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**‘A Performance of Appearance’:
Men, Masculinities and Appearance Medicine**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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Abstract

Masculinity, masculine work places and masculine grooming are all changing. Men of the twenty-first century are experiencing a deconstruction of traditional hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995), as the deindustrialisation of traditional male work places erode the need for men to present a work ethic based upon physical strength.¹ With this erosion of traditional work places, there are changes afoot relocating men, their masculinity and their exterior appearance away from the embedded practices of traditional hegemonic masculinity towards a new ‘performance of appearance’ within contemporary interactive service employment roles.

These changes are not merely occurring from free will, but are mediated by marketing trends and the promotion of the masculine body as an objectified resource, through which men can remain visible and successful in contemporary work places. This movement, however, requires a means to facilitate the changes, with the masculine *habitus* posed as being the vehicle for actualisation.

This thesis draws upon my lived and worked experiences as a Registered Nurse within the appearance medicine sector. I explore contemporary masculine beautification, and the potential paradoxical situation of the emergence of a new masculinity associated with a ‘performance of appearance’ within contemporary work places, but achieved through an adherence to practices associated with traditional hegemonic masculinity. Using a web content analysis approach, I explore masculine appearance medicine websites, the services they offer to men and the marketing trends implemented to engage men with this practice.

My research produces findings that are both multi-faceted and interrelated. The key outcomes suggest that changes are occurring within the construct of masculinity and that men need to both become aware of, and engage with, their *habitus* as a facilitator for change. The findings also present the contradictory practice of masculine appearance medicine treatments being marketed through the constraints

¹ Traditional hegemonic masculinity is the culturally normative ideal of masculine behaviour (Connell, 2005).

and comforts of traditional hegemonic practices. My findings suggest that although the construct of masculinity is porous, and a shift in practices is occurring, with a 'performance of appearance' emerging as a feature of a new work place masculinity, men still require the comforts provided by traditional hegemonic practices in order to facilitate this change.

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Chapter One

“Beauty is a currency system like the gold standard. Like any economy, it is determined by politics, and in the modern age in the West it is the last, best belief system that keeps male dominance intact” (Wolf, 1991, p12).

Introduction

The cultural context of modern masculine grooming

Masculine grooming is changing. The notion that to cut one’s hair, shave and maybe dab on a little aftershave will suffice, no longer applies to men who want to remain at the cutting edge of the modern day work force. Men now have to invest in their appearance, to refine and perfect it according to current social ideals, spending increasing amounts of time and money on lotions, potions and expensive treatment rituals. The results for men are remarkable, furnishing them with a self-worth, self-identity, increased respect and work place participation, all for devoting a little time to improving their grooming routine.

Men’s investment in personal grooming, which extends beyond the previous functional tasks, demonstrates that their external appearance may no longer be located within the constraints of traditional hegemonic masculinity. This development in men’s visual appearance informs of an evolving story defining the subjectivity of men, their values, interests and social positioning. Yet, the numerous options available to men to work upon their appearance may provide a platform of empowerment, allowing men to become who they want to be, with them not necessarily conforming to the culturally defined expectations of how they should behave when they reach middle age. This is particularly pertinent as men may no longer be able to rely solely upon their physical strength and courage to maintain a

competitive work place edge within the youth driven, interactive service work places of today.²

Western men, of the twenty-first century, are experiencing the deconstruction of traditional hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995), as the deindustrialisation of the traditional male work place has eroded the need for men to present a work aesthetic based upon physical strength. These changes demand that men adapt their bodies to the challenges presented with a feminisation of the work place; whereby employment roles have shifted from that of industrial production to embracing interactive service roles (McDowell, 2009). Such changes require men to modify their appearance to comply with the current ideology that to be masculine and career successful, one must simultaneously be well groomed and youthful.

The pressure for men to appear younger, irrespective of their true age, is highlighted by an increasing trend for men in their 50's and 60's investing in more radical cosmetic treatment options (The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, ASPS, 2011). Men are engaging with cosmetic enhancement to project a dynamic and younger image that implies they are still able to perform well, and is specifically relevant to contemporary work places (ASPS, 2011). The correlation between job advancement, mature age visibility and a vibrant exterior aesthetic, is becoming well documented (McDowell, 2009) in an appearance driven culture that judges individuals as one "judges a book by its cover" (North American Precis Syndicate, 1998, p. 31, para. 4). The pressure to remain young looking is evident from the uptake of both cosmetic surgery and appearance medicine procedures by men in recent years, with no decline anticipated in the near future (ASPS, 2011). Middle age men have generally looked after their bodies, albeit shaped by the traditional model of masculinity, and are loathe to forgo the benefits of youth when reducing its impact visually remains attainable (Reinberg, 2011).³

² Interactive service work refers to work which is customer facing and requires the individuals involved to present a well groomed and preferably youthful appearance (McDowell, 2003).

³ Cosmetic surgery is the surgically invasive and aesthetic form of plastic surgery, used to improve a patient's appearance and self-esteem, whereas reconstructive surgery is performed to reconfigure naturally occurring, or inflicted physical defects (Hennink-Kaminski, 2006); Appearance medicine generally defines procedures that do not involve invasive surgery and general anaesthesia but are cosmetic in nature.

Men's willingness to invest in grooming practices, beyond the routines of previous generations, reflects a change in the cultural code of conduct expected of men employed within contemporary work places.⁴ Such changes simultaneously reflect fluidity within the concept of masculinity, resulting in the exposure of a porosity within traditional hegemonic masculinity. These changes, therefore, empower men to transcend the constraints of the traditional hegemonic model of masculinity, in favour of a masculinity founded upon exterior aesthetics. The changing value of the masculine work place aesthetic represents a dynamic move away from a physical strength-focused work place performance, towards a 'performance of appearance' on the part of men. This passage towards a masculinity based upon the 'performance of appearance' is characterised by a paradox, insofar as its emergence must occur through the discourses and practices of traditional hegemonic masculinity.

My story

The potential movement within masculinities, away from the traditionally held practices towards more modernistic behaviours, focused my attention on the possibility of a question emerging from this trend regarding men's performativity. More specifically, my motivation into this field of enquiry reflects my interest in men's appearance medicine and is the culmination of 30 years of lived experiences. I have been aware of the changes afoot within masculine work places over the past two or three decades. I have watched my husband transition from being a qualified engineer, working in a traditionally hegemonic industrial work place in the early 1980's, through to his present day office based, interactive service employment within the telecommunications and information technology sector. However, it was not until I embarked upon undergraduate study in 2003, and was introduced to the works of R.W. Connell and her understanding of masculinities, Linda McDowell and her work *Redundant Masculinities* and Ruth Levitas' work on social exclusion, that I realised the experiences I had shared with my husband were being explored at an academic level.

⁴ Contemporary work places refers to the interactive service sector of employment.

These fields of academia have subsequently inspired and influenced much of my writing and postgraduate study, allowing me to reflect and draw upon my life experiences to enrich my fields of research. My interest in men's lived experiences of contemporary society is a further extension of my previous work, but it is my work as a Registered Nurse that provided the inspiration to research men's participation in the appearance medicine market. Having nursed for over 20 years, and specialised in cosmetic surgery and appearance medicine over the past ten years, I have witnessed a change in the demographic of clientele undergoing treatments. The changing demographic refers not to the increasing number of women attempting to retain their youthful glow, but to the growing number of men who are now also consuming these treatments.

This movement towards increased masculine participation in contemporary beautification aligns with the working experiences of my husband. It was, however, the reflexive processes engendered in me through my years of nursing practice and academic study that provided my motivation to further explore the field of masculinities and masculine identity in relation to men's pursuit of appearance medicine.

The aims of the research

With my personal experiences in mind, the notion to formalise my enquiries has led me to examine the changing aesthetic of men who wish to successfully participate within the contemporary work places of interactive service work; with that changing aesthetic materialising, in part, as the consumption of appearance medicine treatments. I, therefore, explore the influences, the discourse and the cultural and social context in which men are currently portrayed.

More specifically, my research addresses the potential tension between traditional and emerging forms of masculinity, and the modes through which men negotiate their move away from displays of physical strength towards a 'performance of appearance'. My work looks at the transitional nature of the *habitus* in relation to men's movement between differing forms of masculinity, and the use of the

masculine body as a means of capital gain.⁵ For this, I draw upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1990), with *habitus* providing a mechanism to facilitate changes in the appropriation of men's behaviours and the modification of masculine practices.⁶ Furthermore, my research explores the obstacles and barriers through which men must negotiate their transition between differing forms of masculinity.

In order to explore the multifaceted components of men, their masculine practice and the changes that are occurring within contemporary work places, I draw upon the modern phenomenon of the World Wide Web (hereafter "the web") to analyse the marketing strategies of relevant masculine appearance medicine websites. In particular, I pay attention to the normalising and comforting ways in which the websites allay men's anxieties and fears of contemporary appearance medicine, and the marketing that offers men a means of security within what is traditionally a feminised realm. Finally, I study the means through which these websites present the masculine body as a project, and the role of technology as a means of actualisation of the contemporary culturally ideal body.

Statement of research

I investigate, through my research, the complex network of social and cultural factors at play within contemporary work places that persuade men to engage with their exterior aesthetic. More specifically, I examine men's uptake of appearance medicine treatments as a form of youth maintenance required to successfully participate in the current work place climate of interactive service roles. I do this through an examination of seven, male specific, beauty and appearance medicine websites.

My research is framed by an examination of the concepts of *habitus*, the body project, masculinities, and finally disciplinary power. More specifically, I examine the potential that men are moving between an allegiance to the traditional model of

⁵ *Habitus* is a concept used to refer to the norms and practices of particular social classes or groups and is acquired through the embedded everyday actions and social practices of the individual (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

⁶ Pierre Bourdieu was a French sociologist and philosopher and explored many forms of social dynamics.

masculinity and a more fluid, or potentially different, masculinity focused upon exterior appearances; the masculine body as a form of project to be worked upon, through which men can assign meaning and value to their appearance; the role of capital and symbolic violence as a power resource, executed through the narratives of the websites examined and the role of power as a normalising resource for men when engaging with appearance medicine.⁷

I utilise a web content analysis approach to analyse the trajectory taken by male appearance medicine websites in their attempt to engage men with the practice of beautification. My preference to pursue the analysis through a web content approach is appropriate, as this methodology is a remodelled version of the traditional content analysis method and, as such, provides a fitting tool through which to view the web. I pursue the engaging notion that men are moving between traditionally hegemonic and contemporary practices of beautification, but do so within the constraints of traditional hegemonic masculinity. Moreover, I consider the notion that men may be reshaping their *habitus* through their adherence to contemporary ideologies of masculine identities and the renegotiation of their engendered masculine qualities.

Subsequently, I applied a thematic approach to my analysis of the web content, coded and charted the data, so that I could offer an overview of what is happening both within the appearance medicine industry, together with the practice of men and masculinity in the twenty-first century.

Structure of thesis

My thesis comprises of six chapters. The first offers an overview of my proposed research area and introduces men's engagement with appearance medicine treatments specifically as a contemporary phenomenon. In chapter two I follow a path exploring the statistical evidence in the growth of the appearance medicine market over the past 15 years, which provides a backdrop to both the study and the phenomenon, that is, appearance medicine. I pay particular attention to the growth

⁷ Symbolic violence is a gentle or soft violence; it is invisible to the naked eye, even to its victims and is fundamentally the imposition of thought categories and perception upon dominated social agents, perpetuating the action of the dominant category of men (Bourdieu, 2001).

of the male appearance medicine market over this time frame. Chapter two also forms the framework for my research, in the format of a literature review, where I use Pierre Bourdieu's work on capital, *habitus*, masculine domination and symbolic violence; Chris Shilling's body projects, R.W. Connell's work on masculinities, and Michel Foucault's work on power and the normalising gaze.⁸ These theorists provide an interesting, diverse, yet interconnected discourse through which I can analyse and decipher the data I collect. Moreover, the theories of both Bourdieu and Connell are works that have been highly influential in terms of my academic interest.

In chapter three I outline the methodological approach I have taken with my research. I have divided this chapter into three parts to separate the methodological strategy, the websites identified and the themes emerging from the data. In part one I introduce the use of theoretical sampling in order to obtain the appropriate data to study; web content analysis as the most suitable analytical tool for the study of websites, together with the use of thematic analysis to provide the means to extract relevant data from the websites. In part two of the methodology, I provide a brief overview of each website included in my study, which sets the scene for the discussions in chapters four and five. Finally, in part three, I briefly outline the themes that I have identified as being significant and relevant to my outcomes.

My discussion is written across two chapters, four and five, as my findings were such that they demanded to be broken down into two broad ranging categories. In chapter four I explore the normalisation of appearance medicine treatments for men through the concept of masculinities, the possible emergence of new forms of masculinity, together with the role of nostalgia as a comforting mechanism to allay masculine fears and anxieties while moving into the world of appearance medicine. In chapter five I explore the advancement of machines together with the use of power and knowledge within discourse, as a means of men's engagement with appearance medicine.

⁸ Chris Shilling is a British sociologist and professor at the University of Kent, UK and has written works on the social theory of the body; Raewyn Connell is an Australian sociologist and Professor at the University of Sydney and has written prolifically on masculinities.

In my final chapter, I draw conclusions from my analysis of the data, together with acknowledging the limitations of my study. I pay particular attention to the normalisation of appearance medicine treatments for men, the tensions present between traditional hegemonic masculinity, the potential emergence of new forms of masculinity and the role of *habitus* in facilitation of this. I note the role of nostalgia as a means of comfort to men and finally the advancement of machines and the role of power, knowledge and technology in the actualisation of the vision. Furthermore, I offer my work as a contribution to the expanding body of knowledge surrounding men, masculinities and the contemporary beautification practice of appearance medicine, together with proposing further research opportunities to be explored in this fascinating and dynamic field.

Chapter Two

Men's appearance medicine: a literature review

I have purposefully chosen a literature review as a backdrop to my research as it provides a two-fold platform from which I can take this research forward in a constructive manner. The first part of this chapter provides a very brief history of appearance medicine, together with statistical data that supports the exponential growth of this contemporary beautification market over the past 15 years. Part two provides a theoretical backdrop to my work, and a framework from which I can formulate and progress my analysis of the websites and data to be explored.

Part one: the advent of appearance medicine

Cosmetic surgery derives from the reconstructive surgical processes developed by plastic surgeons during the twentieth century. Anecdotally, plastic surgery has been in existence for over 4000 years, with documented evidence of skin graft and reconstructive works occurring in India as early as 800 B.C. (Rana & Arora, 2002).

There were few advancements in plastic surgery across almost three millennia until the Great War of 1914 (World War I), which resulted in vast numbers of wounded soldiers who, if treated, could return to military practice. The sheer scale of the men's injuries, and the military's requirement to restore function and comfort to the wounded soldiers resulted in the emergence of plastic surgery as a field of clinical expertise (Staige, 1946, p. 610). The surgery was primarily functional in purpose, ensuring that soldiers were able to return to military duty, but a by-product of this emerging discipline was the restoration of facial appearances for many of the soldiers (Staige, 1946, p. 610).⁹

⁹ Much of the restorative maxillofacial reconstructive surgery is acknowledged as being the work of Sir Harold Gillies, a New Zealander, despite him having no previous experience in this field of medicine (Alexander, 2007). Maxillofacial surgery is the correction of defective hard and soft tissues of the head, neck, face and jaw (Medical Council of New Zealand, 2006).

Following World War I, innovation in plastic surgery remained stagnant again, with the wounded soldiers of World War II receiving the same treatment as their counterparts three decades earlier, only executed more proficiently (Staige, 1946, p. 618). It was not until after World War II that plastic surgery became more widespread, with an increasing number of surgeons devoting their professional practice to the development of restorative techniques of the human body (Kita, 2009). It was during this fast moving, post-war developmental phase of plastic surgery that surgeons realised the potential influence that cosmetic surgery, as a means of physical enhancement, may have on an individual's ability to become, and remain, both socially and work place successful (Alexander, 2007). The dawn of such a realisation transformed plastic surgery from being a medical necessity towards being a means of beautification (Kita, 2009), ensuring that patients re-acquired self-assurance and self-respect when restored to an acceptable image (Alexander, 2007).

The meteoric growth of plastic surgery was acknowledged globally in 1969 with one plastic surgeon being appointed as Surgeon General (Kita, 2009).¹⁰ Subsequently Dr Joseph E. Murray, another highly influential plastic surgeon, was awarded a Nobel Prize for physiology and medicine, for his outstanding contribution to facial reconstructive therapies (Kita, 2009). These awards ensured plastic surgery's status was elevated to being a genuine and reputable discipline within professional Western medicine.

Statistical data: what is happening now?

Today, plastic surgery is more commonly referred to as cosmetic surgery, when implying procedures have no medically specific purpose other than to beautify the body (Dowshen, 2009). This relocates the practice from being purely medicinal in to the consumer sector of the healthcare industry.

¹⁰ There is no record detailing the name of this particular plastic surgeon available.

Rapid advancements have occurred within cosmetic surgery practices over the past 50 years. The modern day consumer, within Western culture, is exposed to the substantial, significant and sustained development of surgical procedures, resulting in a plethora of innovative new treatments being available, specifically designed for the purpose of beautification (Michelcare, 2011). Treatments have advanced from the simple surgical reconstruction of body deficiencies, in particular facial reconstruction in the early twentieth century, to the creation and use of silicone for implantation and enhancement purposes by 1961; with the first breast augmentation procedure being performed in 1962 by Dr Thomas Cronin and Dr Frank Gerow in Texas, United States (US) (Gustin, 2008).

In 1962 breast augmentation and face lift surgery were the treatments of choice (ASPS 2011; Kita, 2009). However, preferences are changing due to a plethora of innovative and technologically advanced treatments being developed by surgeons. Today calf augmentation, buttock lifts and pectoral implants are readily available for the body conscious consumer (ASPS, 2011), with uptake reflected in the statistical data provided by the ASPS and other practising bodies.

The statistical data is somewhat limited on the consumption rates of cosmetic surgery, with data collection only commencing in 1997. The majority of the detailed data is only recorded in the United States and the United Kingdom (UK), with none currently available on New Zealand consumer practice (Januszkiewicz, 2011a).¹¹ In 1997, a total of 939,192 cosmetic surgery procedures were conducted in the US, with the figure rising by 73 per cent to 1,622,290 procedures by 2010 (ASPS, 2011). Along with the rise in the number of procedures conducted over the 13 year period, the data also indicates a change in consumer practice from purchasing face lifts, blepharoplasty, liposuction and breast augmentation treatments in 1997 towards a greater focus on body sculpting in 2010; with upper arm lifts (640.8 per cent), breast lifts (510.5 per cent) and lower body lifts (316.2 per cent) experiencing the fastest growth rates across all cosmetic surgery procedures (ASPS, 2011).¹²

¹¹ Mr Janek Januszkiewicz is founding co-director of the New Zealand Institute of Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery.

¹² Blepharoplasty is a surgical procedure to remove excess folds of tissue both above and below the eyes; Liposuction is invasive suction-assisted fat removal to reshape the body.

The US data for 2010, when considered by gender, demonstrates that although women remain the major consumer of cosmetic procedures, men now account for 10 per cent of this market (ASPS, 2011). The US data trend is further supported by data emerging from the UK, where men also account for 10 per cent of the cosmetic surgery market in 2010, a rise of 6.6 per cent since 2009 alone (The Guardian, 2011a). American and British men now account for 10 per cent of the cosmetic surgery market, with their procedures of choice differing only slightly, with the American men favouring the body sculpting techniques of liposuction and breast reduction, and British men opting for these also, alongside the facial enhancement of rhinoplasty (The Guardian, 2011a).¹³ The data from the UK suggests that, although rhinoplasty remains dominant, breast reduction, liposuction and abdominoplasty are the fastest growing treatments (The Guardian, 2011a).¹⁴

The current cosmetic surgery data, from both the US and the UK, demonstrates clearly the rise in consumption over a 13 year period and depicts the consumer's move away from facial treatments towards treatments to enhance the entire body. It lacks, however, explanatory notes which might indicate the possible causes for this change in consumer direction. One possible, and very plausible explanation, may be the advent of appearance medicine as an alternative, less invasive and less expensive means of improving facial features (The Guardian, 2011b).

