

TRANSITIONS

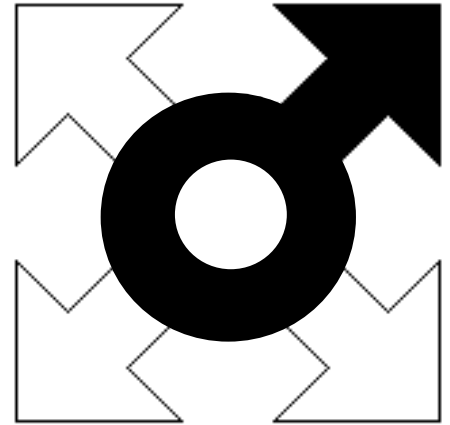
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The Men Should Be Able To Have Their Own Personal Life Dreams & Goals

By Charles Cresson Wood

Recently I was attending a seminar put on by two very famous leaders in the men's movement, men that I both admire and respect. One of the members of the audience, who happened to be a woman, asked the leaders how to make a man happy. I thought it was an excellent question, and a question that I don't hear many women asking these days, so I was especially eager to hear the famous leaders' replies. My hopes were dashed when they both offered different versions of what has been the party line for years, in essence saying: "all a man needs to do is to make his wife or girlfriend happy, and then he will be happy too."

The alleged support for this party line position was a study that said that the number one predictor of happiness for a married couple was whether the wife was happy. I suggest that this is backwards reasoning. It takes the effect and makes it the cause. Because these studied men are accustomed to giving up their personal dreams and goals, allegedly for the greater good, or for the pleasure of their women, that doesn't mean that it's a good formula that will make them happy. Just because today's men are so downtrodden that they don't even believe they are worthy of openly pursuing their own personal happiness, and they therefore focus on their women's happiness instead, that doesn't mean that other

men are well advised to continue to follow the old dictum about giving themselves away. Likewise, just

because a study focused on married couples, and therefore most likely has a bias towards men that play along with this party line, that doesn't mean that all men should pursue the same strategy.

This party line is manifest in advertisements all around us, which for example, make claims like "just buy her that big diamond ring, then she's going to be happy," and the implication of course is that at "this point you will be happy too." Perhaps the ultimate manifestation of this party line is reflected in the disposability of men that is so pervasive in this culture, where they not only customarily die for their country in war, but where they work in a very large majority of the dangerous jobs. The message, as I see it, is that "men must give up their own personal dreams and goals, must instead focus on pleasing their women, on taking care of their family, on being the good provider, and on otherwise living up to what society says they should be." The US Selective Service posters in the Post Office, notifying 18 year old men that they must register for the draft, says it in a concise way — "men have to do what men have to do." It is notable that there is no comparable law requiring women to do "what they have to do."

This party line perspective is not unique to the psychology field, the intimate relationship field, or the men's movement. I see it for example in the domain of Tantra yoga. In that discipline involving reaching spiritual states of happiness through sexual union, the man is supposed to be primarily of service to the woman, and if he has done a good job at it, then he supposedly will be pleased. A number of books espouse this approach,

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Editor's Comment

The pastor of my church once gave a sermon on the importance of regular attendance every Sunday. He told the story of an old man who stopped going to church. He preferred to stay at home and read the Bible on his own. One day, the church pastor came to visit the man. Naturally, he was wondering what he could say to the old fellow to convince him to come back to service. He prayed to God for guidance.

They sat by the fireplace and talked about all sorts of subjects. But the pastor didn't ever bring up the subject of Sunday attendance. Finally, he received an inspiration. The pastor grabbed a poker, and reached into the fire. He hooked one of the burning embers below the fire and pulled it out onto the cool bricks. The two men watched silently as the ember quickly changed from glowing red to a dull ashen

gray. The old man looked up and said, "I'll be at church on Sunday."

Living up here in Boston, I feel removed from most NCFM activity. So, it's a real treat when I can get together with fellow members. This September I was able to do just that when I attended the NCFM Face-to-Face meeting in San Diego. (See the item in the News section.)

We discussed various business items and even passed a monumental motion to establish a national office. But these meetings are most important in another way. Getting together motivates us. Seeing fellow members and talking about men's issues energizes us like nothing else.

So, even if you can't attend the Face-to-Face meetings, be sure to meet with your chapter as often as you can. If there's

no chapter nearby, find a buddy and establish one. Like the burning embers, staying together keeps us hot. If we're alone too long, we can get caught up in our own lives. As I mentioned in a previous editorial, there's a lot going on right now to distract us. We need to help each other stay focused.

Ever Yours in the Cause,

Jason Leatherman

Dreams

Continued from Page 1

but I won't name them, lest I embarrass them unduly. If you start looking around, there seems to be a great deal of support for the notion that men should not have their own personal life dreams and goals. For example, if you look at the statistics for who spends the money in America today, it is by far spent by women rather than men. I wonder whether this is not at least partially a reflection of the fact that, as a society, we believe it is acceptable for women to pamper themselves with a spa weekend, but we don't believe men should give themselves that luxury...

