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Abstract

In this thesis, I argue that *Butcher's Crossing* (1960) presents a counter-hegemonic narrative for the American male as embodied by the protagonist Will Andrews and his path towards an ecological masculine identity. Scholars have previously focused on the characters McDonald and Miller and how they are representations of different social, economic, and cultural factors that shaped 19th century America. What this thesis focuses on, however, is how Andrews abandons ideals affiliated with hegemonic masculinity in favor of an ideal where nature and man are equal. To demonstrate this, this thesis offers a theoretically informed critical analysis on Andrews's interactions between McDonald and Miller to show how hegemonic masculinities are both constructed, contested, and resisted. Crucially, this approach shows that Andrews embodies an ecological masculinity that is able to free itself from the inherent power structures of male domination of nature. As such, this thesis shows how Andrews's narrative provides a model of manhood where men and nature are seen as equals instead of opposing forces.

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"I will only become myself": Hegemonic and Ecological Masculinities in John Williams's *Butcher's Crossing*

Introduction

Butcher's Crossing (1960) is a novel that captures the reader due to its subversion of, perhaps, the expected narrative of American masculinity of the cowboy who ventures out west to conquer the wild. Rather, John Williams offers a text that sets out the complexities underpinning the cultural conflict between the civilized East and the wild West. What makes this setup of cultural dissonance interesting is how it is played out by the various characters who embody the range of masculinities that emerge as the product of social, economic, and cultural influences in 19th century America. In other words, *Butcher's Crossing* grapples with an important turning point in American history - when civilization eradicated the last remnants of the western frontier – and the impact of this upon the individual's sense of their masculine identity. Put simply, the narrative addresses American masculine identity and how it responded to the rapid urbanization of America. As such, this thesis will focus on how the protagonist's masculinity, Will Andrews, is impacted by these constructions of masculinity and how he might resist them and to ultimately argue how Andrews's masculinity should be read as a move from hegemonic to ecological masculinity.

Such a reading requires this thesis to engage with critical theories of masculinity, most notably from scholars such as Michael Kimmel, Demetrakis Z. Demetriou, James W. Messerschmidt and the very influential Masculinity Studies scholar Raewyn Connell. These scholars pioneered the field of Masculinity Studies and introduced the critical terms "Hegemonic Masculinity" and "Homosocial Relations" that are key terms utilized in this thesis. These concepts are key in the examination of the underlying social mechanisms that reproduce masculinities that derive their power from the exploitation of women as well as nature. As a result, this thesis also engages with recent developments in the field of Masculinity Studies, namely the study of masculinity and ecology, popularized as "Ecomasculinities". Studies of Ecomasculinities set out to dissect the relationship between men and nature to provide alternative ways for men to construct their masculinity without having to resort to the exploitation of land or animals. As such, the thesis utilizes the most developed concept from the Ecomasculinities, namely "Ecological Masculinities".

This thesis, then, sets out to argue that *Butcher's Crossing* offers a counter-hegemonic narrative for the American male as embodied by Will Andrews in his construction of an

ecological masculine identity by abandoning ideals affiliated with hegemonic masculinity in favor of an ideal where nature and man are equal. To understand Andrews's masculinity as a transition from hegemony toward ecology, the thesis deconstructs how hegemonic masculinity is represented in the narrative through the theoretically informed analysis of the key characters of McDonald and Miller. The hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller are key as they represent two points of extremity in American masculinity, namely the civilized world of the East and the primitive world of the wild West. The deconstruction of McDonald and Miller entails a critical examination of how their masculinities are dependent on maintaining an internal hegemony over other men and exerting an external hegemony over women and nature. Such a reading sets up the centrality of the performance of the protagonist Will Andrews as his move towards an ecological masculinity shows resistance to the established eastern and western hegemonic masculinities through his refusal to partake in the reproduction of hegemonic power relations. To do this, I will close read several key interactions that Andrews has with McDonald and Miller in *Butcher's Crossing* as these are the fundamental moments in the narrative when the discourses of masculinity are brought to the fore. These demonstrate that Andrews has a certain agency to challenge and subvert the power relations in order to facilitate his turn towards an ecological masculinity and realize his American masculine identity.

A brief synopsis of Butcher's Crossing

Butcher's Crossing takes place in the 1860s, in the remote village of Butcher's Crossing, where we find the protagonist, Will Andrews, a Harvard drop-out who has become disillusioned with city life longing for a real experience in nature. Without much to go on, other than his lifesavings and a single contact in the village, Andrews manages to befriend a team of local hunters who are planning to go on a hunt. Their leader, the seasoned hunter Miller, starts telling the tale of a buffalo-herd so huge it would make them all rich. Intrigued by Miller's tale, Andrews decides to join the hunters on their expedition as he sees this as a golden opportunity for him to satisfy his need for a life far away from the comforts of city-life. After a long and harsh journey, the team finally reach their goal, the buffalo herd is in sight. Andrews realizes with horror why they are there when the other hunters start to ruthlessly slaughter the animals. As such, Andrews learns the course of nature by witnessing the sheer brutality, not only through murder, but also through slaughtering the cadavers of the buffalo. On top of all the murdering and slaughtering, the team gets trapped in the valley as a

snowstorm blocks their escape from the valley. They remain trapped for over six months before they can make their way back home. On top of that, to their ultimate dread, the hunters are informed that buffalo hides have gone out of fashion, making their voyage an economic disaster. The novel ends with Miller burning down the office of McDonald, while Andrews rides off in the sunset.

Chapter one: Masculinities, Power, and Ecology – Theorizing Hegemonic Masculinity, Homosocial Relations, and Ecological Masculinities

In examining how *Butcher's Crossing* (1960) presents a counter-hegemonic narrative to traditional notions of American masculinity, it is crucial that we understand key concepts from Masculinity Studies. Therefore, a careful examination of the concepts "Hegemonic Masculinity", "Homosocial Relations", and "Ecological Masculinity" is key in order to understand the constructions of masculinity in the text as being a result of the inherent power structures between men and nature. With these concepts in place, this thesis will be able to define and deconstruct the masculinities of McDonald and Miller to examine how the masculinity of Andrews reads as a resistance to the hegemony over women and nature that the masculinities of McDonald and Miller represent. The concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" from Raewyn Connell is crucial in understanding why the masculinities of McDonald and Miller represent influential ideals of subordination of women and nature while also making important distinctions between their masculinities in *how* they subordinate these entities. This subordination of women and nature must then be understood in the context of what Michael Kimmel calls "Homosocial Relations" which is a concept that explains why men subordinate others in order to gain recognition of their masculinity in the eyes of other men. These key concepts within Masculinity Studies are not only important in the readings of the characters McDonald and Miller, but they are also vital in the understanding of "Ecological Masculinity" which is the concept that will be applied to dissect the masculinity of Will Andrews. The importance of "Ecological Masculinity" lies in how it provides men with the ability to resist the urge to dominate and subordinate women and nature to prove one's masculinity. As such, "Ecological Masculinity" advocates for a move from hegemonization to ecologization. By engaging with these concepts, this thesis will underline the central narrative of the text: how the protagonist Will Andrews ultimately resists the hegemonic masculinities which McDonald and Miller represent by refusing to partake in the reproduction of their power structures through the construction of a new ecological masculinity.

1.1 Masculinity Studies

Key scholars within the field of masculinity studies such as Michael S. Kimmel and Raewyn Connell have tried to map out how masculinity functions and how we may discuss issues of masculinity. These scholars are important because they provide historical accounts of the

development of masculinity while also explaining how masculinity functions and why, most importantly, we might speak of an idea of multiple masculinities.

In the 1980s, academics started researching how men constructed their own identities in different settings, such as the workplace and the school. This approach to Gender Studies laid the foundation for Masculinity Studies, and "allowed a decisive movement beyond the abstract 'Sex Role' framework that had been dominant earlier." (*Masculinities* xiv). The criticism aimed at the Sex Role Theory stemmed from the notion that it did not encompass the power relations between and within genders, nor did it assess how genders resist power, or how social change takes place (Connell & Messerschmidt 832, Demetriou 337). This indicated the start of masculinity studies in the English-speaking world, where the general focus was on how "change among men was linked to contemporary feminism, and "to understand and combat violence." (*Masculinities* xiv). This new approach to studying masculinity paved the way for scholars to study men and their relations to other men and women in new ways.

Furthermore, as this thesis reads *Butcher's Crossing* in the context of studying masculinity, we need to look into studies of masculinity in American culture. Michael Kimmel's book *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (2006) provides a historical account of masculinity in the US. Kimmel argues that an intrinsic part of American history is the study of men and masculinity,

> We cannot understand manhood without understanding American history. But I believe we also cannot fully understand American history without understanding masculinity. (2)

Kimmel's argument is that American history is intrinsically linked to masculinity, meaning we need to understand the one to understand the other. It is important in this respect to understand that Kimmel defines gender as "the sets of cultural meanings and prescriptions that each culture attaches to one's biological sex." (2). Here, Kimmel makes it clear that gender is a set of social constructs that we affiliate with different genders, meaning he is not basing his arguments on the biological male, but the culturally constructed masculine ideal. Thus, the link between American history and masculinity are tufted on the premise that both are socially constructed phenomena, which is why it makes sense to study both in relation to each other. Kimmel underlines the importance of studying masculinity:

> the quest for manhood – the effort to achieve, to demonstrate, to prove our masculinity – has been one of the formative and persistent experiences in men's lives. That we remain unaware of the centrality of gender in our lives only helps to perpetuate gender inequality. (3)

By explaining how the central drives behind masculinity are the efforts of achievement and ingenuity, Kimmel furthers the connection between American history and masculinity. His assertion that we remain unaware of how gender relates to history facilitates gender inequality, demonstrate why masculinity studies are important as they help us understand the underlying forces that have contributed to shaping history. It is in this respect, the study of masculinity as a central part of American history, that Kimmel sets out his main thesis: "A history of manhood must, therefore, recount two histories: the changing "ideal" version of masculinity and the parallel and competing versions that coexist with it." (4). Kimmel's premise builds on the assumption that there is a structure of power behind the different masculinities. This way, Kimmel makes it clear that the study of masculinity is the study of how multiple masculinities compete with each other and how an idealized form of masculinity shapes the American male.

1.2 Introducing Hegemonic Masculinity

To understand how masculinities compete for power, it is necessary to examine Raewyn Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity". Connell is arguably one of the most influential masculinity scholars and she pioneered the field with her studies of how there are multiple versions of masculinity that constantly intersect and compete for power. In doing so, she conceptualized the term "Hegemonic Masculinity" to capture how power makes certain configurations of masculinity more influential than others. Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" describes "the pattern of practice (i.e., things done, not just a set of role expectations or an identity) that allowed men's dominance over women to continue" (Messerschmidt & Connell 832). The term originated as a result of strong criticisms of the 'Sex Role Theory' for "its inability to conceptualize *power* (and resistance to power) as an essential feature of the relationships between gender and within genders" (Demetriou 338). In other words, Connell wants to go beyond the "biological determinism" (Demetriou 338) of earlier gender theories, because "gender relations are a major component of social structure as a whole, and gender politics are among the main determinants of our collective fate" (*Masculinities* 76). Thus, "Hegemonic Masculinity" becomes a concept that describes how

different masculinities compete for power in a hierarchal system of male identities. In other words, Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" describes how certain configurations of masculine gender practice influence the practices of other men.

From Masculinity to Masculinities

If we are to understand Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" it is important to understand how scholars went from studying masculinity as a single identity for all men toward studying how men embody a range of different masculinities. This pluralization of masculinity is a key element in Masculinity Studies as it helps broaden the understanding of how the male identity works. In the late 70s, Connell partook in a study of inequalities in education, where patterns of gender in secondary school classrooms were studied. In that research, Connell along with other researchers, realized that simply using the binary categorization of 'feminine' and 'masculine' did not cover the complex social patterns they observed. In fact, the researchers found empirical evidence of a complex hierarchical system of multiple gendered identities that were constantly intersecting with each other (*Masculinities* xii; Messerschmidt & Connell 830).

Connell went on to study this phenomenon further, and in 1985, Connell, along with Tim Carrigan and John Lee, published the article "Toward a new Sociology of Masculinity" (1985) where the concept of multiple masculinities was formulated for the first time. The paper drew on extensive critique of the "male sex role", a framework that Connell argued as creating "the impression that the normative sex role is the majority case, and that departures from it are socially marginal" (*Gender and Power* 52). Essentially, Connell critiqued the Sex Role framework for being too static and "incapable of grasping change" (Demetriou 339). Connell's understanding of gender was diverged from the biological view of gender, favoring a "social constructionism" (Demetriou 340), which is to say that gender is more a description of social practice rather than an expression of biological configurations. More concretely, Connell emphasizes that gender "is social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do, it is not a social practice reduced to the body" (*Masculinities* 71). This social framing of masculinity diverged from the strict biological view of men and masculinity and allowed scholars to study masculinity as a "configuration of gender practice" (Demetriou 340). By defining masculinity in a social context, the term was redefined to "conceptualize what has usually been included in the category of "deviance" as distinct forms of femininity and masculinity" (Demetriou 340). Simply put, Masculinity Studies now included all forms of

gender practice as different modes of masculinity instead of defining masculinity as a normative condition for male behavior.

Connell divides masculinity into four distinct categories; Hegemony; Subordination; Complicity; and Marginalization. This is not to say, however, that these are four fixed and unchangeable masculinity types, but rather they are categories that illustrate how different masculinities interact and how power shapes and influences them. The hegemonic masculinity type, for example, is described by Connell as "the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable." (*Masculinities* 76). In this way, Connell essentially argues that there is a certain type of masculinity that can take on the role of a hegemonic position, not that hegemonic masculinity is an identity in itself. Likewise, other configurations of masculine performance may hold positions of subordinate or complicit masculinities. This categorization by Connell is key in the study of masculinity because it allows us to see how power operates between different masculinities by categorizing different configurations of masculine practice in by way of how influential they are. A useful understanding of Connell's idea of masculinities in this regard is provided by Andrea Waling (2018) who in "Rethinking Masculinity Studies: Feminism, Masculinity, and Poststructural Accounts of Agency and Emotional Relativity" (2018) tells us that "masculinity is reflected upon through a consideration of gender and sexual relations, engagement with social institutions, systemic inequalities, power, and men's subjectivity." (93). According to Waling, masculinity should be understood in terms of how different masculinities not only influence each other, but how they interact in the society in general. Masculinities are shaped by the influences surrounding them such as women, institutions, and other men, which in turn shape how men perceive themselves. However, the most important mechanisms in men's conceptions of themselves are described by Connell:

> Masculinity is shaped in relation to an overall structure of power (the subordination of women to men), and in relation to a general symbolism of difference (the opposition of femininity and masculinity). (*Masculinities* 223)

Connell argues that there is an underlying power structure that dictate how masculinity is shaped, she argues that the subordination of women to men is the primary example of this. By examining how different masculinities are associated with different positions of power, Connell provides an understanding of masculinities as intersecting and competitive, however, we must not forget her main assertion which is that masculinity primarily defines itself as a

subjugator. Masculinity's oppressive relationship with women fuels Connell's second point: that men define themselves in opposition to women, masculinity defines itself as an opposing force to femininity. This way, masculinity is understood as a system of gender identities where the masculinity derives its power from the subjugation of women. Further elaboration on the concepts of "Hegemonic Masculinity" and "Homosocial Relations" to advance the understanding of how power manifests itself in normative constructions of masculinity.

Hegemonic Masculinity

As mentioned previously, Connell criticized Sex Role Theory for "its inability to conceptualize *power*" (Demetriou 338). In doing so, she coined the term hegemonic masculinity along with three other forms of masculinity, namely subordinating-, complicit-, and marginalizing masculinities. However, her most persistent and most influential concept is "Hegemonic Masculinity", a concept that is vital in Masculinity Studies. If we are to understand what Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity", we must first understand what she means by 'Hegemony'. Connell defines Hegemony as "the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life" (*Masculinities* 77). She derives her understanding of hegemony from Anthony Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* (1926), a series of essays that Mike Donaldson in "What Is Hegemonic Masculinity?" (1993) explains are "about the winning and holding of power and the formation (and destruction) of social groups in that process" (645). According to Donaldson, Gramsci's concept of Hegemony revolves around the idea that when social groups compete for power and control, they also destroy and form new social groups. This power-struggle dynamic between social groups is used by Connell to illustrate how different masculine identities compete in a similar system Gramsci described. In her much referenced work, *Masculinities* (2005), Connell provides the following definition of Hegemonic Masculinity:

> Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. (*Masculinities* 77)

Basing the concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" on the premise that there are multiple masculine identities, Connell's definition tries to capture the imbalance of power within genders. By employing the term "configuration of gender practice" instead of simply using

"Masculinity", Connell's concept builds on the previously discussed pluralization of masculinity in that gender is "not a fixed set of social norms that are passively internalized and enacted, but it is constantly produced and reproduced in social practice" (Demetriou 340). "Hegemonic Masculinity" is a framework we can use to analyze how these masculinities compete and intersect with each other, and how power defines how different masculinities behave. Paramount in the concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" is the argument that the hegemonic position is based on the domination of other men and women (Messerschmidt 2018). Consequently, hegemonic masculinities are concerned with establishing and maintaining hegemony over both women and other men that do not embody the configurations of gender practice associated with "Hegemonic Masculinity". Put differently; "Hegemonic Masculinity" is determined by both cultural and historical factors and is constantly challenged and amended by these factors.