Appearance medicine consists of less invasive forms of cosmetic enhancement treatments. A defining characteristic of appearance medicine is that it does not require any form of anaesthesia (Park, 2005), allowing treatments to now be consumed quickly, and in extraordinarily high numbers (Bullivant, 2007). From a consumer's perspective, the treatments are 'quick-fix' alternatives to the invasive cosmetic surgery options available and may be consumed within a working lunch hour on every street corner (ASPS, 2011).

The major products in the appearance medicine market are Botox and Hyaluronic Acid in the form of dermal fillers, but it is Botox that has been an outstanding

¹³ Rhinoplasty is a surgically invasive procedure to re-align the nose.

¹⁴ Abdominoplasty is the surgical removal of excess abdominal fat and skin to make the stomach appear flat (tummy tuck).

success (Halaas, 2011).¹⁵ Botox was initially developed during the 1980's for the correction of facial spasms and cross-eyes, but also inadvertently improved the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles (Schlessinger, 2011). It was this, unplanned side-effect of the neuro-toxin, that has subsequently been developed into the less invasive, less costly appearance medicine treatment commonly available today (Raval, 2011).

The statistical data for appearance medicine demonstrates exponential growth between 1997 and 2010, and now outpaces invasive cosmetic surgery procedures (ASPS, 2011). In the US in 1997, 1,087,919 appearance medicine procedures were conducted, with this figure rising to 7,714,524 in 2010 (ASPS, 2011). The US data indicates that Botox is the dominant treatment irrespective of gender, followed by injectable dermal fillers for women and laser hair removal for men; with men now accounting for eight per cent of this market (ASPS, 2011). However, more significantly, men have increased their rate of consumption of appearance medicine treatments by 88 per cent between 1997 and 2010 in the US (ASPS, 2011).

The US is the only country to currently produce such detailed statistical data on appearance medicine consumption. However, the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) anecdotally suggests that British male consumption aligns with that of the US, with Botox also being the dominant treatment (The Guardian, 2011).

Other countries are beginning to demonstrate an interest in the consumption practices of men, cosmetic surgery and appearance medicine, with data emerging from Australia indicating that men are now the fastest growing consumer within this market (NZ Herald, 2011). Australian men, however, do not align so closely with their American and British counterparts, for Australian men are opting primarily for blepharoplasty (Januszkiewicz, 2011b). The Australian College of Cosmetic Surgery (ACCS) believes that "...men are the driving force behind the industry's exponential growth, despite the global downturn..." (Knudsen, 2011, p. 1). This view is upheld

¹⁵ Botox is a neuro-toxin produced by the *Clostridium botulinum* bacterium and is injected in the muscles so they can no longer contract, causing wrinkles to relax and soften; Dermal fillers are injections of hyaluronic acid that plump up the skin reducing fine lines and wrinkles.

by the raw data emerging globally, as Australia is not alone in experiencing an explosion of consumerism in the cosmetic enhancement industry.

Globally, although the US remains the largest consumer of cosmetic enhancement treatments, it is followed very closely by both China and Brazil, with the UK positioned 18th and Australia 22nd (Januszkiewicz, 2011b). Unfortunately there is currently no global ranking available for New Zealand. Anecdotally, however, Janek Januszkiewicz, a member of the New Zealand Institute of Plastic and Cosmetic Surgery, believes New Zealand is generally following global consumption trends, and more specifically, those of Australia.

The global data differs slightly from the specific data emerging from the US in terms of gendered consumption of treatments. Globally, the data highlights that men account for 15 per cent of the market, rather than the 10 per cent indicated in the American literature (International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, ISAPS, 2010). This data is indicative of men increasing their stake in the consumption of enhancement procedures, and appearance medicine treatments in particular.

The rise in male consumption might be accounted for, in part, by the increasing number of surgeons attracted to the lucrative world of cosmetic surgery (Sullivan, 2001; Mintel, 2005). However, when considering the proliferation of advertising produced and directed towards engaging men with appearance medicine treatments, a practice supported by the ASPS (Hennink-Kaminski, 2006), it offers only a partial explanation for the increasing growth in this market. A further explanation may be offered through men's increasing awareness of the changes afoot within masculinised work places, with a move away from industrial production occurring, towards more interactive service orientated careers, with this change highlighting the need to affect their appearance accordingly (ISAPS, 2010).

Appearance medicine treatments are no longer solely associated with, and accessed by, the privilege of wealth or fame, but have begun to be within the reaches of the population more generally (Sullivan, 2001). This move is indicated in data that suggests that 'men only' beauty salons are increasing significantly in number, through men's preference not to be associated with traditional feminine health spas

(Yao, 2011). More specifically, the ‘American Male’ chain of salons, for example, is already opening its 15th store in the US, stating that it is men’s preference to receive treatments in male only stores without the fussiness or dominant scent of female spas (Yao, 2011, p1).

This expansion of ‘male only’ salons expedites the ‘massification’ of appearance medicine treatments. It consolidates what has already been achieved through marketing strategies, with the broader target audience being persuaded that the benefits of appearance medicine will enhance the careers of most socio-economic groups. Augmenting this diversification in masculine practices, and in a manner which might make appearance medicine accessible for the masses, are the emergence of ‘surgery now, pay later’ credit facilities (Hennink-Kaminski, 2006). Such credit facilities exist in a number of countries, with a relevant example being the Transform Group in the UK. Transform are a specialist company providing purpose built hospitals for all cosmetic surgery and appearance medicine treatments and offer a range of finance packages to suit every budget, thus ensuring accessibility of services to all customers (Transform, 2011). However, these arrangements are not unique to the UK, as within New Zealand, Caci Clinics also offer extended credit facilities to clients in order to regularly access appearance medicine treatments (Caci, 2011).

This new accessibility to enhancement treatments by the general population is, to some medical practitioners, not unproblematic. Medicine is founded upon ethical and moral obligations of practitioners and is designed to best suit the needs of the patient; it is not founded upon financial or personal gain (Hennink-Kaminski, 2006). Yet the potential to make vast sums of money is the primary enticement for many surgeons and practitioners to invest in attaining these skills, therefore presenting a dichotomous situation which blurs the status of medicine to that of being simply another skilled trade (Sullivan, 2001). A further concern, upheld by some practitioners and social commentators, is that increased accessibility to enhancement treatments will result in some consumers developing negative thoughts towards their

body imagery (body dysmorphic disorder), while others simply become addicted to constantly improving their bodies (Higuera, 2006).¹⁶

Addiction was described by Le Breton (2004) as “a way of filling a void or stifling a fear by means of a product or an action that procures temporary relief and response” (p. 346). This temporary fix, therefore, in relation to appearance medicine, implies the potential for clients to repeatedly return for treatments to achieve physical perfection that formulates the addiction. The addiction to enhancement treatments is evident as the data from the ASPS suggests that 66 per cent of clients are repeat patients, both male and female (Templeton, 2008). However, the data represents an enormous ethical dilemma for those practitioners accepting clients for repeat treatments, as a number of surgeons admit that much of the additional work for these clients is unnecessary (Templeton, 2008; Higuera, 2006).

The data available at present demonstrates how the entrapment into a possible cycle of addiction to appearance medicine treatments might occur, not only for women, but now for men also within Western cultures. The entrapment relocates masculine imagery away from strength and power towards imagery associated with beauty, youth and vitality, and rewards such external perfection with the potential to engage successfully within the interactive service sector of employment.

The massification of appearance medicine treatments, the indicated growth in men’s consumption of this contemporary body fix, and the potential for addiction to such practices, encouraging men to become more visually attractive, underpins a change occurring within the field of masculinity. Traditional hegemonic masculinity is changing, opening up opportunities for multiple masculinities to co-exist, together with the potential emergence of a new, appearance based masculinity (Connell, 2005). This new masculinity, with its focus upon a ‘performance of appearance’, in preference to a performance of physical strength and courage, requires men to modify their bodies through engaging with appearance medicine treatments. However, this transformative practice requires a facilitator to actualise this movement within masculine practices.

¹⁶ Body dysmorphic disorder is a psychiatric disorder characterized by the excessive preoccupation with imagined defects in physical appearance (MedicineNet, 2011).

Part two: the theory

Habitus and the emergence of a new habitus

The meaning of success for the twenty-first century male can no longer be derived simply from the traditional forms of masculinity associated with strength, courage, power and money. Contemporary masculine work place success indicates that the presentation of the masculine body as an objectified status symbol, more associated with non-traditional forms of masculinity is becoming essentialised, through a 'performance of appearance'.

This potential diversification in essential masculine attributes invokes the masculine body as a positive resource for both visibility and success, as men transition between industrial productivity, towards a role within the interactive service sector of employment. Such a move, transcending the boundaries of traditional hegemonic masculinity, simultaneously informs the *habitus* of being male, with the potential of a new *habitus* to emerge relocating men's work place practices alongside those associated with the feminised service industries of administration. However, the masculine counterpart to administrative work has roots within the interactive service sector, whereby success is founded upon an aesthetically pleasing performance of the masculine body (McDowell, 2009). This shift in focus upon the masculine attributes associated with work place success witnesses the rise of the 'attractive' man, the potential demise of the physically strong man and subsequently a re-masculinisation of the office based working environment.

The emergence of this particular new *habitus* is dependent upon men undertaking the transformative treatments offered by appearance medicine practitioners. However, appearance medicine is presented in a paradoxical manner as being not only essential to the appearance of the 'new man', but is administered within the normative expectations associated with the traditional hegemonic model of masculinity.

Habitus is generally acknowledged as being a concept used to refer to the norms and practices of particular social classes or groups. It is, at least in a significant part,

acquired through the embedded everyday actions and social practices of the individual (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977); with a relevant definition being:

“The *habitus*, as a system of dispositions to a certain practice, is an objective basis for regular modes of behaviour, and thus for the regularity of modes of practice, and if practices can be predicted...this is because the effect of the *habitus* is that agents who are equipped with it will behave in a certain way in certain circumstances.” (Bourdieu, 1990, p77).

Habitus, as constructed by Pierre Bourdieu, points to the existence of a set of durable, although changing, dispositions and values that comprise the individual subject. *Habitus* is a condition of subjectivity which enables social differentiation to occur along the vectors of class and status. The salient point being that this differentiation occurs at the level of the subject, within subjectivity. The concept permits the individual, and in this instance men, to react to the notion of body modification without pre-constructed thought, but as a reactionary measure. *Habitus*, although indirectly reflective of social class, is acquired through the socialisation and nurturing of the individual and, as such, provides a foundation from which judgements are made (Bourdieu, 1979). A man's *habitus* is an embodied experience, an experience which men may not even be aware of. Yet the *habitus* is not a fixed or permanent state.

The *habitus* consists of different forms of behaviour appropriate to the situational subject positioning of the individual at any given time (Macey, 2000), and it is these practices that in turn impact upon and modify the *habitus*, structuring further experiences. The modified *habitus*, therefore, allows individuals to adjust their behaviour according to any given situation, transporting the focus onto individual's interactions, as opposed to knowledge or material assets (Devine-Eller, 2005). *Habitus* is perceived as being an elastic and fluid concept, one that embraces and incorporates the ever changing structures and ideals of Westernised cultures (Podmore, 1998), and is formed and informed not only through individual subject positioning, but also through gender and occupation (Fowler, 1999).

With *habitus* being sufficiently flexible to move and embrace cultural developments, it becomes possible to classify *habitus* in terms of different categories of people, for example a working class *habitus*, an artistic *habitus* and an aspirational *habitus* (Fowler, 1999). Aspirational *habitus* is a tentative extension of Bourdieu's *habitus*, suggesting that individuals are forward thinking in order to achieve success, but either lack the means through which to obtain their goals or are unable to translate their ambitions to reality (Baker & Brown, 2008). Through aspirational *habitus*, and the construction and reconstruction of the masculine body, *habitus* subconsciously produces and reproduces actions without thought, and so the new idealised masculine body becomes perceived as the new norm (Fowler, 1999).

Habitus is influenced and shaped by current economic conditions within specific cultures and men require appropriate cultural capital to ensure compliance with the changing trends in masculine appearance.¹⁷ It is the ability of the *habitus* to be influenced, that provides a platform from which adaptations to the traditionally hegemonic practices of men can bring about change. *Habitus* is the container in which men (and women) emerge in their formative years, providing a foundation of thought processes and judgements, and as such also shapes social practice. That said, *habitus* can be altered through further and alternative life experiences, so as to facilitate change to the ordered structure of a man's life. That is, men can move forward and acquire a second or different set of characteristics, which are more focused upon the changes they need to make in order to be successful participants, in this instance, within contemporary work places. However, men's ability to acquire the necessary cultural capital may be restricted by their social positioning, their gender and occupation, together with the notion that 'body projects' are historically feminised.¹⁸

The embodied *habitus*, therefore, reflects the ability of individuals to produce and reproduce their social positioning, both within and against influential social structures (Fulton, 2003; Bourdieu, 1984). This leads to the possibility that aspirational *habitus*, or the embedded traits of individuals, can transform the

¹⁷ Cultural Capital, a term first used by Pierre Bourdieu refers to the non-financial resources available to individual to promote social mobility.

¹⁸ 'Body projects' are the attainment of improved or perfect appearance through achieved over a lifespan (Shilling, 2003).

masculine body from a functional being to one that constitutes current ideals of successful appearance-based performances.

Such changes to *habitus*, however, are reliant upon men being aware of a need to change. Men must be motivated to acquire a new set of practices, and in turn to modify their *habitus*, so as to embrace the contemporary nature of appearance medicine and the potential increase in personal resources that may result from it. This implies, as noted by Bourdieu, that *habitus* is not a fixed or permanent state, but one that can be adapted to align with the changing situations men now find themselves in. It is the flexibility of this container, and the fluidity of its structure, that allows for the conception of multiple *habitus*, that serve to transport men from the safety of traditional masculine practices to being able to embrace appearance medicine.

The modern predilection, therefore, for men to engage in an appearance-based performance at work moves against the prevailing social order of masculine dominance, raising questions over whether masculine domination is on the verge of change. This is possible as, although masculine domination as it currently stands is embedded in social practices (Bourdieu, 2001), it is the invisibility of its persuasion, its gentle yet pervasive intent, that may facilitate the changes afoot. Such changes are being driven by men's need to reconstruct their appearance to successfully participate within contemporary interactive service roles, reflecting the subtle subordination of some men by others, with such domination being effected through the practice of symbolic violence (Connell, 2005; Clatterbaugh, 2004; Kimmel, 1993; Bloch, 1974).¹⁹

Symbolic violence, a 'soft' power utilised at an almost unconscious level (Bourdieu, 2001), is predominantly exerted through symbolic channels of communication and emotion. It is exercised subconsciously through knowledge and practical recognition (Bourdieu, 2001), but is simultaneously embedded in the *habitus* of men, irrespective of them being the dominator or dominated (Krais, 2006). It is the

¹⁹ Masculine domination positions men as the primary authoritative figures central to the socially organised structure of social practices, through which women and some men become subordinate to their leadership (Connell, 2005; Clatterbaugh, 2004; Kimmel, 1993; Bloch, 1974).

symbolic violence of the masculine dominator that results in the social inequalities reflected in men's abilities to access the means to construct and reconstruct their bodies to conform to new masculine ideologies of appearance. This leads me to question whether symbolic violence plays a role in the subversion of men, through which the reconstruction of the masculine body is mandatory to achieve contemporary work place success.

A new proposition emerges in light of the points I have made: that success for men in the twenty-first century is no longer fully achievable if men continue to follow the traditional form of masculinity. Modern day work place success indicates that men's performance may need to be focused on the appearance of their bodies (McDowell, 2009), thus embedding the masculine body as a commodified resource which re-informs the *habitus* and social positioning of participating men. The 'performance of appearance' however, also relies upon men acquiring a new set of practices, involving the uptake of appearance medicine treatments that will, in turn, impact and modify their *habitus*. Such a move for men could result in them being socially repositioned within work places, through the acquisition of, and adherence to, a new *habitus*; a *habitus* associated with their exterior aesthetic achieved through the implementation of aspirational *habitus*.

Men turning to a 'performance of appearance', rather than a performance of physical strength and courage, transfers their identities from that associated with the traditional model of masculinity towards a new masculinity founded upon the exterior aesthetic. Such a transition towards men's identity being related to the transformative self, focused upon enhancing their 'face value' as a commodified resource for work place participation, allows men the privilege of relocating their social and work place positioning to that required for modern day success.

Men, therefore, are moving away from the traditional model of masculinity through a performative appearance associated with a new *habitus*. This results in these men identifying with a new form of masculinity, achieved through the investment of both time and money in their bodies. This movement within masculinities may result in increased participation and success in contemporary work places but is, however,

dependent upon men's reflexive awareness of their bodies as long term projects (Davidson, 1998; Haiken, 1997; Sullivan, 2001).

Body projects

Images of the current idealised aesthetic of the perfect body are evident through media representations and are often blamed for the increase in body dissatisfaction experienced by both men and women (Wykes & Gunter, 2005). Yet these media representations, delivered via television, magazines and the Internet, infiltrate the psyche subtly, often appearing uninvited into the mind, suggesting that these idealised bodies are now the norm and no longer unattainable perfection (Groesz, Levine & Murnen, 2001). This subtle suggestion that the body should be perfect feeds upon not only those individuals whose self-esteem and self-worth are at a low ebb, but locates the suggestion of body perfection within the minds of the ageing population, with it no longer directed solely towards women, but men also.

Issues of perfection with body image are not a new concern in social practice. For centuries, women have not only been concerned with their appearance, but have been subjected to masculine appraisal as objects of desire which, if not perfect in appearance, resulted in negative anxieties of the body (Groesz et al, 2001; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). These anxieties are no longer the premise of the feminine. Men are now being targeted as objects of 'desire', even when that desire is for a pleasing work place aesthetic (Hennink-Kaminski, 2006); with the 'masculine objects' being enhanced through a 'surgical fix' (Davies, 2002; Gilman, 1999; Haiken, 1997).

Men are not necessarily pawns in this movement towards the enhancement of appearance in the construction of gender identity and the taking up of (previously feminine) practices of beautification. Some men may actively pursue a youthful appearance without media or cultural influence. Significant numbers of male professionals, from the baby-boomer generation, also known as Generation X, are transcending the boundaries of the traditional model of masculinity, determined to maintain their competitive edge in what is a youth driven, service based, economy

(Davies, 2002; Gullette, 1994).²⁰ This generation of men are, in part, responsible for repositioning the masculine body to a more highly individualised location, in a desire to express self-identity and heightened visibility through their refined appearance, thus reflecting current cultural ideals of physical attractiveness.

Such self-identity, and the attainment of an improved or perfect appearance, may be a short term investment for some men. For others, however, this embodied identity is achieved over a lifespan and was identified by Chris Shilling (2003) as being the ‘body project’. The ‘body project’ provides a platform from which to analyse the underlying schemas at play in informing the new models of masculinity derived through the beautification practice of appearance medicine.