This "men shouldn't have personal life dreams and goals" approach is offensive to me because it implies that men are really simpletons, they are such elementary creatures, that all they need to do is please their women (and by implication take care of their family, etc.), and then they will be happy. In case nobody has noticed, let me go down on the record as saying that men are complex human beings. Their happiness is not going to be assured, and in fact probably is not going to be achieved, if they simply go with the program that has already been set up for them, i.e., if they focus exclusively on pleasing their women.

Perhaps the most serious problem with this "men shouldn't pursue their personal goals" perspective is that it shuts down open and honest communication between men and women. I believe that open and honest communication about a wide variety of topics, including personal life dreams and goals, is an essential requirement for a successful, loving and supportive relationship. If men have already decided that they must junk their personal dreams and goals, that these things were just unrealistic fantasies, if they feel as though they must instead "get real," then they won't even mention these personal life dreams and goals to their female partners. Women who are in relationship with these men may in turn complain about how their men are not sharing themselves, but these women need to understand that many of these men are only living up to what they believe society expects of them.

So there can be a place where men don't share their dreams and goals, where this doesn't become part of the intimate conversation for a couple, and this can create a vicious circle that perpetuates the problem. If the women think that their men don't have these dreams and goals, then they

don't seriously engage with these topics. The fact that these things are not openly discussed may in turn reinforce the men's belief that there is no space for their dreams and goals, that they are not entitled to pursue their own dreams and goals. They may then further repress the part of themselves that wants to bring these topics forward in conversation. It may, in certain relationships, get so bad that the men simply decide they have to leave the relationship.

This "I have to leave" approach is nonetheless a relatively unevolved way of looking at things, notably because it is a dualistic perspective (it holds only two options). From this unevolved place, it looks like the options are (1) be in an intimate relationship with a woman and follow the role model, or (2) don't be in a relationship with a woman. I suggest that there should be other options such as (3) be in an intimate relationship but create a new set of role expectations, or (4) don't be in relationship and explore your feelings about having to sideline your dreams and goals all your life, understanding that this is a temporary healing process rather than a long-term solution.

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As I see it today, the process of reprogramming ourselves out of socially dictated role models, the process of claiming our own lives as men, has several distinct steps. First, there is a realization that these role models clearly don't work. In this case, a specific man may come to appreciate that doing what society told him to do, that is, "being a man," is not the way to his personal happiness and fulfillment. Second, there is a rejection of these gender roles and a searching for something different. In this case, a heterosexual man may decide he isn't going to date women, because he doesn't want to play that game any more, because that game is too painful, because he has to give too much, and because he receives too little in return. Third, after having distanced oneself from the situation where the role model is required, men can start to consider something else. In this case, a man may decide that he doesn't want to get married because the institution of marriage so often comes with burdensome gender role expectations, but he will instead engage in some sort of a personally negotiated intimate relationship with a woman.

I am suggesting that if several well-known leaders in the men's movement are still trotting out the well-worn "just please your woman, and then you'll be happy" formula, that many of us haven't even gotten to the first of these three steps. I am suggesting that men should be entitled to live their own lives, to pursue their own personal dreams and goals, and that they shouldn't be expected to put everything aside so that they can simply be a slave to social expectations. I am suggesting that we as a society are intelligent enough to figure out new ways that men can be personally fulfilled, that we can have conversations about the fulfillment of both men and women, and at the same time, accomplish the necessary things (like provide for a family).

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TRANSITIONS

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Media Digest

A sampling of news and commentary relating to men's issues and interests

compiled by Mike Spaniola

Bernard Shaw Issues a Warning

Ex-Anchor Has Messages for White Males, Owners

By Richard Prince, Maynard Institute, August 11, 2007

http://www.maynardije.org/columns/dickprince/070811_prince/

Bernard Shaw, the veteran journalist who retired as CNN anchor in 2000, struck out at unnamed media owners who are “sabotaging the public good” with their “profit fixations,” and, as he accepted a Lifetime Achievement Award Saturday night from the National Association of Black Journalists, warned white males that they ignore diversity at their peril. ... “Beyond this ballroom tonight, white males, wake up,” Shaw continued. “Globally, you are an island speck in an ocean of color. The reins of power will weaken and so will your grip — if you do not faithfully support our nation’s greatest strength, diversity.”

Welfare Funding Obstructs Shared Parenting

By Stephen Baskerville, Ph.D.

mensnewsdaily.com, July 18, 2007

<http://mensnewsdaily.com/2007/07/18/welfare-funding-obstructs-shared-parenting/>

The movement for shared parenting faces a major obstacle: the federal government. The conventional piety is that family law is a matter for the states, and federal officials claim they have no authority to become involved. This is piffle. The federal government is up to its ears in family law by its funding for child support enforcement, domestic violence programs, and child abuse “prevention.”