Demetrakis Z. Demetriou expands Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" by differentiating between different forms of hegemony. In the article "Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity: A critique" (2001) Demetriou suggests that we should separate between what he calls "internal" and "external" hegemonies to question the production and reproduction of "Hegemonic Masculinity". First, by "internal" hegemony, Demetriou says the current holder of the hegemonic position exerts "hegemony over subordinated masculinities" (341), which is to say men dominate other men. Second, "external" hegemony is to Demetriou "hegemony over women" (341). By differentiating between these two forms of hegemony, Demetriou makes the important assertion that hegemony is exerted differently when it comes to who is being subjugated. This is a key point that takes the concept "Hegemonic Masculinity" a step further in how power is used to assert hegemony. This is a key point when reading *Butcher's Crossing* because it provides critical terms that make us able to see how power not only is used to maintain men's hegemony over women, but also how men subordinate other men.

Further expansion of Connell's concept was undertaken in an effort to create a framework that better describes the specific power machinations of "Hegemonic Masculinity". Messerschmidt and Connell's article "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept" (2005) reworks the concept to include a better understanding of how hegemonic masculinities are reproduced and maintained. Specifically, Messerschmidt and Connell recognize that "contemporary research has shown the complexity of the relations among different constructions of masculinity" (847), which is to say that Connell's original formulation of "Hegemonic Masculinity" did not account for "the agency of subordinated

groups as much as the power of dominant groups and the mutual conditioning of gender dynamics and other social dynamics" (848). This meant that the original understanding of hierarchy needed to be reworked because it only described the power relations between men which meant that the agency of women was not considered in normative constructions of hegemonic masculinity. This is important as "patterns of masculinity are socially defined in contradistinction from some model (whether real or imaginary) of femininity" (848) which meant that women needed to be considered as an intrinsic part of the hierarchy between men because they represent a symbolic difference to masculinity. In essence, by excluding women and femininity from the masculine hierarchy, a key element in the construction of masculinity was lost due to how women's influences on men were not accounted for. Therefore, an incorporation of the agency of subordinated groups provides a better understanding of how power is asserted because it recognizes that constructions of "Hegemonic Masculinity" are dependent on having someone to subordinate.

This lead Messerschmidt and Connell to do away with the static view of the hierarchy of masculine identities by as that did not account for how subordinated groups may resist hegemonic masculinity. This is because hegemonic masculinities are "configurations of practice that are constructed, unfold, and change through time" (852) which means that there will always be contestants to the current holder of hegemony. Forwarding on from this, Messerschmidt and Connell tells us that "gender relations are always arenas of tension" (853) meaning the hierarchal structure of power between different masculinities is inherently based on tension between different masculinities. This means that the way different configurations of masculine performance are able to occupy the position of hegemonic masculinity is by resolving the tension. However, Messerschmidt and Connell make it clear that these tensions will never be resolved because the specific configuration of masculine performance "that provided such a solution is open to challenge" (853). This means that there will always be contestants to the current holder of hegemonic masculinity as the way to attain the position of hegemonic masculinity is through competing with the other masculinities. This means that the masculine power hierarchy is based on oppressive practice where the configurations of masculinity gain power through the oppression of weaker masculinities.

In addition to elaborating on the specific mechanics of hierarchy, Messerschmidt and Connell also provide an account for how we must understand "Hegemonic Masculinity" in terms of geography. They recognize that "Hegemonic Masculinity" operate on different geographical levels, namely: the local level, the regional level, and the global level. Local hegemonic masculinities are constructed "in the areas of face-to-face interaction of families,

organizations, and immediate communities" whereas regional hegemonic masculinities are "at the level of the culture or the nation-state" (849). Lastly, global hegemonic masculinities are constructed in "world politics and transnational business and media" (849). The significance of differentiating between different levels of geography gives us the tools necessary to see where different hegemonic masculinities derive their authority from. There may for example be multiple local variants of hegemonic masculinity, which all correspond to a singular regional masculinity. Differentiating between local, regional, and global masculinities are important as they "allows us to recognize the importance of place without falling into a monadic world of totally independent cultures or discourses" (850). In other words, the incorporation of geography gives the implication that there are hegemonic masculinities in all cultures and discourses, and that they constantly influence each other.

Finally, Messerschmidt and Connell elaborate upon the materiality of the male body in the reproduction of "Hegemonic Masculinity". They argue that "hegemonic masculinity is related to particular ways of representing and using men's bodies" (851). In other words, men use their bodies to represent their masculinity in various forms such as in sports, work, and other activities. While they argue that bodies always have been a crucial part of hegemonic masculinity, they concede that the "common social scientific reading of bodies as objects of a process of social construction is now widely considered inadequate" (851). Put differently, bodies are not merely the result of masculine practice, the body is "a participant in generating social practice" (851). Thus, men's bodies are simultaneously the product of social practice as well as agents of social practice, meaning the body itself also contributes to the production and reproduction of hegemonic masculinity.

In sum, Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" is understood as a description of the power machinations that makes us able to see how certain masculine practices become more powerful than others. This is a key concept in the analysis of the representations of masculinity in the narrative of *Butcher's Crossing* because it provides a framework we can apply to critically examine how hegemonic masculinity is reproduced and maintained.

1.3 Homosocial Relations and Masculinity

A key concept that further expands how masculinities influence each other is Kimmel's concept of "Homosocial Relations". In Kimmel's analysis of masculinity in the book, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (2006), he argues that masculinity is a homosocial act, meaning men are first and foremost seeking the recognition of other men. Building on the

previous assertion that there are multiple masculinities, Kimmel argues: "it's other men who are important to American men; American men define their masculinity, not as much in relation to women, but in relation to each other" (5). This way, men's primary way of being recognized as masculine is through the eyes of other men.

This is not to say, however, that men do not seek the recognition of women, as this recognition from women is a key part of the complex performance of masculinity with other men. As Kimmel states, "men often go to elaborate lengths and take extraordinary risks to prove their manhood in the eyes of women." (5), but this is stated in the context of the intricacies of homosocial relations between men. Kimmel's concept of "Homosocial Relations" sees women more as a means for men to improve their standing among other men. This does not mean that men do not care about women, but that the way masculinity is structured, men must show off their feats to other men to confirm their own masculinity. The driving factor of masculinity, then, is "the evaluative eyes of other men [that] are always upon us, watching, judging." (5). It becomes evident that men are always aware of the judgement of other men as they know that the only way they may gain recognition as masculine is through the validation of other men.

According to Kimmel, the origins of homosocial masculinity stem from a desire to control and dominate, but not because domination and control in itself is what men seek. Kimmel says that the original definition of masculinity came from a feminist perspective, where masculinity "was defined by the drive for power, for domination, for control." (4). However, when taking into account the homosocial nature of masculinity, Kimmel argues that:

> Manhood is less about the drive for domination and more about the fear of others dominating us, having power or control over us. Throughout American history American men have been afraid that others will see us as less than manly, as weak, timid, frightened. (*Manhood in America* 4)

The yearning for control and domination is something men do to avoid being dominated by other men. Men dominate to show other men that they are not weak or frightened, but strong and resilient. The idea of domination becomes a defense mechanism where men dominate others such as women or nature to protect themselves from other men. Interestingly, men see each other as both measures of recognition and as potential enemies, this paradoxical notion further illustrate the reason why men dominate, it is both a means of protection and recognition.

While Kimmel's concept of "Homosocial Relations" emphasizes how masculinities primarily legitimize themselves in the eyes of other men, we must also distinguish between two main types of homosocial relations. Nils Hammarén and Thomas Johansson's article "Homosociality: In Between Power and Intimacy" (2014) introduce the terms *vertical* and *horizontal* homosocial relations. Vertical homosociality is understood as "a means of strengthening power and of creating close bonds between men and between women to maintain and defend hegemony." (1). Vertical homosocial masculinity is concerned with maintaining the current structures of power. Horizontal homosociality, on the other hand is understood as "more inclusive relations between, for example, men that are based on emotional closeness, intimacy, and a nonprofitable friendship." (1). These two concepts forward on from Kimmel and connects the concept to hegemonic masculinity in two major ways. First, vertical homosociality expands the understanding of how the gender hierarchy is reproduced in that hegemony is constantly defended through homosocial relations. In that respect, masculinities reproduce the gender hierarchy because it legitimizes their masculine identity. As a result, power structures are maintained due to how different configurations of masculinities derive their identity from power. Second, horizontal homosociality further illustrate how dynamic masculinities are due to how relations between men constantly change as they continuously seek out new groups of men for validation.

"Homosocial Relations" is a concept that describes how masculinities interact and intersect driven by the inherent fear of being dominated by other men. It would appear, then, that men seek to dominate others such as women to leverage themselves as masculine in the eyes of other men, but this urge to dominate also serves as a defense mechanism where men dominate others to avoid being dominated. Additionally, Hammarén and Johansson's distinction between vertical and horizontal homosocial masculinity further expands the idea that influential masculinities try to both consolidate themselves in hegemonic positions while also trying to include other masculinities.

1.4 Ecomasculinities

Before examining the concept of "Ecological Masculinities" it is important to survey the field of Ecomasculinities to establish the background for this concept. The most urgent development within the field of Masculinity Studies has been the interest in Ecomasculinities as discussions of gender and ecology has only been prevalent in discussions of Ecofeminism. The field of Ecomasculinities emerged as a reaction to both Ecofeminism and the apparent

lack of ecological perspectives in Masculinity Studies. The goal of Ecomasculinities Studies is to "cross-examine protagonists as exemplars of idealised ecomasculinities that might hold out – albeit fictious – alternative paths forward for men and masculinities in deeper relationship with Earth" (Hultman and Pulé, 2018). This vision of Ecomasculinities Studies emerged from prior scholarly work, most notably from Mark Allister's book *Eco-Man: New Perspectives on Masculinity and Nature* (2004) which drew extensively on earlier concepts from Masculinities Studies, such as Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity".

Mark Allister, recognized as one of the founders of Ecomasculinities (Hultman & Pulé 194), called for the need of both ecofeminism and masculinities scholars to go further in their critical investigations into the complexities surrounding men's relationship with nature:

> […] nothing suggests that planting vegetables or flowers, observing wildlife, wandering in woods, camping, learning to be self-sufficient outside one's house, or earning out of doors have anything to do with masculinity. (9)

Thus, Allister argues that ideals of masculinity are affiliated with how nature is perceived, meaning one element of masculinity derives its identity from how nature is constructed in the eyes of men. This way, Allister argues that the typical attributes we associate with masculinity are not intellect or ingenuity, but rather "men who exhibit prowess in "nature", outdoors, in sports arenas, or "through" nature, by being rugged and handsome." (1). Consequently, an ecomasculinist approach would argue that masculinity derives its sense of identity from men who tame and conquer nature, in other words, man's ability to prove himself in nature lays the foundation for his masculinity. In light of the assertion that masculinity and nature are interrelated, Allister forwards his critique of masculinity scholars when he asserts that "not one essay – in an anthology about men's lives – discusses men in relation to the land." (9). Thus, Allister makes it clear that there is a stark need to reevaluate men's relationship with land and nature if we want to create new models for men to follow, as Allister views men's relationship with nature as a key part of masculinity. Interestingly, Allister criticizes Raewyn Connell's book, *Masculinities* (2005), for being "a pro-feminist, theoretical critique of the many masculinities in our culture, [ignoring] the influence of nature on men." (9). To Allister, important scholars in the field of masculinity studies are missing a key point in the masculine discourse, namely how masculinity is shaped by the complex relationship between masculinity and nature.

Continuing the discussion about how masculinity and nature relate, Allister argues that gender should not be viewed as the definite source of identity. Allister argues that:

> Men and women together are bound up in our social structures, and continuation of those structures serves some people and not others; patriarchal beliefs and attitudes exploit many women and men, as well as exploit the land and animals. (8)

It is thus not men in themselves who are exploitative, but the social structures behind the people who exploit that is the real problem. Masculinity is to Allister rooted in deep social structures of patriarchy where strict hierarchical structures define how women, other men, and especially nature should be treated. To Allister, Masculinities scholars never engaged with the issue of nature in their analyses of masculinity: "For men's studies scholars, it is as if males today have spent their entire lives in houses, schools, and cities, exclusively, and men's "relationships" are only with humans, not the nonhuman world" (9). It becomes apparent to Allister that scholars of masculinity do not take into consideration the role nature plays in men's lives. It is in this respect that Ecomasculinities intervenes in traditional studies of masculinity with its perspectives on men and nature.

Central to Ecomasculinities is the study of how masculinity and nature are related or how "men (and women) are shaped by, and shape, the nonhuman world" (Allister 9). Allister makes an important distinction between what he calls the human and nonhuman world, signifying that we are leaving out an entire world of plants and creatures when studying masculinity. The distinction between the human and nonhuman world then becomes a vital tool for uncovering new grounds in the study of masculinity as it sheds light on aspects of nature that are subjected to the destruction and oppression of masculinity. The distinction between the human and nonhuman world becomes even more important when we consider Vahit Yaşayan's article, "Enforcing Masculinities at the Border: An Ecomasculinist Reading of Cormac McCarthy's The Crossing" (2021), argues that Allister views nature as a socially constructed phenomenon: "Thus he [Allister] believes that nature is socially constructed in relation to masculinity and that there are many examples of constructive male voices and male narratives that relate to ecomasculinism" (Yaşayan 4). Nature, in accordance with Allister's view, is constructed as a component of masculinity. Allister argues in that regard that masculinity should expand its understanding of nature to include land and animals as a central part of how masculinity is understood. In this way, Allister seeks to widen the already socially constructed aspects of masculinity to include aspects of nature that has formerly been ignored by important scholars of masculinity such as Connell and Kimmel.

Ecomasculinities in Literary Studies

When discussing the emergence and origins of Ecomasculinities, another important scholar in addition to Allister is Scott Slovic, as he is one of the first scholars to make the connection between Ecomasculinities and Literary Studies. Slovic, in the essay "Taking Care: Toward an Ecomasculinist Literary Criticism" (2004) advocates for an "ecomasculinist literary criticism", which is to say that Slovic wants to reexamine literary texts in an effort to "identify, in literary texts, socially and ecologically responsible behavioral and linguistic models for men." (72-73). This way, Slovic wants to perform new readings of existing literature in order to identify these ecological male virtues. In terms of rereading existing literature, Slovic wants us to identify virtues and ideals that already exist to include as many people as possible into this ecological representation of men. Slovic's notion of an ecomasculinist literary criticism centers around the idea of rehabilitating certain masculinities as ecological modes of living. Slovic proposes this reexamination of literary texts as a result of his criticism of ecofeminism:

> "Men," "male," "masculine" – these words and the categories of being represented by them have become "otherised" by the prevailing discourses of feminism and environmentalism. (70)

To Slovic, the prime fault of ecofeminism is that they subject men to the same reductionist categorization they accuse men of. Thus, instead of providing equal grounds for men and women to construct healthy relationships with nature, Slovic argues that ecofeminism establishes women as "morally superior to men by virtue of their historical subjugation in certain cultures" (70). To counter this imbalance in ecocritical criticism of gender, Slovic argues that there is a stark need of identifying the masculinities that represent care, nurture, and ecological living. What remains important to Slovic is the move beyond "essentialist castigation" (78) of gender and rather to start focusing on exemplifying behaviors and ideals of ecological living.

When considering both Slovic and Allister and how they have pioneered the field of Ecomasculinities, we must also consider the John Tallmadge's essay "Deerslayer with a Degree" (2004) as he puts such an ecomasculinist reading into practice by analyzing the character Deerslayer from Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*. Tallmadge's essay is based on his own experiences as a young man under the influence of the "man in the wilderness" trope:

> Deerslayer's wilderness was attractive because it promised freedom from having to deal with women and having to compete with men. It was an arena for a kind of manhood that seemed accessible to small, self-conscious boys who lacked the killer instinct necessary for manly careers in sports, warfare, big business, or organized crime. (19)

Tallmadge describes how the literary character Deerslayer, also known as Hawkeye, provided a model of manhood where men could live alone without the pressure and expectations of modern society. To Tallmadge, literary figures such as Deerslayer represent a masculinity that is shaped in accordance with nature. To achieve this ideal, he argues that we need a "reconfiguration of attitudes toward nature, women, and the wisdom of tribal cultures" (24). This reconfiguration of manhood contrasts the model of manhood where nature is used by man to prove his manliness.