The body as a project

Body enhancement and beautification is not a new phenomenon and can be traced back to both early Christianity (Brown, 1988) and to the time of Ancient Greece. In these times both men and women adorned their flesh with decorative accessories in order to improve their appearance, and possibly their status (Foucault, 1988).²¹ These decorative enhancements, associated with traditional cultural ritual, are removed from the current day enhancements associated with the ‘body project’, as body projects are produced through reflexive practice and not through tradition (Rudofsky, 1986).

The concept of the ‘body project’ refers to the notion that the human body is objectified, and subsequently worked upon to transform it from its natural state, to one which conforms to current cultural ideals of beauty and perfection; a state that transcends the boundaries between technology and nature (Shilling, 2003). The result of this objectification of the corporeal frame ensures that an individual’s self-identity is sustained in the narrative of the reconstructed body, through the practice of reflexivity. Such reflexivity allows men to be more aware of who they are, themselves as gendered beings and the necessity to conform their appearance to the

²⁰ Baby boomers (Generation X) are those individuals born between 1946 and 1964 in the post World War II period.

²¹ Michel Foucault (1926-1984) is an influential French philosopher, sociologist and historian who developed five distinct but interrelated assumptions underpinning his world view; these being order, history, truth, power and ethics (O’Farrell, 2005) and is best known for his critical studies on social institutions with a particular interest in ethics and epistemology.

current cultural ideals associated with contemporary working environments. The result of reflexivity observes men moving away from the traditional hegemonic format of masculinity and, through their capacity as agents for change, relocating their practice towards a softer masculinity concerned with their external imagery (Stryker & Serpe, 1982).²²

The reflexivity of masculine practice, together with the consumption of appearance medicine, applies the personal values and beliefs of individual agents to the value of the commodification of their appearance. This results in a bidirectional cause and effect influence becoming embedded in men's quest for acceptance and improvement. This bidirectional influence pertains to the positive or negative response received when an individual has undertaken body modification. It subsequently determines the extent to which men reflexively consider the cultural expectations of their masculine appearance, the degree to which they now meet this measure, and the necessity for further treatments. The embedded practice of reflexive change results in the creation and re-creation of the self as an ever changing autobiographical narrative, with that narrative developing and changing with the ageing process (Askegaard, 2002).

Ageing is becoming intrinsically problematic within the Westernised cultural ideals of body imagery, with youth and appearance increasingly prized (Sayre, 1999). Consumers are becoming ever more reluctant to accept ageing as a natural process, and view it as a disease that can now be partially cured (Askegaard, 2002; Sayre, 1999; Haiken, 1997). This cultural ideal, which is disinclined to acknowledge ageing as natural or acceptable, together with the increase in health marketing, has evolved into individual consumers becoming active reproducers of external image perfection; utilising the 'body project' as their methodology to achieve this status.

'Body projects', for some agents of body change, can become a lifelong investment, (Shilling, 2003). The structure of the 'body project' can be flexible and fluid, dependent upon the extent to which enhancement is required at any given life juncture (Shilling, 2003). Such projects are subject to change depending not only

²² Reflexivity refers to the relationship between cause and effect, or to be reflected back on oneself.

upon the age of the agent, but also according to their social class, gender and their perceived need for body alterations (Shilling, 2003). Women find the need to alter and improve their bodies firmly located within the social context of their daily lives in order to raise their self-esteem (Askegaard, 2002). For men, however, the need to enhance and improve their appearance is positioned within the acknowledgement that their bodies have become personal resources, through which successful participation in contemporary work places may be attained.

The link between attractiveness as a personal resource and increased career advancement is not a new phenomenon (Varian, 2006). As career advancement and its associated economic wealth increases the more an individual is perceived as being beautiful, irrespective of productivity (Mobias & Rosenblat, 2006); with this correlation becoming commonly known as the 'beauty premium' (Hamermesh & Biddle, 1994). The 'beauty premium' was studied by Daniel Hamermesh & Jeff Biddle (1994), who developed their research in order to demonstrate that choices are constantly being made on superficial plateaux; that is, choices are based upon skin-deep evidence only. The political world was the setting for the study to demonstrate the value of attractiveness in political candidates. The study revealed that when parliamentary candidates stood for re-election, having already served at least one term, their chances of re-election were greatly increased when their publicity literature was redesigned to incorporate more flattering and updated images of themselves. This demonstrates an increased significance being assigned to attractiveness rather than the intellectual competence of the individual concerned.

The relationship between beauty and success may be a reflection of a cultural obsession. To be surrounded by beautiful people is currently idealised. It suggests that beautiful people are more successful in their paid employment through an assumption, which lacks substantiation, that beauty equates to honesty and increased intelligence in the work place (Harford, 2007). This is no more evident than in the media portrayal of male politicians and bureaucrats, and is clearly demonstrated when an American Senator was heard to praise Barack Obama, prior to his successful election as American President, for being 'the first mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy' (Harford, 2007, p1). Such a statement suggests that previous black presidential candidates, for

example Jesse Jackson, did not meet these exacting criteria, therefore correlating their failure with their less attractive appearance. Through such an open acknowledgement of the essential nature of masculine attractiveness being a prerequisite for success in the public sphere, it is no wonder that some men may be feeling the pressure to actively pursue the ‘beauty premium’ through investing in ‘body projects’ as a means of achieving work place success.

The ‘beauty premium’ was the focus of a study into the paid labour market by two American economists, Markus Mobius and Tanya Rosenblat (2006), in an attempt to determine the causal relationship between beauty, perceived intelligence and productivity. The experiment was conducted using recruits from a student talent pool, who were divided into employers and employees. The employees were asked to solve maze puzzles designed to ensure only skill was required to be successful, with no reliance on attractiveness or beauty.

The findings from this study were interesting. They indicate that although those perceived as being beautiful were actually no more productive than their less attractive counterparts, the employers identified the ‘beauty premium’ through considering the more physically attractive workers to be more able to complete the task and be more productive (although, according to Mobius & Rosenblat, this is inaccurate). The perception that the more beautiful recruits were more competent has been associated with their increased levels of self-confidence, reflected in their ability to take and complete the task without problems. It is the duality of the increase in self-confidence, together with an attractive appearance, that provides an illusion of increased market value, equating to increased career advancement.

The outcome of Mobius & Rosenblat’s research was supported by King & Leigh’s 2009 paper ‘Beautiful Politicians’. This again was located within the sphere of politics, and examined the beauty of political candidates presented for selection in the 2004 federal elections in Australia. The aim of the research was to assess how voters viewed the beauty of each candidate and the likely influence such perceived beauty would have on the vote share. The results of King & Leigh’s study aligned not only with Mobius & Rosenblat’s research, but also with Harford (2007), whose analysis of image and attractiveness demonstrated that such superficial factors do

matter in the sphere of politics. The ‘Beautiful Politicians’ study, therefore, suggested that beauty is actually a greater issue for male political candidates than for female candidates, with the ‘beauty premium’ being more productive for men than for women (King & Leigh, 2009). Beautiful male political candidates are perceived as being more competent than their less attractive counterparts, in what is already a masculine environment. This provides evidence of how necessary it is becoming for some men to feel the need to work on improving their image to conform to modern cultural ideals of what constitutes success.

Being perceived as beautiful is not only beneficial in employment that is conducted through the media, as is the case for politicians (King & Leigh, 2009), but is also reflected within professional services where beauty would not be necessarily be perceived as a prerequisite for success (Harford, 2007). The valuing of appearance over intellectual ability can be transposed from the political arena to many other working environments for men, and as such ascribes a value to their gender that was previously absent (Harford, 2007); for example those men employed in sales, media and customer service (the interactive service industries). An attractive appearance ranks in third place behind only experience and confidence when potential employees are interviewed (Johnson-Mandell, 2010), with confidence clearly and inextricably linked to perceived beauty (Mobius & Rosenblat, 2006). It is the superficial value of appearance, therefore, that is encouraging men to actively manage, construct and reconstruct their bodies to transform their appearance to one which enhances their professional ambitions; an attainment achieved through an investment in the masculine body as a project.

The ‘body project’ is, however, more than an individualistic desire for self-improvement in order to actualise self-identity and participation within contemporary workforces.²³ In the realm of masculinity, the ‘body project’ functions as a site of men’s reconstruction of their bodies through the investment in them as projects, producing and reproducing the intentional continuity of self-identity (Giddens, 1991). Through the individualised construction and regulation of the

²³ The duality of structures and agency, as an epistemological problem, have synthesised these powers as an explanatory framework for the relationship between human action and the development of social structures; whereby the relationship between social structures and human agency are interactive and reciprocal in nature. Structure and agency are inextricably linked (Giddens, 1984), with structures being produced and reproduced through individuals practices (Giddens & Pierson, 1998).

masculine body, men are able to develop their self-identity to secure their location in contemporary cultures (Gill, Henwood & McLean, 2005), therefore exhibiting the culturally valued trait of social responsibility, albeit through attending to the private domain of their bodies. The reflexive social reproduction of self-identity, located in the symbolic value of masculine beauty, implicates the body as a conceptualised enterprise to be modified, improved and developed, through which men can actualise a meaningful narrative to their working lives (Shilling, 2004; Shilling, 2003).

The construction and reconstruction of the body resurrects the ageing body's ability to successfully participate within the contemporary workforce, but is subject to men having the ability, courage and/or capital to access what are traditionally feminised treatments (Shilling, 2003). The investment in the body as a project, and the potential for successful work place participation can be conceptualised through the work of Pierre Bourdieu (2006), with the body becoming a form of capital for men. This reflects the transcendence of the traditional model of masculinity focused upon physical strength and courage, towards the benefits of a new, attractive work place appearance focused masculinity.

Capital, physical capital and symbolic value

Drawing upon the work of Pierre Bourdieu, it can be anticipated that men who invest in their exterior aesthetic as a means of securing work within the interactive service work place, will consciously reconfigure the masculine body into an objectified commodity and subsequently, into a form of capital. The attainment of an improved masculine body, achieved through the symbolic nature of the *habitus*, allows men to subconsciously transcend the constraints of traditional hegemonic masculinity in their minds. However, the reality that their bodies have been modified and reconstructed to assimilate with contemporary ideals of masculine body perfection, contradicts their imagined social positioning of remaining within the framework of traditional hegemonic practices.

'Capital' is often associated with economic and monetary value (Moore, 2008). However, as a concept outside of economic analysis, whereby no physical exchange

of money occurs, it can be used to examine the structure and function of social relations more generally (Bourdieu, 1986). Bourdieu's analysis of capital in *The Forms of Capital* (1986), reformulated Marx' concept of what capital is, expanding the concept to include both material and embodied phenomena, with a focus upon relationships that have productive benefits (Svendsen, 2001).²⁴ This analysis suggests a movement away from solely labour induced material gain in the form of money, towards social relationships that embrace capital in a myriad of formats (Bourdieu, 1986). Such an analysis demonstrates the conceptual elasticity of capital as a theoretical framework.

The elasticity of capital, as a concept that can be modified as societal narratives evolve, is visible in the reformation of masculinity from traditional hegemony to a masculinity founded upon work place appearance. This allows men to modify their bodies to align to newly constituted notions of masculine beauty and gain a positive exchange value for their investment. Such capital gain, attained through men's investment in their bodies as projects, suggests the body may become a form of symbolic capital.

Symbolic capital, whereby attention, prestige and honour become important resources, functions as an influential embodiment of cultural value (Bourdieu, 1978), embedded in the socially dictated acceptable appearance of men in the work place today. This resource can be viewed as an extension of men's status, from which social and cultural advantages may be drawn. Symbolic capital possesses distinctive characteristics which are dependent upon the setting in which they are utilised, and can be understood through the social positioning of an individual, their beliefs, values and lifestyle choices (Moore, 2008). This allows men an opportunity to create success within contemporary work place settings, and an improvement in their social positioning, as the symbolic capital of appearance has an intrinsic worth, informing the status of the individual (Anderson, Grunert, Katz & Lovascio, 2010; Moore, 2008). However, the symbolic capital of appearance is achieved through the positive exchange value of physical body modification or physical capital.

²⁴ Karl Marx was an influential 19th century philosopher, social scientist, historian and revolutionary who contributed significantly to the understanding of how society functions.

Physical capital is embedded in the aesthetic attributes of men, together with their social practices. It provides a visible reference to the social positioning and cultural identity of the individual. Such a reference, in turn, can be converted into other forms of capital, with physical capital constituting a valuable resource for men when applied to their ‘performance of appearance’ in contemporary work places (Baker & Brown, 2008; Light, 2001). Yet, physical capital constrains the masculine ‘performance of appearance’ and its conversion into successful work place participation, as a man’s appearance is not wholly associated with just his ‘face value’ but also its symbolic value. Sport, for example, overtly displays the prominence of physicality, but this is not representative of everyday masculine work place experiences, as the work place is not always located within such activities (Shilling, 2005; Light, 2001).

Everyday work place experiences are embodied in everyday actions and gestures which convey cultural and social significance. This results in a simultaneous enablement and constraint of social action, and of the physical capital through which appearance medicine treatments may be accessed. Physical capital, therefore, provides an understanding of the centrality of human agency in the construction and reconstruction of the appearance of the masculine body, together with its positioning within society, through which symbolic capital is accorded. Subsequently it is the social positioning that becomes significant in the acquisition of body capital, independent from other forms of capital, through which men can successfully engage with contemporary work places (Shilling, 1991; Bourdieu, 1985).

The importance of the body, as being simultaneously a form of physical and symbolic capital, highlights the significance placed upon the performance of masculine appearance, through which the value of the working life is contextualised. Without the acceptance of, and adherence to, this practice of valuing the newly idealised form of the male aesthetic, the re-masculinisation of the office space would fail to thrive. Yet, it is through the changes within contemporary work places, from feminised to re-masculinised, that encourages men, or even demands of men, to positively perform through their improved aesthetic.²⁵

²⁵ During the World Wars many women were encouraged to enter paid employment within factories and offices to continue the work of those men serving in the armed forces, thus feminising many work places.

With this 'demand' for men to work upon their bodies, there are indicators of possible inequalities in opportunities for men to access appearance medicine treatments. Physical capital not only indicates the social position of the individual, it projects a relationship between the time and financial resources available to convert the body into a gainful work place asset. Such resources are more likely to be available to the dominant, middle class, white male than other more subordinate groupings (Bourdieu, 1978). The need for time and financial investment in the construction and reconstruction of the new work place appropriate masculine body is evident when drawing upon the work of Bourdieu for clarification:

“...the length of time for which a given individual can prolong his acquisition depends on the length of time for which his family can provide him with the free time, i.e.: time free from economic necessity, which is a precondition for the initial accumulation.” (Bourdieu, 1986, p246).

This analysis can be seen to come to fruition when considering members of lower socio-economic groups. These particular groups, in general terms, make the best of their bodily appearance, but have little spare time that is free from economic necessity, to develop an awareness of their bodies, let alone have the necessary capital to work upon its reconstruction (Bourdieu, 1986). It is this point that demonstrates the privilege of the dominant class through having the means, time and capital necessary to work upon their bodies as projects, with the outcome being visibly demonstrable in their work place gains (Shilling, 2004). However, the dominant class simultaneously have the ability to remove themselves from admitting to undertaking appearance medicine treatments through the privilege of non-disclosure, therefore, making the enhanced masculine body a location of privilege (Kimmel, Hearn & Connell, 2004).

The financially privileged body, however, is no longer solely the prerogative of the wealthy and elite. It is becoming increasingly accessible to all men through the massification of appearance medicine as a treatment (Cowan, 2009; McDonald, 2009). Appearance medicine has been re-platformed to become accessible by those men who aspire to improve their visual worth. The consequence of the massification of this market suggests a shift away from the privilege of wealth dominating the

construction and reconstruction of the masculine body, towards the mass commodification of the body by all social stratifications. 'Body capital' was a concept originally utilised to analyse the processes through which apprentice boxers achieved their goals of increased value, despite the constraining class related circumstances in which they lived (Wacquant, 2004). Yet when 'body capital' is used in conjunction with *habitus*, it allows an exploration of how agency, social positioning and social stratification influence the way in which the masculine body can become a positive resource within present day work place settings (Blunden, 2004).

Such an analysis not only locates 'body capital' within a more expansive sociological framework than that of boxing gyms (Kreuger & SaintOnge, 2005), but simultaneously sets up the possibility of a newly emerging *habitus* within the context of evolving masculinities. The acquisition of 'body capital', attained through a commitment to, and investment in, the masculine body as a project however, introduces the prevailing paradoxical situation that such bodily enhancements are accessed through the structures of traditional hegemonic masculinity.

Masculinities

The landscape of masculinities is changing and becoming more porous, allowing a shift in the backdrop that underpins what it is to be masculine today. This now enables some men to distance themselves from traditional hegemonic masculinity in favour of alternative masculinities. Notwithstanding these shifts, it remains possible to speak of, and to identify the continuing hegemony, of traditionalist masculinity.

The past three decades have witnessed the emergence of masculinities (or men's studies) as an academic discipline; a discipline independent from women's studies and feminist analysis, therefore, allowing a greater degree of understanding of men's participation in history. Michael Kimmel (1993) suggested that previously men had no history as they were absent from literary discourse depicting personal experiences and emotions from a masculine perspective. Kimmel also suggested that historical literature may be viewed as empty and void of meaning without the exploration of

lives lived by men as men, the structures they created and the organisations in which they participated.²⁶

The lack of literary accounts of masculine lives is evident through the analysis of classical novelists for example. Historically the Bronte sisters' works have been analysed in a deeply gendered manner, exploring their feelings surrounding marriage and femininity, whereas Charles Dickens' works are treated as social problems rather than them being viewed as an exploration of masculinity, marriage, fatherhood and male orphans (Armengol & Kimmel, 2010). The result of this divergence in literary analysis has prompted suggestions that men are both genderless and invisible through the lack of detail representing how men worked and socialised previously (Kimmel, 1993), leading to the notion of invisible masculinity.

Invisible masculinity was identified by Kimmel (1993) through his privilege of being a white middle class male. Kimmel noted that while women are aware of their gender, and both men and women who are not white are aware of their race and ethnicity, white middle class men do not notice any of these issues. They take these issues for granted, resulting in the invisibility of their masculinity and their innate ability to ignore the centrality of gender to their everyday lives. White middle class men do not realise the relevance that their gender plays in allowing them to behave the way they do in their adherence to traditional hegemonic masculinity, the culturally produced hierarchies of gender and the privilege this infers upon them (Robinson, Frost, Bucclgrossi & Pfeffer, 2003; Kimmel, 1993; McIntosh, 1988).

Traditional hegemonic masculinity is steeped in connotations of power, respect and waged employment, and underpins the masculine characteristics that are culturally idealised (Popay, Hearn & Edwards, 1998). This privilege is generally ascribed to white middle class men and is currently experiencing an expansion within its socially constructed format. The expansion repositions masculine identities away from those closely associated with hegemonic practices towards a work place performance associated with an improved appearance. This development within masculinities is achieved through the deconstruction of what it now means to be masculine in the

²⁶ Michael Kimmel is an American Sociologist specialising in gender studies.

twenty-first century work place, as men's working environments have witnessed a dramatic shift from the dominance of manual labour to an increase in service based industries (Giddens, 2009; McDowell, 2009; McDowell, 2003; Faludi, 1999). The deindustrialisation of the work place has been associated with the feminisation of the labour force (Giddens, 2009; McDowell, 2003), and subsequently an erosion of traditional hegemonic culture associated with the work place (Hammermesh & Biddle, 1994).