Family law reformers must labor to create 50 campaigns to enact shared parenting in 50 state legislatures. But we labor in vain until we confront the federal funding. In essence, the federal government pays states to collect child support. How this works is complex, and the formula seems to change constantly (perhaps to prevent us

from understanding it?). I have described the process in a paper just published by the Institute for Policy Innovation. But the essence is this:

The more child support collected, the more money the state receives from federal taxpayers. The more children are forcibly separated from their fathers, the more money the state receives from federal taxpayers. The more mothers divorce their husbands or bear children out of wedlock, the more money the state receives from federal taxpayers. The more sole custody awards are granted, the more money the state receives from federal taxpayers. The more onerous the child support levels, the more money the state receives from federal taxpayers. The more money is squeezed out of every parent (or even any non-parent available), the more money the state receives from federal taxpayers.

Rarer than Rabies: The Legacy of Michael Nifong

By Carey Roberts, mensnewsdaily.com, July 25, 2007

<http://mensnewsdaily.com/2007/07/25/rarer-than-rabies-the-legacy-of-michael-nifong/>

Soon after prosecutor Michael Nifong was disbarred by the North Carolina Bar Association, the National District Attorneys Association issued its take on the case. “Nifong’s case is rarer than human rabies,” claimed Joshua Marquis, vice president of the group. “The defense bar is piling on and trying to claim this is typical behavior,” he bitterly complained.

So was Michael Nifong merely a “rogue” prosecutor, a feckless bad-apple amidst a scented orchard of ethical and civic-minded district attorneys? Let’s take rape, for example. Experience reveals that rape is a red-meat accusation that triggers an aggressive prosecution. You may remember the 1989 rape of the Central Park jogger and the accusation that five “wilding” teenagers had perpetrated the attack. But when the DNA test results did

not match, the prosecutor had to claim the semen came from a sixth “mystery” member of the gang. Despite that dubious explanation, the five were convicted. But 13 years later DNA evidence proved another man had committed the crime and the five were set free. Sorry about that, fellas.

Twenty-five years ago civil rights attorneys Barry Scheck and Peter Neufeld established the Innocence Project, a group dedicated to protecting the innocent through post-conviction DNA testing. Earlier this month the group registered its 205th exoneration, most of the cases involving false convictions of rape. Prosecutorial misconduct is a factor in 42% of DNA exonerations, they reveal. [www.innocenceproject.org]

Child sexual abuse is another charge that juices up any prosecutor with political aspirations. In 1994, the small town of Wenatchee, Wash. was seized by a wave of sex abuse hysteria. Parents and Sunday school teachers were accused of child rape. Over two years, 43 adults were arrested on 29,726 charges of sex abuse involving 60 children. [<http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/powertoharm/accused.html>]

Not a scrap of physical evidence was presented to support the charges and some witnesses later recanted their testimony. But that didn’t keep 17 of the accused from going to jail.

Choosing Foster Parents over Fathers

By Jeffery M. Leving and Glenn Sacks, July 11, 2007

http://glennsacks.com/blog/?page_id=916

In the heartbreaking Melinda Smith case, a San Diego father and daughter were needlessly separated by the foster care system for over a decade. Last week, Los Angeles County settled a lawsuit over the case for an undisclosed sum. Yet a recent Urban Institute study found that the Smith case typifies the way the foster care system

harms children by disregarding the loving bonds they share with their fathers.

Smith was born to an unwed couple in 1988. Her father, Thomas Marion Smith, a former Marine and a decorated Vietnam War veteran, saw Melinda often and paid child support. When the girl was four, her mother abruptly moved without leaving a forwarding address. Two years later, Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services found that Melinda's mother was abusing her. Though the social worker for the case noted in the file that Thomas was the father, he was never contacted, and his then 6-year-old daughter was placed in the foster care system.

Thomas—whose fitness as a father was never impugned nor legally questioned—continued to receive and pay his child support bills. Authorities refused to disclose his daughter's whereabouts, and didn't even inform him that his daughter had been taken by the County. Smith employed private investigators and attorneys to try to find

Melinda and secure visitation rights, but he eventually ran out of money.

Romney Compares Hillary to Karl Marx

By Doug Powers, July 23, 2007

<http://dougpowers.com>

Mitt Romney thinks that Hillary Clinton needs a lesson in economics ... comparing Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's economic plan to that of Socialist Karl Marx. "It would be helpful to have a person leading the country who understands how the economy works and has actually managed something."

Nah, Hillary understands this and knows exactly what she's doing—it's some voters who need a lesson in economics. An economically educated electorate would mean the Hillarys of the world would sell about as well with the general population as O.J.'s alibi, which is why Hillary is a big backer of government schools run by people with a vested interest in seeing to it kids

know nothing about economics via classes taught by people who know nothing about economics.

But I do disagree with Mitt that Hillary's economic plan reeks of Karl Marx—actually it reeks of Groucho Marx. It's comical, it walks funny, it's disguised, and you know there's a joke just around the corner.