Importantly, Tallmadge does not argue that the literary character Deerslayer provided the ultimate model of Ecomasculinities. Tallmadge asserts that "The Deerslayer model of manhood construes nature as a scene for heroic action", and that "nature is set over against a protagonist who is only passing through" (25). Thus, Tallmadge recognizes that while literary figures in the likes of Deerslayer provided an ideal of manhood with close relations with nature, the ultimate goal of these men were to use nature for their own personal gain. Feats such as hunting big game or using nature for its resources are not ideals of manhood Tallmadge suggests we should strive after; he rather suggests a "restoration ecology" where the goal is "to cultivate not merely a handful of privileged species but an entire biota." (25). This way, Tallmadge builds upon the ideals of natural living found in literary figures such as Deerslayer where nature is viewed as the ideal place to live, but as a place of restoration and growth instead of exploitation and destruction. Tallmadge describes the modern man in nature as committed to "inhabit the landscape, not merely pass through it on the way to adventures; they live in place as householders and citizens." (27). Tallmadge advocates for a masculinity where men live in harmony with the landscape, where men can live freely without the need to exploit and subjugate nature, animals, or women.

Critiquing Ecomasculinities: Forwarding on to Ecological Masculinities

Allister's anthology and the scholars surveyed previously are important to the study of Ecomasculinities because they laid the foundation for an ecomasculinist literary criticism.

However, their work has been subject to criticism most notably by Martin Hultman and Paul M. Pulé. The main critique of Allister's work forwarded by Hultman and Pulé is that Allister postulated that *Eco-man: New Perspectives on Masculinity and Nature* (2004) would serve as "a companion to ecofeminism" (Hultman & Pulé 196). However, Hultman and Pulé notes in *Ecological Masculinities: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Guidance* (2018) that Allister's anthology falls short in establishing a proper complimenting critical theory to ecofeminism:

> since various contributors provided cursory arguments for masculine ecologisation that did not delve into the political machinations nor the sociological and ecological consequences of malestream norms that we consider to be necessary in order to justify it as ecological feminist compliment. (196)

This critique of early Ecomasculinities illuminates a key point in the ecomasculine discourse: the arguments of Allister, Slovic, and Tallmadge all seem like reactionary arguments rather than well thought out and tested theories. Thus, Hultman and Pulé are certainly justified when they forward their critique of Allister's pioneering study of men's relationship with nature as they recognize that critical scrutiny of political, sociological, linguistic, and ecological aspects of Ecomasculinities are missing. This way, Hultman and Pulé recognize Ecomasculinities as a key perspective in the masculine discourse, however, they illuminate critical missing aspects of the theory that need to be addressed.

Specifically, Hultman and Pulé criticize both Slovic and Tallmadge's essays as they delve into literary criticism. Hultman and Pulé bring up Slovic's essay "Taking Care: Toward an Ecomasculinist Literary Criticism" (2004), as this essay is the "only chapter in Allister's anthology that discussed ecofeminism directly and beyond Allister's initial mention" (196). However, Slovic's essay does little more than "alluding to that classic sexist retort of feminist hysteria" (196), which is to say that Hultman and Pulé argue that Slovic fails to establish an ecomasculinist literary criticism on par with ecofeminism. Thus, he falls short when it comes to actually developing it: "Further, he stopped short of demonstrating how men might actively facilitate ecological responsible human-nature relationships – other than stating that they should." (196). In other words, Slovic never addresses how such a literary criticism should be carried out neither does he develop any literary criticism of his own other than stating there should be ecomasculine readings of literary fiction.

In similar fashion, Hultman and Pulé also made some criticisms about Tallmadge's "Deerslayer with a Degree" (2004) where their main objection related to Tallmadge's

apparent lack of deconstruction of men's relationships with hunters. Hultman and Pulé argue that "the implicit hegemonic relationship between the hunter and the hunted was not deconstructed" (195). This way, Hultman and Pulé makes a critical observation of how Tallmadge fails to address the hegemony of hunters and their prey, which is key because a major point in the ecomasculine discourse is addressing how men relate to "the nonhuman world" (Allister 9). Furthermore, Tallmadge never addresses the agency of "the hunted", meaning the animals that are being hunted are not included in Tallmadge's criticism. Thus, Hultman and Pulé assert that Tallmadge's essay never went beyond "hunting as a supposed masculine rite" (196). Additionally, Hultman and Pulé observe that Tallmadge in addition to not allowing the hunted animal any agency, "nor did the impact of the loss of that individual animal on its ecosystem." (196). This is a key criticism that not only revitalizes animals themselves, but it also accounts for ecological damage on ecosystems.

Thus, Allister's anthology on Ecomasculinities lacks some key elements mostly related to detailed scrutiny of how an ecomasculinist literary criticism should function. Hultman and Pulé calls Allister's anthology a "'preliminary mention' of the need to bring masculinities-nature relationship into more acute focus." (197). *Eco-man* (2004), then, might not contain essays that critically analyze the structures of masculinity and ecology, but it does pave the way for a proper ecomasculinist literary criticism as Allister, Solvic, and Tallmadge illuminate the need for a discussion about how masculinity and nature relate to each other. In the wake of the arguments Allister put forth in *Eco-man* (2004), other scholars have published their studies about Ecomasculinities, but they as well "suffered from similar shortcomings [to Allister]." (Hultman & Pulé 197). Consequently, within the field of Ecomasculinities, the most recent and crucial contribution has come from Hultman and Pulé's formulation of the term "Ecological Masculinities", a term that further develops key ideas from Allister, Slovic, and Tallmadge. Additionally, "Ecological Masculinities" responds to the very important terms hegemonic masculinity and homosocial relations.

1.5 Ecological Masculinities

"Ecological Masculinities", understood by Hultman and Pulé as "a gathering point for previous conversations about men, masculinities and Earth" (53) is a crucial concept from that has been developed from studies of men's relationship with nature. The concept is elaborated upon in their book, *Ecological Masculinities: Theoretical Foundations and Practical Guidance* (2018), that "the Western socio-political landscape of the industrialised north is in

great need of a transformation from hegemonisation to ecologisation." (155). The move from hegemonization toward ecologization is key to understanding the concept of "Ecological Masculinities", because the main objective of providing men with an ecological model of manhood is to abolish the desire to subordinate and exploit nature. It is through the examination of power relations that "Ecological Masculinities" provides a critical alternative to already existing forms of hegemony, which was an aspect lacking in the original formulations of Allister, Slovic, and Tallmadge.

Hultman and Pulé, in the context of moving from hegemony toward ecology, advocate that we need to examine two of the most prominent configurations of gender practice that have reproduced hierarchy and hegemonic tendencies:

> To achieve this, we must be willing to look for other options for men and masculinities than the industrial/breadwinner and/or ecomodern offerings of hegemonisation that have accompanied male domination. (155)

What Hultman and Pulé are arguing is that "Ecological Masculinities" stands as an alternative to already existing forms of hegemonic masculinities. The industrial/breadwinner and ecomodern masculinities that Hultman and Pulé refer to are their conceptualizations of the hegemonic masculinities that are dominating the western scene. As a result, they build on Messerschmidt and Connell's earlier assertion of how the dynamics of "Hegemonic Masculinity" holds the potential of "abolishing power differentials, not just of reproducing hierarchy" (Messerschmidt & Connell 853). The ecological discourse within Masculinity Studies is further elaborated upon, in MacGregor and Seymour's article "Men and Nature: Hegemonic Masculinities and Environmental Change" (2017) that "it is true that many men and influential forms of masculinity are involved in environmental destruction. But not because XY chromosomes mechanically dictate environmental destruction" (5). This assertion points to the fact that men's desire to exploit and destroy nature can change because it comes as a result of social practice. In similar fashion, Rubén Cenamor and Stefan Brandt argue in *Ecomasculinities: Negotiating Male Gender in U.S. Fiction* (2019) that ecological models for men "elicit a desire in men to become engaged in other practices of masculinity that are counterhegemonic and have the primary aim of achieving equality in different strata of society" (x) which is to say that the construction of an ecological masculinity subverts masculinity as being based on different positions of power. Thus, the concept of "Ecological

Masculinities" becomes an important intervention in how ideals of masculinity may change, as it provides new models of social practice for men to follow that are counter-hegemonic.

Formulating Ecological Masculinities

As mentioned previously, both Hultman and Pulé and Cenamor and Brandt position "Ecological Masculinities" as a potential way of abolishing the reproduction of hierarchy and power differentials in gender discourse through a "transformation from hegemonisation to ecologisation" (155). As we already know, Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" was formulated to capture how "gender relations were seen as structured through power inequalities" (Messerschmidt 86). Connell also argued that hegemonic masculinities derive their power through their subordination of other men, but most importantly from women. However, another aspect of hegemonic masculinity that "Ecological Masculinities" bring to the discourse is how hegemony is not only established by subordinating other men and women, but also through the exploitation of nature. By recognizing this fact, Hultman and Pulé argue that "Ecological Masculinities" stand in a better position of power resistance which makes it capable of changing the current gender hierarchy. They argue this by stating that "ecological masculinities stand as a critical alternative to industrial/breadwinner hegemonies and ecomodern reforms" (54). These hegemonic masculinities are based on the symbolic difference between men and nature, making them inherently exploitative of the land and animals. Thus, Hultman and Pulé's term stands as a critical alternative to dominant forms of hegemonic masculinities in the West due to how it seeks to abolish this asymmetrical power relationship between men and nature.

In further scrutiny of "Ecological Masculinities" it is this crucial to expand the understanding of what ecology means. The term 'ecological' in "Ecological Masculinities" is applied by Hultman and Pulé both as a scientific and socio-political term. By *scientific* the authors mean "as a branch of biology that explores the ways that organisms interact with each other and the ecosystems within which they live" (54), and by *socio-political* "as a movement that explores the relational complexities associated with protecting and preserving living systems on Earth – human and other-than-human alike" (54). This dual use of 'ecological' retains the biological aspect of early ecomasculine thinking while also including the socio-political context of men's homosocial relations as well as the inherent power-struggles between different masculinities. Thus, "Ecological Masculinities" become a movement that "is intended to shift our trajectory as a species towards a deep green future in which we

recognise the relationality of humans alike." (54). What Hultman and Pulé argue for when they advocate for a "deep green future" is the notion that men and masculinities are not contrasting forces to nature. By arguing this, the concept of "Ecological Masculinities" is situated in the context of incorporating men as an intrinsic part of nature, which means masculinities should not derive their sense of self from how much power they are able to exert over nature. Instead, "Ecological Masculinities" uses ecology and care to foster an ideal of manliness by subverting the need for dominance and power.

Hegemonic aspects of "Ecological Masculinities" are further elaborated upon in Sherilyn MacGregor & Nicole Seymour's "Men and Nature: Hegemonic Masculinities and Environmental Change" (2017) where the authors argue that "hegemonic masculinities have been constructed in opposition to nature" (11). By saying this, the authors are arguing that manhood and influential forms of masculinity presupposes that men consolidate their power by directing it toward the exploitation of land and animals. This argument is important as it expands Connell's assertion that "Hegemonic Masculinity" is based the notion that male identity is constructed "in relation to a general symbolism of difference (the opposition of femininity and masculinity)" (223). This way, MacGregor and Seymour makes the important connection between studies of men and ecology that just as men construct their identities in opposition to women, they also construct their identities in opposition to nature. What emerges from this assertion, is the fact that Hegemonic Masculinities reproduce a power structure where men use the exploitation of women and nature in the construction of their male identities. In relation to this, Demetriou's concept of external hegemony, which was understood as "hegemony over women" (341), should then be understood as the hegemony over women *and* nature. As such, we must understand men's domination of nature in the same context as men's domination of women.

In the context of arguing that hegemony presupposes an opposition of men to nature, Cenamor and Brandt argue that a key part of constructing Ecological Masculinities is to work towards doing away with the notion that men and nature are two opposing entities. They build on Michael Kimmel's concept of homosocial relations to argue that "if women and nature share a similar history of oppression by men […], their history of liberation can perhaps also be shared" (x). This notion connects to Kimmel's concept of homosociality by way of men fearing the domination of other men, leading them to exert domination over women and nature as a means to protect themselves. Thus, Cenamor and Brandt find it relevant to investigate "whether fictional male characters demonstrating a more caring and egalitarian attitude toward nature also show a desire to engage in feminist movements and work toward

gender equality in society" (x). By including questions of expanding men's homosocial horizontally, through a more masculine practice that also include women, Cenamor and Brandt hope to challenge "the essentialist view that posits nature in contrast to masculinity" (x). It thus become apparent that through expanding homosocial relations horizontally to include both women and nature that within normative constructions of masculinity, "Ecological Masculinities" can make the move from hegemonization to ecologization.

What remains important in understanding "Ecological Masculinities", then, is that it stands as a critical alternative to hegemonization by absolving the inherently oppressive power relations that subjugates nature and women to men. Due to the exploitative nature of hegemonic masculinities, "Ecological Masculinities" provide a form of gender practice where masculine ideals are rooted in care for both women and nature. In doing so, "Ecological Masculinities" uses power in order to include nature and women as equal parts of the gender hierarchy, instead of subordinating them. This engagement with the concept of "Ecological Masculinities" provides the necessary depth to fully understand how *Butcher's Crossing* offers a counter-hegemonic narrative as this concept allows us to understand how an ecological masculine identity may be constructed through the resistance of hegemonic masculinity.

Chapter two: Journeying West – Scholarship on Different Constructions of Masculinity in *Butcher's Crossing*

This chapter sets out to establish how different scholars have read *Butcher's Crossing* in an effort to create a foundation for studying how masculinity is constructed in the narrative. Given how the previous chapter set out that constructions of masculinity are related to different positions of power, it is then crucial in this chapter to establish the inherent power dynamics between the East and the West as well as how social, economic, and cultural factors shape the different literary representations of masculinity. This chapter, then, engages with key readings of *Butcher's Crossing* to establish how masculinity is constructed and how it operates. What will become apparent from the subsequent reading of the limited critical scholarship on the overlooked and underappreciated *Butcher's Crossing* is the fact that it is built upon the tensions between two points of extremity with regards to American masculinity. As a result, myths of the American frontiersman are dissolved, allowing the reader to recognize how different masculine ideals have shaped American history and culture.

2.1 The Civilized World of the East and the Primitive World of the West

The central tension in *Butcher's Crossing* comes in the form of two conflicting streams of cultural ideals and the first scholarly debates on *Butcher's Crossing* identified these two streams of cultural tension. These streams are identified by scholars as manifestations of conflicting cultural ideals affiliated with tensions between the civil world of the East and the primitive frontier of the West. The scholar Levi S. Peterson argues in "The Primitive and the Civilized in Western Fiction" (1966) that Williams's novel sets the stage for an "intense cultural debate over the conflicting values of the civilized and the primitive" (197). This statement paved the way for subsequent academic work on *Butcher's Crossing*, where the two voices of civilization and primitivity were the main proponents in the scholarly debate. In "Butcher's Crossing: The Husks and Shells of Exploitation" (1973) Jack Brenner built on Peterson's argument of how *Butcher's Crossing* portrays the cultural tensions between the primitive and the civilized, but Brenner further nuanced this issue by redefining the primitive voices in the narrative as transcendental influences. What these scholars show is how tensions rise as *Butcher's Crossing* captures a central conflict of values between the civilized world of the American East and the primitive frontier world of the West.

The Primitive and the Civilized

When reading *Butcher's Crossing* in the context of the studies of literary representations of men and masculinities, Levi S. Peterson is a crucial place to start as he was the first to identify how *Butcher's Crossing* handles the cultural tensions between the American frontier and the civilized world. Peterson argues that *Butcher's Crossing* portrays an "intense cultural debate over the conflicting values of the civilized and the primitive" a cultural dilemma that characterizes "the sense of ambivalence that Americans feel about their vanished frontier" (197). To Peterson, the way the narrative portrays Andrews's escape from the city to the remote frontier town of Butcher's Crossing captures an essential part of American heritage and provides a starting ground for further discussion on masculinity.