Employment opportunities for men have shifted from the physical ethos of industrial production towards the female dominated growth sectors of service work, administration and healthcare (McDowell, 2009, 2003). This movement in work place roles is evident, as half way through the twentieth century more than half of all British men were employed in manufacturing or industrial production (McDowell, 2009). Almost sixty years later, in 2009, less than 15 per cent of British men were employed in the industrialised labour market (McDowell, 2009). This employment shift has resulted in men needing to manipulate their appearance to align with contemporary ideals of masculinity, in order to relocate their working bodies into the interactive service sector (McDowell, 2003; Walkowitz, 2002; Fenkel, Tam, Korczynkisi and Shire, 1999; MacDonald & Sirianni, 1996).

There is evidence to support that this shift in employment is not only occurring in the UK for men, with data from the US confirming that American men are currently securing 80 per cent of all new vacancies opened in the past three years, irrespective of role (Trier, 2012). Furthermore, American men are making significant gains within interactive service work, and now account for over 51 per cent of retail positions, for example (Clawson, 2012). Yet the notion that the work force has been feminised may misrepresent what is actually occurring. As men are now overtaking women working in this employment sector, it results in the feminine roles of interactive service work now becoming the new norm for men; that is, service based industries are becoming re-masculinised (Trier, 2012).

This enforced restructuring of working environments for men has, however, resulted in the systematic oppression of some men who no longer conform to notions of traditional hegemonic masculinity, by men who remain in a place of white middle

class privilege (Risman, 2004). It is this change within the balance of work place privilege that has resulted in the oppressed men, who may be deemed as subordinate or 'other', through their non-compliance to traditional hegemonic masculinity, becoming acutely aware of their identity as gendered beings (Kimmel, 1993); with this simultaneously changing the formula of what constitutes being masculine (Connell, 1995).

This contemporary fragility of traditional hegemonic masculinity becomes apparent, even if only symbolically, through the embedded concept of male and female difference becoming more fluid and less rigid within Westernised cultures (Kubal, 2011; Connell, 1995). Yet, if masculinity is a socially constructed cultural role, and only exists in dualistic opposition to femininity (Clatterbaugh, 2004), what it means to be masculine remains subjective and becomes dependent upon personal agency and the social positioning of the individual and what masculinity represents to them (Clatterbaugh, 2004; Connell, 1995). Such subjectivity suggests porosity in the concept of traditional hegemonic masculinity, offering the opportunity for alternative and more fluid forms of masculinity to exist simultaneously (Connell, 1995; Popay et al, 1998).

Masculinity should not be viewed as an isolated issue, but as one account of men's function within the structural hierarchies at play within Westernised cultures (Charis, 2011). The representation of the idea of masculinity "...demands an account of the larger structure and how masculinities are located in it..." (Connell, 2005, p.67). Such an analysis of masculinity results in the possibility of creating multiple permutations of what it means to be masculine, as there is not one correct way to be a man. Such a change in the landscape of what it means to be masculine is creating a slow burning, yet energetic, tension between traditional hegemonic masculinity and the 'new man' model, a model favouring men's abilities to engage with their gender (Connell, 2005; Buchbinder, 1994). However, the emergence of the 'new man' does not mean the dissolution of traditional hegemonic masculinity, but the possibility of a 'post-masculine' discourse through which alternative masculinities are produced, without discounting traditional practices.

The 'new man' model is associated with men having less brawn and increased sensitivity, with an interest in the more feminine practices of fashion, beauty and family (Connell, 2005; Buchbinder, 1994). However, in practice it is not sufficiently simple to suggest that a traditional 'strong' man has given way to a 'new man', but that there is an evolution at play in the transition for some men from, or between, one category to the other. The transition from traditional masculinity towards a 'new man' may, however, never be achievable for some men who are unable to pursue a 'performance of appearance' without feeling completely disavowed from traditional masculinity. It is possible that men are currently in the 'post-masculine' phase in their practices, but are yet to realise what their final destination will be in relation to their masculinity. However, some men are becoming a little 'softer' around the edges, while maintaining a tough inner self, with David Beckham being favoured by many British academics as being highly influential in changing masculine behaviour, deeming him the 'ultimate metrosexual' (The Age, 2003, p1).²⁷

Men's active engagement with, and overt acknowledgement of, their gender is not as simplistic as all men embracing nail polish and wearing sarongs. As Simone de Beauvoir inferred in her statement "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (de Beauvoir, 1989, p267); a concept that is equally applicable to men. Men, through the dominance of traditional hegemonic masculinity were not born men, but have become men through adhering to the culturally defined expectations of a specific body shape associated with physical strength and power, but have not necessarily been aware that this conformity exists, is necessary, or is binding. This lack of awareness has allowed the culturally normative ideals of traditional hegemonic masculinity to pervade the psyche of men subconsciously (Nemeroff, Stein, Diehl & Smolak, 1994). Yet, this singular form of masculinity, which defines men as not being feminine (Charis, 2011), is now being expanded to incorporate alternative forms of masculinity aligned with the changing work place environments twenty-first century men are confronted with.

The centrality of appearance, therefore, with regard to the masculine body, has been interpreted as being driven, in part, by the conscious promotion for men to possess

²⁷ Metrosexual refers to a man, usually living in an urban setting, who spends considerable time and income on his appearance.

healthy bodies (Shilling, 2002). However, men now also need to perform aesthetically within the service and technology based work environments of today (McDowell, 2009). It is these work places that have reclaimed and reclassified office work as being masculine, through the power associated with machines. Such power, achieved through the advent of technology and machines, provides men with a reconceptualisation of what it is to be masculine in the contemporary work place (Horowitz & Mohun, 1998). It is men's own ambition, therefore, to build machines in the first instance that has returned to reflexively influence men to use those machines for the benefit of their exterior aesthetic.

The result of the advent of machines for contemporary beautification is the emergence of men performing aesthetically in the work place, but this performance can only be achieved through the confines and constraints of the traditional model of masculinity. This masculinity is located in the power of machines and the discipline of power, with the presence of hegemony being responsible for organising alternative presentations of masculinity. It is, therefore, the development of machines, the power located within them, and the domination of disciplinary power, attained through the domination of traditional hegemonic masculinity, that opens the pathway for men to deviate from this norm of practice towards a 'performance of appearance' within contemporary work places.

Disciplinary power and the normalising gaze

Masculine domination, as indicated, is perceived as a 'soft' and subtle formulation of power for men to use over others, including other men. However, power is not singularly noted as being soft, it is often associated with forms of discipline should individuals not conform to contemporary cultural ideals of behaviour or actions. Discipline, therefore, is a means of power, through which behaviours may be regulated, and is enforced through a system of surveillance. This may prove a useful tool of analysis when considering men and their perceived need to manipulate their identities to conform to current work place ideals of a pleasing masculine appearance.

In order to ascertain an understanding of disciplinary power, I use an overview of Michel Foucault and his work in this field. For Foucault, power is not discipline, but rather that discipline is one method through which power may be exerted. Historically, the use of disciplinary power has strong associations with crime and punishment, but the concept can be expanded to embrace welfare and education programmes for example, with an intention of creating a society of docile bodies (McGaha, 2000). Such a society would result in bodies that are easy to control by those with power and authority to do so (Foucault, 1977, p. 298). Using such power to control bodies will, therefore, produce bodies that will be socially productive in relation to social and economic conditions (Oliver, 2010).

Power is unobtrusive, it operates not through the hierarchies of power relations but by way of networks. More specifically, disciplinary power is a mechanism through which power can regulate the behaviour of individuals and is achieved through the organisation of cultures, institutions, activities and actions. Power is highly influential and is the cornerstone of humanity, for hierarchies exist irrespective of culture, helping to define and redefine the norms present within each community.

Westernised cultural practices have witnessed a major shift with the power of the sovereign, based upon coercion, superseded by that of disciplinary power. Such disciplinary power is reinforced through diffuse and insidious forms of social surveillance (Foucault, 1979a) through which, in this instance, appearance medicine is normalised for the participants. Such power both enables and constrains the social actions of the men engaging with the reconstruction of the masculine body; with the websites analysed in this study, and the knowledge they impart, securing their position as agents of social control, from which symbolic capital may be attained by men.

This use, therefore, of disciplinary power, as a means to control the masculine body to conform to contemporary ideals of work place appearances, is not unrealistic. It may offer men a masculine comfort when embracing contemporary beautification which has, until now, been primarily viewed as a feminised practice. The comfort is produced and reproduced through its close association with the comforts provided by traditional hegemonic masculinity and, therefore, has been part of many men's lives,

either overtly or subconsciously. Therefore, men's active participation in grooming activities, and accessing appearance medicine treatments, depends upon a successful normalisation of contemporary beautification as a practice for both men and women.

This normalisation for men can be achieved through what Foucault described as the 'normalising gaze' (Leonard, 2007). The 'normalising gaze' of appearance medicine compels men to improve their looks irrespective of their needs or socio-economic background, to ensure they adhere to the required body ideology of contemporary work places. Such normalising techniques are often realised through media representations that infiltrate the male psyche, ensuring men locate themselves within the new social norms of appearance medicine, achieved through the influence of social trends (Slade, 2006). The normalisation of masculine appearance medicine, therefore, involves a diffusion of power, both within and across, the stratified fields of cultural hierarchies. The power, surveillance, judgement and correction of the male body may, therefore, prove influential in men's engagement with appearance medicine treatments.

Surveillance is of particular relevance to the potential movements occurring within masculinities, as it invokes the notion that being watched and monitored ensures compliance to contemporary ideals. Surveillance is often associated with descriptions of the Panopticon and the principles of 'them' watching 'us' (Vaz & Bruno, 2003). However, as Foucault suggests, power is everywhere and cannot be pinpointed to a specific location, but can be located within the individual (Foucault, 1977, p. 108). Such a concept suggests that surveillance, of any form, involves a surveillance of the self, achieved through power relations producing the subject (Rose, 1999, p. 243). Therefore, the normalisation of male grooming, contemporary beautification and uptake of appearance medicine, relies upon the 'Panoptic' style power of those deemed as knowledgeable or superior, in this instance, the mass media.

Power also relies upon current patterns of masculine imagery but promoted through the process of self-surveillance, and implies a need to care for the self (Vaz & Bruno, 2003). In this instance caring for the self, as a reconstruction of the male body, results from the relational powers within cultural places, as "we move in a world of

perpetual strategic relations” (Foucault, 1988, p. 168). The consequence of this is an objectification of men’s bodies, increasingly disciplined by the gaze placed upon them, and normalised in relation to the prevailing ideals of masculine appearance.

Conclusion

A paradox in the contemporary constitution of masculinity opens up an opportunity to explore the field of male identity. It offers an opportunity to explore a newly emerging *habitus* of men who have invested in their appearance as a means of successful participation within contemporary work places, and the means through which they have to negotiate the persisting traces of traditional hegemonic masculinity in order to achieve this status. This paradox, however, suggests that it is possible that the existence of traditional hegemonic masculinity, in its current format, may not survive if sufficient men embark upon the new trajectory of basing their work place performance upon their exterior aesthetic. The formulation of traditional masculinity may have to become repackaged and re-presented, reflecting men’s need to change their appearance for successful work place participation.

Therefore, men’s move from a work place performance founded upon physical strength and courage towards a ‘performance of appearance’, opens up an opportunity for me to explore how the impulses of a new *habitus* for men, and the persistence of locating the new *habitus* within the constraints of traditional hegemonic masculine ideals, presents an unruly paradoxical situation in the public representation of appearance medicine, through website marketing.

Chapter Three

Methodology: the research story

Introduction

My personal interest in men's lived experiences, the changes to the masculine work environment over the past decades, together with my own work experiences as a Registered Nurse within the cosmetic surgery and appearance medicine sectors have proved highly influential in my choice of academic research. In this case my inspiration is drawn from the potential movement afoot within masculinities based upon the increasing masculine consumption of appearance medicine treatments, men's need to pursue such contemporary beautification treatments and the methods through which such treatments are marketed to men. In this research I explore the potential paradoxical situation of the emergence of a new masculinity associated with the 'performance of appearance' within the work place, but achieved through an adherence to practices associated with traditional hegemonic masculinity. I conduct this exploration of contemporary masculine beautification through a close analysis of male appearance medicine websites, the services they offer to men and the marketing trends implemented to engage men with this practice.

In this chapter I outline the stages I have negotiated in order to undertake this research. I have divided the chapter into three parts to separate the structural processes of research from the descriptions of the sample achieved, and the themes identified. In part one I provide overviews of the methodological tools implemented and the objectives of these. In particular I discuss the use of theoretical sampling as a means of selecting the websites for inclusion in my study; web content analysis as being relevant to an online study; the use of thematic analysis as a secondary means of extracting relevant data from the websites together with notes and discussion on validity and reliability. Furthermore, I include personal observations where relevant. In part two, I provide a brief description of each selected website, to provide a

backdrop to the forthcoming analysis, with part three presenting an overview of the themes emerging from the data.

Part one: the research

Research question

The question I have developed for this thesis draws upon the potential tension between traditional and emerging forms of masculinities, as men negotiate a move away from a physical performance in the work place focused upon the virtues of strength, courage and overt power, towards a ‘performance of appearance’ within contemporary work places. I further draw upon the intrinsic value of the exterior aesthetic as providing men with an alternative platform from which power, within contemporary work places, may be assumed. Yet, this possibly more refined practice of being a man will not be ascertained without overcoming obstacles or barriers, through which men must negotiate their way to reinstate their dominance within the changing environments in which they now work. The following question, therefore, provided a starting point from which the website analysis into this field of research could be performed:

Q. How do the male appearance medicine websites negotiate the tension between traditional masculine identities associated with physical work place performances and the emergence of a masculinity founded upon a ‘performance of appearance’; with particular reference to the comfort offered to men to allay potential fears and anxieties when undertaking appearance medicine treatments?

The literature on men, masculinities and their association with appearance medicine is currently evolving in terms of sociological academic research, therefore, my study is located within a relatively new field of enquiry. The idea that formed the foundation of this research came to fruition, having observed my husband have little choice in moving from the industrialisation of engineering to the interactive, service based telecommunications market, and the aesthetic transformation undertaken by him in this move. Therefore, my research is motivated by this lived and shared experience.

In order to address my research I have implemented a qualitative research approach to my work, to ensure the acquisition of relevant data to inform an understanding of the issues present within men's contemporary lived experiences.²⁸ Using the web as my means of enquiry, and the attainment of relevant data being key to my academic enquiry into this field, I utilised a qualitative web content analysis approach to data collection.

Sample

In order to obtain the most relevant data for my study I utilised the theoretical sampling technique. Theoretical sampling is a methodological approach used to select data in order to develop an understanding of a particular field of investigations, and is particularly suited to emerging fields of academic research (Draucker, Martsofl, Ross & Rusk, 2007). This sampling method is both relevant and useful when related to the emerging masculine appearance medicine market, as it is informed by evolving theory and emerging trends (Strauss, 1987). Theoretical sampling allowed me to select the male beauty websites which would clearly inform my research, with a focus upon men's participation in appearance medicine treatments. My intent, therefore, was to explore the discursive construction of the websites and the manner in which they negotiate the paradox between traditional hegemonic practices and the emergence of a new appearance focused masculinity.

Being mindful of the exploratory nature of this research, I intentionally implemented an open sampling theoretical technique, through which I consciously identified the websites of both interest and relevance to my research. This intentional methodological strategy allowed me to not only generate conceptual theories from a sociological perspective, but also allowed a degree of reflexivity in my practice as a researcher. In this instance, my reflexive practice allowed me to quickly assess each website highlighted as being of potential interest, for relevance to my study, and discarded if it did not meet my specified criteria.

²⁸ Qualitative research aims to gather an in-depth understanding of a particular phenomenon or human behaviour (Bowling, 2002).

In structuring my research I decided upon the use of two search engines (Google and Yahoo) as dynamic platforms from which I could reflexively, and in a bidirectional manner, analyse website content to ensure it met the needs of my research. Bidirectional reflexivity, in sociology, is useful as a tool whereby self-reference and examination of data can affect the outcomes, through a continuing strategy to review and realign actions. My use of bidirectional reflexivity enabled me to analyse, modify and refine the research criteria and phrases as a constant process, with amendments being made as appropriate. This resulted in the most suitable websites being identified. With regard to the search engines, I used Google because it is known as being the most reliable for producing relevant search results on a global basis and offers specialist advanced search options (Consumersearch, 2009). I chose Yahoo, a less sophisticated search engine, due to its capability of also providing relevant data for research purposes (Consumersearch, 2009).

In order to conduct my web search I created a list of carefully considered phrases which, due to my prior knowledge and interest in this field, encompassed the multi-faceted nature of the masculine appearance medicine industry, masculinities as an academic field and the masculine body as a project (Appendix A). My list of appropriate key words were entered into both the Google and Yahoo search engines, with a return of 31 websites, 22 from Google and nine from Yahoo.

Now, using bidirectional reflexivity, I reassessed and modified my key words and phrases to reduce the sample size and, as such, implemented a second tier search. The second search was again conducted through both search engines, with the purpose that each previously identified website must meet all criteria highlighted in Appendix B. This second search yielded seven websites, all of which met the set criteria, and I deemed suitable for inclusion in my research. The websites are as follows:

1. *Destination for Men*: Retrieved 1 March, 2011, from <http://www.destinationformen.com.au/about/htm>
2. *Face of Man*: Retrieved 7 March, 2011, from <https://faceofman.com.au/about-skin-care-for-men.html>

3. *Kiora Medi-Spa*: Retrieved 19 March, 2011, from <http://www.kiora.com.au/male-day-spa-melbourne.asp>
4. *Maschio Grooming*: Retrieved 9 March, 2011, from <http://www.Maschio-grooming.co.uk>
5. *Planet Man Grooming Lounge*: Retrieved 2 March, 2011, from <http://planetmangroominglounge.co.uk>
6. *The Refinery*: Retrieved 28 March, 2011, from <http://www.the-refinery.com/treatments/hair-removla.html>
7. *Trampas: The men's room*: Retrieved 23 March, 2011, from <http://www.Trampas.co.uk>

These websites now constitute the basis of my research into the masculine appearance medicine market. They provide a wealth of fascinating information from which I draw out the relevance to contemporary masculine practices. It must be noted, however, that I drew my analysis at the times indicated above, and by the nature of website content, these websites may be subject to change.

Web content analysis

In order to draw out the relevant data from the websites, I decided to implement a web content analysis approach. Content analysis, as a qualitative research methodology, is well established within the social sciences, enabling researchers to systematically analyse the detailed content of texts and images (Herring, 2010). Web content analysis, is a derivative of this already established research genre, but has undergone a variety of modifications to lend its efficacy more appropriately to the ever increasing volume of literature available on the web (Herring, 2010). More specifically, and in addition to the traditional approach of content analysis, it provides a framework through which website content, blogs and social networking sites can be analysed (Herring, 2010). Web content analysis can be broken down into two analytical tools, each formulated to analyse specific types of online data (Gibson, nd).

The first tool of web content analysis is a digitised method of collection, collation and analysis of web content, features and discourse and has been adapted from the traditional, off line format of content analysis (Gibson, nd). The second tool of web content analysis is the digital method of data collection and has been specifically designed to analyse the frequency of such online activities as blogging, hyperlinking, social media and the layering of stories (Gibson, nd). In this research I utilise the digitised method of data collection but not the digital, as the quantifiable relevance of blogging posts and number of social media entries is not the focus of this study, but the online features and narratives of websites are.

Through implementing the web content analysis approach, I was able to focus on each website as a single unit of analysis. From this I gained an understanding of the direction and significance of each website narrative as being a portrayal of socio-cultural texts and lived life experiences. These rich socio-cultural texts, and the necessity to develop a research methodology through which they can be suitably explored, underpins the influential nature of the web and the knowledge resource it has become. However, the use of web content analysis alone was insufficient to process and thoroughly analyse the data I have drawn from the websites explored. With this in mind, I took a collaborative approach to data analysis and drew upon the qualities of thematic analysis, as an additional analytical tool, through which I uncovered many recurring themes.