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Book Reviews

By J. Steven Svoboda

Big Sister: How Extreme Feminism Has Betrayed the Fight for Sexual Equality

Vancouver: Greystone Books, 2004.
Canadian \$22.95/US \$15.00.
www.greystonebooks.com. 216 pages.

Simon Fraser University criminology professor Neil Boyd has written a flawed but generally excellent debunking of radical feminist zeal that provides an interesting contrast to *The War Against Men* by another professor, Richard T. Hise. Whereas Hise is an unapologetically rumped hardcore conservative activist, Boyd came to men's issues only after some undeniable truths moved him from his Farrellesque button-down, feminist-sympathetic starting point all the way to where he has written this book-length indictment of Big Brother's sibling, *Big Sister*.

One problem with the onrushing march of time is there is always the question

with later books that repeat information from earlier works as to what they are doing differently or better. This is all the more true when much repeated analysis follows and is credited to a previous author, in this case, Christina Hoff Sommers. Another reason for concern pops up on the very first page of the book, the preface, where the author reveals his lamentable and inexcusable ignorance of men's and women's equivalent levels of family violence. Later, he manages to discuss the work of the leading scholars that proved women's violence levels, devoting four pages to Murray Straus and later also discussing Richard Gelles, without once repeating this central finding of theirs. This is nothing less than a subdued yet still inexcusable version of the same misdeeds of which he rightfully accused feminists: obfuscation and half-truths that operate like lies and cannot help but deceive. (I suspect, given Boyd's background, that when he learned of these facts through Hoff Sommers, Straus, Gelles and others, they

simply posed too big a leap of faith for him given his past, a contradiction he never managed to reconcile.)

On the other hand, the benefits of writing a book from the author's position is that in some respects, it is harder for critics to attack him. We really have something fairly remarkable here: a professor sympathetic enough to feminists that he was selected as the head of his university's sexual harassment tribunal, who was repelled enough by the complaints he was called upon to process that he had to write a book on feminist excesses. By page 6, he has already leaped into the breach of the fight, forcefully and eloquently setting forth in plain words the utter lack of a need for university gender studies departments. Moreover, he continues, sexual harassment has, after long and strident feminist activism, been unwisely broadened to encompass "hostile work environments" and a subjective test that resides largely if not entirely in the view of

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Reviews

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the alleged victim. The law in its current state has “a frighteningly inadequate burden of proof and a dangerously vague test of liability.” We have thereby created “a standard that too often accepts the lowest common denominator of sensitivity in the workplace.”

Many of the university rape accusations which Boyd examined at his university and about which he learned at other universities are nothing short of pathetic cries for attention from highly dysfunctional, disturbed young women. In Canada, universities are not the only places where men are subject to this danger: according to national law, subjective consent is all that matters without reference to objective standards; moreover, the consent must be explicitly communicated. “So much,” the author wryly observes, “for the real world” in which sex rarely plays out in the orderly fashion of a college debating contest. The problem, of course, is that, as Kumbe Ginnane, author of *From Regret to Rape*, can tell you, good men end up doing years behind real bars as a result of these travesties. MacKinnonism equals McCarthyism, as Boyd himself points out. The lies are repeatedly disproven and yet, as Boyd shows, they continue: The “onslaught” of violence on Super Bowl Sunday. The “rule of thumb” about how thick a stick a man can use to beat his wife. Pornography causes sexual violence.

Sexual harassment law, Boyd deftly demonstrates, carries criminal-level penalties but is treated as a civil violation. Regrettably, Boyd glances at but fails to explore the more fundamental question of why sexual harassment law was ever needed in the first place, when assault was previously a criminal offense. (Another area where his blinders may limit his vision.)

Boyd piles on tragedy of ruined life after tragedy, and yet tells each story in an engaging manner. The sagas are depressing and fascinating at the same time. The conclusion drawn by the author as to the underlying message seems right on: Life must never be unpleasant. If it is, a male is almost certainly to blame and must be punished. To justify this punishment, due

process, not to mention rationality, are discarded. (Again, Kumbe Ginnane can confirm this.) The presumption of innocence is tossed aside, sometimes without even a pretense otherwise.

The sad tale of the rise and fall of the repressed memories movement is enlightening, appalling and (because it is now on the wane), heartening, all at the same time. Boyd recounts the history very skillfully. He also does a good job summarizing the brave new world at Columbia, where “you can be defined as a rapist, and tossed out of the university, without the right to counsel or the right to confront your accusers.” The fundamentally dishonest stretching past the breaking point of the definition of batterers is also detailed. (This is particularly clear because the definition is not applied reciprocally to women as well, even regarding bread-and-butter battery, but this is a point on which Boyd is again mute.) One interesting fact of which the author reminds us is that *sibling* violence is actually the most common form of family violence.

Neil Boyd has created a book that is ideal for giving to a friend who sympathizes with feminism, as that person’s first wakeup call. Those of us already involved in gender equity work can enjoy Boyd’s authorial skill, read and lament the individual stories, and hope that as time goes on, the writer will come even more fully to grips with the beast he has taken on. His next offering may start to resemble some of our movement’s finer works. For now, this book is a good start.

