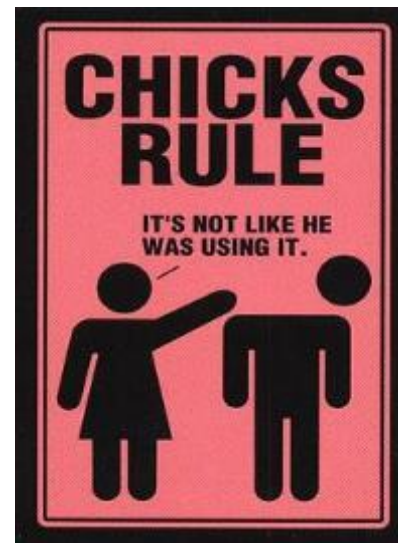




# Misandry and the second sexism



1

Russell Delderfield

1. An introduction to misandry
2. The Second Sexism?
3. 'Men hating' and the male body
4. Conclusions

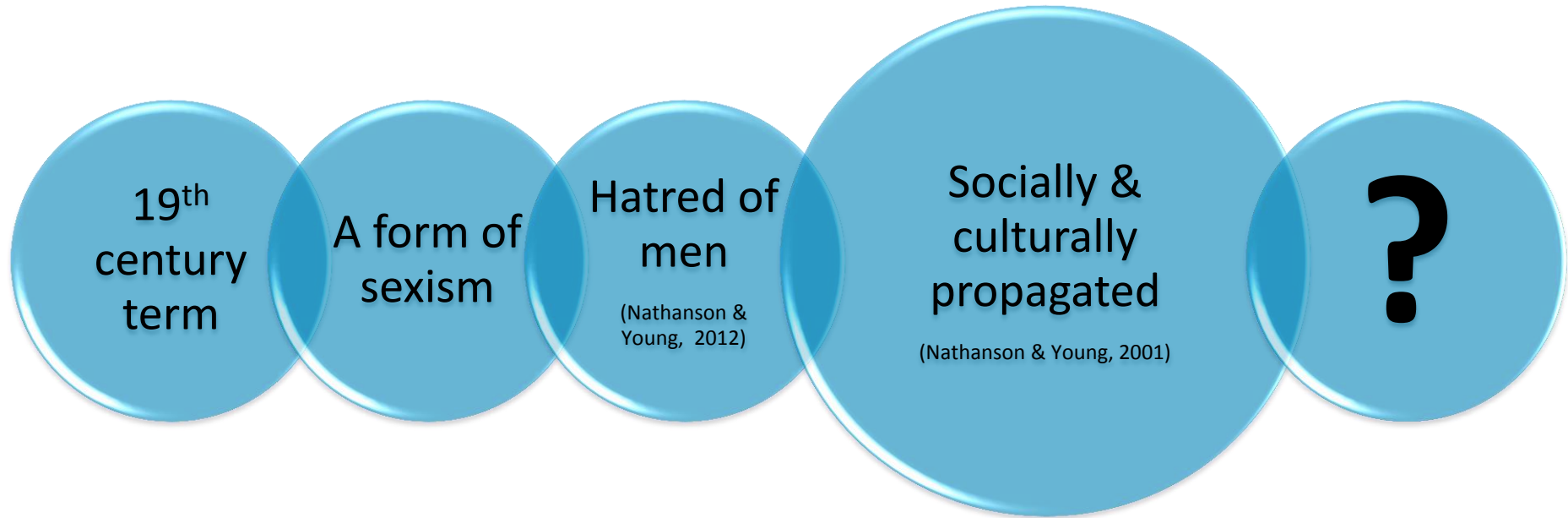
## What led me here?



- Critical studies on men (CSM, Gough & Robertson, 2010)
  - Male mental health
  - The male body
- The aim of today's talk
  - Problems, problems



# 1. An introduction to misandry



2



3



4

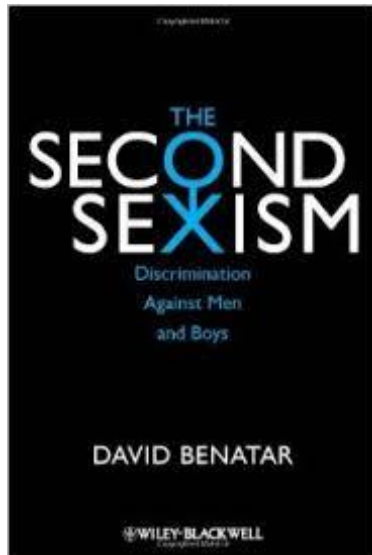
# Changing Roles?