However, the American frontier disappeared long before the publication of *Butcher's Crossing*, which begs the question why it is still relevant to discuss the values of the frontier men? To Peterson, the debate between the primitive and the civilized begins "with the affirmation of the primitive" (197). Central values of primitive living are found in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* (1823) where the reader meets the scout and hunter Natty Bumppo. Peterson uses Cooper's character to illustrate key values of primitive living:

> Although Natty Bumppo is civilized enough to be deferential to the genteel men and ladies who people of the novel in which he appears, he possesses the primitive qualities of freedom, lawlessness, and violence. There is no evil in Leatherstocking's practice of these values, for his is a perfect rectitude. (198)

Important to Peterson's assessment is the fact that lawlessness and violence are not affiliated with being evil or in possessing immoral values. The values attributed to Natty Bumppo of freedom, lawlessness, and violence are to Peterson important values of primitive living as they prove to be a distinguishing factor between civilized and primitive living. Peterson affirms that "the historical frontiersman was often removed from the civilized values of love and marriage, chastity, sobriety, non-violence, and lawfulness" (197). In other words, ideals of primitivity were based on an escapism of civilized life, values of primitivity signified a contrast to civilized living.

On the other side of the spectrum, however, Peterson also accounts for the negative portrayals of primitive living as an attempt at promoting civilized values. Peterson gives an account of the influence of Walter Van Tilburg Clark's *The Ox-Bow Incident* (1940), a novel Peterson regards as "probably the most famous Western" (201). In Clark's novel, a team of

ranchers lynch a gang of cattle thieves, which is not an uncommon incident in Western novels, according to Peterson. However, instead of glorifying the actions of the ranchers as heroic, Peterson argues that *Butcher's Crossing's* narrative "views it as evil and productive of guilt" (201). Furthermore, Peterson asserts that Clark's novel "argues that the civilized value of law prevents the miscarriage of justice by enabling men to act more objectively and less precipitously than they can when acting privately" (201). Thus, two sides of the spectrum of American culture are established, one where being free and unbound by society's laws are exalted values, while the other upholds law and order as "man's chief claim to nobility" (201).

Peterson situates *Butcher's Crossing* as in between these two cultural extreme points of masculinity. To Peterson, Andrews is caught in the crossfire between these cultural forces, through how "the violence and isolation of the Western wilderness destroy a man's transcendental faith in God and his sense of value and meaning of his own existence" (202). The implicit conflict found within the narrative is manifested in the Andrews's existential struggle between ideals of primitivity and civilization. To Peterson, Andrews's journey through the Western frontier become "an image for the aridity and purposelessness of modern existential man" (202). The narrative's portrayal of an academic's struggle at the frontier paints a picture of these two extreme sides of "the debate American culture is holding with itself over the worth over the primitive and the civilized" (203). Thus, *Butcher's Crossing* becomes an arena where the tension between the East and West of American culture is explored. Peterson provides a good starting point for subsequent debates about *Butcher's Crossing* as he gives necessary cultural and historical context to further analyze it.

America: The East and the West

Forwarding on from Peterson conceptualization of the primitive vs. the civilized, Jack Brenner further elaborates on the cultural debate as presented above, however, Brenner frames Peterson's idea of the primitive vs. the civilized as a conflict between ideals of the East and the West. In the article "Butcher's Crossing: The Husks and Shells of Exploitation" (1973) Jack Brenner argues that *Butcher's Crossing* presents a paradox, because "on the one hand, […] the west has freed us from history because we have had to temper our abstract ideas against the implacability of natural facts; on the other [hand] Transcendentalism finally demands a contempt for experience" (245). This paradox is what informs Brenner's reading of *Butcher's Crossing* as he maintains that it both deals with a transcendentalist idea of nature

while also providing a brutal realist depiction of it. This dichotomy between ideas and experience is to Brenner an illustration of a conflict of values between the East and the West.

Brenner argues that Williams uses transcendentalism to move the narrative from the civilized world of the East to the wild frontier of the West. Evidence of this is found directly in the text as Brenner illustrates how two paragraphs of *Butcher's Crossing* are deliberate reworks of key works of the transcendental movement. The two works in question are "Nature" (1836) by Ralph Waldo Emerson, and "Walking" (1851) by Henry David Thoreau. The first paragraph gives an account of Andrews's longing for nature when he was a student and lived in the eastern part of America. Brenner notes that "with minor changes, the language and ideas are Emerson's" (248) which to Brenner represents Andrews's "Emersonian union with the Oversoul" (248). In this way, the narrative prepares Andrews to head out west so he can discover his true self. Next, Brenner argues that Williams uses Thoreau's "Walking" to illustrate Andrews's numbness when he is fronted by the wilderness that surround Butcher's Crossing. Andrews is looking at the "flat and featureless land" (51), yet he is convinced that he is in the right place, as he contemplates leaving the city "more and more" (52).

These direct references to transcendentalism in the text signals to Brenner that Andrews carries with him a conception of nature that is different from the reality he is met with in Butcher's Crossing. This assertion is crucial to Brenner because "Andrews remains on the threshold of mystical merge" (250) meaning Andrews is revering nature as something mystical. In other words, Andrews has never been out in the wilderness, he has only experienced nature through ideas and representations of it. This assertion is a key part of the paradoxical notion of transcendentalism Brenner argues the narrative presents. Moving from the East to the West, Brenner sees the slow deterioration of Andrews's virtues when encountering the real wilderness in western America. This transcendental metaphor is taken a step further in the text as Andrews is blinded by the snow when he takes is snow shades of, which to Brenner is "a solid symbolic hit at Emerson's metaphor for the transparent eyeball" (254). The narrative continues to describe how Andrews's experiences with nature continue to numb and hurt, the landscape is harsh and devoid of meaning. Here lies the paradox Brenner described earlier, *Butcher's Crossing* uses both transcendental thought of the pristine and brutal realist depictions of nature to show how the stark contrast between eastern and western America. Brenner argues that by juxtaposing the values these two geographical counterpoints represent Williams "has reminded us that the great Western themes of individualism and Transcendental optimism are somehow related to the exploitation, which in some sense, is the

history of the West" (258). In this way, Brenner argues out that even men who carry with them pure intentions of natural reverence from the East are also contributing to exploitative practices as they expand civilization's borders which must come at the cost of eradicating nature.

2.2 Literary Representations of Masculinity in Butcher's Crossing

Having established how *Butcher's Crossing* portrays the cultural tension between the civilized East and the primitive West it is crucial that we look into how scholars have examined how this tension plays out in the individual characters and how that impacts their masculinities. Andrew Rowcroft proposes in "Towards a Politics of Failure John Williams' *Stoner* (1965) and *Butcher's Crossing* (1960)" (2018) that Will Andrews's economic and personal failures present an alternative to "hegemonic forms of American masculine identity which tend to blur the boundaries and distinctions between myth and history" (7). This argument forwards on previous notions of the East and the West by recontextualizing the narrative's central tension as a critique of the myth of the American man. In further information of Rowcroft's analysis, Anthony Hutchinson's article "'Young America' and the Anti-Emersonian Western" (2020) forwards the masculine discourse through the analysis of socioeconomic factors. Hutchinson argues that the socioeconomic conditions in 19th century America is what shapes the masculinities of McDonald and Miller which leads Hutchinson to argue that Andrews eventually ends up reproducing their masculinities. Furthermore, Mark Asquith argues in *Lost in the New West: Reading Williams, McCarthy, Prolux and McGuane* (2021), that McDonald and Miller are representations of different perceptions of nature; Miller sees nature as an arena where he can manifest his cowboy identity by hunting buffalo while McDonald sees nature for its potential of producing capital gain. In contrast to Hutchinson, Asquith argues that Andrews is ultimately able to look beyond the visions of McDonald and Miller which frees him from being influenced by their masculinities. Lastly, Brad Bolman's perspectives in the article "Seeking Peace, Finding the Violence of the Real: Traumatic Ecologies and the Post- Political Present" (2012) is important due to how he makes argues how Andrews functions as an "ecological subject" (1) in how he constructs his identity in relation to a fictionalized and idealized version of nature.

Masculine Identities in Butcher's Crossing

In "Towards a Politics of Failure: John Williams' *Stoner* (1965) and *Butcher's Crossing* (1960)" (2018) Andrew Rowcroft argues that *Butcher's Crossing* deals with "hegemonic forms of American masculine identity which tend to blur the boundaries and distinctions between myth and history" (7). Rowcroft continues the discourse from prior scholarship by recontextualizing the "distinctions between myth and history" (7) in a masculinity context. Rowcroft thus provides an essential reading of *Butcher's Crossing* in terms of how the different male characters live up to and embody their masculinities. In an attempt to explore different hegemonies of American masculinity Rowcroft asserts that "Williams beautifully oscillates between a representation of individual and collective forms of identity, refusing to subside into group cohesiveness" (4). He finds evidence for this oscillation in how the characters' only communion is found in their collective duties out in the wild such as food conservation and buffalo-skinning. On an individual level however, the characters have little in common and they never seem to develop any mutual interests either. It is through this shared individuality Rowcroft argues that *Butcher's Crossing*:

> cuts through the underlying romanticization of classic notions of Western masculinity which seek, against the rise of a modern industrial technology, a way to regain a seemingly diminished manhood through adventure, robust health, and an assertive patriotism. (4)

In other words, Rowcroft argues the male characters who inhabit the frontier village use their masculinity to resist Eastern masculinity of civilization, order, and law. However, what sets Williams' narrative apart from classic Western narratives of men proving their masculinity in nature is the fact that it does not contain any of the classic components of a Western narrative. Rowcroft recounts that "without the classic staples of gunfights, enemies, and the protection of women and children, relations among men turn to interior conflicts, malady, and group discord" (4) leaving the narrative ready for scrutiny of masculinity as an isolated concept.

To support his argument, Rowcroft argues that the narrative employs a realistic image of the West to illustrate how the narrative of *Butcher's Crossing* resists hegemonic forms of masculinity. According to Rowcroft, the narrator employs a "lyrical wasteland" (5) in the sense that the landscape is described as dry and arid, yet it carries romantic qualities. It is here that Rowcroft suggests that "this lyrical wasteland discourse relies on a collective memory of the American frontier as a site of becoming, rather than the refuse and detritus of abandoned machine parts" (5). It is the sheer emptiness and isolation from civilization that becomes "the very condition of frontier experience" (6), not frontline valor and heroism. As such,

Rowcroft's reading of *Butcher's Crossing* provides an essential leeway into exploring masculinity further.

Connecting the dots between Rowcroft's reading and the cultural tensions between the East and the West, Anthony Hutchinson's 2020 article becomes essential. In his article "'Young America' and the Anti-Emersonian Western" (2020) Hutchinson argues that Williams' reconceptualization of the West as "rooted in a materialist analysis of socioeconomic factors" (239) shapes the language of the characters and the narrative as a whole. Essentially, Hutchinson makes the connection between the socioeconomic circumstances of the East and the West to argue that the men effectively speak different languages. Where the East would be characterized as loud, descriptive, and in possession of a rich and sophisticated vocabulary, the West is characterized by a "masculine code of verbal restraint" (242). Another way of putting it would be that the Eastern man uses language to idealize and revere nature, while the Western man uses language in a practical manner in order to survive. These different ways of verbal communication, then, become the linguistic embodiment of different masculine identities and signal that there are in fact more than one masculine ideal for the characters to follow, rooted in their different socioeconomical statuses. Hutchinson explores how the characters Miller and McDonald come from different socioeconomic backgrounds which in turn shapes their language.

McDonald uses his language to assert his eastern masculinity by repeatedly speak of the hunters in a derogatory language by referring to them as "hard cases". McDonald's language reflects his desire to buy land and develop Butcher's Crossing into a bustling town, whereas Andrews has no such desires even though he has more in common with McDonald that he has with the rest of the men in the village. Furthermore, McDonald retains the ability to read which makes him the most powerful man in the village has he can claim land because he can "render intelligible the document that validates that claim and are privy to the kinds of information that make for sound investment" (249). This way, McDonald uses his language to assert his role as a businessman, landowner, and an entrepreneur, in other words an eastern man.

Miller, on the other hand, is characterized by his background as a hunter and a man of nature. Miller does not possess a rich and varied language he is rather in possession of a sparser and more practical language. As Hutchinson notes "[Miller] claims to have learned to read over the course of a winter" (243) which signifies a "masculine code of verbal restraint" (242). Given Miller's sparse language it would be reasonable to think that he might live in harmony with nature, but according to Hutchinson this is not the case: "far from evidencing

communion with nature, the hunters are shown to be wholly at its mercy" (243). What Hutchinson sees is not a man who understands nature, but a man who seeks to exploit it, as he notes: "Miller's relentlessness, furthermore, defies logic, economic or otherwise, and instead, in what is surely a gesture to the auto-destructive cast of mind famously embodied in Melville's Ahab, speaks to the primal an ineffable" (245). Miller embodies a masculine language of physicality, not a business-oriented language as McDonald. We, thus, begin to see how language sets the two men apart and how their socioeconomic backgrounds shape their languages which in turn determine their identities. As a result, Hutchinson argues that Andrews's masculinity is broken down and reshaped by the same socioeconomic conditions that made McDonald and Miller's masculinities. To Hutchinson, Andrews does not reject McDonald or Miller's masculinities, he embraces them instead which leads Hutchinson to argue that Andrews is "another Miller or McDonald, no doubt, in the making" (255).

Mark Asquith explores these constructions of masculinity further in his book *Lost in the New West* (2021) and adds to the discourse of socioeconomics that the characters' perceptions are different depending on what socioeconomic backgrounds they have. As Asquith remarks "for McDonald 'men with vision' are not those in search of the Over Soul, but those making smart investments" (28). Asquith remarks that McDonald sees buffalo hides first and foremost as the "scattered bills of sale that cover the floor […], the paper equivalent to which the buffalo has been reduced" (28). However, it is this reductionist and commodifying view of nature that Andrews seeks to escape when he journeys westward. McDonald encourages Andrews to "'Look' at the emptiness as an investment opportunity" (28) which proves to be the antithesis to what Andrews is looking for. McDonald's vision of the West, Asquith argues, requires Andrews to "keep his vision alive by looking beyond McDonald" (28). Asquith maintains that Andrews wants to 'see' something else that is not rooted in capitalist materialism. In other words, due to the masculine ideals McDonald follows he is only able to see the world as a businessman, which to Andrews, is of no interest.

Miller, the man to lead Andrews out in the wild, is to Asquith a "hard-eyed conformist, who offers the vision of one last glorious buffalo hunt in a hidden valley" (29). Miller looks further than McDonald and proves to be the man Andrews has been looking for in the sense that he can lead Andrews on an expedition further out west. Miller, however, sees the expedition as a chance of "validation from one last kill" (Asquith 34) in other words Miller sees the buffalo as a last opportunity to prove his manhood. What both Miller and McDonald share is the vision of nature and animals as something they can use to reaffirm their identities either in the form of profit or in the form of masculine confirmation. Neither

McDonald nor Miller share Andrews's vision, but Andrews is "having difficulty expressing what it is that [he] is looking for" (29) which to Asquith "acts as the first warning of the dangers of Andrews's particular brand of idealism" (29). With no clear vision of what he is looking for Andrews stands as a point of resistance to the visions of Miller and McDonald. Asquith underlines this point by showing how the worthlessness of the buffalo hides at the end of the narrative has a severe impact on the identities of Miller and McDonald.

Miller, enraged by the fact that his expedition proved to be worthless, stages a massive bonfire as a "futile gesture through which he mocks a universe that appears to be laughing at him" (42). But Asquith maintains that Miller's ultimate gain from the expedition was not "the economic worth of the hides" but rather "their value in defining him as a cowboy" (42). McDonald has an opposite reaction to Miller even though he acknowledges that they have no inherent value anymore as he values possession as an end in itself, as Asquith notes:

> His belief in possession as an end in itself, detached from utility, economics, morality and even common sense, anticipates the fetishization of ownership that will transform frontier settlements like Butcher's Crossing into successful economic proportions. (42)

To Asquith, McDonald derives his masculinity from being wealthy which is why he wants to transform Butcher's Crossing into a bustling town. This is McDonald's weakness, however, as Asquith notes that McDonald is unable to move on from the trauma of going bankrupt. McDonald's fetishization of ownership is what ultimately emasculates him because it makes him unable to realize his masculine potential.