Father Your Son: How to Become the Father You’ve Always Wanted to Be

By Dr. Stephan B. Poulter. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. www.books.mcgraw-hill.com. www.fatheryourson.com. www.stephanpoulter.com. 215 pages. US \$14.95; Canadian \$21.95.

Father Your Son is the first book by Los Angeles-based clinical psychologist Stephan B. Poulter. Poulter has given us an engaging, invitingly written and attractively formatted life guide on how to maximize our success as fathers to our sons.

Poulter notes that the single most important predictor of empathy is paternal involvement. The author believes that one of our most important jobs in learning how best to father our sons is figuring out *our* position as sons to *our* fathers. Thus teachings about ourselves and generations below and above us (including our grandfathers, who after all helped create our fathers) are blended together in an unusual yet most effective manner. Poulter suggests creating lists of those qualities of male family members that you do want your son to acquire, and another list of those qualities you don’t want him to have. We are usefully asked if we can accurately determine — in a given situation — on a scale of 1 to 10 the intensity of our son’s anger, violence potential, or hatred. Another great question: do you know where your son is, what he is doing, and who he is doing it with between the hours of 3:00 and 8:00 P.M. (the hours when boys typically get into the most trouble)?

Stephan Poulter seems to be a bit more grounded than some of his colleagues in the male-oriented personal growth authorship department. He notes that “kids are sharp” and will know if your body is present but your mind is a million miles away. According to the author, one of the most important truths boys can carry with them through their lives is confidence that they are connected to their fathers sufficiently to know that Dad will be there even if they mess up. Poulter notes that this confidence can give the boy great resiliency.

The author has a knack for hitting on some simple yet profound truths, as when he writes that it is important to come to terms with being a lost son, which 93% of us are. It takes a lot of energy to keep the feelings of our fatherless boy suppressed! The author’s list of situations to watch for when a discussion about girls can usefully be raised is similarly astute and light-handed.

A couple of Poulter’s points did give me slight pause. Would anyone savvy enough to pick up this book in the first place really need reminding, for example, not to zone out in your boy’s presence, to share

feelings with him, etc.? Similarly, the author devotes a number of pages to discussing a behavior pattern by which men forcibly separate themselves from uncomfortable feelings, seemingly assuming (without discussion and, I believe, incorrectly) that all men do this. I disagree that the mother does not have a unique role to play with raising an infant, and that the mother-infant bond stems from nothing more than mothers' usual involvement with infants' care and feeding. Finally, Poulter seems to assume boys are heterosexual, thereby missing a chance to offer ways of addressing fears a son will doubtless have if he senses any tinge of same-sex attraction.

Yet these are tiny points in the context of this superlative work. *Father Your Son* is admirably free of straw men. The case studies the author provides (which are of course suitably convoluted with names changed) charmed me in that they were *not* atypically dramatic and charged, as is so often the case. For example, Duncan, who found it hard to communicate with his son, "gently (but skillfully) dissuaded his son from expressing his fears or other strong emotions." Poulter advises fathers who see a bit of themselves in Duncan not to shrink from uncomfortable emotions but to at least occasionally share them with their sons. In one provocative exercise, he encourages us to write about our father as if we were a newspaper reporter trying to encapsulate his life. I have to do some pondering as to why I so rarely discuss my feelings about my father with others, which is one of Poulter's questions for the reader. At one point, the author provides parenting scenarios with three choices given as to the best fatherly response. All three options are plausible and it takes some thinking and feeling to come up with the best course.

Poulter discusses the five fundamental fathering styles that he also explores in his other book: superachiever, time bomb, passive, absent, and compassionate mentor. Tips and techniques are provided to help the recovery process of a dad fitting each of the four flawed styles.

Father Your Son is a slender book stuffed with far more than its share of golden nuggets. Poulter's list of the seven topics to talk about to your boy on the cusp of adolescence is by itself worth the price

of admission. And the dream exercise he suggests, not relating to night-time dreams but rather to an exploration with your son of the things each of you wants to achieve, is priceless. One astonishing insight is that in many ways adolescents bear a striking similarity to 2-year-olds! "Just as you don't take a two-year-old's temper tantrums as indicative of who he really is and what he thinks about you, don't take all your teenager's words and deeds at face value." The list of 14 types of troubling teenage behavior is also very illuminating.

Some of Poulter's advice is surprising yet highly astute, as when he wisely counsels not to try to influence your son in any way! Frontal efforts can be counterproductive, while walking the walk in our own lives makes all the difference. Fathers are advised to take male depression more seriously than we may be tempted to do, and at the same time the author shows us (in part through 13 potential trouble signs that he tabulates) how to distinguish genuine, potentially life-threatening depression from the transitory states any adolescent is bound to experience. Interestingly, over-involvement in positive things such as school, sports, or work can be a sign of depression. Everything must be considered in context.