**“Men and women are really angry at each other ... We don’t know how to live together, don’t trust each other. Men are feeling displaced; women are angry.” (Nathanson & Young, 2012: 1)**

- Soldier, Lord, Frontiersman, Expert, Breadwinner (Gilmore, 1994)
- Messages given to gender are more important than gender itself (Andersen and DiDomenico, 1992)
- “...contradictions men feel in relation to their masculinity” (Seidler, 1989: 185)
- Men ‘contaminated’ with femininity (Till, 2010).
- Invulnerability & stoicism = manliness
  - ‘Passing’ and the dangers of not ‘passing’ (Gough & Robertson, 2010).

**“Being a man is brilliant. Seriously, it is. Except for penile dysmorphia, circumcision, paying the bill, becoming a weekend father, critics who’ve been hating on us for, well, pretty much fifty years – oh, and those pesky early deaths...” (Lloyd, 2014: 1).**

- A “toxic cultural environment”
- Whose ideas of manhood?
- The proliferation of difference over sharedness (Benatar, 2012)
- An assumption that men have a godlike power not to succumb to hostile stereotypes about themselves (Nathanson & Young, 2012) .
  - Sex, Health, Money (Faludi, 1999; Lloyd, 2014)
- Men as ontologically evil (Nathanson & Young, 2001)
- Emptiness and Obsolescence



(Benatar, 2012)