Thematic analysis is a qualitative methodology used for the identification, analysis and reporting of themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Boyatzis, 1998). This analytical tool offers an accessible and flexible approach to the analysis of qualitative data, allowing both the manifest and latent content of the data to be organised and interpreted systematically (Boyatzis, 1998). Manifest content is the actual, visually present content of the websites, with latent content being the underlying, not necessarily written subtexts that require interpretation to provide meaning to them.

There are, however, a number of issues suggesting a vulnerability in using thematic analysis as a research methodology, with questions raised about its validity, and criticism for themes simply ‘emerging’ from the data without thought or articulation

(Braun & Clarke, 2006); with such negative inferences potentially rendering the methodology as questionable. Moreover, failure to account for how themes have emerged can be

“...misinterpreted to mean that themes ‘reside’ in the data, and if we just look hard enough they will ‘emerge’ like Venus on the half shell. If themes ‘reside’ anywhere, they reside in our heads from our thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them.” (Ely, Vinz, Downing & Anzul, 1997, p205-6).

However, despite the contentious issues around thematic analysis as a research methodology, I decided to implement it as I viewed this tool as being a means through which I could actively interpret the website data from my own individualistic standpoint. This, therefore, allowed me to create links between the website data, my prior knowledge of this field of practice and the statistical evidence that men are increasingly involved in the consumption of appearance medicine treatments.

Stemming from my personal interest in the academic field of masculinities, together with my worked experience within cosmetic and appearance medicine treatments, my interpretation of the data produced the following themes which demanded further analysis:

1. The normalisation of appearance medicine treatments for men; masculinities, the emergence of new and acceptable forms of masculinity and the role of nostalgia as a source of comfort to men in the allaying of anxieties and fears.
2. The advancements of machines and the use of power and knowledge in discourse in actualisation of the new masculine aesthetic vision

The overriding notion that contemporary work places demand that men modify their appearance to one that is currently idealised and acceptable, is a notion that is conveyed consistently throughout the themes identified; and one which my lived experiences supports. I feel that although the themes are very much interrelated, and

the convergence of the themes ensures contemporary male beautification is not feared but more readily accepted, each theme simultaneously remains unique in its own right and is responsible for an aspect of ensuring men move in this new direction.

Coding

Following the implementation of both the web content and thematic analysis tools to draw data from the websites, I produced a coding schedule to assist my identification of emerging themes, trends and patterns. I do acknowledge that my prior knowledge of the appearance medicine market has assisted me in the process of identifying the emerging themes; however, the coding schedule provided a framework through which I recorded the manifest content of each website against a specific set of physical characteristics (Appendix C). These characteristics included:

1. Physical website characteristics
2. Website appeal
3. The use of technology

Through these broad ranging categories, I then considered these attributes according to their relational significance to traditional hegemonic masculinity, successful participation of the masculine body within contemporary work places and the possible emergence of a new performance of masculinity. In considering these broad ranging categories, and in order to manage the data more effectively, I created a further 24 sub-categories and a total of 273 attributes (Appendix C), all classified according to their thematic similarity. The categorisation process, and the production of such a significant number of attributes, provided me with a platform and foundation block, from which I could reflexively develop a rich and more in-depth exploration of the masculine appearance medicine market.

Validity and reliability

The validity and reliability of my research is of great importance. Therefore, in order to provide a degree of rigor to my research I attempted to produce a study that is both transparent and logical, with the connections between physical data and my interpretation of it being understood in a clear, concise and correct manner. I offer my work with a transparency to the construction of the research field, my personal experiences and interests in this matter, the construction and execution of the research process, with my outcomes being clearly visible.

My attention, therefore, to transparency and clarity allows for credible and accurate replication of my research format. However, owing to my personal subjectivity, and that of future researchers, interpretation of the data will always be dependent upon the social positioning of the researcher involved, together with their specific aims.

In this instance my research is both inspired and influenced by my academic interest in masculinities as a field of research and worked experiences within the cosmetic surgery and appearance medicine markets. Yet, with these interests clearly identified, the data produced in this study remains both apparent and understandable to those with no prior knowledge of the industry, therefore, allowing the possibility of accurate replication of the structure of the study.

Part two: websites

An overview of the websites

Having spent a long time poring over the seven websites used in my research, I thought it appropriate to introduce each one with a brief overview of how they construct their concepts, aspirations and expectations of men within the expanding contemporary beautification market of appearance medicine. Drawing upon my analysis, and with broad generalisations, the websites can be clearly identified with their target markets, through the creation of specific ambiances alluding to the perceived aspirations of their current and potential clientele.

I noted that all of the websites located their language and discourse firmly within masculine practices and rituals that equate with functionality and purpose; with a rich dialogue present related to technology and the advancement of machines. Furthermore, the enticements offered by the websites to men were closely aligned to traditional hegemonic practices and included free alcohol, sports channels to watch and gaming platforms for relaxation; these I noted in stark contrast to the relaxation and health orientated drinks offered in female spas. Each website differed in their approach to the masculine appearance medicine market, yet ultimately all were attempting to integrate male appearance medicine as being a normal practice for all modern day men.

Destination for Men

Destination for Men, for me, epitomises the generalised attempt to masculinise the appearance medicine market. The website, representing a salon which is located in an inner southern suburb of Adelaide, South Australia, is vibrantly decorated in red, white and purple which, in my opinion, projects feelings of vitality, exuberance, energy and enthusiasm, but above all masculinity.

The website relies upon promoting treatments through the use of celebrity clientele and alcohol, particularly as the owner, Tony Gray, is an ex-Australian Football League player. The bar is featured heavily throughout the website, with other

celebrity footballers, radio presenters, cricketers, a basketball player and a baseball player either drinking at the bar, or being photographed with female models. I did note, however, that with the business focus being on alcohol and the idea of celebrity, there are no images indicating the décor of the treatment rooms or services offered.

The language used throughout this website is research based, functional, efficient and concise. There are no references to grooming guides, male spa etiquette or luxury experiences, just functionality with a clear focus that the salon caters for the contemporary Australian male, "...a men's-only grooming salon that caters exclusively to the needs of the Aussie male" (Gray, 2012, p. About us, para.7).

Destination for Men uses contemporary modes of communication and has icons linking to their Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages, with Facebook used primarily as a method of advertising and promotion. YouTube, however, offers a greater insight into the functioning and ethos of the salon, with two videos narrated by the owner Tony Gray. Having watched both video clips I noted the importance placed upon having a beer to relax before having any treatment, but quite significantly in my opinion, that the treatments are all conducted on men by young female staff members, with the final scene being the owner receiving treatments from three female staff members simultaneously.

Destination for Men offers a range of beauty treatments including IPL skin rejuvenation and IPL hair removal.²⁹

Face of Man

Face of Man is presented as an upmarket male only beauty salon in the heart of the central business district of Sydney, Australia. The most striking element of this website, for me as a researcher, was the clearly evident reliance upon nostalgia as a means of masculinising the entire practice. There is a clear aura of nostalgia and

²⁹ IPL is similar to laser machines to remove hair or provide skin rejuvenation.

sophistication present both on the website and within the images of the salon, and is reflected in the use of a black and beige colour scheme.

The website is simple, yet sophisticated. The signage is encased in scroll-like banners, and the interior of the salon presents a dichotomy between early nineteenth century hotel lobbies at reception and the industrial settings of factories and mills within the treatment places. More specifically I noted that the corridor and larger treatment area are presented as industrial minimalism with exposed brickwork being painted white, contrasting with black glossy tiles. The presence of ornaments reflecting by-gone eras are evident and include a hotel style desk bell, a globe, a gramophone, candles displayed in watchmen styled cases, a large old fashioned spotlight and apothecary styled glass bottles.

Despite the nostalgic references clearly evident throughout the ethos of the website and salon, the website does use modern modes of communication, namely YouTube and Facebook. Facebook is used consistently and encourages good communication between themselves and clients as a medium for bookings as well as queries. Having watched the YouTube video it makes reference to the owner, Kylie Hayden, and her dream of opening a salon founded upon the ethos of a 1930's gentleman's cigar lounge, which clarifies the use of nostalgic rhetoric as a backdrop to the website. *Face of Man* furthers this notion of a cigar lounge through ensuring alcohol is available for relaxation purposes for clients, but does so by offering 'Scotch' and not beer which, in my opinion, makes it stand out from the majority of salons and helps the website to instil its aura as a quality provider.

Face of Man offers a range of beauty treatments including laser hair removal, microdermabrasion and facial peels.

Kiora Medi-Spa (Kiora)

Kiora Medi-Spa, located in Hawthorn, a suburb of Melbourne, Australia, differs from the other six websites in my research, as it is a unisex salon and it clearly identifies with the medical aspect of the appearance medicine market. *Kiora* has a

male specific section on the menu bar offering similar, if not somewhat more limited options to men than to women using the same website.

The visual aesthetic of *Kiora* is orange and grey in colour, reflecting the unisex nature of the website. The website is clinical in its construction with images of stark white and immaculate reception areas, waiting and treatment rooms, together with a running narrative that is a mixture of both clinical and functional discourse. The website, and therefore the salon, although functional does, in my opinion, lack a quantifiable enthusiasm for the treatments offered and may be constrained by medical practise being the focus of the service, and not that of contemporary beautification.

The interactive means of communication used by *Kiora* is advanced in comparison to other websites in my study. It not only uses YouTube and Facebook, but also offers an ‘online body need evaluator’ and male specific appearance medicine forums. Facebook is used as a marketing tool, with minimal interaction with the client base, however, the YouTube videos are interesting in the presentation of the treatments offered. One particular video frames the masculine need of appearance enhancement within a context of relaxation, and de-stressing, yet features a man discussing his reasons for undertaking appearance medicine treatments and the clinical benefits of Botox.

Kiora offers a full range of appearance medicine treatments including laser hair removal, Botox and dermal fillers.

Maschio Grooming (Maschio)

Maschio Grooming is a salon located in the central business district of Leeds, a working class city located in the north of England, which I have visited on many occasions. Leeds’ close association with the Industrial Revolution is evident from the numerous red brick factory buildings which have now been renovated into loft conversions and trendy shopping lanes.

The website presents a professional, sophisticated image, an ethos founded upon respect and has a visual aesthetic of grey and pale blue. The interior of the salon is clean cut, has a contemporary yet relaxed feel and has minimalist décor, with a number of monochromatic mirrors hanging on the walls. The website draws attention to the ever present masculine practice of consuming alcohol to relax prior to treatments, but also offers a broad range of other entertainment incentives to men including plasma televisions, gaming platforms and free Wi-Fi.

Keeping up with the technological incentives, *Maschio Grooming* uses both YouTube and Facebook as interactive communication mediums, with Facebook used extensively as a resource for bookings, special offers, daily activities and staff recruitment. The YouTube video is short, exhibiting the exterior of the salon, male barbering and massage treatments.

The overall genre of *Maschio Grooming* is of a salon located in the rejuvenated district of an industrial city, and reflects the reconstruction of contemporary work places, but remains a salon that is accessible to men from all walks of life.

Maschio Grooming offers appearance medicine treatments including micro-dermabrasion, Botox and dermal fillers.

Planet Man Grooming Lounge (Planet Man)

Planet Man is a male only beauty salon and barbershop located in Chadderton, a district of Manchester, England. Having lived in the South-West of Manchester for almost 40 years of my life I can clarify that Chadderton is a working class neighbourhood North-East of the city, and has roots firmly located in the cotton industry and the Industrial Revolution. The town has moved little in its positioning since that time and remains a blue collar working district. With this situational information in mind, I found it fascinating that a website and salon which, from the exterior looks little beyond an everyday barbershop, would pursue such modernistic treatments and include appearance medicine upon their menu.

The *Planet Man* website is simply styled but incorporates a 'space race' theme to its marketing strategy. The salon offers a futuristic take on contemporary male beautification with notions of space travel used in the décor of treatments rooms. *Planet Man* also offer male grooming products manufactured in the same genre, with the language indicating a narrative founded in space travel. In true masculine style the image gallery opens with a beer fridge.

Planet Man engages with social media as a form of communication, using YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is primarily an advertising tool, however, Twitter is used for bookings and updating daily events, with YouTube offering a video demonstration of a cut throat razor shave. Interestingly, the YouTube cut throat razor video is framed with a background soundtrack of reggae music.

Planet Man offers a broad treatment menu including Botox and laser teeth whitening.

The Refinery

The Refinery is an upmarket male only salon, with one store located in the heart of the west end of London and the second within the Harrods Department Store, Knightsbridge, London, England. The locations ooze exclusivity and sophistication, which is reflected in the sleek and minimalistic styling of the website, presented simply in black and grey.

The Refinery presents both interior and exterior pictures of the salon. The exterior pictures indicate one salon being housed within a Georgian period building with the interior being of minimalist yet comfortable design, both of which provoke an atmosphere of an elite gentlemen's club. The interior décor, however, also houses photographic images of muscular male models undergoing treatments, but documented in the nostalgic sophistication of black and white print.

The Refinery does use contemporary social media as communication methods, utilising both Facebook and Twitter. Facebook appears to be used little by the website, however, Twitter has a good and current interactive audience.

The language is simple yet sophisticated, but the narrative contains no reference to alcohol being a necessary enticement before undergoing beautification treatments, nor any other incentives associated with traditional hegemonic practices.

Of all the websites in my research, the exclusivity presented through the website would, in my opinion, appeal to those men positioned in the upper social stratifications of the London elite; men seeking a sumptuous grooming experience.

The Refinery offers a broad range of appearance medicine treatments including laser hair removal.

Trampas: The Men's Room (Trampas)

Trampas is a male only salon located in Durham City, in the North-East of England. Durham is a city noted for its association with coal mining and working class roots. This website is an interesting one, and presents a very different format to all the others featuring in my research. The website locates its image within the military, with a striped backdrop and colour scheme of khaki, rust and white, and features a cartoon caricature of an American army officer. Yet these military representations are not carried through to the interior of the salon.

The interior images of *Trampas* indicate an aesthetic associated with comfort and old fashioned furnishings, including dark leather chesterfield styled couches and dark wooden, antique furniture, set against a backdrop of orange/red wall colourings. The ornamental decorations feature numerous photographic images and paintings; however, these again are confused in focus and direction, offering everything from sports cars, oil paintings, alcohol labels and a picture of Mahatma Gandhi. The soft furnishings are, therefore, not in keeping with either the militarised theme of the website, nor the interior décor of the salon.

The language is simple but masculine, with detailed information clearly given for the more advanced procedures offered, together with some reassurances. *Trampas* offers inducements in a similar manner to many other websites featured in my research, including plasma televisions and a Starbucks coffee shop. *Trampas* also engages with the contemporary communication methods of Facebook and Twitter. The *Trampas* Facebook page is a well-used, interactive forum for their clientele base and offers a greater insight into the salon's ethos together with more images of the exterior of the salon. The exterior images again present a focus on old fashioned values, with the salon being housed within a period brickwork building; however their Twitter page, which is again well used, carries their trade-mark military style of a khaki background and the military caricature.

Trampas offers a broad selection of appearance medicine treatments including holistic therapies, Botox and dermal fillers.

Part three: the emerging themes: an overview

Introduction

In this final part of my methodology I decided to preview the themes I have identified as being of interest, of the most significance to my research and to the questions I have posed. This preview provides a backdrop to my discussion in the ensuing chapters. Initially I discuss the normalisation of masculine appearance medicine treatments together with the concept of masculinities, the emergence of new forms of masculinity associated with the male aesthetic, together with the role of nostalgia as a means of alleviating anxieties for men. I then discuss the advancement of machines and the use of power and knowledge in discourse to actualise this vision.

Masculinising the femininity of appearance medicine: masculinities, normalisation and nostalgia

Despite, however, my prior knowledge of masculinities, appearance medicine and the increasing number of male clients, I did not realise the extent to which websites attempted to normalise these contemporary beautification treatments for men, nor the significance of this role. With the notion that masculinities are becoming porous and potentially changing, through embedding the new rituals of masculine beautification as being customary, it highlights the significance of how the websites normalise this process for men. The data highlighted that new routines and rituals are being developed as standard practices, and as such align men's new behaviours with the historically constructed culture of feminine beauty regimes (Rudofsky, 1986).

Through my analysis of the websites I noted that traditional hegemonic masculinity is changing and moving away from clear cut associations with power, physical strength and courage. The consequence of the website narratives indicates that changes in traditional masculinity are affecting what it means to be masculine in contemporary work places. The previously traditional, enriched and embedded social practices of men are presently at risk of erosion and, therefore, make way for the

existence of multiple masculinities (Connell, 1995). However, I noted most clearly that the websites inform men of the new transformative practice of male beautification through the relational value of traditional hegemonic masculinity. Appearance medicine, and the discourse espoused by the websites, translates to the possible emergence of a new masculinity, a masculinity focused upon the ‘performance of appearance’; with that appearance being achieved through men turning their bodies into objects for modification (‘the body project’), as well as a means of successful work place participation (Davies, 2002; Bordo, 1999, 1994; Kimmel, 1996, Connell, 1995).

The relocation of the masculine body away from traditional hegemonic practices towards a masculine ‘performance of appearance’ within contemporary work places is only achievable with a shift in the masculine *habitus*. The new masculine *habitus*, which transcends the boundaries of the traditional model of masculinity is dependent, however, upon men’s assimilation with the transformative treatments currently offered through appearance medicine. Yet the appearance medicine treatments offered through the websites, which may potentially reposition men away from their traditional *habitus*, simultaneously ensure that traditional hegemonic practices remain visible.

The potential that men simultaneously relocate their *habitus* away from traditional hegemonic masculinity towards a new masculine ‘performance of appearance’, but do so within the constraints of traditional hegemonic practices, demonstrates the flexibility of the *habitus* as being sufficiently fluid to embrace a broad spectrum of daily practices, both contemporary and traditional (Fowler, 1999). This dichotomy represents how the masculine shift in *habitus* is not merely a move away from traditionally masculine practices, but a change that simultaneously embraces aspects of hegemony through which the ‘performance of appearance’ is born. The masculine ‘performance of appearance’, therefore, relates to the conjecture of an aspirational *habitus*, as developed by Fowler (1999), as an extension of Bourdieu’s *habitus*. This conjecture relies, however, upon the websites’ ability to market the relational value of men’s appearance, and the performance of this, in order to re-masculinise contemporary work places.

Through the websites need to offer men security and comfort in accessing appearance medicine, the emerging gulf between the traditional practices of masculinity and the ‘performance of appearance’ is bridged by the representations of nostalgic rhetoric. This practice locates the contemporary nature of appearance medicine within the golden age of past times and allows men to romanticise their adherence to the new norms of body ideology. The use of by-gone eras and a yearning for idealised past times, all of which have strong associations with, and produce connotations of, traditional hegemonic practices, ensures men remain masculinised, even when their traditional masculinity is potentially under review. Furthermore, the use of nostalgia to underpin contemporary beautification may allay men’s fears and anxieties of being associated with the feminised world of appearance medicine. Contemporary work places may, therefore, be demanding pleasant exteriors of the masculine body, but through the websites’ construction of the traditionally masculinised rhetoric of industrial work places or colonial explorations, the positioning of male beautification is presented as normal and idealised.

The advancement of machines: power and knowledge in discourse as a means of men’s engagement with appearance medicine

The thematic trend of nostalgic representations, the reliance to some degree on the industrialisation of working practices and the advancements in technology and machines, were again unexpected on my part. The clarity through which some of the websites associated themselves with one or all of these practices highlighted significance in ensuring comforting environments are offered to men, through which masculine anxieties of contemporary beautification may be allayed.