Yet another fantastic part of the book is the author's appendix on mythology. This section might have been even more effective if more smoothly integrated with the rest of the book. Yet as presented to us it is wonderful. I had never previously heard of this concept of the three horses (red, white, and black) that we may ride at different times in our life. The black horse is the horse you mount if you eat your shadow self and incorporate it back into your life so as to become a true wise man. I also *loved* the author's suggestion that we reframe our adolescent son's activities in a mythological framework, so that we can understand fights with us or our wife as knightly battles, examine the wounds our son has sustained lately (romantic rejections, poor grade), and determine the strengths of the main monster (bully, unfriendly teacher, Mom, Dad) in his life. The point is not to excuse a son's actions but to understand them in the context of the work he needs to complete in adolescence. This will enable us to avoid needlessly prolonging this stage.

The second appendix, a guide for stepfathers and divorced fathers, is naturally a bit more mundane, but still excellent.

Stephan Poulter is a magnificent author. *Father Your Son* is jam-packed with wisdom and action items that can help us co-create real positive change in our son's lives. Please do not miss it, for your son's sake and for the world's welfare.

What's Happening??

National Coalition of Free Men News

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY, NOVEMBER 19th

(By Dr. Jerome Teelucksingh)

The objectives of celebrating an International Men's Day include improving gender relations, promoting gender equality, producing responsible males and highlighting positive role models.

The annual observance of International Men's Day on November 19th seeks to address problems and challenges facing boys and men. These issues include the portrayal and involvement of men in politics, religion, parenting, domestic violence, drug abuse, fathering, homicides, sports, media, power, war, suicides and family life.

Some of the goals of Men's Day — to promote unity, resolve disputes, cultivate greater understanding between men and women, increase tolerance and thus create a safer, better world.

This special day for men was initiated in November 1999 in Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies. Since then the initiative has received an overwhelming positive response from both men and women in North America, Australia, the Caribbean, Asia, Africa and Europe. In public discussion groups, offices and neighborhoods attempts were made to address and seek solutions for the problems facing males in today's society.

Every year numerous individuals, international associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and religious bodies have been contacted to assist in the observance of this special day. There is also a need for the regular hosting of international conferences on men to address issues and seek solutions.

In the long-term we can make International Men's Day on November 19th an annual worldwide event with beneficial results.

It is hoped that men interested in improving themselves and reforming other males would be part of this ongoing "Men's Revolution" and annually celebrate International Men's Day.

At work, in our communities,

schools and religious institutions, there should be dialogue between both sexes for greater understanding and tolerance.

Thanks for your support and encouragement as we all strive for gender equality and attempt to remove the negative images and the stigma associated with men in our society.

Editor: Also see Dr. Teelucksingh's letter in the Letters section.

NCFM'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY FACE-TO-FACE GATHERING

In celebration of NCFM's 30th anniversary, the NCFM board of directors held a Face-to-Face gathering from September 7th to September 9th, 2007, in San Diego, California. Board members met at the California Men's Center San Diego, 932 C Street, Suite B, San Diego, CA 92101.

As always, it was an exciting meeting. Marc Angelucci presented a summary of the Equal Protection lawsuits that he and fellow attorney Al Rava have been leading in California. Harry Crouch gave us all sneak previews of domestic violence and child support documentaries that will soon be released.

Most importantly, the board voted to make the California Men's Center the national headquarters of NCFM. This is a big step for the organization!

WEB SITES TO WATCH

(By Jason Leatherman)

Marc Rudov is the author of *The Man's No-Nonsense Guide to Women: How to Succeed in Romance on Planet Earth*. He also has a rich web site at themansnononsenseguidetowomen.com.

Your everyday shopping can benefit NCFM!

At **iGive.com**, you can support NCFM while shopping online. iGive provides a mall of stores which will contribute a certain percentage of your purchase to your selected charity.

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Thank you and happy shopping!

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Besides writing this book and many on-line articles, he also produces podcasts and appears in TV interviews. All of this content is archived on his site. Check it out!

NCFM-LA CHAPTER REPORT

(By Marc Angelucci)

We are now helping several more paternity fraud victims, including appealing a case in which a man challenged the judgment within the time the child support services said (in writing) they would allow a challenge but then reneged and refused to allow a DNA test, as did the court. The appeal will be called County of Sacramento v. Guadalupe Llamas.

On August 9, the *L.A. Daily Journal* printed an op-ed by the law firm of Thelen Reid Brown Raysman & Steiner examining the legal implications of NCFM-LA's victory in the case of Angelucci v. Century Supper Club. It mentioned NCFM-LA and its mission, but made factual errors about the case and NCFM-LA. On August 23, the *Daily Journal* printed a letter from attorney Al Rava of NCFM San Diego (who represented the plaintiffs) correcting the errors and calling NCFM a leading equal rights organization.