What remains significant to Asquith, in the wake of both Miller and McDonalds' defeats, is the fact that Andrews is liberated from both of their grasps. As Andrews observes the two broken men agonizing over their losses Asquith remarks "this is everything Andrews rejects" (42) which is to say that Andrews ultimately becomes a witness to the loss of identity McDonald and Miller face as they are no longer able to use their exploitation of nature to their own gain. To Asquith, Andrews becomes free in the sense that "he understands that no meaning nor new identity awaits him, only a different way of seeing" (43), meaning he is able to see nature as something else than an object of exploitation. Thus, Asquith provides a counter-hegemonic reading of Andrews's narrative as he argues that Andrews is able to free himself from seeing the world as McDonald and Miller do. This reading stands in stark contrast to Hutchinson who sees Andrews's narrative as a reproduction of the conditions that made McDonald and Miller. As such, Hutchinson reads Andrews's decision to ride out West as a desperate attempt at reliving classic frontier experiences such as the scramble for land

and hunting of big game. Ultimately, however, both Asquith, Rowcroft, and Hutchinson provide valuable insights into how the masculinities of McDonald and Miller are shaped by the material and cultural conditions of 19th century America.

Masculinity and Ecology in Butcher's Crossing

While the focus has been on how masculinity is constructed in terms of the East and the West, language, and perception, there is also a need to investigate ecocritical readings of *Butcher's Crossing*. In "Seeking Peace, Finding the Violence of the Real: Traumatic Ecologies and the Post-Political Present" (2012) Brad Bolman sets out to explore how masculinity functions as an ecological subject in the narrative. Bolman uses the term "ecological subject" (1) to describe "the belief in nature as an idealized entity with its own human-will or divine-will […] that can justify *inaction* in the face of global warming" (3). Nature in *Butcher's Crossing* is to Bolman an entity of itself as he argues Andrews is subordinating himself to nature. It is in this subordination to 'mother nature' that "Andrews decides the secret to a fulfilled life lies in finding the right relationship with "nature"" (3). As such, Bolman argues that Andrews is searching for a completeness in the nature he feels he is a spiritual part of.

However, while Andrews may feel as an intrinsic part of nature, he does not take any concrete action. To Bolman, "engagement with ecology becomes a passive messianism, waiting in vain for some action that will "fix" nature's anger" (3). Andrews's subordination to nature does not make him more active or engaging he merely waits for something reminiscent of a divine intervention. This passivity springs out of a "passion for the real" which is understood as "the desire to experience reality unmediated by any social relation" (6). Following this logic, Bolman argues that Andrews is forced into passivity in his quest to find nature in its purest form because his ultimate goal is to experience nature without any social interference.

Additionally, language itself prohibits Andrews from experiencing real nature because "language is always incomplete" (6). What Bolman means by this is that language is inherently divisive and categorizing, meaning certain aspects of reality will always be left out due to the nature of language. Andrews cannot, through his language, grasp the entirety of nature as "there is always, inevitably, something that is missed out, something that cannot be symbolised" (6). Consequently, Bolman's reading culminates in the idea that Andrews's language makes him a subject to his idea of 'mother nature' meaning he subordinates himself to the very idea of nature. It is through his Emersonian idealization of nature that Andrews

creates an impossible task for himself and thus he loses his agency to act in order to preserve the nature he so much adores.

It is in the context of Andrews's impossible quest for an untouched, virgin nature that Bolman asserts that "there is no "big Other" that might guarantee the meaning of our actions in relation to nature" (7). As already established, Andrews seeks a form of nature that is unmediated by social relations, but Bolman argues that there is no such thing as a virgin nature:

> The virgin nature, devoid of all human contact, is a grand fantasy: nature is always conceived and framed through human interaction with, and intervention into, the natural world. (7)

What Bolman asserts is that nature cannot exist without linguistic mediation which is to say that Andrews's idea of nature is only an idea, a mental construction. What Andrews is seeking is a subjective experience where his actions are justified in the eyes of 'mother nature'. This way Bolman maintains that Andrews becomes an ecological subject in the sense that he is chasing an impossible of self-fulfillment in finding 'mother nature'.

Interestingly, Bolman argues that Andrews finds what he is looking for with the exception that "he awakens to a world different from the one of his imagination" (8). When the hunting party finally finds the hidden valley with the buffalo, Andrews is led to believe that this is where he will finally achieve his goal of tranquil peace in nature. However, Bolman observes that the Andrews notices a 'white hotness' which functions as a prelude to the sheer violence that follows. The violence Andrews is met with is the exact opposite of that he has been looking "and this extreme violence is not at all an exception: it is the horrifying norm, which Andrews cannot bear" (8). The horrifying realization Andrews comes to is that 'mother nature' is not peaceful at all, she is violent, unforgiving, and brutal.

What Bolman ultimately argues is that Andrews's idealization of nature is inherently dangerous and harmful because it justifies inaction. By subordinating himself as an ecological subject Andrews is merely sitting by as other men are destroying and exploiting the nature he seeks to preserve. Andrews's idealization only causes harm as "rejecting and covering it [nature] up with fantasies of perfection and hopes for a different future merely delay the pain of the realization and harm us repeatedly and for longer periods of time" (17). As such, Bolman says that Andrews will never be satisfied which becomes evident when he returns to Butcher's Crossing where everything and everyone has lost their meaning "even Francine, the

lusted-after object of his sexual desire, becomes nothing more than an empty body in his mind" (14). After encountering the violent reality of nature, Andrews realizes that life has no higher meaning and that places and people are nothing more than physical objects, devoid of any soul.

What remains important to Bolman is the notion that Andrews is nearing a solution to the problem of passivity as an ecological subject. Bolman's conclusion is that "nature is, in itself, political" (17) and it is only by doing away with the illusion that nature is an almost divine entity that Andrews can finally resist and subsequently change the politics of nature and ecology. The capitalist desire to use and exploit nature for profit is something that Andrews wants to resist and to Bolman the way he can do that is by starting to acknowledge the realness of nature, namely that it is not some place of divinity and perfection.

Bolman's perspective on Andrews's masculinity as an ecological subject and nature as a political construction is a crucial perspective in how we read *Butcher's Crossing* in the context of "Ecological Masculinities" as he clearly sets out the power relations between men and nature. Andrews follows Emersonian ideals of reverence and worship of nature as something pristine and perfect while the other men, Miller, and McDonald, has a different power relation to nature as they see it as something to be exploited to satisfy their own personal masculine identities. These assertions tell us that there are different power mechanisms at play here and that each of these three men are using nature to confirm their identities by different means. Miller and McDonald share the desire to exploit both nature and women in contrast to Andrews who see them through a lens of idealism and perfection. What this ultimately says about these men is that they construct their masculinities in relation to different ideals and standards affiliated with different views of nature and ideals of civilized vs. primitive living.

Chapter three: A New Man Emerges – Resistance to Hegemony and Ecologization of Masculinity

Having surveyed critical developments in Masculinity Studies by looking at Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity", Kimmel's concept of "Homosocial Relations", and Hultman and Pulé's concept of "Ecological Masculinities", this chapter will use these concepts to argue how the protagonist of *Butcher's Crossing*, Will Andrews, resists the hegemonic masculinities of the other key characters McDonald and Miller by developing his own ecological masculinity. To be able to do this, it is imperative that we first understand the machinations of the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller in terms of how they exert internal and external hegemonies. However, it is also critical that we read McDonald and Miller as different embodiments of an American hegemonic masculinity at the regional level and the tension between their eastern and western masculine ideals. Understanding how these men exert and use their power in order to maintain their hegemonic positions is key to understanding the power-relations Andrews is subjected to when he arrives in Butcher's Crossing. Having established the hegemonies of McDonald and Miller, I will then examine how Andrews's character shows resistance to the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller through a passion and reverence for nature. In doing so, I argue that Andrews uses his power to facilitate ideals of ecological masculinity, that is to say a performance of masculinity affiliated with showing care and nurture for nature and women, and, in doing so, freeing himself from hegemonic ideals of domination and subjugation. Ultimately, Andrews's narrative demonstrates the possibilities of constructing an ecological masculinity that reaches for agency outside the power machinations of American hegemonic masculinity by escaping further out west, far away from civilization.

3.1 Hegemonic Masculinities: McDonald and Miller

In order to understand Andrews's masculinity as a form of "Ecological Masculinity", it is crucial that we highlight the hegemonic masculinities which he is resisting in the narrative. To do so, I will read the narratives of the characters of McDonald and Miller through the lens of Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" and the homosocial relations that are used to reproduce both internal and external hegemony. As the second chapter established, Peterson and Brenner established that there is an internal cultural tension in *Butcher's Crossing* – namely, the primitive world of the West and the civilized world of the East. In this section, I

will be forwarding the discussion of these cultural streams and reframe them in the context of "Hegemonic Masculinity" to argue that McDonald's hegemonic masculinity is derived from abstract ideals of civility such as economics and property traditionally associated with the East coast of America. The second part of this argument sets out Miller as the embodiment of a hegemonic masculinity associated with western ideals of primitivity such as living off the land and masculine ideals of proving oneself in nature. Such a reading will reveal how the characters of McDonald and Miller does not see any development, making them static representations of masculinity at the western frontier. In this way, it is crucial to examine McDonald and Miller's narratives to understand Andrews's resistance to these representations of hegemonic masculinity.

The first character that will be examined is McDonald, a businessman hailing from the East who came out West to Butcher's Crossing in search of business opportunities. McDonald is the first man Andrews forms an acquaintance with upon his arrival in Butcher's Crossing due to McDonald's friendship with Andrews's father. McDonald's hegemonic position in the masculine gender hierarchy is established early in the narrative, as even before having met the man we get the understanding that McDonald's masculinity is very influential in the village of Butcher's Crossing:

> 'McDonald?' the clerk nodded slowly. 'The hide man? Sure. Everybody knows McDonald. Friend of yours?' (7)

McDonald's presence in the narrative is immediately established as he is clearly an influential man given the fact that everybody knows him. Here, we get the sense that McDonald stands out in the narrative and that his masculinity is something the other characters are clearly affected by. Additionally, the clerk uses the word 'man' when referring to McDonald's profession which could be read as signaling the importance of the association between such a job and masculinity. What makes the utterance of the clerk a signifier of McDonald's hegemony, however, is how he refers to McDonald simply as a 'hide-man' instead of calling him a trader or business-owner. This might suggest that the clerk sees himself as not intelligent or skilled enough to be doing what McDonald is doing which is suggestive of McDonald's hegemonic position in the masculine gender hierarchy.

The first meeting between McDonald and Andrews is an important moment in the narratives of hegemonic masculinity that *Butcher's Crossing* is working hard to present to the

reader. Here we get the first indicators of McDonald's hegemonic masculinity from McDonald himself:

> 'Come in, come in,' he said, thrusting his hand violently up through the thin hair that dangled over his forehead. He pushed his chair back from the table, started to get up, and then sat back wearily, his shoulders slumping.
>
> 'Come on in, don't just stand around out there.' (13)

Here, McDonald makes it clear before even having met Andrews that he waits for no one by giving him clear orders of entering his office. By declaring his dominance from the beginning, it becomes evident that McDonald inhabits a hegemonic position that he intends to keep by asserting his dominance over other men. McDonald is the one who speaks and gives orders, not Andrews, which is a clear indication of McDonald's hegemonic masculinity. He also appears impatient towards Andrews, telling him to "Come in" and to not "just stand around out there" (13). This impatience and commanding language are an early signifier of how McDonald is wielding his power to subjugate less powerful men in his vicinity. By acting and speaking before Andrews has a chance to introduce himself or stating his business, he is ensuring that the men who enter his office are subjected to his influence. This way of asserting dominance is an example of vertical homosociality as put forward by Hammarén and Johansson as "a means of strengthening power and of creating close bonds between men and between women to maintain and defend hegemony" (1). As such, McDonald is extending his homosocial relations vertically toward Andrews by speaking first, making sure that Andrews knows his place in the hierarchy.

The use of a violent body-language, as McDonald is "thrusting his hand violently up through the thin hair that dangled over his forehead" (13) prefigures masculine ideals of living in Butcher's Crossing where one must be strong in order to survive. As a result, the narrator's descriptions of McDonald's violent movements show how ideals of masculinity in the West are affiliated with acts of violence. However, after having displayed a violent movement, McDonald immediately sits back 'wearily' with "his shoulders slumping" (13). This collapse, or weariness, acts as a textual example of how McDonald's masculinity becomes a signifier of how this violence is wearing him down. McDonald is only powerful to the other men as long as he can maintain his internal hegemony over them which he does by maintaining his position as the strongest man in terms of economics. This is not to say that we should forget that McDonald's masculinity belongs to the eastern sphere of American masculinity. Instead, we should read his violent manners as a metaphor for his economic dominance of the land

around Butcher's Crossing. In so doing, we must remember that McDonald's masculinity is inherently a configuration of American masculinity which means that he uses dominance of the land to protect his masculinity from being subjugated to other hegemonic influences. In other words, the narrator's description of McDonald's weariness signals that there is a struggle for power in the narrative. McDonald's main adversary in this struggle for internal hegemony over the other men is the huntsman Miller.

Miller, in addition to McDonald, is the other man who inhabit the position of hegemonic masculinity in the narrative, and he is also keen to influence Andrews's sense of masculinity. Andrews is introduced to Miller through McDonald who says, "everybody knows Miller" (20), mirroring the store clerk's mention of McDonald to Andrews earlier. This recognition of Miller's position by McDonald is a signifier to the reader that Miller has a near equal status to McDonald in terms of power. The affirmation of Miller's power by McDonald, then, makes it plausible to assume that Miller also is in a position of hegemonic masculinity and that his hegemony potentially poses a threat to McDonald. Miller, however, is not concerned with owning land or being particularly wealthy as his hegemonic masculinity derives from growing up at the western frontier where values of primitivity are regarded over the civil values of eastern Americans. The tension between Miller and McDonald is evident as Miller is suspicious of Andrews's errand when Andrews visits him:

> Andrews sat in the empty chair between the girl and Miller. 'I hope I'm not interrupting anything.'
> 'What does McDonald want?' Miller asked.
> 'I beg your pardon?'
> 'McDonald sent you over here, didn't he? What does he want?' (26)

Miller's hegemonic influence needs to be maintained and reproduced, which is why he reacts with suspicion when an eastern man like Andrews introduces himself because Miller knows he might pose a threat to his internal hegemonic influence. This scene shows how the struggle for hegemonic influence between McDonald and Miller because Miller immediately suspects Andrews is subordinate of McDonald's internal hegemonic masculinity even though he has no reason to think that. The tension between the two men become even more apparent as Miller shows resistance to McDonald's internal hegemony by telling Andrews that: "McDonald's been trying to get me to head a party for him for two years now. I thought he was trying again" (26). Miller is not interested in working for McDonald because that would imply that McDonald would be in charge of Miller's affairs leading to a subordination of

Miller's masculinity to McDonald's masculinity. This refusal to work for McDonald is an expression of the urge to dominate to avoid the domination of other men, Miller simply refuses to work for McDonald because it would imply that McDonald is more powerful than him.

This tension between McDonald and Miller is the result of how the men measure their masculinities in relation to different ideals of manhood. McDonald enforces his internal hegemony over the other men in Butcher's Crossing by employing them as hunters, thereby subordinating them as inferior in terms of wealth, as Miller explains to Andrews: "They [the hunters] do the work, and he [McDonald] gets all the money. They think he's a crook, and he thinks they're fools" (31). In contrast, Miller tells Andrews that: "I hunt for my own or I don't hunt at all" (32), indicating that his masculinity is derived from showing strength and prowess in nature. As such, Miller establishes his internal hegemony by posing as a man of physical strength and resilience that is capable of dominating nature.

This struggle for power between McDonald and Miller illustrates the key point that McDonald and Miller inhabit different hegemonic masculinities that compete for internal hegemony over the other men. Their struggle for internal hegemony over other men comes as a result of Kimmel's assertion that "manhood is less about the drive for domination and more about the fear of others dominating us, having power or control over us" (4). Kimmel's main point is that American men have been preoccupied with using domination to protect themselves from the domination of other men. This assertion remains true for both Miller and McDonald who both use external hegemony to subjugate women and nature in order to enforce their internal hegemony of other men. Therefore, they both assert external hegemony over women and nature as a measure to protect their masculinities from being dominated by the other. As McDonald is asserting his external hegemony by purchasing more land around Butcher's Crossing which makes him a contender for the position of hegemonic masculinity by way of economic domination. Miller, on the other hand, hunts big game to appear the strongest in terms of dominating nature by brute force. Thus, both McDonald and Miller use external hegemony to protect their masculinities from being subordinated to the other. In this way, McDonald and Miller both use the exploitation of nature to make sure their masculinities remain in powerful positions among the men in Butcher's Crossing.