Men’s relationship with traditional hegemonic practices and industrialisation are exploited by the websites as a means, also, of locating appearance medicine within familiar territory for their target audience. Technology, machines and power are inextricably linked to gender and masculinity (Cockburn, 1992). They are thematically noteworthy as they shape men’s interest in, and adherence to, their need to construct and reconstruct their objectified bodies as a resource for contemporary work place participation. Men’s attachment to machines, and the power they

produce, results in men bonding with the machines, their power, their output and the progress that the machines represent, resulting in the empowerment of men to perform aesthetically in the interactive, service focused, work place.

This normalisation of contemporary masculine beautification appears to be achieved through the practice of self-surveillance and the regulation of the male body. It is underpinned through the websites' covert power to impart the need for male beautification as a resource through which successful work place participation may be achieved, yet is conveyed through the constraints and comforts of the traditional model of masculinity.

The covert power of the websites, through the dissemination of information as a form of knowledge, and the discourse entered into, provides an engaging opportunity for men when tempted by appearance medicine treatments. For power, located in knowledge and discourse generates the normalisation of appearance medicine for men.

Conclusion

The overview of themes provides a broad framework for the discussion which follows, to ensure a greater depth of analysis of the data. The richness of this data allows the potential to produce a rich and lively discussion around the notion that the websites are marketing the newness of appearance medicine for men, but locating it within the security of traditional hegemonic practices. It is from this conjecture that I identified the paradoxical situation whereby men attempt to achieve a 'performance of appearance' within contemporary work places, but the attainment of this is achieved through the administration of normative practices associated with the traditional hegemonic model of masculinity.

Therefore, in the ensuing two chapters I pursue the normalisation of male appearance medicine, masculinities and nostalgia as a resource for comfort together with the advancement of machines and power and knowledge in discourse as a means of men's engagement with appearance medicine.

Chapter Four

“Nothing succeeds like the appearance of success” (Lasch, nd).

Masculinising the femininity of appearance medicine: masculinities, normalisation and nostalgia

Like many other women I take beauty regimes and the potential need to dabble in appearance medicine as part of my normal practice. To encourage men, however, to move from the comfort of their traditional grooming routines towards routines in which they engage with appearance medicine, requires a marketing strategy that produces this process as being normal for all men. In this chapter I explore the methods undertaken by the websites to normalise contemporary male beautification practices, their relationship with masculinity and the prospect of a newly emerging masculinity defined by a man’s exterior appearance. I also discuss the websites’ use of nostalgia as a source of masculine comfort to allay anxieties and fears when undertaking appearance medicine treatments, within the context of traditionally hegemonic masculine practices.

Masculinities: masculinising the femininity of appearance medicine

Women, living within contemporary cultures, understand the value of their appearance and undertake the work necessary to transform their body from its natural state to one that is acceptable within their specific culture (Falk, 1995). Historically, women have constructed and reconstructed their bodies through the tradition of rituality to align their physical selves with the current ideology of body perfection (Rudofsky, 1986), using daily routines of cleansing, moisturising and depilation to perfect their appearance (Black & Sharma, 2001). Such routines and rituals have become entrenched in women’s social practice, so that conforming to the

current standard of beauty is no longer an extraordinary activity, but has become part of their normal everyday practice of femininity (Black & Sharma, 2001).

Femininity works on multiple levels, with some achieving the ideologically given state of body perfection but others not even attempting attainment (Holland, Romazanoglu, Sharpe & Thomson, 1998; Skeggs, 1997; Weekes, 1997). Beauty, for women, is associated with such positive characteristics as morality and kindness, but is simultaneously judged according to the current cultural ideals, normalised through repetitive practise. For men, however, the social practice of beautification is a new phenomenon. It is unfamiliar territory and requires that the websites of male appearance medicine providers overcome men's entrenched perceptions of the beauty market as being feminine, so as to encourage men's participation in the improvement of their appearance.

Traditional hegemonic masculinity has long been the dominant form of masculinity and, as such, has become embedded in social practices and discourse. It directs individual men towards a narrative of culturally defined and acceptable behaviours achieved through men's complicity, agency and reflexivity (Connellan, 2001; Wetherall & Edley, 1999). The dominance of this discourse remains at the forefront of men's behaviours today, but changes are afoot with the growing awareness of multiple forms of masculinity being in existence (Connell, 2005).

The changes which are occurring are gradually restructuring the powerful positioning of traditional hegemonic masculinity and, in turn, informing a new form of masculinity. The new masculinity emerges as a consequence of a perception of the male body as being an object to be transformed, beautified and enhanced (Davies, 2002; Bordo, 1999, 1994; Kimmel, 1996; Connell, 1995). The move away from traditional hegemony towards a new masculinity is located in men's need to reposition themselves within the restructured work place environments of the twenty-first century (McDowell, 2003). That is, within work places that offer interactive service work reliant upon the pleasing appearance of men, as it has been noted that men's bodies are becoming objects of work place admiration, and as such need to appeal to the idealised bodies of contemporary culture. Men now have to reproduce their exterior self as being '...slender, toned, deodorized, youthful-looking

(and white)...’ (McDowell, 2009, p. 9), as a means of selling themselves as employees, as well as the objects or services of their employer. Such enforced changes to the masculine body demand men renegotiate their identities to conform to contemporary labour markets.

The changing identities of masculinity

The website narratives and discourse I have observed underpins the notion that masculine identities are in the throes of changing to coexist within the scope of multiple masculinities, in order for men to participate successfully within contemporary work places. Moreover, I noted that to normalise masculine participation in appearance medicine treatments was a primary objective of the marketing strategies, with particular attention given to the ageing male body as being a negative life event, regardless of it being a natural process. These changes allow for the emergence of a masculinity focused upon appearance. The importance of the website representations of the masculine aesthetic lie, therefore, in the manner in which they reinforce traditional hegemonic masculine practices to normalise treatments, while simultaneously promoting a masculinity based upon the ‘performance of appearance’ (through the consumption of appearance medicine). That is, a new form of masculinity is emerging from the multiple forms present, through which the ‘worked upon’ man, who appears more groomed and beautiful, will now fit into the new work place masculine norms of interactive service work.

Many men, however, are experiencing complex feelings about the need to work on their appearance and are reluctant to move away from the values of traditional hegemonic masculinity (Diller, 2010), towards a masculinity focused on appearance. The websites, therefore, locate their marketing within the context of traditional hegemonic practices to assist in comforting men who undertake appearance medicine. Using masculine discourse, the websites define treatments as being normal for all men. More specifically, they assure men that their treatments have been formulated especially for the masculine face and body. Emblematic of this practice is the manner in which *Destination for Men* makes a generalised gesture towards this reassurance, by referring to the specific needs of men:

“Destination for Men is precisely what the title suggests – it is a grooming and relaxation destination specifically designed for men! Our research indicates that the Australian male is in need of a professional salon that caters exclusively for their needs.” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. About us).

Trampas’ website notes the need for reassurance by confirming that their treatments

“...cater exclusively for the body, skin and hair needs of men.” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Welcome).

Although clinical in its presentation, *Kiora* also appears to see the necessity in reassuring men that appearance medicine is normal and acceptable as a masculine practice. Here, *Kiora* clarifies that Botox and dermal filler administration will meet the specific needs of men, referring to

“... males’ [sic] unique requirements and anatomy: anti-wrinkle injections for men have a set of unique requirements. Firstly, the anatomy is considerably different to that of the female and requires careful assessment of the facial musculature to assure optimal outcomes. Secondly, because of the greater muscle bulk in the male considerably more volume of injections are required to achieve the look desired. *Kiora*’s Specialist Cosmetic Doctors are expert at tailoring anti-wrinkle injections treatments to suit the male patient.” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Male Anti-Wrinkle Treatments).

This statement gives clear direction to men that their needs have been considered and accounted for when administering these treatments. It also delivers the information in a straight forward discourse. The precise measure of the narrative, together with a no-nonsense approach to marketing, indicates to men the normality of appearance medicine. Furthermore, the narrative highlights the traditional masculine physique of men being larger than women to, not only reassure men that treatments are suitable for their needs, but to simultaneously masculinise the practice through normalisation. The practice, therefore, of offering reassurance to men, albeit in a masculinised format, demonstrates to this interested, but possibly hesitant, group of users that the treatments are now normal practice for many men.

Further examples of alluding to traditional hegemonic masculine practices, while marketing the benefits of appearance medicine, are drawn from the *Face of Man* website illustrating this dynamic. The *Face of Man* treatment areas, for example, are presented as industrial work places. They combine exposed brick work that has been white washed together with glossy black tiles, reminiscent of bathrooms in previous eras (Retrieved 7 March, 2011, from URL: <http://www.faceofman.com.au/about-us.html>, picture 2). This representation offers men a familiar environment in which to construct and reconstruct their bodies through the administration of appearance medicine. However, this industrial appearance contradicts the self-representation of the business, as the website does not locate itself within the industrial era but rather as:

“...a generously proportioned custom built premises inspired by the classic style of an early twentieth century gentleman’s cigar lounge.” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Welcome)

and combines

“... the comfort and atmosphere of a gentleman’s club with the vitality and sense of well-being of a health spa.” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Introduction).

While the gentleman’s cigar lounge certainly aligns with notions of traditional hegemonic masculinity, the pictorial imagery on the website does not reflect the nostalgic representations that would be expected of such descriptions. This contradictory narrative suggests an attempt to engage men through the luxurious association of gentlemen’s cigar lounges but demonstrates this, interestingly, through connotations of industrialisation.

The contradictory situation on the *Face of Man* website may depict conflicting narratives and images, but a similar scenario is also presented on the *Trampas* website. *Trampas* initially presents a narrative defined by military expectations, with a caricature of a military officer and a khaki colour scheme, yet the interior and exterior images of the actual salon starkly contradict this (Retrieved 23 March, 2011, from URL: <http://www.Trampas.co.uk/>); with the interior constructed around notions

of a traditional barber shop (Retrieved 23 March, 2011, from URL: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Trampas-The-Mens-Room/154177864607821>).

The military branding on *Trampas'* website provides a positive association with traditional hegemonic masculinity for those men who remain unsure about dabbling in the world of appearance medicine. The military, as an institution, symbolically represents the values and virtues of traditional hegemonic masculinity. Men's initial contact, therefore, with *Trampas* suggests the practice of contemporary beautification is not only normal for men, but that caring for the masculine body is important, as it informs a narrative that formulates and dictates nations (Klein, 1999). Such narratives influence and orientate men's behaviours, allowing men to develop idealised versions of the self, through the association of power and influence of the military (Thornborrow & Brown, 2009; Dutton, Dukerich & Harquail, 1994).

The *Trampas* website represents a skilful application of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1977), to infiltrate the psyche of men. The use of disciplinary power, in relation to the military, and its deep rooted associations with traditional hegemonic masculinity, results in the construction of obedient or docile bodies (Thornborrow & Brown, 2009; Humphreys & Brown, 2002). Foucault's theories, when applied in this context, therefore, demonstrate how men may be drawn to appearance medicine treatments through military representations. Men are less resistant to military influences (than women) and, as such, *Trampas* is able to persuade men that to work upon their appearance, in order to reproduce socio-economic power, is currently an acceptable practice. From this, men's compliant docile bodies permits them an opportunity to work within the interactive service sectors, where success is measured upon a pleasing, and culturally idealised exterior aesthetic (McDowell, 2009).

Trampas' use of the military, however, not only invites men to regulate their own conduct with regard to the construction of their bodies, but subsequently turns these men into obedient, self-disciplinarians, ensuring men continue with body reconstruction as a long term project. The creation of obedient bodies is achieved through the aspirational influence of both traditional hegemonic masculine ideology and the military. The military is a culturally defined masculine institution, with deep rooted associations of power linked to the upper social stratifications of wealth,

privilege and rank (Advincula-Lopez, 2009). *Trampas'* use, therefore, of the military suggests to men the prospect that they too may attain an improved social status, and power potential, if willing to undertake appearance medicine treatments.

Trampas attempt, therefore, to normalise masculine appearance medicine, and promote men's ability to determine their aesthetic selves through their association with the military. This is particularly notable as the military is founded upon the ability to achieve one's aspirations (Reardon, 1985) and, as such, the use of this institution may prove inspirational for those men who lack the means or courage to convert their ambitions into reality. The use of military discourse, where male bonding and the routine self-management of the body are everyday practices for its members, may also enable individual men to confront the challenges presented within their current work places, with respect to the reconstruction of their bodies. Therefore, the military representations on the *Trampas* website contribute to men being able to transform their *habitus* away from their traditionally inherited practices towards that of an aspirational *habitus* (Fowler, 1999); as the military suggests that aspirations can be achieved through hard work (Reardon, 1985).

The emblematic ability of the military to facilitate change in the *habitus* may prove viable for some men, and possibly cuts across the generations, as both baby boomers and youth have served time in war zones. The juxtaposition, however, between the reality of being in the gendered military forces, and the reflexivity required by men to produce and reproduce their bodies to an aesthetically pleasing standard, is wholly oppositional. That is, the reflexively produced body is disassociated from traditional hegemonic masculine values (Rudofsky, 1986). Yet, for men to reflexively produce their bodies, and emerge more aligned to a masculinity focused upon their appearance, they paradoxically require the tools provided by, and associated with, traditional hegemonic practices for actualisation.

I witnessed the means through which men could achieve actualisation, when I considered the *Face of Man* and *Trampas* websites. I drew conclusions that, despite the contemporary nature of appearance medicine, the websites' reliance upon traditional modes of masculine practice are important to encourage masculine engagement, with most notable references being the gentlemen's clubs and the

military. The dependence upon the practices of traditional hegemonic masculinity is further visible on the *Planet Man* website. *Planet Man* has based its marketing strategy firmly within the highly masculinised arena of the ‘space race’. The website, salon logo and narrative all use ‘space race’ images and language (Retrieved 2 March, 2011, from URL: <http://www.planetmangrooming.co.uk/>).

The ‘space race’ is closely associated with the dominant traits of traditional hegemonic masculinity (Llinares, 2009). Astronauts, in particular, are promoted as being exemplary idealistic representations of what it is to be masculine (Connell, 1995). *Planet Man*, embracing the embodiment of masculine ideology through its associations with space flight, sits juxtaposed to the feminised practices of appearance medicine. The association with astronauts simultaneously suggests to men the possibility of reaching for their dreams, even if ultimately the dream is never attainable.

Planet Man, however, and in a similar manner to both *Trampas* and *Face of Man*, do not carry their dominant marketing theme through to the interior décor of their salon. The *Planet Man* décor comprises of exposed brick work, referencing industrialised work places of pre-aeronautical times. Yet, the practice of locating websites in idealised masculine places of the military, space flight or industrialised work environments, supersedes the need for consistent marketing, and locates the contemporary phenomenon of appearance medicine within places strongly associated with traditional hegemonic practices; despite the physical erosion of some of these environments.

Six of the seven websites I analysed demonstrate a direct reliance upon traditional hegemonic practices, whether it be the military, gentleman’s cigar lounges or the ‘space race’. Such practices indicate clearly the continuing need of websites to align closely with masculine traditions in order to engage men with their treatments. However, one website stood alone in overtly negating this need. *Kiora Medi-Spa* declines all inclinations to incorporate masculine practices into their website or salon. Instead, the dominant referent of their website is professionalised medicine and clinical practice. On the face of it, this appears to represent a ‘softening’ of the

traditional masculine theme. On closer inspection, however, it is but a simple reworking of that theme.

The dominance of men within professional medical practice is a long standing, socially and culturally constructed phenomenon (Broom, 1995). Medicine is defined by its gendered status, with the recruitment of doctors determined through the socially constructed nature of gender and health roles played out by both men and women (Broom, 1995). The status of medicine, therefore, is not gender neutral but constitutes a part of the gender order and of the dominance of masculinity within this field (Broom, 1995). It is this silent, yet undoubted, association with the masculine practice of medicine that *Kiora* relies upon to demonstrate its alignment with traditionally masculine practices. It is subtle, refined and almost restrained, yet the gender character of medicine is ever present. However, *Kiora*, although undoubtedly not unique in this approach, is a minority representative of such salons, with the majority focusing on the traditional hegemonic male as a means of engaging men with appearance medicine treatments.

The advent of male only salons, or male only sections of clinical websites (*Kiora*), demonstrates a significant growth in the appearance medicine market. This practice offers men an opportunity to investigate the possibility of enhancing their appearance without the embarrassment of attending a female spa. The discomfort with feminine spas is not directly addressed by the majority of websites, but referred to more subtly through subtexts, which indicate their services are specifically designed for men. One salon, *Maschio*, has acted specifically upon this issue of discomfort, however, and directly addresses the matter of embarrassment within the narrative of their website, stating that

“Maschio allows men to have a truly relaxing experience, where they can be pampered, without the embarrassment of a mixed gender clientele.”
(*Maschio*, 2011, p. About us).

Despite, however, the dominance and presence of medicine as a background marketing tool, *Kiora* also makes an attempt to de-feminise their services and overtly appeals to the male as consumer (rather than patient), with a dedicated introduction

to the salon being a “male friendly day spa” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Male Spa). This clearly defined narrative demonstrates the necessary role played by marketing strategies in the clarification of their target markets. The narrative further references the contemporary nature of interior design in the salon, as though this would appeal more specifically to men than women:

“...Kiora boasts a clean sheet design by RL Designs that eschews the clichés of older spas...” (with) “...state of the art treatment rooms that ensures the male client feels relaxed...” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Male Day Spa).

This statement, however, falls short of defining exactly which aspects of traditional hegemony they are referring to when appealing to male clientele. The overall lack of obvious references to practices of hegemonic masculinity by *Kiora* may actually work for the website, resulting in the website appealing to a youth market.

This acknowledgement, that appearance medicine is no longer the sole domain of feminine practice, may alleviate some concerns or anxieties men may have of engaging with treatments. The notion, however, that appearance medicine provides feminine only treatments is not the only potential point of stress for men. Male anxieties must exist around first time visits to salons, as *Face of Man* in particular, has produced a ‘grooming lounge etiquette’ guide to alleviate potential embarrassment for men (Retrieved 7 March, 2011, from URL: http://www.Faceofman.com.au/mens_grooming_guide.html). The website offers reassurances to men of what to expect and how to behave, together with implying that appearance medicine is a normal and everyday masculine practice. *Trampas* has also noted the potential for male embarrassment and offers to reassure men that to visit the salon is normal practice. It specifically notes this potential for embarrassment in the following extract, in that there may be

“A few strange positions, but remember your therapist is a professional!...”
(*Trampas*, 2011, p. Waxing).

Through the acknowledgement of embarrassment and awkwardness, the websites offer comfort and normality to men about the practices of contemporary

beautification. However, to further normalise these practices, and to assist in breaking down the barriers of treatments offered in salons, a number of the websites offer male face and body products for retail purchase. More specifically, *Destination for Men*, *Maschio*, *Planet Man* and *The Refinery* offer products for sale, as a means of continuing the grooming regimes at home. Through offering a continuum to the grooming started within the salon, the products support the normalising practice of male beautification. In particular, the language used to market the products reflects not only masculinised interests, but also appeals to the traditional hegemonic practices of men. Of its' particular products, *The Refinery* notes, for example, that the products use

“...cutting edge technology” (and can) “...improve and maintain the health and vitality of even the toughest of skins.” (*The Refinery*, 2011, p. Refinery Products).

However, male only products, in isolation, are inadequate for the normalisation of grooming practices for men. Website creators, under the direction of salon owners, have sufficient knowledge, experience, and resources to create a multi-faceted marketing process, incorporating the many perspectives associated with traditional masculinity, so as to entice customers into their salons. The *Destination for Men* website provides a clear example of this in practice, with its founder Tony Gray saying he

“...founded Destination for Men in 2006 following several years of research...” (and has) ‘...correlated all of the information he has received thus far to form a men’s only grooming salon that caters exclusively to the needs of the Aussie male.” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. About Us).