Combat

Violence

Family

Punishment

Bodily  
Privacy

### Combat

- Men are more disposable, men fear cowardice more than death

### Violence

- Men thrive on it, sexual assault, intimate partner abuse

### Family

- Custody & paternity, less attachment, life expectancy

### Punishment

- Corporal discipline, sentence severity

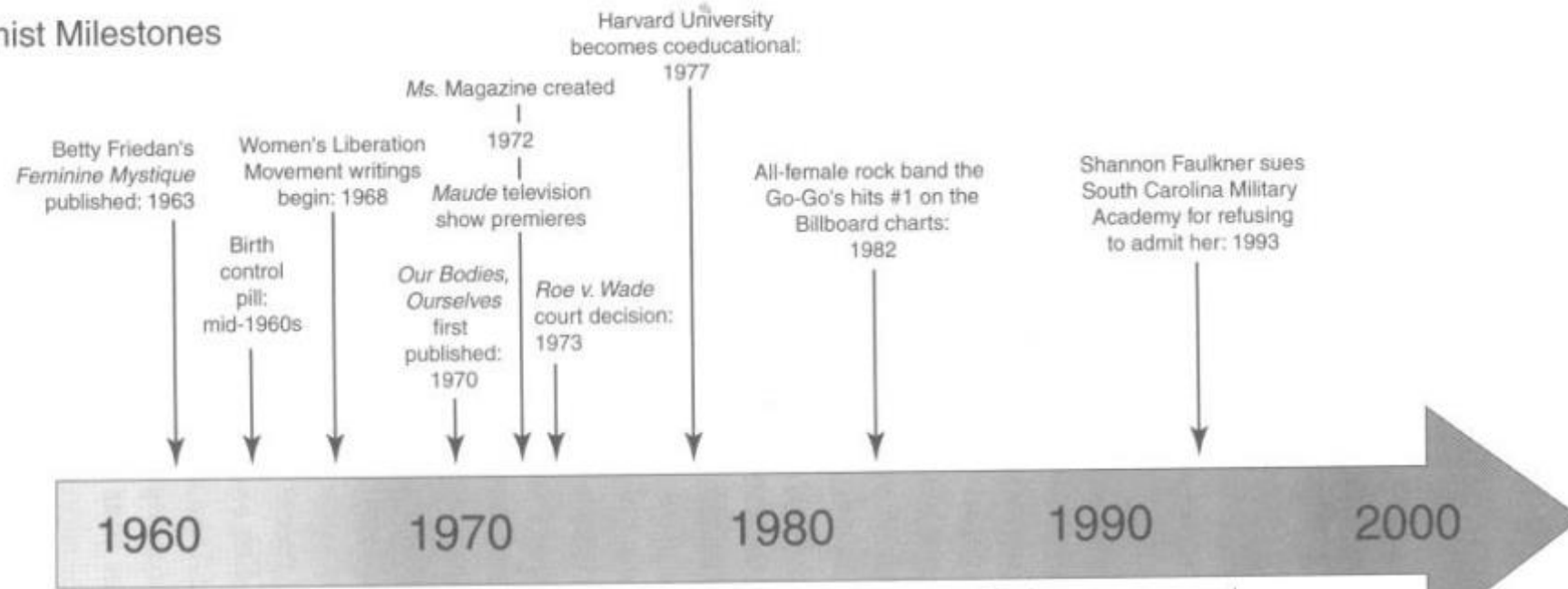
### Bodily Privacy

- Men require less, value it less, nudity is not 'the same' for men

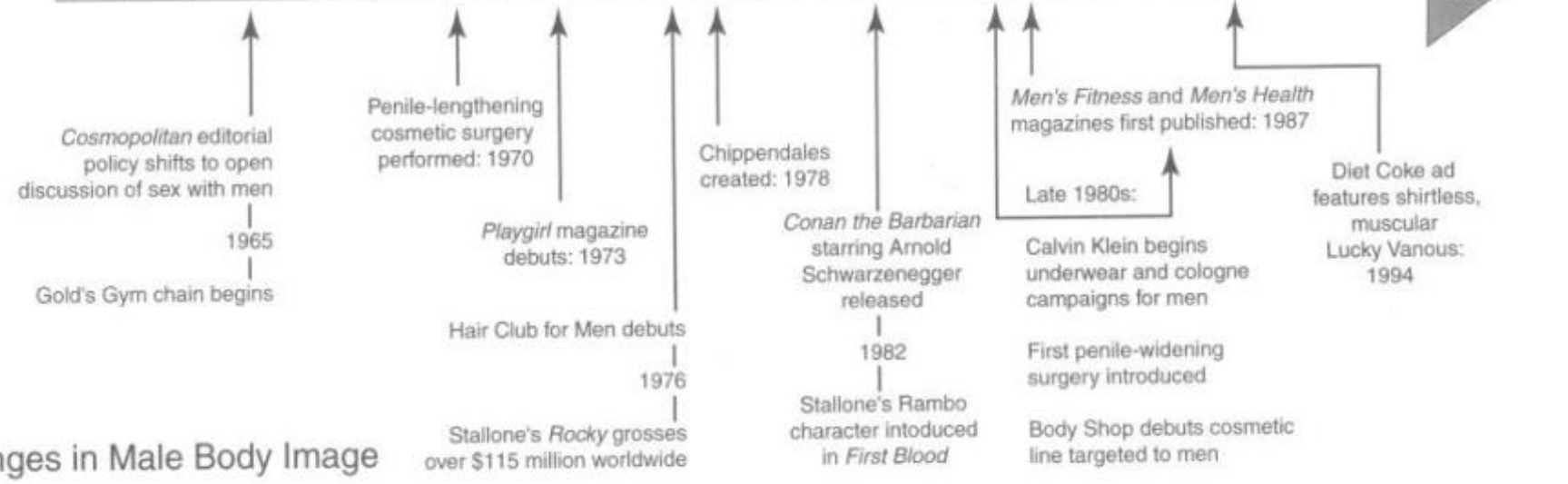


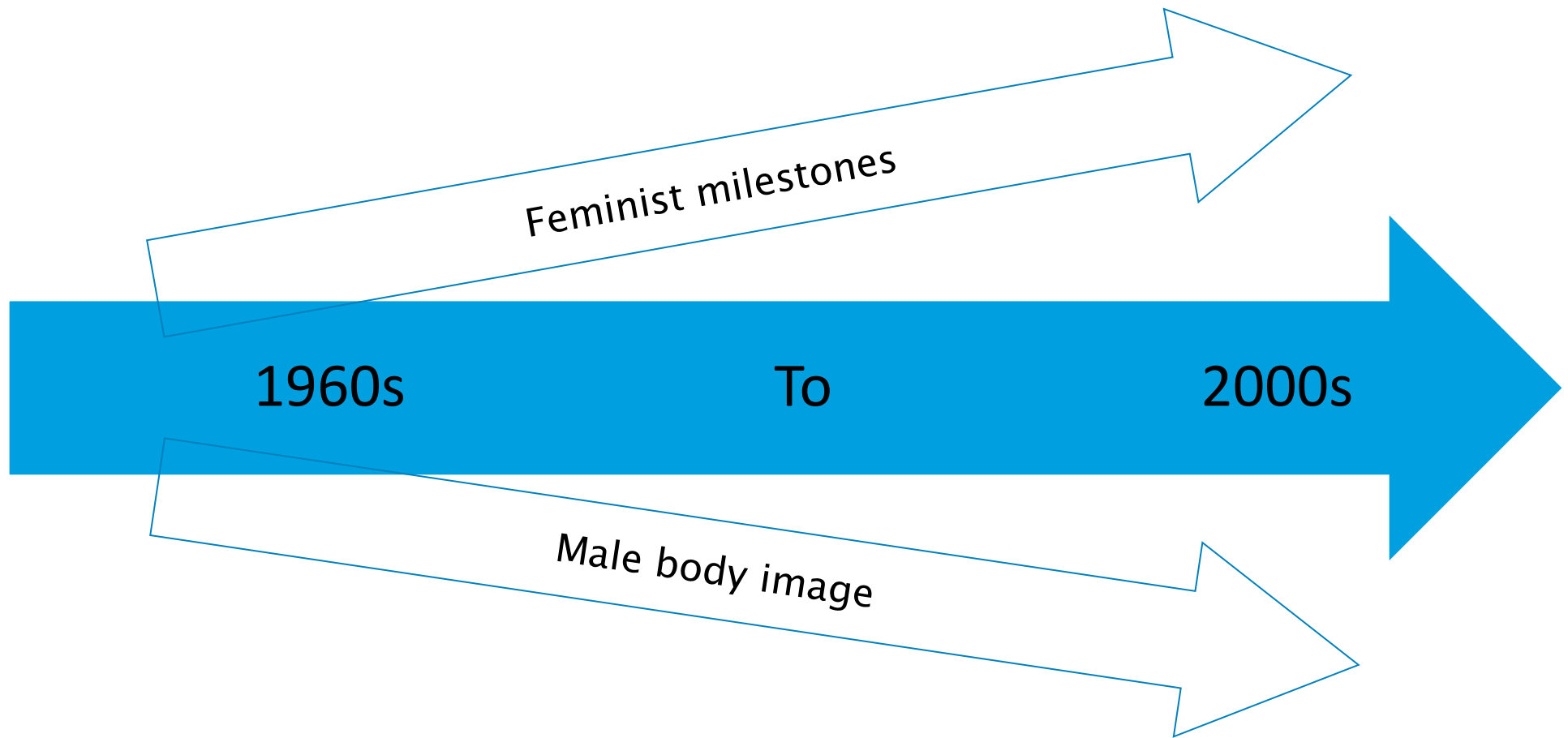
Milestones of feminism and the mounting cultural emphasis on the male body over the past forty years.

## Feminist Milestones



## Changes in Male Body Image





(Pope et al., 2000)



5

“...the male body...is a punishing crucible in which the ego is painfully subjected to the tyranny of the Ideal.”  
(Gilmore, 1994: 214)



6

### 3. 'Men hating' and the male body

- The level of disproportion is astounding = not just lean/contoured/muscular



- almost a 30% increase to chest size.

- "...with many contemporary figures far exceeding the muscularity of even the largest human bodybuilders" (Pope et al., 1999: 70).



- Young boys say 'muscles are better'

(Baghurst et al., 2006; Baghurst et al., 2007; Brownell and Napolitano, 1995)

"and now men's body ideal also seems to be drifting further away from biological health" (Morgan, 2000: 1373).