It thus becomes important to examine how their masculinities differ by way of being representations of the East and the West. The main difference between these two literary representations of masculinity lies in their different geographical origins in which McDonald constructs a hegemonic masculinity in relation to eastern American ideals whereas Miller is a

man of the wild western frontier. Consequently, these representations of masculinities are manifestations of Peterson's reading of *Butcher's Crossing* depicting a conflict between the primitive and the civilized. In this conflict, McDonald represents civilized living in terms of buying and selling land, whereas Miller represents primitive living in terms of not living according to any laws and proving his masculinity through physical activities such as hunting. These contrasting hegemonic masculinities McDonald and Miller represent must be understood as different geographical constructions of hegemonic masculinities, more specifically they are regional representations of eastern and western America. This geographical distinction, that the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller are regional representations of eastern and western America, is vital to understand the inherent power struggle between these men. However, while there are regional differences between eastern and western hegemonic masculinities in the narrative, it is crucial to understand that they are the product of an American hegemonic masculinity on the global level.

That McDonald is a man of the East becomes apparent quite early as he is quick about explaining his reason for coming out west to a confused Andrews: "What? You don't what? Why, it's hides, boy. Buffalo hides. I buy and sell. I send out parties, they bring in the hides." (16). McDonald makes it clear to Andrews that his sole reason for coming out west is purely due to business reasons which, as already established, is a key signifier of the East and ideals of civility. In recognizing that Andrews is hailing from the East, McDonald's emits internal hegemonic influence over Andrews as he tells him "Listen. There ain't many like us here. Men with vision" (17). McDonald makes it clear to Andrews that Eastern men are inherently different from Western men and that Andrews is part of the Eastern identity. Through the clear instruction of who Andrews is, McDonald is positioning himself as an ideal eastern man from whom Andrews should derive his masculine ideals from.

McDonald's attempt at including Andrews in the eastern American sphere of masculinity becomes visible in how he tries to convince Andrews to partake in his capitalist ventures in Butcher's Crossing:

> 'Look, boy. It's the railroad. Don't go talking this around; but when the railroad comes through here, this is going to be a *town.* You come in with me; I'll steer you right. Anybody can stake out a claim for the land around here; all you have to do is sign your name on a piece of paper at the State Land Office. Then you sit back and wait. That's all.' (17)

This statement by McDonald signifies key aspects of the internal hegemony he is trying to enforce on Andrews. First, he is referring to Andrews as 'boy' which is arguably not only because of the age difference, but also because McDonald is reproducing his masculine power over Andrews. The usage of 'boy' places McDonald as a fatherly or patriarchal figure in relation to Andrews, subordinating him to McDonald's hegemonic masculinity. McDonald also says he'll 'steer' Andrews right which further solidifies the power-relations between the two men. Second, what McDonald is 'steering' Andrews toward is eastern masculine ideals of landownership, a critical part of eastern values of civility. To McDonald, the most important thing a man can do is assert his dominance by purchasing land and increasing one's personal wealth. Following this logic, McDonald is purchasing land before anyone else to make sure his position in the masculine gender hierarchy remains unchallenged when civilization finally arrives in the form of a railroad in the village. This urge to buy property echoes the argument put forward by the ecomasculinists that "patriarchal beliefs and attitudes exploit many women and men, as well as exploit the land and animals." (*Eco-Man* 8). McDonald is using the purchasing of land to manifest his masculine power over nature in order to protect himself from the power of other men while also gaining recognition of his masculinity in the eyes of men. This way of embodying masculinity is what Hultman and Pulé calls "hegemonization," which means the driving factor behind one's masculinity is inherently related to one's position of power in the gender hierarchy. It is this way of asserting one's manhood through the dominance of nature that I argue Andrews ultimately tries to resist. McDonald is exerting external hegemony over nature in order to justify his masculinity, and he is using his internal hegemony to implore Andrews to do the same because to McDonald this is how a truly powerful man is supposed to act.

However, considering why McDonald lives in this remote village begs the interesting question as to why he even came out West in the first place. McDonald's reason for coming out west becomes increasingly clear through the conversation between him and Andrews as McDonald gives us reason to think that he did not possess hegemonic influence back in the East:

> 'I think my father admired you, Mr. McDonald,' Andrews said.
>
> 'Me?' He laughed shortly, then glowered suspiciously at Andrews. 'Listen boy. I went to your father's church because I thought I might meet somebody that would give me a better job, and I started going to those little meetings your father had for the same reason. I never knew what they were talking about half the time.' He said

> bitterly, ‘I would just nod at anything anybody said. Not that it did a damn bit of good.’ (15)

What this bit of dialogue implies is that McDonald came out west because his position in the masculine power hierarchy was limited. It becomes evident that McDonald did not inhabit a position of internal hegemony over the other men due to his lack of power. Back in the East, McDonald would face fierce competition from other like-minded men, but in coming out west he faces no competition or opposition to his masculinity. Back in the East, the reader has reason to believe that McDonald was not a man of high status given his reason for joining Andrews’s father’s church: “I went to your father’s church because I thought I might meet somebody that would give me a better job” (15). In the context of reading McDonald’s masculinity as eastern, a ‘better job’ would also mean that his masculinity would be associated with more power, giving him the ability to enact his influence over other men and increase his patriarchal power over women. However, the fact that McDonald states that he “never knew what they were talking about half the time” (15) implies that his civilized manner had severe flaws, making him an outsider in the sphere of eastern American masculinity. Understanding McDonald, then, as a man who came out west to assert his dominance over the land becomes crucial in the examination of his character as we realize his motivations for being in the West arose from his masculinity being associated with a weaker power back in the East.

Despite moving away from the East, however, McDonald does not want to associate himself with the western men. It becomes apparent that McDonald is reproducing the power the other men had over him in the East by talking down the hunters in Butcher’s Crossing:

> ‘Hunters’, McDonald said. His dry thin lips went loose and open as if he had tasted something rotten. ‘All hunters are hard cases. That’s what this country would be if it wasn’t for men like us. People just living off the land, not knowing what to do with it. (17)

Here, McDonald uses homosociality in a vertical sense, separating the hunters from “men like us” (17) signaling to Andrews that hunters inhabit a less powerful masculinity compared to the likes of McDonald. Simultaneously, a horizontal homosociality is employed by McDonald toward Andrews as he is not simply contrasting the hunters to himself, but to “men like us” (17) which is a sign to Andrews that McDonald is accepting of Andrews’s masculinity. McDonald is showing resentment of the hunters, given the ‘rotten’ taste he gets in his mouth

when talking about them. By employing both vertical and horizontal homosociality, McDonald is consolidating his internal hegemony over the hunters and Andrews by appearing as a figure of authority. To ensure Andrews that he is serious, McDonald also makes it clear that he has economical control over the hunters, stating: "But I'll warn you: Most of the men around here hunt for me" (19). This tour de force of socioeconomic standing is McDonald's way of appealing to Andrews's eastern masculinity as McDonald. This, again, is a mode of horizontal homosociality McDonald employs to underline the differences between the two regional masculinities that separate the East and the West.

What we can say about McDonald is that he is asserting the key elements of his eastern hegemonic masculinity in the West, namely civility in the form of landownership and economic domination. Important to his assertion of dominance is how he wants to include Andrews in the construction of eastern hegemony by trying to convince Andrews to invest in land. What McDonald ultimately tries to do is to get Andrews to exert external hegemony by purchasing land and in so doing Andrews will confirm McDonald's hegemonic masculinity by acknowledging that McDonald's mode of asserting economic dominance is legitimate. McDonald's economic dominance helps him assert his dominance by subjugating the land to himself while also preventing other men, such as Miller, from asserting their dominance of the land around Butcher's Crossing. Put differently, McDonald uses his external hegemony over the land as a symbolic difference between nature and his own masculinity.

It is crucial to understand that the tension between McDonald and Miller does not stem from any desire by Miller to become wealthy like McDonald. In other words, Miller does not want to embody an eastern hegemonic masculinity through owning land. Miller's hegemonic masculinity is a that of a western man, meaning he values the primitive values of lawlessness and freedom. As such, Miller's opposition to McDonald's hegemonic position comes as a direct result of Miller not wanting to be defined by any laws or economical structures because these things are precisely what western men seek to escape. Miller's masculinity exists in a world where the exploitation of material values is instrumental to constructing one's masculinity. This mode of thinking about the world makes it so that Miller, like McDonald, uses his external hegemony as a tool to reinforce his internal hegemony. Miller's external hegemony, however, is about proving his manliness through physical domination like hunting big game or dominating women sexually. This mode of asserting power physically becomes clear when Miller agrees to take Andrews with him on a hunt:

> ‘My stake’s pretty low,’ Miller said. ‘Whoever came in would have to put up just about all the money.’
> ‘How much?’ Andrews said.
> ‘And even so,’ Miller continued, ‘he’d have to understand that it would still be my hunt. He’d have to understand that.’ (35)

This interaction between Andrews and Miller is key because it shows how Miller asserts his internal hegemony over Andrews by making it clear that he will not be a subject of Andrews’s socioeconomic power. By underplaying Andrews’s attempts at asking how much money it would take to finance the hunt, Miller subverts Andrews’s power as a wealthy man. Therefore, Miller takes control of the conversation by making clear to Andrews that it still will be his hunt, because Miller cannot be seen as a man who was hired by someone. Thus, Miller’s condition for accepting Andrews’s financing of the hunt is that Andrews will not be in charge of anything because that would mean Miller’s masculinity losing power. Additionally, Miller needs to have his name associated with the hunt because it strengthens his internal hegemony in Butcher’s Crossing. As such, Miller extends his homosocial relations toward Andrews vertically, meaning he includes Andrews as a part of his team as long as Andrews knows his place in the hierarchy.

Miller does extend his homosocial relations horizontally to Andrews however when he introduces Andrews to the prostitute Francine, telling Andrews that “a whore is a necessary part of the economy” (28). Miller’s use of ‘economy’ can be read as both the material economy as Miller states that “A man’s got to have something besides liquor and food to spend his money on” (28), but more importantly, women act as a way of maintaining the economy in terms of maintaining the power-relations of hegemonic masculinity as “the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy” (*Masculinities* 77). In other words, Miller tells Andrews that men need women to legitimize their own manhood, thus making prostitutes an essential part of the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity. This essentializing of Francine’s role as a prostitute is Miller’s way of telling Andrews that taking advantage of Francine sexually serves as proof to the other men that Andrews is capable of asserting his dominance which in turn grants his masculinity the recognition of Miller. This way of using women to assert one’s masculinity reproduces the exploitative aspects of western hegemony which explains why Miller deems it essential for there to be prostitutes in Butcher’s Crossing.

In this regard, the materiality of the body is another key element in the performance of internal hegemony in the text due to how bodies are “a participant in generating social

practice" (Messerschmidt & Connell 851). Therefore, Miller's idealization of physical domination not only manifests itself in the domination of the female body, but it also manifests itself in dominating the male body. As we have seen, Miller is presented in contrast to his friend Charley Hoge by a bartender who describes Miller as a "big man" while Hoge is said to be a "little feller" (28). By contrasting Miller with Charley Hoge, we get the understanding that Miller poses an intimidating figure on the other men. The adjective 'big' might in this context not only mean big in terms of physicality, but also big in terms of how Miller's character is perceived. This way, Miller's body is part of his construction of masculinity and through the juxtaposition with his smaller friend, Charley Hoge, Miller's stature, and physical embodiment of his masculinity become an expression for his internal hegemony.

Charley Hoge is a perfect example of how Miller's embodiment of a western hegemonic masculinity manifests itself physically. Hoge is maimed, he lost his right hand on a hunt with Miller in the Rocky Mountains. The loss of a limb has branded Hoge with evidence of having survived the harsh realities of nature, showing the other men what it truly means to wrestle with the forces of nature. However, Hoge is a traumatized man, and he initially refuses to accompany Andrews and Miller on their expedition: "I ain't going, Charley Hoge said. 'That's a country of the devil'" (36). However, here we see how Miller's masculinity overpowers Charley Hoge's masculinity through by using his body as a social agent:

> 'But he'll go with us,' Miller continued. 'With only one hand, he's a better camp man than most.'
> 'No' Charley Hoge said. 'I ain't going. Not this time.'
> 'It'll be alright,' Miller said. 'This time of year, it's almost warm up there; there won't be no snow till November.' He looked at Andrews. 'He'll go; (38)

In this brief exchange, Miller overpowers Hoge by using the loss of a limb as a proof that Hoge is stronger than most men, calling Hoge a "better camp man than most" (38). This way Miller appeals to the homosocial relations between him and Hoge, confirming his masculinity through the affirmation that being maimed is proof that Hoge is a capable hunter. In addition, Hoge is telling Miller that he will not go again, "not this time" (38) signaling that Miller has convinced him to participate on hunts after he was maimed. Miller's show of power in this scene, however, comes from how he does not talk to Hoge, but how he turns his attention away from Hoge, telling Andrews that: "He'll go" (38). This simple utterance shows that

Miller is in complete control of Hoge as Miller subordinates Hoge by referring to him in the third person. Miller's seemingly complete control over Hoge is a direct result of how Hoge lost his hand given it was Miller who amputated it: "It got to stinking,' Miller said, 'so I knew it had to come off.'" (37). The reason Hoge lost his hand, we learn, is not due to natural causes, but because Miller decided it had to be amputated. As such, Hoge embodies his masculinity through the representation of a maimed body, but it was due to Miller's hegemonic influence that Hoge became maimed in the first place as he eventually gives in to Miller's masculine influence, letting the hand be cut off. This way, a key part of Hoge's masculinity, through the representation of a severed hand, is subjected to Miller's hegemonic masculinity. Consequently, Hoge is not a man who survived the forces of nature due to his own masculinity, but due to Miller's masculinity. This realization makes it clear that Hoge's body is the product of Miller's western hegemonic masculinity, and that Miller uses Hoge as evidence of his own masculine identity.

What emerges from this reading of McDonald and Miller, then, is that they are both using their external hegemonies over nature to reproduce their internal hegemonies over the other men in the narrative. However, a pivotal point in the narrative comes near the end when Miller and Andrews learn from McDonald that buffalo hides have lost all their value, as he tells them that "the bottom's dropped out of the whole market" (292). This is devastating to both McDonald and Miller because this emasculates them as "the buffalo hides, like the bodies of prostitutes, are no longer needed in the West" (Asquith 42). McDonald has lost all his money as a result of the sudden collapse of the hide market which is emasculating to him because that means he has lost his ability to assert his external hegemony by way purchasing land. Miller, on the other hand, is emasculated in terms of losing his status as a buffalo hunter which is evident in how McDonald explains to him that "the hide business is finished. For good. […] 'Just like you're finished Miller. And your kind" (292). By declaring that Miller and his 'kind' is finished, the narrative signals that Miller can no longer enforce his internal hegemony in Butcher's Crossing because his masculinity is no longer recognized by the other men. This is made clear by how McDonald explains that "the hunters are selling buffalo meat to the railroad company – and they're letting the hides lay where they skin them to rot in the sun" (293). The image of the rotting buffalo hides become a metaphor for how their masculinities are no longer acknowledged by the other men which strips both McDonald and Miller of their power as proprietors of hegemonic masculinity. In this way, both McDonald and Miller's narratives become static representations of the changing material conditions in

19th century America as they are both rendered powerless by the changing material conditions of the American economy.

3.2 Andrews's Resistance to Hegemony

Having established how the static hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller operate in the narrative and how they are ultimately emasculated by the collapse of the hide market, a key part in understanding Andrews's embodiment of an ecological masculinity requires the understanding of how he resists hegemony. This is key in how we can argue that Andrews represents a counter-hegemonic narrative because the emasculations of McDonald and Miller signifies that Andrews's narrative differs in how he is not emasculated by the collapse of the hide market. Given Hultman and Pulé's formulation of "Ecological Masculinity" as "a transformation from hegemonisation to ecologisation" (155) it is key that we understand how Andrews's masculinity resists hegemony by transcending toward an ecological relationship with nature. He does so, I argue, by refusing to participate in the reproduction of the power structures McDonald and Miller's masculinities reproduce.

Understanding how Andrews resists the hegemonic influences of McDonald and Miller requires a recognition of the agency of subordinated groups as well as accounting for the dynamics of "Hegemonic Masculinity" as described by Messerschmidt and Connell (2005). We need to understand this because Andrews's masculinity is initially subjected to the hegemonic influences of McDonald and Miller. However, it is key to understand that Andrews's subordinate masculinity retains the ability to resist hegemony as the power dynamics that reproduce the internal hegemonies of McDonald and Miller are dependent on the subordination of other men. This it to say that the subordination of Andrews's masculinity to the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller does not mean that Andrews is powerless in the masculine gender hierarchy. Evidently, Andrews can use his agency as a subordinated man to oppose the power structures McDonald and Miller are imposing on him. This means that his resistance to the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller lies in Andrews's refusal to partake in their oppressive and subordinating practices. Andrews's importance in McDonald and Miller's constructions of masculinity is evident in how both men extend their homosociality horizontally toward Andrews because as much as his masculinity needs their recognition, they also need subordinate men that can recognize their hegemonic positions in the power hierarchy.