This narrative, ingratiating the salons into the psyche of men, is representative of five of the websites in this study: *Destination for Men*, *Face of Man*, *Maschio*, *Planet Man* and *Trampas*. Four of the salons - *Destination for Men*, *Maschio*, *Planet Man* and *Trampas*, in addition to free alcohol, offer plasma televisions and premium sports channels to entertain their male clientele while waiting for treatments. *Destination for Men* offers a games room to pass some time while waiting for

treatments, with *Maschio*'s offering gaming platforms and free Wi-Fi. These additional marketing tools suggest that men have a need to be 'cared for' within settings, to appeal to their interests and pastimes, together with providing familiarity and comfort. *Maschio* clarify their reasoning for including such extra attractions, as the salon having

“...been designed with men's comfort in mind.” (*Maschio*, 2011, p. The Salon).

With these physical incentives being firmly located in masculine practices, it assists in easing men's tensions and anxieties about seeking appearance medicine treatments. Although it is notable that male appearance medicine treatments are marketed within the constraints and context of traditional hegemonic practices. However, the connotations of traditional hegemonic masculine practices delve deeper than the superficial nature of these physical enticements. Traditional masculinity undoubtedly exists within the website narratives, with language being a key component in the normalisation of appearance medicine.

Masculinity: discourse as a tool for normalisation

The language used on the men's websites in my research, and the language used for female spas differs considerably. Female spas tend to focus on tranquillity, peace of mind and de-stressing treatments. The websites in my study, however, use functional language, based upon technical specifications and are performance related. The language creates the illusion that men 'need' the treatments, as to invest in the body ensures men will appear more attractive, youthful and therefore visible. Such language, and the inferences contained within them, reflects the social power of discourse, as the way in which a subject is presented and discussed reflects in the reaction to, and with, the subject.

Website discourse results in men being persuaded that to beautify their bodies is an embedded and essentialised contemporary requirement of work place masculinity. The language used by the websites varies considerably, with discourse being located

in the traditional practices of masculinity, for example, nick-names for celebrity clients, clear explanations of treatments, to the more sophisticated reference of a salon being a “grooming emporium” (*The Refinery*, 2011, p. Introduction). The use of such language locates the websites and their treatments within the normal realms of activities for men, and refrains from alienating men from the feminisation of appearance medicine. This strategic use of language is deployed by all of the websites.

Face of Man approaches the normalising of treatments by ensuring their narrative invites all men to engage in appearance medicine, and does so by not producing a dichotomous narrative, but one that states

‘We provide an environment where clients are men, not fathers, sons, husbands, bosses or employees...’ (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. About Us),

all conducted in a relaxing atmosphere, so

‘...come in, let us fix you a drink as you sink into our luxury leather couch...’ (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. About Us).

These statements suggest that going to the salon for treatment is a normal practice for all men, irrespective of social position or socio-economic status. *Destination for Men*, however, relies upon less formal narratives and focuses quite heavily upon nick-names for their celebrity clients. This encourages not only a normalcy around their treatments and salon, but also creates a sports field or bar environment in which men undertake treatments. Examples of this practice are extensive with

‘...Darren ‘Boof’ Lehmann...’ (and) ‘...Andrew ‘Cosi’ Costello...’ (and) ‘...Jason ‘Snow’ Carter.’ (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. Celebrity Clients).

Planet Man’s space themed salon carries phrases that play on ‘space race’ discourse. The home page warns men to ‘prepare for blast off’ (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. Home), and that by taking the leap into the salon it is

“one small step for man, one giant leap in male grooming.” (Planet Man, 2011, p. Home).

This theme is continued throughout their treatment menu, in an attempt to align their treatments with the masculine world of space travel. More specifically they offer an “astro energizing facial” (and a) “space flight back, neck and shoulder massage” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. The Menu). However, the descriptions for these treatments reside in the more feminised day spa discourse, with the ‘astro-energizing facial’ being presented in the terms of

“Exfoliate, cleanse and moisturise. De-stress and relax with the ultimate facial treatment using a range of massage techniques, creams, heated towels, deep cleansing mud masks and luxury scrubs to energize your face, refine large pores and bring your skin back to life. A unique and relaxing experience to keep your skin healthy and looking fresh. A mantastic gift idea.” (*Planet Man*, 2011, P. The Menu).

In this same manner, the ‘space flight back, neck and shoulder massage’ is talked about in the following way:

“Drift into outer space no shuttle needed with the ultimate back, neck & shoulder massage to relieve tension ease out stress and relax the body and mind.” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. The Menu).

More generally, the employment of masculinised language is carried through to the explanations on the treatment menu, with the exception of those noted above. The explanations are generally clear and concise across all websites, often relying upon key masculine expressions or practices to continue the normalisation process for men. The following examples are effective in reflecting this practice:

“... hypoallergenic crystals (think of it as a “mini sandblaster”) to remove all of your dead skin cells...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Skin Health), and

“...Power Lift Facial ... A thorough and result-driven facial...” (*The Refinery*, 2011, p. Face and Eyes), and

“...want to finally ... reveal that six-pack camouflaged below a layer of fat?...” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Lipodissolve for males), and

“...teeth whitening laser blaster...” (*Planet Man*, 2011, Menu), and

“...while a ‘hangover’ mask make this the perfect skin therapy...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Skin Health).

The websites take this masculinised language further by relying more specifically on technology and technical language as a means by which to reassure men that these treatments are masculine appropriate, with the following examples exemplifying this:

“...developed by NASA technology in the United States, ‘Light Emitting Diodes’ set at a specific frequency absorb into the skin...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Skin Health), and

“...17,666 watts of peak power enables the GentleLASE to treat ... the GentleLASE is capable of delivering 755nm fluences up to 100J/cm² in pulse durations of 3 ms...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Candela Laser Hair Reduction).³⁰

The last quotation from *Face of Man* offers men a dichotomous discourse. It not only offers reassurance that the treatments are masculine appropriate, through the technical capabilities of the machinery, but simultaneously suggests that the treatment is actually gentle and potentially pain free. Further examples of the masculinisation of treatments, and therefore their normalisation, continue through

³⁰ Fluence refers to the measured output of energy via laser machines

the package deals offered by many of the websites.³¹ The packages are given names or titles steeped in masculine language; for example

“Something 4 the weekend” (and the) “Rolls Royce.” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Special Packages), and

“5 o’clock shadow.” (*The Refinery*, 2011, p. Packages), and

“The Neil Armstrong” and “The Buzz Aldren.” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. Menu), and

“Groom the groom.” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. Treatments).

These examples of discourse suggest the websites are reliant upon traditional hegemonic masculinity as a marketing strategy to engage men with contemporary beautification. This reliance upon the traditional model of masculinity is a recurrent theme throughout the website narratives to include the naming of treatment packages and specific services, for example:

“No more grey.” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. The Menu), and

“Stag shaving party.” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Special packages), and

“Pit stop 4 the man on the go.” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Special packages), and

“Boy-Tox.” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. The Menu).

Although the first three of these phrases are every day expressions that might be heard coming from men across the globe, the marketing of Botox as ‘Boy-Tox’ stands out as being different. It demonstrates the juxtaposition between maintaining traditional masculine practices, appealing to a broad age range of men in need of aesthetic enhancement and the practice of administering contemporary fixes for

³¹ Salon packages usually offer a number of related treatments for a set price.

facial flaws to men. This affectionate, yet highly masculinised name for Botox, has been used by journalists and commentators alike. However ‘Boy-Tox’ has been further reproduced as ‘Bro-Tox’ to refer to those black men who choose to undertake appearance medicine treatments to age more gracefully, and is traditionally used when spoken by one ‘bro’ to another (NZ Herald, 2012). These playful attempts to rebrand Botox allows it to bridge the feminising of appearance medicine treatments, yet, simultaneously normalises the treatments for men, albeit in a traditionally hegemonic manner.

Despite website promotions targeting the baby-boomer generation, together with some acknowledgement of the needs of the youth of today, there remains some middle ground that is not covered by either category. This middle ground includes men who may have the financial means and the social positioning to pursue appearance medicine treatments, and may include those labelled as ‘new men’. The branding of men as ‘new men’ suggests that this group differ from those associated with the traditional model of masculinity. This label often refers to those men who are embracing later fatherhood or the environmentally friendly male, for example. One website in particular has noted, and acted upon engaging with this market. *The Refinery* specifically appeals to ‘new men’ through treatments advertised as being for the:

“Dandy Daddy” (or) New Daddy” (or) Eco Daddy.” (*The Refinery*, 2011, p. Packages).

This move, on the part of *The Refinery*, to embrace the already occurring movement within masculinities, not only acknowledges what is happening to men, but highlights the porosity of traditional hegemonic masculine practices. Men are embracing environmental issues, or are participating more fully in parenting activities reflecting fluidity in the concept of masculinity and, as such, demonstrate the move already occurring within the field of masculinities. The play on words associated with masculine practices, but more disassociated from traditional models of masculinity, emphasises the need for websites to be flexible in their approach to marketing masculine appearance medicine treatments. It reflects a necessity for websites to be broad ranging in their appeal and to remain abreast of both

contemporary issues as well as those associated with traditional hegemonic masculinity.

These masculine phrases, or references to masculine interests, offers reassurance and comfort that appearance medicine treatments are a normal practice for many men in contemporary culture. This could then help men to feel secure in embracing what is a new practice. The discourse deployed by the websites to entice men into appearance medicine may have to overcome the differing requirements of men, dependent upon their life stage at any given time.

The generation gap

The issue of appealing to a younger clientele is important, as it is suggested that it is the younger generation who are prepared to care for their skin as a normal practice when compared to their fathers. Current data states that “64% of all 24-46 year old men globally now believe that they spend more time grooming than their fathers did” (Ogilvy & Mather, 2011, p. 8). The relevance of this is located in younger men, between 20 and 30 years of age, accepting masculine grooming and caring for their skin as being a normal and natural process, and is actualised through an enjoyment of the experience (Cambridge, 2010).

The data suggests, therefore, that grooming is becoming a normal everyday occurrence for Generation Y.³² The notion of masculine grooming now starts in educational institutions, with this generation of men being advised to “dress well, test well” (Ogilvy & Mather, 2011, p. 11), as a means to survive the pressures of looking good in pursuit of work place success. This instruction suggests a range of social factors at play which direct Generation Y to understand that to simply be good at a job is no longer sufficient for success. Moreover, men (of all ages) must now look good, to be a ‘complete package’ (Ogilvy & Mather, 2011). The notion, therefore, that contemporary work place success is linked to appearance, with a masculinity removed from the notions of traditional hegemonic practices, is apparent with some websites offering treatments specifically aimed at men under the age of

³² Generation Y refers to those born anytime from the late 1970’s to the late 1990’s but has a core element of those born between 1981 and 1989.

20 years. *Maschio*, in particular, offers facial treatments for teenage boys, as a foundation for future grooming practices:

“This half hour facial is a great way to get teenagers into a daily cleansing routine! Guiding them through the importance of using cleansers ... and why” (*Maschio*, 2011, p. Services & Treatments).

This marketing repositions the traditional *habitus* of boyhood behaviour and influences towards a new, and more readily acceptable, version of appearance, with *habitus* being the expediter for this movement within masculinities. Yet a paradox characterises this attempt to provide a foundation upon which young men can build their future self-care regimes. Although positive, this kind of early intervention may ultimately result in less need for appearance medicine treatments by those individuals in years to come. However, this direct targeting of youth is limited to *Maschio* in the websites analysed, with the majority still directing their marketing strategies towards the baby-boomers of Generation X. This does make sense as, according to ASPS (2011), Generation X is currently the dominant user of appearance medicine treatments. The focus which, therefore, predominantly falls on the needs of the older generation does go some way to explaining why these appearance medicine businesses locate their advertising in practices within the context of traditional modes of masculinity. This is because the formative years of Generation X taught men that ‘normal’ men were associated with physical strength and courage, and not beautification and grooming.

The focus upon Generation X is not unsurprising for a further reason. Superficially baby-boomer men are currently fighting to retain their youthful appearance in a consumer driven, interactive service employment market. However, there is an alternative explanation for the masculinised marketing strategies offered by the websites. It is possible that many men of this generation have already attained a certain social and professional status, and the inducements associated with traditional hegemonic masculinity simply fulfil men’s need to remain ‘masculine’ while undertaking appearance medicine treatments. This masculinisation of appearance medicine, therefore, provides men with an opportunity to engage with contemporary practices of beautification through their pre-constructed understanding of being a

man. Such a perspective may demonstrate the power associated with the social positioning of men who have the financial means to work upon their bodies. It demonstrates their ability to transcend the boundaries of traditional hegemonic masculinity, while simultaneously feeling they align with such practices. However, there are some strategies that may bridge the generation gap, with the following four excerpts illustrating methods used by the websites to target men interested in the contemporary fix of appearance medicine treatments, irrespective of age, albeit through associations with traditionally masculine practices:

“The products we use, the interior of the salon, the ambience, and all advertising and promotional material is specifically designed to attract male customers (and make YOU feel comfortable!).” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. Home, para. 5), and

“Sit back with a beer, tea or coffee, watch the sports and get the look you want.” (Planet Man, 2011, p. The Salon, para. 4), and

“...We provide an environment where clients are men...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. About Us, para. 4), and

“We are a Male Hair & Grooming Company with a salon designed around men’s needs and comfort with offers of beers on arrival...” (*Maschio*, 2011, p. About Us, para. 1).

With most websites offering alcoholic refreshments, the practice of associating ‘real men’ and the drinking of alcohol demonstrates how the websites locate their narratives within the boundaries of traditional hegemonic masculinity. *Destination for Men*, *Maschio* and *Planet Man* all advertise free premium beer, for example, to entice men into their salons.

Alcohol, and beer in particular, has a long association with men and masculinity. Both in the UK and Australia the gendered consumption of beer has been noted as a masculine pastime (Pettigrew, 2002; Barr, 1995). The use, therefore, of free beer in website advertising uses this close association with traditional hegemonic

masculinity as a normalising feature for men. *Destination for Men* focuses heavily on their bar as an advertising medium (Retrieved 1 June, 2011, from URL: <http://www.destinationformen.com.au/about.htm>), with *Planet Man* having a photograph of a beer fridge within their gallery (Retrieved 2 June, 2011, from URL: <http://www.planetmangrooming.co.uk/gallery/>). *Face of Man*, in keeping with their 1930's cigar lounge theme, offers men a 'Scotch' while waiting, to calm their anxieties. The idea of having an alcoholic drink with other men is associated with normal masculine practice, with the only difference being that the setting is within the context of a beauty salon and not a public house. The promotion of beer, or 'Scotch', suggests the masculine pastime of drinking in a bar, yet the wording around alcohol simultaneously evokes the notion that men need to calm their fears before undertaking the unfamiliar appearance medicine treatments.

Websites utilise more traditionally masculine pastimes than merely alcohol to engage men with appearance medicine treatments. The websites also include televisions and sports channels, gaming platforms and free Wi-Fi, with these incentives potentially bridging the age gap between Generations X and Y. Marketing strategies, however, extend further to include some novelty ideas. Planet Man, for example, promotes the purchase of gift vouchers as being "mantastic gift experiences" (Planet Man, 2011, p. The Menu), offering a play on words. Alternatively, *Face of Man* offers a promotion accessed by invitation only, which is represented by an individual card that "... looks almost like a black Amex..." (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Special Offers). The black Amex is known globally as a status symbol of wealth, and is associated with the elite, but masculine business set (O'Connell, 2010), therefore, *Face of Man* are engaging men with appearance medicine through the status associated with power and wealth. However, the websites continuing reliance upon traditional masculine practices as a means of engagement for men takes on an historical twist, with the unexpected reliance upon nostalgic rhetoric being implemented as a marketing tool.

Nostalgia

Nostalgia represents the subjective nature of historical memories, real or imagined, and implies that previous times were better than that of contemporary society. It reflects the longing for past times, often referred to as being a 'golden age' and is not only used to explain idealised perceptions of historical periods, but can be viewed as a form of romanticism based upon previous ideals reconciled through the imagination (Boym, 2002). Nostalgia, in contrast to the phenomenon of progress which is attained through the advancement of machines and technologies (which will be discussed in chapter five), seeks to attain and retain the unattainable, through the reminding of past events, comforts and securities (Pickering & Keightley, 2006).

The concept of by-gone eras, filled with a yearning for an idealised past, evokes the melancholic recollection of a time when men were men, being both physically and morally wholesome (Wagner, 2002). It is a reminder of a time filled with happiness or sorrow or of sensory effects. However, these recollections, irrespective of their accuracy, formulate what it means for nostalgia to remain part of present day living. More generally, nostalgia is associated with past experiences and encounters, and as such, provides a motivation to enjoy recounting these times. Therefore, the use of nostalgic strategies by the websites plays to men's enjoyment in indulging with associations of by-gone eras, of times when they were young.

The notion of by-gone eras, such as the Industrial Revolution, when men were 'real' men, is demonstrated by the *Face of Man* website. The website depicts the salons' interior as being located in past times, both the industrial era with exposed brickwork, but also a time of traditional hotel lobbies. The reception area features a hotel desk, wall clock and a hand bell to ring for attention. To similar effect, nostalgia is also used by *The Refinery* and *Trampas* to engage men with the contemporary practice of appearance medicine treatments, but reflected through the use of interior and exterior aesthetic décor and heirloom decorative pieces associated with by-gone eras. The most notable feature present across all three websites is the relational virtues placed upon the aesthetic of the traditional male barbershop.

Nostalgia and the traditional male barbershop

The dominating nostalgic theme of the renaissance of the barbershop aesthetic is consolidated with *Face of Man*, *The Refinery* and *Trampas* offering men's hairstyling and traditional shaving services. The websites' ability to link into an association with traditional barbering presents a warm and positive reminder to men that a safe environment is offered to them to undertake appearance medicine treatments. It is an astute use of marketing strategies that offers both comfort and normality to services incorporating appearance medicine. The following extract demonstrates this selling feature:

“Barber shop shave – the old-fashioned way!” ... “Experience the relaxation of an old-fashioned shave as you recline in our very own Barber Shop chair!” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. Barber Shop Shave, para. 1 & 2), and

“A close, clean shave using a traditional cut throat razor...” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. The Menu).

The practice of evoking positive memories of by-gone barbering is, however, brought up to date with the treatment marketed by *Trampas*, who offer a

“Traditional cut throat shave with hot towels infused with masculine aromatic scents...” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Wet Shaving, para. 3).

This treatment presents men with a dichotomous approach to the traditionally masculine wet shave experience, through the contemporary application of aromatherapy oils and holistic medicine.

Nostalgia and the military

The renewed interest in traditional barbering is further reflected in men being knowledgeable of hair styles and grooming equipment from the past; with men now asking for ‘military brushes’ for example (Colman, 2011). The military, in conjunction with the use of nostalgia, provides men with the comfort that to actively

pursue salon treatments will result in the obedient body, through strong associations with military discipline and, as such, traditional practices of masculinity (Colman, 2011). The military's association with traditional hegemonic masculinity, is furthered through the nostalgia of the heroes of wartime experiences.