- Marginalising men – the example of men with eating disorders. The male voice is missing from eating disorders research (Dalglish and Nutt, 2013)
- 'Man-up', get a grip and 'stop being a woman' (Räisänen and Hunt, 2014)

# Gareth

- As a child, I was severely overweight. By the time I was 16–17, I weighed 20 stone. Beforehand, at school, I was seriously bullied kids boys and girls alike. Boys would spit, kick, punch and hurl vocal abuse, girls were somehow worse. The words they spoke could be vile, and a look could last forever. It was a horrible experience, school that is.
- I always wanted to be thin, even when I was the fat guy at school. In recent years, I've looked to pictures of women and the like I find attractive. I don't think that its that I want to be a skinny woman, rather that I think they would never like me or want to be with a guy like me, fat. I never wanted to be muscular and macho and large. I guess its because I was always big and strong anyway, being 20 stone gives you a lot of power. I wanted the opposite, to be worryingly thin.
- Maybe there's something in being so very petite and fragile, reminiscent of the benevolent youth I never really had; or the reverse in comments about my weight being too much to being too little, or simply that I genuinely have such a lack of faith in women, inasmuch as they are all shallow and judgemental like all the little girls were in school, and that all guys are egotistical bigheads that like to down tread the outsiders.

## James

- This decision not to get professional help was down to the stigma involved with having an eating disorder. In my previous job I had to notify work about any mental health conditions and yet in reality the work side of my life has been manageable its my personal life that was a mess.
- Therefore I withdrew from all of my friends, and tried to keep myself to myself. This meant I lost some friends and hurt others because they couldn't understand what I was doing. If I did socialise I tried to go to the cinema around the corner because then I wouldn't have to talk to the people I went with. Alternatively I would socialise with people I didn't really know or didn't particularly want to socialise with!
- As for girlfriends I wouldn't give them long enough for them to get to know me because in my mind I knew I was worthless and that they'd soon find that out! So as soon as I felt they were getting to know too much about me, I would completely withdraw with no explanation

## Josh

- I still hate myself. I cannot stand the way I look. I think I am fat, I think I am ugly. I would like to write 'I know I am' rather than I think I am.
- I am very strict to keep my weight down. I tend to eat less than 2,000 calories a day. Food beyond a certain time of day is a real problem for me. I think I will always have a problem. Not full on bulimia, that has now passed, I think. Yet it's not normal, surely, to dislike yourself so much as I do?



## Richard

- it was just me and my father left and I took it upon myself to take over the more 'feminine' roles which involved cleaning and more importantly cooking.
- I remember everyone getting worried because we all just stopped talking about food and it would no longer be offered to me, my girlfriend would be called out of the room by her mother, who would 'have words' and she would come back in tears because she couldn't help me.
- I must add, that even now, I find it hard to find employment because of the stigma around the eating disorder because I am a male but most of all, the people who have found it most difficult to deal with and have been most dismissive, have been my family.

“Let’s suppose an eating disorder really were a ‘women’s issue’ then, eating disorder aside, **what have we done to our men to make them believe that being anything like a woman is bad or something to feel ashamed about?** Apparently, we are in complete denial about the sexism that continues to be deeply instilled in boys by the society that’s supposed to nurture and enlighten them.”

(Delderfield, 2014)

# **The brain of a sensitive banker... the body of a ruthless warrior.**

- Men “police” one another (Gill et al., 2005).
- We are **holding one another to account** against masculinities that are not ‘natural’, that reinforce an ideal of masculinity (Connell, 2005).

1. Generations of men have experienced a shift in their understanding and embodiment of masculinity. This may be causing recourse to inhabiting a uniquely male space – the body.
2. This in turn may explain the apparent shift in the increase in dysfunctional relationships with the body in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
3. Men may feel as if their masculinity is being challenged on several fronts. This is not surprising, if the misandry debate is taken into account. However, it could be argued that the majority of discrimination perpetrated against men is by other men.
4. “Powerlessness may have become confused with femaleness” (Katzman, 1997: 72). Currently this remains unaddressed in the study of masculinity. Leading to a “deeply embedded double standard...” which “...corrodes the very notion of equality...” (Nathanson & Young, 2012: 8).

See my research blog at <http://blogs.brad.ac.uk/russell-delderfield/> for a downloadable, full list of sources and image acknowledgements, and the slides featured in today's talk.