McDonald and Miller's paradox of oppression and inclusion in their constructions of their hegemonic masculinities is forwarded by Messerschmidt and Connell (2005) who argue that "both incorporation and oppression can occur together" (848). It is not only because of Andrews's agency that he is able to resist, however, we must also remember that Messerschmidt and Connell argued that hegemonic masculinity consists of "configurations of practice that are constructed, unfold, and change through time" (852). This means that the social practice that currently holds the position of hegemonic masculinity may change. This implies that McDonald and Miller's masculinities may provide a solution as to how masculinity should be practiced. It is important to remember that the hegemonic masculinities they represent "that provided such a solution is open to challenge" (853), meaning it is important to understand that McDonald and Miller's masculinities are not immune to resistance. As such, it is crucial that we understand how Andrews can use his agency as a subordinate to provide resistance to hegemonic masculinity. We see an early example of how Andrews shows resistance to hegemonic masculinity early in the narrative as McDonald tries to convince Andrews to invest in real estate:

> 'Thank you, sir,' Andrews said. 'I'll consider it.'
> '*Consider* it!' McDonald released his arm and stepped back from him in astonishment. He threw up his hands and they fluttered as he walked around once in a tight, angry little circle. 'Consider it? Why, boy, it's an opportunity. Listen.' (17)

In this brief exchange, it is clear that McDonald is aware of his own power and that he is trying to use it to convince Andrews to become like him. The significance of this scene, however, does not lie in how McDonald exerts his power, but how Andrews with little effort is able to resist McDonald's attempts at convincing him to partake in the reproduction of hegemony of the land. Andrews's response is pragmatic as he gives McDonald a vague answer by merely insinuating that he will consider McDonald's proposition. The narrative makes it clear that Andrews's response is effective as McDonald has to physically take a step back when he listens to Andrews. As the conversation continues, we see that McDonald's temper increases as he is walking in a "tight, angry little circle" (17) which further shows how the text works to present Andrews's resistance to McDonald's masculinity. McDonald's oral response to Andrews is however more aggressive and direct which shows that McDonald tries to enforce his internal hegemony over Andrews by uttering that he is giving up a huge opportunity. This way, McDonald extends his homosocial relations toward Andrews vertically by trying to convince Andrews that he belongs in the sphere of eastern hegemonic

masculinity. McDonald's increasing anger, however, shows that Andrews's ability to resist McDonald's attempts at incorporating Andrews into the eastern masculine power dynamic is successful. Further in their conversation Andrews finally stops McDonald and makes his intentions known, saying:

> 'Mr. McDonald', Andrews said quietly, 'I appreciate what you're trying to do for me. But I want to try to explain something to you. I came out here –' […]
> 'I came out here to see as much of the country as I can,' he said quietly. 'I want to get to know it. It's something that I have to do.' (18-19)

This response Andrews provides is key as it is the first evidence of Andrews showing a desire to resist the masculine hegemonization of nature. In other words, Andrews is resisting McDonald's masculinity on a fundamental level by stating that his intentions are not about becoming more masculine through domination, he shows resistance by merely stating that he wants to experience nature. This subversion of the hegemonic masculinity of McDonald becomes powerful in that it poses a challenge to the very foundation his hegemony is based on, which is the subordination of nature to men. As a result, Andrews's masculinity takes a crucial turn toward constructing an ecological masculinity by refusing to partake in the reproduction of hegemonic power relations.

Andrews's resistance to the basic premise that men should be above nature, then, is pivotal in how the dynamics of the hegemonic masculinities he is subjected to is able to change. Andrews's masculinity gets more and more separated from external influences of hegemony as he spends time in nature: "after their first day's journey, the country lost some of its flatness; it rolled out gently before them, and they traveled from soft hollow to soft rise, as if they were tiny chips blown upon the frozen surface of a great sea" (86). Andrews is unable to comprehend the vast expanses of raw nature as the men are travelling further out west to the extent that Andrews finds "himself less and less conscious of any movement forward" (86). Andrews's masculinity is encapsulated by nature, making him unable to comprehend the sheer vastness and challenges affiliated with living out in nature. This encapsulation of Andrews's masculinity is vital because it makes his masculinity less influenced by ideas of nature as an opposition.

The encapsulation of Andrews's masculinity gives Andrews the ability to resist hegemony as it makes him stray further and further away from dominant masculine influences. The reason as to why we might say that Andrews gains agency from being encapsulated by nature lies in Cenamor and Brandt's argument that spending time in nature

"elicit[s] a desire in men to become engaged in other practices of masculinity that are counterhegemonic" (x). In essence, Andrews's encapsulation, in how he loses track of time, is a signifier of how his masculinity acts in a counter-hegemonic manner because it shows how the influence of nature is more powerful on him than the power of either McDonald or Miller. As such, power is displaced in a way that makes Andrews "an ecological subject" (Bolman 1) which is to say that Andrews displaces himself as subordinate to the power of nature. To Bolman, being an ecological subject means "the belief in nature as an idealized entity with its own human-will or divine-will" (3). Andrews is certainly viewing nature as something higher than himself given how Charley Hoge talking about a chapel is able to trigger Andrews's memories with nature:

> Sometimes after listening to the droning voices in the chapel and in the classrooms, he had fled the confines of Cambridge to the fields and woods that lay southwestward to it. There in some small solitude, standing on bare ground, he felt his head bathed by the clean air and uplifted into infinite space; the meanness and the constriction he had felt were dissipated in the wildness about him. (48)

The association between nature and divinity is apparent in this quotation and it is key in how Andrews is placing himself as an ecological subject to the power of nature. Chapels and classrooms, institutions that are important in the construction of eastern hegemonic masculinity, are devoid of meaning to Andrews as they represent confinement and restriction. In contrast, Andrews flees to some nearby fields and woods where he can experience true freedom, where the fresh air reinvigorates him with new meaning compared to the staleness of the chapel. When fleeing the confined spaces the chapel represents, Andrews experiences new meaning in the form of escaping these confined spaces and restrictions eastern society imposes on him. Put differently, Andrews's escape to these small patches of wilderness is representative of him escaping the power structures of eastern hegemonic masculinity which is evidenced by how he feels that he stands in solitude when he is in contact with nature. Andrews is experiencing what it is like living free from the influences of modern society and hegemonic masculine codes of conduct which is why he values his solitude in nature so much. This solitude becomes an image for the divinity he experiences as he feels he ascends into "infinite space" (48) which could be read as a metaphor for heaven. It is, thus, clear that Andrews resists the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller because they represent confinement and power. While Miller's western hegemonic masculinity is closely associated with primitive living and opposition to law and order, Miller's main tool for constructing his

masculinity is still through his assertion of external hegemony by the subjugation of women and nature. Therefore, while the masculinities of Miller and Andrews may share a common goal of constructing their masculinities in relation to nature, they differ in how their conceptualizations of power positions them in terms of how they treat nature.

To better understand why Andrews resists Miller, we must understand Miller's masculinity as a "model of manhood [that] construes nature as a scene for heroic action" (Tallmadge 25). In other words, nature is a scene to Miller where he can construct his masculinity through exploitative activities such as hunting. Importantly, Andrews does not want to use nature as a scene to prove his masculinity as Miller does, which is evident when Miller asks him why he came out west:

> 'So you came out here. To Butcher's Crossing.'
> 'Yes, sir.'
> 'And when you learn what you want to learn, what'll you do? Go back and brag to your kinfolk? Write something for the papers?'
> 'No, sir,' Andrews said. 'It's not for any of those reasons. It's for myself.' (30-31)

This exchange between Miller and Andrews is significant because it shows how Andrews is rocking with the basic structure of the hierarchal relations between men and nature. We see this in how Miller is left dumbfounded by Andrews's response as the narrator observes that "Miller did not speak for several moments" (31). It is apparent that Andrews is forwarding ideals of masculinity that are outside the normative constructions of masculinity in 19th century America. Miller rationalizes Andrews's wish to arrange their grand hunt as a way for Andrews to appear more masculine to his 'kinfolk' back home in the East. Andrews, however, has no such intentions which is evident in how his response to Miller is very ambiguous and vague. The exact ambitions of Andrews are not what leaves Miller speechless, however, it is rather how Andrews is completely denying that he has any ambitions at all for being in Butcher's Crossing. It is important in this regard to acknowledge that Miller's masculinity is part of an inherently oppressive structure. This makes it very difficult for Miller to understand why Andrews is so apathic when it comes to participating in the reproduction of the power relations between men and nature. Building on this, we are reminded that Allister argued that the social structures in Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity" are inherently patriarchal in terms of exploiting nature on the same grounds as women:

> Men and women together are bound up in our social structures, and continuation of those structures serves some people and not others; patriarchal beliefs and attitudes exploit many women and men, as well as exploit the land and animals. (8)

By proclaiming that he is not going hunting for anyone else than himself, Andrews initiates a discontinuation of these social structures Allister describes as exploitative to both nature and women. Bolman's reading of Andrews as an ecological subject becomes crucial here because it displaces the power of Andrews as a subject to the power of nature. This means that he effectively resists these social structures Allister describes by displacing his masculine power as someone who is being subjected rather than someone that is subjecting others. Thus, Andrews's resistance to "Hegemonic Masculinity" must be understood in the context of "Ecological Masculinities" as moving from hegemony to ecology in the sense that Andrews's masculinity withdraws from patriarchal structures of exploitation. Due to the patriarchal features of hegemonic masculinity subordinate nature, it is then crucial to examine Andrews's relation to women due to how women and nature are both used as tokens by men to validate their masculinities.

In understanding Andrews's resistance to these hegemonic forms of American masculinity's oppression of nature, it is crucial to examine how he displaces his power toward women. As Cenamor and Brandt argue "if women and nature share a similar history of oppression by men […], their history of liberation can perhaps also be shared" (x). Andrews only meets one woman in the narrative, the prostitute Francine, and they form a relationship. Andrews's relationship with Francine is an important factor to consider when understanding how Andrews transforms his masculinity from hegemony toward ecology. He ultimately abstains from continuing their relationship because it would reproduce hegemonic power structures. Evidence of Andrews not wanting to validate his masculinity through the exploitation of women is clear in the scene where Francine invites Andrews back to her place. Andrews suspects Francine is trying to lure him into paying for sleeping with her, but she reassures him that "I'm not working now […] it's for love; it's because I want you" (68). Although Andrews initially agrees to engage in sexual activities with Francine, he quickly regrets his decision as he "was assailed by the knowledge that others had seen this face as he was seeing it now" (69) whilst imagining "hundreds of men, steadily streaming in and out of a room" (69-70). Though it may be logical to conclude that Andrews is merely disgusted by the fact that Francine is a prostitute, it is important to remember that Andrews does not want to construct his masculinity through exploitation. His envisioning of Francine having slept with

hundreds of men before him is Andrews seeing himself as part of yet another cycle of men taking sexual advantage of women. As a result, Andrews panics when he realizes that he is about to reproduce the social structures he was initially trying to escape, as such Andrews physically withdraws himself from Francine: "No!' he said, hoarsely, and flung himself across the room stumbling on the edge of the rug" (70). Andrews's physical abstinence from engaging sexually with Francine is a clear indication that he has no interest in following ideals of asserting external hegemony as a protective measure of his own masculinity. Instead, Andrews views Francine as part of an inherently oppressive system:

> He saw her as a poor, ignorant victim of her time and place, betrayed by certain artificialities of conduct, thrust from a great mechanical world upon this bare plateau of existence that fronted the wilderness. (66)

When observing the circumstances that led Francine to her choice of profession, Andrews realizes that even in a remote village such as Butcher's Crossing she is not free from the social structures of the civilized world Andrews sought to escape. Andrews notes that Francine is not aware that her being in Butcher's Crossing serves the sole function of sexually gratifying the men there which in turn reproduces the structures of masculinity that are inherently oppressive. Andrews's view of the world as mechanical is a sign that he understands there are certain social structures, structures of hegemonic masculinity, that dictates the outcome of Francine's life. What Andrews ultimately comes to realize is that even in Butcher's Crossing, a village that to Andrews exists at the edge of civilization, women are subjected to the same power-structures as in the civilized world in the East. Thus, by engaging with her sexually he contributes to bringing these exploitative structures of masculinity closer to the wilderness he wishes to experience unmediated by the exploitative nature of masculinity.

A key thing to understand in this regard, however, is that while Andrews wants to resist the hegemonization of masculinity he can't construct his ecological masculinity in the eyes of Francine, he has to prove his ecological masculinity in the eyes of influential men such as McDonald or Miller given how Kimmel explains that "American men define their masculinity, not as much in relation to women, but in relation to each other" (5). Therefore, Andrews does not listen to Francine when she expresses her disappointment with him going hunting with Miller and the other men:

> Francine shook her head, though she continued smiling. 'Yes, you'll be back; but you won't be the same. You'll not be so young; you will become like the others.' Andrews looked at her confusedly, and in his confusion cried: 'I will only become myself!' (67)

Francine is afraid Andrews will become an oppressor like the other men in Butcher's Crossing, meaning he will treat Francine as a "necessary part of the economy" (28) just like Miller explained earlier in the narrative. Francine is afraid Andrews will become subjected to the mechanisms that created both Miller and McDonald thus making him "become like the others". Andrews's response to Francine presents a contrast to her concern as he declares to her that he will only become himself. What Andrews's answer implies is that his journey out in nature with Miller and the other men will make him able to realize his masculinity as an ecological man. However, the narrator remarks that Andrews reacts in a confused manner when he answers Francine which indicates that Andrews has not yet understood what it is he is looking for. What he does realize, however, is that he will not find his identity in Butcher's Crossing, he knows that he needs to escape these normative constructions of masculinity. Ultimately, Andrews's treatment of Francine before he ventures out with Miller proves that he is capable of resisting the hegemonic masculinities McDonald and Miller represent through his ability to recognize the structures that put Francine in her position which leads him to deciding to not take advantage of her.

Crucially, Andrews's relationship to Francine shows the vitality of her agency in Andrews's construction of masculinity because it allows him to construct a masculinity that is not dependent on the assertion of external hegemony over women. As such, Andrews's resistance to hegemonic forms of American masculinity derives its strength from the subversion of the power-dynamics between men and women which paves the way for the ecologization of masculinity in relation to nature. Andrews's treatment of Francine makes the ecological transition from hegemony to ecology possible because his masculinity provides an answer to the legitimacy of patriarchy. It does so by fostering a masculine ideal that exists outside of the inherent power structures Francine is the product of, meaning Andrews treats Francine as an individual that has agency outside the power structures the eastern and western hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller reproduce. Thus, Andrews displaces his masculinity as an ecological subject meaning he utilizes the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity to situate himself as an equal in terms of power in related to women and nature. This way, Andrews constructs a masculinity that does not seek to dominate or exploit, he

rather seeks to construct his masculinity in concert with women and nature, juxtaposing their power alongside his own power.

3.3 Ecological Liberation

Having examined Andrews's resistance to hegemony, it is now crucial to look at how Andrews constructs an ecological masculinity through situating his masculinity as an equal to nature instead of an opposing force to it. By resisting hegemony, Andrews learns that power can be subverted and that nature's subordination to men may be changed. For this change in power to happen, however, it requires Andrews to present his masculinity as an alternative to American hegemonic masculinity. To do this, we must examine how his masculinity gradually transforms from a traditional American masculinity toward an ecological masculinity where men and nature are equal in terms of power.

Andrews's first step in changing his masculinity is observed early in the narrative as we learn that his first encounter with nature fills him with a desire to escape civilization:

> He felt that wherever he lived, and wherever he would live hereafter, he was leaving the city more and more, withdrawing into the wilderness. He felt that that was the central meaning he could find in all his life, and it seemed to him then that all the events of his childhood and his youth had led him unknowingly to this moment upon which he poised, as if before flight. (52)

This passage indicates that Andrews is set on escaping the power dynamics he has been part of his whole life. His desire to escape the city to withdraw into the wilderness is an indication that he wants to construct a masculinity that recognizes the agency of nature by absolving the notion that masculinity needs to exist as an opposing force to nature. Interestingly, as Andrews sees the events of his life leading up to this moment, the moment where he leaves civilization, he likens it to taking flight for the first time. His likening of standing on the line between civilization and nature may indicate that he is imagining himself as soaring up to a heavenly place the very moment he sets foot out in nature. To Bolman, Andrews's divine outlook on nature creates a passive masculinity "that can justify *inaction* in the face of global warming" (3). In the case of *Butcher's Crossing's* narrative, Andrews's divination of nature may be read as a reaction to the rapid urbanization of America, leading him to seek out nature as an escape from the rapidly changing world. However, Andrews's initial escape from civilization may be a sign of his masculinity becoming more ecological, such a divine

ecologization of nature "becomes a passive messianism, waiting in vain for some action that will "fix" nature's anger" (3). Thus, Andrews's initial escape from civilization creates a passive ecological masculinity in which he expects to find a divine entity that will preserve nature. Thus, while Andrews's initial ecologization of masculinity may be a passive one, it is still important in the process of transforming his masculinity from hegemonization toward ecologization.