On August 26, NCFM-LA had another gathering in Sherman Oaks Park with Fathers4Justice. Ray Blumhorst wrote a story about it in Men's News Daily at: <http://blogwonks.com/2007/08/26/fathers-and-mens-issues-groups-rock-the-valley/>

On August 30, we filed the opening appellate brief in Woods v. California, in which we are challenging the constitutionality of California's exclusion of men from domestic violence provisions and of incarcerated fathers from programs for incarcerated mothers and their kids. The brief is 50 pages and the record 1348 pages.

On August 21, *L.A. Times* assistant editor Matt Welch printed an op-ed about the government's abuse of passport restrictions and how it unfairly targets fathers. He mentioned NCFM-LA member Taron James' paternity fraud case, then printed NCFM-LA's thank you response on the newspaper's blog on August 24.

We had letters printed (responding to biased domestic violence articles) in the *New Zealand Times* (8/2), *Eureka Reporter* (8/9), *Chapel Hill News* (8/12), *Sierra Sun* (8/12), and the *Bangkok Post* (8/

14).

Our chapter report in the last issue of *Transitions* left out the media hits listed below:

On June 4, 2007, CBS News aired a story on paternity fraud victim Bert Riddick, whom NCFM-LA is helping, and interviewed NCFM-LA's president, mentioning NCFM-LA on the screen. That same day, the *Torrance Daily Breeze* ran a story on Riddick and quoted NCFM-LA. Then on June 20 the same newspaper ran a story about NCFM-LA member Taron James' paternity fraud case and quoted NCFM.

NCFM-LA's victory in Angelucci v. Century Supper Club was covered in the *American Chronicle* (5/31), KTVU News (5/31), *Mercury-Register* (5/31), *San Francisco Chronicle* (6/1), *Orange County Weekly* (6/1), and *Metro-News Enterprise* (6/1).

NCFM-LA had letters printed (mostly responding to biased domestic violence articles) in the *Wilson Daily* (4/9), *Seattle Post Intelligencer* (4/10), *USC Daily Trojan* (4/12), *London 24* (4/26), *Vermont*

Guardian (4/27), *Arab American News* (4/28), *Caribbean Net News* (5/4, 5/8 and 5/11), *Londa Gazette* (5/10), *Cape Cod Online* (5/24), *Derry Journal* (5/25), *San Bernardino Sun* (5/26), *Inbox Robot* (5/26), *Connecticut Post* (5/29), *The Conservative Voice* (6/6), *Sequoyah County Times* (6/8), and *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* (6/17).

Special Thanks Due

Special thanks are in order to the following recent financial contributors. Your donations make a great deal of difference.

Eric W. Berg III, TN
John Hayes, WA
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Ronald Rich, OH
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Letters to the Editor

Editorial Policy: *NCFM and the Transitions staff welcome letters from readers and will print them as space allows. We reserve the right to edit letters for editorial style and space restrictions but will continue to publish letters in their entirety when possible. Send article responses, corrections, or other comments about the newsletter itself to the editor: Jason Leatherman at transitions@ncfm.org. Letters sent directly to him will be addressed "Dear Editor". Send opinions, stories, requests for advice, or other letters to our president: Michael Rother at ncfm@ncfm.org. Letters sent to him will be addressed "Dear NCFM".*

DEAR NCFM:

My name is Joe Goldberg and I am a Family Law P.A.S. & Litigation Consultant. My special expertise is in the area of Parental Alienation and Parental Alienation Syndrome. You may be a little bit acquainted with P.A.S., since the Alec Baldwin case broke into the headlines last month.

Parental Alienation is a matter that involves substantial problems involving custody and visitation and there are many people that have these problems in your group and need advice. I would like to offer some of my time to answer questions that anyone might have. I believe that my experience and expertise would be valuable to many people going through a divorce with children.

I would like to suggest that maybe I could be put on a speaker phone to answer the questions that are submitted in advance. This way everyone can have an opportunity to hear what I have to say and learn about parental alienation. This would also give me a chance to receive questions in advance and have a little preparation time to provide an answer. I feel certain that this might interest a great number of people, (even those that know other people that have some of these problems and can let them know what my advice is).

I can also send you a description of my services and you can become more acquainted with my story as a parent of children afflicted with PAS. In the meantime,

thank you for your time and interest in this proposal.

Joe Goldberg
Family Law P.A.S. & Litigation Consultant

NCFM:

Thank you for contacting NCFM. Your offer does sound interesting. Can you tell me what city you practice in? We may have a local chapter, and you may be able to meet in person with some of our members. The phone conference call may not be necessary. Let me know if you're interested.

DEAR NCFM:

Although I've never written a piece wholly on feminism, I've discussed it in many of my essays. Please share this collection with your readers.

<http://ABCDunlimited.com/ideas/feminism.html>

Barry Loberfeld

<http://ABCDunlimited.com/ideas>

NCFM:

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on feminism. I've been a fan of your ideas for many years, having read your occasional article in *Liberty* magazine and other fora. Thank you!