As the narrative progresses, and Andrews spends more and more time in nature, we learn how Andrews's masculinity starts to transition toward a more symbiotic relationship with nature. Such a transition is crucial in Andrews's realization of his ecological masculinity because it subverts his notion of nature as a divine being, making him able to understand how living out in nature requires actions from him as well. This symbiotic relationship with nature becomes visible in the narrative as Andrews becomes more comfortable being out in nature:

> The land looked calm and undisturbed; he wondered idly at the half-submerged fear he had had of it during their crossing. Now that they were over it, it had the appearance of a friend known for a long while – it offered him a sense of security, a sense of comfort, and a knowledge that he could return to it and have that security and comfort whenever he wished. (129)

In this part of the narrative, Andrews starts to familiarize himself with nature as he starts to consider it an old friend. His consideration of nature as a friend instead of a divine entity signals that Andrews is beginning form a reciprocal relationship with nature. His idea of nature as a friend signal that he is positioning nature as an equal to himself, that nature has an agency of equal status to his masculinity. Consequently, Andrews begins to feel comfortable and secure in nature which indicates that he is able to assert his masculinity in nature without having to dominate or exploit it.

It is thus crucial to understand that Andrews's ecological masculinity is constructed as an opposition to the hegemonic masculinities of McDonald and Miller due to how "hegemonic masculinities have been constructed in opposition to nature" (MacGregor & Seymour 11). As a result, Andrews's ecological constructs itself as an opposition to masculine hegemonization. Thus, Andrews's ecological masculinity stems from his resistance he showed McDonald and Miller earlier in the narrative. To be able to maintain his ecological masculinity in nature, then, Andrews has to reproduce his ecological masculinity as an intrinsic part of nature as his masculinity opposes the masculinities of the other men in the

narrative. We get an idea of how Andrews's ecological masculinity operates as part of nature as we read his experiences with being trapped by snow in a valley for six months:

> The snow was gathered high upon the mountainside, so that no longer did his eyes meet a solid sheet of green; now he saw each tree sharply defined against the snow which surrounded it. (216)

The way Andrews is perceiving nature here is important because it shows how he starts to diverge from a view of nature as a single entity, given how he is starting to see the vegetation as individual plants instead of experiencing them as vague colors in the landscape. As the landscape is covered in snow, nature's details become more visible to him, allowing him to look upon nature in a new light. Andrews's changing view of nature signals that his ecological masculinity's ability to reproduce itself in nature becomes stronger because he now starts to recognize the individual entities in nature. What this recognition allows his ecological masculinity to do, then, is reproducing itself in relation to each individual plant and animal instead of relating to nature as a whole. This way, Andrews's view of nature as a set of individuals makes it possible for his ecological masculinity to constantly reproduce itself because there are always new trees or animals to include the reproduction of ecological relations. Andrews's realization, that nature consists of a multitude of individual plants and creatures, dawns on him as he realizes his view of nature has changed:

> Looking at the land which had become so familiar to him that he had got out of the habit of noticing it, and which now was suddenly strange to him, so strange that he could hardly believe that he had looked upon it before. (216)

Andrews's newfound vision of nature as something strange not only opposes the hegemonizing tendencies of traditional American masculinity, but it also opposes his original vision of nature as something divine and idealized. In addition, his strange outlook on nature comes as the direct result of his view of nature as the sum of all the plants and animals instead of seeing nature as one single entity. As such, we must understand that Andrews's recognition of nature as comprising of individual plants and creatures indicates that he starts seeing nature in a scientific way, which is a key part of Hultman and Pulé's conceptualization of Ecological Masculinity. The scientific view of nature does not mean that Andrews starts collecting data about nature, it means that he starts to see nature "as a branch of biology that explores the ways that organisms interact with each other and the ecosystems within which they live"

(Hultman and Pulé 54). This way, Andrews's ecological masculinity changes from viewing nature as a single divine entity into seeing it as multitude of ecosystems and organisms. This change in vision, from an idealized divine outlook to a scientific ecological view, makes Andrews's ecological masculinity important in establishing masculine ideals of nurture and care for nature. Andrews's ecological masculinity presents such ideals of care and nurture for nature as he extends his homosocial relations toward the sights and sounds, he observes:

> in the distance there came the soft echoing snap of a branch that gave beneath its weight of snow; across the camp, from the drifted corral, came the sharp snort of a horse, so loud that Andrews imagined for a moment that it was only a few feet away. (216)

As Andrews spends more time in nature, the more distinct sounds and movements become from plants and animals become to him. As he hears one of the horses snorting, he imagines it being in close proximity to him which is a signifier of Andrews trying to extend his homosocial relations horizontally toward nature. What Andrews's homosocial extension toward nature indicates, then, is that he wants to gain an emotional closeness with nature's plants and living creatures. By extending his homosocial relations toward nature, Andrews facilitates displaces his masculine power from being solely dependent on the homosocial relations between other men into being able to include the land and animals in his configuration of masculinity.

What we must realize, however, is that while Andrews extends his homosocial relations horizontally to include nature in his masculine relations, his ecological masculinity can only be sustained in nature as his ecological masculinity lacks a proper language to be able to extend its homosocial relations toward other men. As Asquith remarks, Andrews is "having difficulty expressing what it is that [he] is looking for" (29). This difficulty to express himself is seen several times in the narrative as Andrews has trouble expressing to both McDonald and Miller what he wants to achieve by venturing out in the wilderness, he merely states that "It's something that I have to do" (19). Andrews's lack of language stands in stark contrast to the languages of McDonald and Miller who both possess languages that allows them to express what they want to achieve. McDonald's language is business, and, as we have previously seen, McDonald uses his language to try and convince Andrews to become a businessman. Miller, on the other hand, uses his language as a hunter to articulate his desire to hunt down a buffalo herd of legendary size. However, even as Andrews spends months out in the wild with the other men, he never develops a language for his ecological masculinity, as

the narrator remarks: “He came to accept the silence he lived in, and tried to find meaning in it. One by one he viewed the men who shared that silence with him” (236). Andrews’s attempt at finding meaning in the silence he endures might be read as him trying to develop a language he can use to assert his ecological masculinity. However, he never develops any such language during the course of the narrative, making his ecological masculinity impossible to reproduce in American society because he lacks a language that can help him extend the homosocial relations of his ecological masculinity to the other men.

Consequently, Andrews’s ecological masculinity is not resilient enough to be able to reproduce itself in among the other men in American society. His ecological masculinity’s lack of language is a vital aspect in understanding why Andrews ultimately decides to leave civilization behind. Without the ability to extend his homosocial relations to other men, Andrews’s ecological masculinity lacks the necessary means to survive in the hierarchal power structure other American masculinities are part of.

We get to see how Andrews is unable to reproduce his ecological masculinity as he makes his return from the wilderness to Butcher’s Crossing. Back in the village, Andrews starts having frequent sexual intercourse with Francine, which would make it seem like he has given up his ecological masculinity. It is thus credible to ask if Andrews’s masculinity gives in to the power of hegemonic masculinity due to how he is seemingly unable to resist the urge to assert external hegemony over women by having sexual intercourse with Francine. Consequently, the narrator remarks that “he moved across the room to where Francine waited in the darkness” (303). The darkness becomes a metaphor for how Andrews is not able to clearly see that the power of hegemonic masculinity, which he initially resisted, now leads him into the reproduction of patriarchal power relations.

However, Andrews’s participation in the reproduction of hegemony is only temporary as he is finally able to resist his urges: “Gradually he came to look upon his frequent and desperate unions with Francine as if they were performed by someone else” (305). As such, Andrews gains an awareness of the power that is working on him, making him able to see that his actions came as a result of him giving up his resistance the hegemonization of American masculinity. Therefore, Andrews understands that he cannot stay in Butcher’s Crossing, nor can he return to the East, “to the country that had given him birth, had raised him in the shape he occupied and the condition that he had only begun to recognize, […] No, he would never return” (324). The reason why Andrews will never return to the East is that while nature may be revered there, eastern men do nothing to preserve nature when he witnesses how men in the West exploit nature in the name of civilization. In other words, if Andrews wants to live in

the civilized parts of America, he has to partake in the reproduction of what Cenamor and Brandt calls "the essentialist view that posits nature in contrast to masculinity" (x). Which is to say that Andrews has to live in a world where the exploitation of nature remains an intrinsic part of American hegemonic masculinity.

Thus, Andrews's ecological masculinity, formulated by Hultman and Pulé as a "transformation from hegemonisation to ecologisation" (155), means that while Andrews himself may have transformed his masculinity from hegemonization to ecologization, the world around him remains the same. As a result, Andrews decides to leave it behind:

> Except for the general direction he took, he did not know where he was going; but he knew that it would come to him later in the day. He rode forward without hurry, and felt behind him the sun slowly rise and harden the air. (326)

Because the sun is behind Andrews as he starts riding, we learn that he is headed west due to how "a thin edge of sun flamed above the eastern horizon" (325). Given how Andrews does not know where he is off to signals that he is aware that he is entering a world where there are no place names because human civilization has not come that far, meaning there is a world he is entering that is free from the powers of hegemonic masculinity. Thus, he escapes hegemonic masculinity on a geographical level as he is entering a land where there are no men who reproduce hegemonic power relations. However, an argument against this could be in fact that Andrews is performing the ultimate hegemonic masculinity narrative as he is heading out west again, reproducing the American narrative of discovery. This argument is forwarded by Anthony Hutchinson's article "'Young America' and the Anti-Emersonian Western" (2020) where he argues that Andrews is "another Miller or McDonald, no doubt, in the making" (255). Hutchinson essentially postulates that Andrews's experiences with Miller in the wild were so traumatic that he instead seeks "the next heedless adventure in primitive accumulation: the scramble for land, exchangeable commodities, and, ultimately, whatever capital can be accrued from either" (255). Andrews's decision to head out West again signals to Hutchinson that the narrative forwards ideals affiliated with primitive living. Thus, Hutchinson reads Andrews's narrative as a reproduction of the frontier man who use nature as an arena to prove his manhood.

However, we might disagree with Hutchinson's interpretation by reading what happens on the textual level as Andrews decides to leave Butcher's Crossing. As he saddles

up his horse prepares to ride away from Butcher's Crossing, we get a glimpse of how the text gives us a hint towards how Andrews does not reproduce hegemonic masculinity:

> His horse's reins were tough and slick in his hands; he was acutely aware of the rocklike smoothness of the saddle he sat in, of the gentle swelling movement of the horse's sides as it took in air and expelled it. He breathed deeply the fragrant air that rose from the new grass and mingled with the musty sweat of his horse. (326)

The language in this quotation acts counter-hegemonic in how it portrays Andrews's keen awareness of his natural surroundings, indicating Andrews's desire to exist alongside nature as an equal. Andrews's awareness of how his horse moves and breathes becomes a metaphor for how he now sees himself as part of the cycles of nature. This notion is underlined by how Andrews is described as riding "forward without hurry" (326), meaning he has no sense of urgency which is significant because it indicates that he has no specific goal of gaining anything from his new voyage. We should remember in this regard that Asquith argued that "he [Andrews] understands that no meaning nor new identity awaits him, only a different way of seeing" (43) which is to say that Andrews has freed himself from conceptions of nature as a passive entity that will invigorate his masculinity with meaning. Instead, he has learned to see nature as an independent collection of ecosystems that are slowly being eradicated by American men. Consequently, Andrews's masculinity forwards ideals of care and nurture as his narrative portrays a masculinity where the end goal is simply to exist alongside nature by becoming part of its natural cycles. Thus, Andrews's embodiment of an ecological masculinity allows men and nature to live in a symbiotic relationship where ideals of masculinity are associated with taking care of nature instead of destroying it. As such, Andrews's masculinity is liberated from the hegemonizing power of American masculinity as he is able to construct a masculinity that is able to exist outside the inherent power dynamics of American hegemonic masculinity.

Conclusively, Andrews leaving civilization behind as a protective measure for his ecological masculinity becomes a metaphor for how the narrative tells the reader that for new masculinities to be constructed, men have to step outside the current power structures they are part of. As a result, *Butcher's Crossing* presents a narrative of how American masculinity may be subverted in favor of a masculinity that engages with nature on a level where ideals of care and nurture can be considered masculine ideals as instead of using nature as an opposition to masculinity. By subverting the notion that masculinity needs to assert dominance as a protective measure of the domination of other men, Andrews's ecological

masculinity stands in stark opposition to the literary representations hegemonic masculinity McDonald and Miller embody by positioning itself as an intrinsic part of nature, promoting care and nurture as ideals of masculinity.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined how *Butcher's Crossing* (1960) offers a counter-hegemonic narrative of American masculinity as embodied by Will Andrews in his construction of an ecological masculine identity. Specifically, by focusing on Andrews's interactions between McDonald and Miller, the thesis deconstructs the power machinations of American masculinity to illuminate the counter-hegemonic narrative Andrews's character represents. Therefore, it is crucial that Andrews's narrative is read in the context of studying the masculinities of McDonald and Miller as they represent the internal hegemonies of American masculinity Andrews constructs his masculinity in opposition to.

To fully understand Andrews's counter-hegemonic narrative, then, the thesis engages in a close reading of the key characters McDonald and Miller through the application of Connell's concept of "Hegemonic Masculinity", Kimmel's concept of "Homosocial Relations", and Hultman and Pulé's concept of "Ecological Masculinities". Evidently, McDonald and Miller's characters are based on two different ideals of masculinity, namely the civilized world of the East and the primitive world of the wild West. McDonald, with his business of buying and selling land and buffalo hides, represents values of civilization through the commodification of nature, while Miller represents primitive ideals of using nature as an arena to display is masculinity. Understanding these men as representations of eastern and western America is key because it sets up the central power struggle between the two men in the narrative. This power struggle is important to understand because it highlights a key aspect of American masculinity, namely that American men use domination of nature and women as protection against being dominated by other men. Accordingly, both McDonald and Miller seek to establish an internal hegemony over other men to protect their hegemonic masculinities from being subjected to domination of other men. Therefore, the thesis reads McDonald and Miller's efforts of establishing internal hegemony by focalizing on the interactions between them and Andrews because it shows the specific mechanics of how their internal hegemonies are asserted. Crucially, we learn that McDonald and Miller are ultimately emasculated by the collapse of the hide market which is an important signifier of how Andrews's narrative progresses beyond their narratives of hegemonic masculinity.

McDonald and Miller's internal hegemonies share the fundamental idea of man being above nature, which is why their attempts at including Andrews in their internal hegemonies revolve around convincing Andrews to partake in their exploitative practices. As a result, McDonald and Miller extend their homosocial relations toward Andrews by forwarding the

idea that men need to assert their external hegemony by way of domination and exploitation. However, Andrews's narrative provides a counter-hegemonic alternative by having Andrews refuse McDonald and Miller's masculinities. Andrews's resistance to their internal hegemonies is thus manifested in how he refuses to establish an external hegemony which provides grounds for his ecological masculinity to take form. Consequently, Andrews's ecological masculinity becomes a construct that is able to exist outside the inherent power structures of American masculinity. He can do so by doing away with the conception that masculinity should be seen as an opposite to nature by extending his homosocial relations toward it. Andrews is then able to construct an ecological masculinity by displacing himself as an ecological subject as he starts seeing himself as part of nature's ecosystems. Andrews's decision to ride out further West, then, symbolizes his escape from civilization in favor of simply existing in concert with nature. This action signifies his final transition from hegemonization to ecologization as he physically escapes the power structures that reproduce men's hegemony over nature.

The narrative of *Butcher's Crossing* contributes to opening conversations about how men can engage with nature in more meaningful ways by offering a counter-hegemonic narrative to normative constructions of American masculinity. As Andrews resists the hegemonic masculinities of eastern and western America, as represented by the characters McDonald and Miller, Andrews's narrative offers an alternative portrayal of American masculinity. He does so by contesting and resisting traditional narratives of American masculinity by refusing to partake in the reproduction of men's external hegemony over women and nature. By doing so, Andrews is able to construct and ecological masculinity that exists outside the power structures of American masculinity which simultaneously frees him from being part of these structures.

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