DEAR NCFM:

You've been invited to join our free social network <http://kinderfind.com> for parents and childcare providers in the US & Canada. Find local parents with similar interests and local providers for schools, daycares, tutors, children's recreation and more.

Our goal is to connect parents and providers to help raise our generation of kids together.

Scott Springer

Founder, **KinderFind.com**

NCFM:

Thank you for the information. I've shared your message with our membership via our email discussion group. If anyone is interested, they can contact you directly. Good luck!

DEAR NCFM:

Is there a Seattle Chapter of NCFM?

Also, I'm looking for national men's rights groups, and you seem to be the only non-profit I could find, are there any other MRA non-profit groups?

Brook Hartly

harty@ironwolve.com

<http://misandry.us>

NCFM:

Thank you for contacting NCFM. Currently, there is no Seattle chapter for NCFM. However, a number of people have expressed interest in setting up a Seattle chapter. If the right people come together and make it happen, it could be a reality in a matter of a few months. Please let me know if you're interested in getting involved with such an effort.

NCFM is the largest, oldest, and most active national men's rights group in the USA. There are other groups in the U.S., many of them local to one geographic area, or focused on a specific issue like fathers' rights, but we are the largest men's rights organization with a general focus. We are interested in many men's rights issues, and we don't limit ourselves to just one area. You will also find a few men's rights organizations that are really just one- or two-person operations.

If you're looking for a national men's rights group, I would encourage you to consider joining NCFM and becoming active. We have a regularly-published newsletter, several chapters around the country, a national email discussion group for members only, and many ongoing

projects.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

DEAR NCFM:

Is there a Florida chapter?

Betty McMillan

www.bmcmillan@orlandosentinel.com

DEAR NCFM:

Once again, I am inviting you and your organization to observe International Men's Day on 19th November 2007. This is the 9th observance of an annual event in which both men and women support in an effort to reform and improve individuals.

Many thanks to those persons and groups, especially in developing countries, for assisting and observing International Men's Day. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to hold their independent observances.

The method of commemorating International Men's Day include public seminars, classroom activities at schools, radio and television programs, debates, panel discussions, peaceful marches and art displays.

The manner of observing this annual day is optional and you can use any appropriate forum. By informing your group, organization, government, friends, public institutions and neighborhood, the message can reach a wider audience.

The theme for 2007 is, "The Time for Healing is Now". Among the perspec-

tives to be addressed is the need for forgiveness of those who have hurt us, discouraging gossip, avoiding alienation of those persons who are different from us, promoting physical healing among the injured in war-torn societies, removing divisions among men and between men and women, and improving relations among family members and relatives.

Some questions to be considered — why is emotional healing important for our well-being? The need for spiritual healing to occur among ourselves and others? How could I become a healer of others? Am I willing to help those who have injured me? How will I know that healing has occurred? What are the factors which promote healing? Is healing a continuous process?

This information can be used in brochures, websites, magazines, newspapers, e-mails or newsletters.

Undoubtedly, your support will assist in building a society aspiring for peace and a more tolerant and understanding future generation.

Feel free to contact me for further information and good luck in your endeavors.

Dr. Jerome Teelucksingh
thirdworldunited@yahoo.com

ncfm now has coffee mugs for sale!

Chapter Reps: These mugs make a great fundraiser! Discounts are available for chapters purchasing 5 or more mugs.

These mugs are made by MWare and are high quality regular sized coffee mugs. Choose a Cobalt Blue or Hunter Green mug. Each mug sports the NCFM logo, name and the scripted motto: Giving Men a Voice Since 1977.

Price per mug is \$12.99, including shipping to the 48 contiguous United States.

Contact Deborah Watkins at NCFMdfw@yahoo.com or (214)-485-1512 to place your order. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery.

Help the Men's Center!

The California Men's Center is an outstanding resource for men and for NCFM. It's also now the home of NCFM's national office! You can help the Men's Center expand its programs and help more men by making a MONTHLY PLEDGE. Even as little as \$10/month will help greatly!

For more information about the Men's Center, please visit www.californiamenscenters.org

To set up your monthly pledge, please contact Deborah at NCFMdfw@yahoo.com or (214)-485-1512.

Volunteers Needed Please Help !!

ASSISTANT EDITOR OF TRANSITIONS - The editor could use some help in the production of Transitions. You would start by calling potential authors and soliciting articles. You would take on more tasks as your time and interest allow. This could include proofreading, graphical arts, or pursuing any other ideas you may have for improving Transitions. If interested, please contact Jason Leatherman at transitions@ncfm.org.

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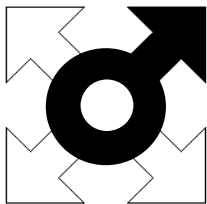
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Chapters

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Dallas/Fort Worth | (214)-485-1512 ncfmdfw.org |
| Twin Cities | (888)-223-1280 www.ncfm-tc.org |
| Los Angeles | (626)-359-3709 www.ncfmla.org |
| San Diego | (619)-231-1909 www.californiamenscenters.org |



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