War heroes represent a reminiscent perspective of what it was like to serve in the military forces during war times. War heroes' perceived imagery bestows upon them a divine ancestry of increased courage in the face of adversity, rising to challenges, irrespective of the risks or sacrifices required to do so. These nostalgic images of what it is to be a war hero, a member of the powerful military institution, rely upon an individual's ability to decipher the reality of the situation from the nostalgia. Such representations are reflected through the *Trampas* website, which subtly allows men the comfort of being associated with the courageous institution of the military, irrespective of the nostalgia being misrepresented or warped (Horning, 2012). However, in practice, the clientele base of each salon may actually be too young to be war heroes associated with the World Wars for example, or remember the actual barbershops of by-gone times, but remain willing to engage with this as a means of comfort and reassurance. The reliance upon military nostalgia is not the only historically convenient marketing tool available to the websites, with some marketing being located within the idealism of colonial times.

Colonial nostalgia

Nostalgia is not only represented through the regeneration of the barbershop aesthetic. It is present in the exterior imagery of *The Refinery*, a Georgian fronted salon, as well as the interior design of the *Face of Man* salon, which is decorated with heirloom ornaments in the form of gas lamps, globes, industrial spot lights and apothecary glassware. Such ornamental decorations not only exude nostalgia, but a specific thread of nostalgia associated with colonial exploration. 'Colonial nostalgia' symbolises something that has been lost, but is not reconstructed as a mode to promote consumption in contemporary consumerist cultures (Peleggi, 1996). This form of nostalgia has roots founded in the power associated with British overseas colonies, particularly during the time of the British Empire (Loh, 2008). The

historical romanticism, therefore, conveyed through the use of colonial artefacts and Georgian architecture, is synonymous with the nostalgia of a culture that has disappeared and an imagined past where that culture once offered stability that no longer exists (Warnock, 2011). The following extracts offer examples of this

“The new setting reflects their time-honoured service with an “old world” influence...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Welcome, para. 5), and

“So come in, let us fix you a drink as you sink into our luxury leather couch and absorb the vintage atmosphere...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Welcome, para. 6).

The salons’ utilise the romanticism of nostalgia to engage men with the modernity of appearance medicine, from which men may come to produce their contemporary identities. However, this is achieved within the escapist comfort of the traditionally masculine barbershop (Hausman, 2010), for example:

“...time-honoured service with an “old world” influence, enhanced with contemporary treatments and technology.” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Welcome, para. 5), and

“The new look vintage-inspired design is also accompanied by new state of the art equipment and deluxe treatments ...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. About Us – Vintage Renewal).

The safe and sentimental nature of nostalgia is reflected in the reconstruction of the vintage barbershop salons, the colonial décor and the Georgian exterior aesthetic. This results not from a desire to truly reconstruct the previous decades or centuries, but from applying selective amnesia to the realities of these eras, through representation of idealised versions of these times (Coontz, 1999). The unreality, therefore, of nostalgia as a marketing technique, confirms that the longing for past times is indeed unauthentic, as the past that has been reconstructed did not truly exist, except in the imagination of the narratives presented (Goodman, 2008).

Reflexivity and nostalgia

The reality that the past was less likely to be as good and as ideal as that imagined, relies upon the client not invoking a reflexive attitude to the nostalgic artefacts, images and aesthetic of the websites. Reflexive nostalgia would initiate a response to the website marketing questioning the reality upon which the websites and salons are constructed. Such enquiry would determine whether the reproduction of the traditional barbershop aesthetic alludes to a reality that is not historically accurate, or a fiction that comforts men in a hegemonic format. Nostalgia, therefore, relies upon men feeling comfortable within these environments, together with men reflecting upon the imagery as an imagined scene that fulfils their need to belong to the practices of hegemony, without further active participation in recreating the scene.

If men, however, were to implement reflexivity into their practice, as is required to construct and reconstruct the aesthetic of the male body, they may consider the notion of nostalgia as contradictory to their needs. Images of yesteryear, vintage salons and old fashioned furnishings challenge men's comfort with the present. They present an ideology that never really existed, but simultaneously offer a security to men that hegemony is alive and well, despite their need to engage in appearance medicine treatments to successfully participate within contemporary work places.

The invocation of nostalgia, however, allows for the potential of nostalgia, or social memory, to be a temporary condition (Pickering & Keightley, 2006). This temporary condition allows men to momentarily suspend the reality of their daily lives in order to consume the contemporary fix of appearance medicine, but within the conceptualisation of past times. This absorption of, and indulgence in, nostalgic notions provides a homeostatic function for men allowing them, in their minds, to return to previously enjoyed, or believed to be enjoyed, states without consequence (Zhou, Wildschut, Sedikides, Chen & Vingerhoets, 2012). This approach to appearance medicine marketing by *Face of Man*, *The Refinery* and *Trampas*, achieved through the creative and influential use of the social memory, offers men a brief retreat from the rigours of twenty-first century life; a retreat that is fragile and

remains dependent upon the positive and productive reconstruction of the past in relation to the present (Pickering & Keightley, 2006).

The influence of nostalgia reflects upon a need to uphold and maintain the notion of past cultural practices, sights, sounds and experiences. These experiences are to be cherished and can be used as a means of self-identity and meaning (Sedikides, Wildschut & Baden, 2004). The emotional labour attached to nostalgia is highly influential in the well-being of individuals. It is particularly notable in the longing for traditional hegemonic masculine practices which have become lost through the process of deindustrialisation (Ortony, Clore & Collings, 1988). *Face of Man*, *The Refinery* and *Trampas* are using these lost practices to inform and engage men with the construction and reconstruction of the masculine body, all within the comfort of nostalgia and vintage barbershops. *Face of Man*, in particular, highlights the use of nostalgia as a fundamental component of their ethos, with the salon owner being heavily influenced by the 1930's, stating that

“I really wanted to bring back all that old-fashioned charm and prestige.”
(*Face of Man*, 2011, p. About Us – *Face of Man*), and

“...one of the aspects I like about that era is that customer service was such a high priority.” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. About Us – *Face of Man*).

Such nostalgic discourse presents men with the knowledge that the salon is designed specifically with men and their comfort in mind. *Face of Man* have focused heavily on the virtues and marketing capabilities of nostalgia and have carried this throughout their website design, including birthday celebrations. The website signals the nostalgia of the birthday with a reference to a popular song from the 1970's:

“...Stop, whoa yes! Wait a minute Mr Postman!” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Special Offers – Birthday Letters).

They go further and discuss the virtues and vices of modern communication methods with that of letter writing associated with by-gone eras, stating that

“Nobody sends/receives letters anymore, but for your birthday we are keeping it old fashioned...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Special Offers – Birthday Letters).

The very fact that *Face of Man* has not just superficially located their practice in the nostalgia of the 1930’s and 1940’s, but carried their work through to the finer details of their practice, highlights the significance of nostalgia in capturing men’s imaginations; together with their desire to consume by-gone representations when practising contemporary beautification. It suggests that nostalgia is a state of mind rather than a rationalised feeling, and can be viewed as a denial of the present in favour of a golden age from the past. This implies, therefore, that men who prefer the nostalgia of the golden years are finding difficulty in reconciling the need to work upon their appearance in the present day.

The notion of men experiencing difficulty with the changing ideology of the masculine body indicates the possibility that these same men are struggling with the change in *habitus* that is required to not only aspire to change the masculine body, but also to positively engage with this process. Nostalgia and the lived experience of it, provides a welcome setting for men who are heavily influenced by their current social positioning and *habitus*, but lack the resource of capital to move forward and change their appearance. It is, therefore, the nostalgia associated with the by-gone eras of masculine grooming, in this instance, that is impacting men and encouraging them that to engage in appearance medicine as an acceptable practice. Yet, nostalgia may mean different things to different men, with some referring to representations of past experiences, while others may include the notion of intellectual nostalgia and the idea of belonging to a certain time or social grouping.³³

Within the context of rhetoric nostalgia, both *Face of Man* and *Trampas* attempt to introduce contemporary approaches to masculine health. With this move the websites provide a foundation upon which the fluidity of masculine practices can be restructured, therefore, assisting men in changing their *habitus* to conform to contemporary ideals of body imagery. However, this move towards holistic forms of

³³ Intellectual nostalgia represents a form of nostalgic rhetoric that is focuses on the depth of the narrative and not the superficiality of it.

treatment does simultaneously depend upon men's ability to reflexively access a new *habitus* to accept these as normal practices for men today. This dynamic can be seen in the following:

“Reunite mind, body and spirit with healing energy ... it allows the body to activate its own healing ability, removing energy blockages and cleansing the body of toxins.” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Holistic Therapies – Reiki), and

“...working on three of the seven chakras ... this relaxing treatment can rebalance energy levels, soothe ...” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Holistic Therapies – Indian Head Massage), and

“...thermal basalt and chilled marine stones provides a delicious combination of health giving sensations...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Stress Solutions – Hot Stone Therapy).

Trampas promotes the holistic nature of treatments but locate them within the nostalgic rhetoric of the military, the obedient body and the self-regulation associated with such masculinised institutions. *Face of Man*, similarly, promote holistic inspired treatments but locate them within the nostalgia of cigar or gentleman's lounges. Through the presentation of treatments as being nostalgic and masculine, but simultaneously contemporary, it may be the inducement some men require to engage with appearance medicine.

Conclusion

In noting the broad range of strategies implemented by the male appearance medicine websites, there is evidence to suggest that changes are afoot within the structures of masculinity. Indications are present to suggest that the dominance of traditional hegemonic masculinity is being affected through men's need to successfully participate within the changing structures of contemporary work places. Men are having to embrace the contemporary need to work upon their bodies to be employable within the interactive service sector and, as such, move towards a

masculinity focused upon their appearance. However, such a move away from work place associations of physical strength appears to be facilitated through the websites on-going reliance upon traditional hegemonic masculine practices as a means of engagement. This suggests that a movement in masculinities may be occurring but with a lingering, yet significant, reliance upon traditional masculine practices.

Traditional hegemonic masculinity appears to provide a framework, through which the emergent potential of treatments becoming normalised, is enabled. Should men, therefore, deem to participate in the contemporary need to enhance their bodies to be gainfully employed within the changing landscape of masculine work places, it affords the possibility of a masculinity focused upon a 'performance of appearance' to exist within the remit of traditional masculine practices. However, with men needing to work upon their bodies to be effective employees within the interactive service sector, the route to actualisation requires a facilitator for transition which, in this instance, is a shift in the masculine *habitus*.

Masculine *habitus*, traditionally located within the boundaries of hegemonic practices, provides the mechanism for change that is required for men to move away from a performance of work place physical strength towards that of appearance. *Habitus* is sufficiently malleable to accommodate the changes required to facilitate appearance medicine as normal practice for men. The websites generally underpin this need for men to change their aesthetic through the subtle use of narratives. More specifically, the use of an aspirational *habitus* as an instrument to facilitate change may prove to be the key issue in men being able to relocate their masculinity and to embrace the acceptability of appearance medicine as a means of being effective employees within contemporary interactive employment roles.

It is also notable that nostalgia offers men a comforting reassurance that to groom is acceptable, even if today's grooming is far removed from that associated with barbershops and shaving emporiums. Nostalgia offers an opportunity to embrace memories, regardless of their accuracy, and embody them in the practice of modern day masculine grooming practices. To groom is essential, but today to groom means taking a larger step into the feminised world of appearance medicine. However, with the security of nostalgia to support them, men are able to embrace the opportunity to

work upon their aesthetic within the comforting confines of traditional hegemonic masculine practices.

Chapter Five

Men and machines: power and knowledge in discourse

Men have historically been associated with industrial production, particularly during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was a time that witnessed the rise of technology and machines as a means of masculine power (Horowitz & Mohun, 1998). It is the invention and reinvention of machines by men that results in a perfect interaction between men and machines emerging. In this contemporary post-industrial era, the aesthetic reproduction of the masculine body, industrialisation and the advancement of technology have, therefore, become mutually exclusive practices (Horowitz & Mohun, 1998). In this chapter I discuss the advancement of machines as a supportive and comforting tool to men who undertake appearance medicine treatments, together with the role of power, and the sharing of knowledge through discourse, as a means of masculine engagement with appearance medicine.

Men and machines

In technology, the advancement of machinery and gender are inextricably linked. Men dominate the field of technology, with gender and technology being socially constructed, whereby one discipline cannot be understood fully without the existence of the other (Cockburn, 1992). The male aesthetic is central to the understanding of what it means to be masculine, but can also be understood through men's relationship with machines (Mellstrom, 2004). Machines ultimately shape men's relationships with technological advances; but simultaneously men shape and advance the machines that affect the outcome of their lives and, as such, remain significant in the development of the contemporary masculine body (Mellstrom, 2004). The early socialisation and nurturing of men to invite machines into their lives, and live through their progression, allows men an opportunity to integrate the new machinery into defining and redefining the aesthetic of the masculine body.

Public discourses encourage men to derive sensual pleasure in their engagement and interaction with machines (Mellstrom, 2004). This, therefore, allows the advancements in laser technology, for example, to provide comfort, pleasure and reassurance to men within the feminised world of appearance medicine. The websites provide detailed descriptions of the machinery and technologies available as a supportive mechanism for men. Such depictions suggest a need for men to find meanings to the treatment processes which have links to attachment and loyalty, and in this instance attachment to traditional hegemonic masculinity.

Men, attachment theory and machines

Attachment theory, whereby individuals develop attachments to things that are believed to be important to achieving happiness or success, is known as an affectional bond. This bond is understood by the individual to be mutually exclusive in its existence, whereby happiness cannot be achieved without the existence of the object of significance being present (Lerner & Mikula, 1994). Attachment for men, therefore, is related to a bond with the machines and technology available to reconstruct and reposition the masculine body and the progress that such machinery represents.

All the websites in this study offer men a means of attachment with the power of progress and of traditional hegemonic masculinity, highlighting the benefits attainable when treated with machines. More specifically, however, it is the technicalities of the laser machines that are emphasised:

“...17,666 watts of peak power enables the GentleLASE to treat ... the GentleLASE is capable of delivering 755nm fluences up to 100J/cm² in pulse durations of 3 ms for unparalleled treatment efficacies in hair removal ...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Candela Laser Hair Reduction), and

“... true lasers emit a pulse of coherent light of 810nm wavelength ...” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Laser Hair Removal).

The 'GentleLASE' featured on the *Face of Man* website offers an interesting situation. It suggests that men are engaging with the power of the technology and the virtues of a high wattage output and fluence capabilities. Such technical data is, in itself, meaningless unless the reader has pre-existing knowledge of electrical outputs. However, this conforms to, and confirms the notion that men receive comfort in, and attachment to, the numerical specifications declared on the websites.

The attachment of men to machines provides men with a known safe haven for any potential insecurities they might experience. Machines provide the proximal closeness of technology, together with practices of traditional hegemonic masculinity, in order to relieve men's potential anxieties. The allegiance to all things mechanical is borne out of a masculine need to be defined by the progressive nature of machines, and may prove essential to fulfilling some missing elements in men's lives. Attachment theories, therefore, based upon the psychological needs of the individual, feeds directly into the emotional consumption of appearance medicine treatments for men. This provides men with the security they require in order to legitimately maximise their own opportunities, without feeling they are completely moving away from traditional models of masculinity (Marris, 1991).

The attachment to machines is closely related to men's attachment with technology. Men are, therefore, using online technologies as well as that of treatment machines to reconstruct their exterior aesthetic. The use of online technology has increased significantly, with some data suggesting that the number of 'silver surfers' has increased by one million users in the year 2009-2010 alone; with men over 50 years old (the baby-boomers) being responsible for 38 per cent of this growth figure (Roberts & Wallop, 2010).³⁴ This increased participation by the websites primary target market provides, not only, an interactive communication network to market appearance medicine, but simultaneously provides men with anonymity assured by such technological advancements when seeking treatments.

The increasing acceptance and use of technology, whether it be appearance medicine treatment machinery or online communications, gives rise to the notion that power is

³⁴ Silver surfers are adults over the age of 50 who frequently spend time on the World Wide Web browsing (but not necessarily appearance medicine websites), but can include midlife adults from 40-70 years of age (Fox, 2011).

distributed to men through the advancement of machines. It provides a method of reconceptualising masculine domination within contemporary culture, with that domination produced in terms of the dynamic virility of a masculine body aesthetic associated with technological advances and contemporary work place success (Mosse, 1996). Yet power is not only located within the machines that have been created to provide this contemporary appearance based 'fix', but is simultaneously located in the knowledge imparted by the websites as a further means of masculine engagement.

The use of power and knowledge as a means of engagement for men

Foucault believed power to be a fundamental element within all human relationships, especially within the work place, with power being inextricably linked to knowledge (Oliver, 2010). The complexity of power relations in social settings, in order to induce others to comply with the given norms, can be seen through the rise of technology and machines as a new resource of power for men (Horowitz & Mohun, 1998). This new power resource can simultaneously be seen through the way knowledge is imparted within the discourse of the websites. The knowledge given by the websites relies upon the internalisation of what is acceptable to each individual involved before deciding to comply with the new idealised masculine body (Lepper, 1983). Yet the inseparability between knowledge and power results in the dynamics of both being reliant upon each other, as knowledge generates power, but power requires knowledge in order to be effective (Oliver, 2010).

Knowledge and power

Knowledge is an important aspect of selling the appearance medicine treatments to men, for the knowledge acquired both assures and ensures men are comfortable and confident in the decisions they make to work upon their bodies as investment projects. Knowledge is given freely by all the websites in this study, with *Face of Man*, *Kiora*, *Planet Man* and *The Refinery* being the more generous in the information presented. These websites provide knowledge of not only the treatments that are available, but the potential outcomes for men who undertake them. This

provides a comprehensive knowledge base thus empowering men to undertake the appearance medicine treatments, while maintaining the ability to rationalise their actions through their relationship with the knowledge.

It is within this knowledge/power relationship that the power of the websites resides in the first instance. It provides men with the knowledge required regarding contemporary beautification without which they would be unable to attain their goals of enhancement. The coexistence, therefore, of both knowledge and power presents a dichotomous practice where the goals of power and the goals of knowledge become inseparable (Foucault, 1979b), as “...in knowing we control and in controlling we know...” (Gutting, 2011, p. 33). The knowledge, and the power residing within the knowledge given by the websites and taken by men, presents a reality that may not yet wholly exist; as this reality is open to casual acceptance by men through their relationship with machines and the pre-existing anxieties regarding their appearance. The knowledge/power dichotomy present, therefore, within the discourse between the websites and men is contextually based, with the relationship occurring within a system of mutually consensual interactions of information provision and the accessing of it (Alcoff, 1999).

Many men still live within the constraints and domination of traditional hegemonic masculinity, however, the websites play an intrinsic role in changing the way in which men view their bodies. The shift in knowledge, together with the power imparted through the websites, demonstrates the ability of the masculine body to move away from being a physical resource of strength. Such power assists the masculine body in becoming an aesthetic resource, focused upon a masculinity of appearance within contemporary work places.

The knowledge/power relationship between the websites and men is mutually constitutive because there is “no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge”, that “power produces knowledge” and that “power and knowledge directly imply one another” (Foucault, 1979b, p. 27). It is, therefore, the knowledge imparted by the websites that empowers men to affect the narrative discourse of their future appearance, gained through the production and reproduction of knowledge based expertise (Alcoff, 1999).

The knowledge/power relationship ensures men are becoming comfortable with the processes involved in enhancing their masculine aesthetic. However, the connection between knowledge and power goes further, with the very constitution of the male subjectivity being reframed in ways which locate it within the matrix of self-knowledge and self-care. The language and imagery utilised by the websites is specifically formulated to engage men with this contemporary necessity. The notion that knowledge and, therefore, power resides within the text of the websites, assists men to both internally and externally reconcile the necessity to reconstruct their bodies to the culturally desirable norms of the day (Templeton, 2008). The following excerpt demonstrates this point:

“The Aussie male is now pro-active about his grooming. Men not only want to feel good, they want to look good too. Men are taking a greater interest in their appearance and are always looking for ways to take some ‘time-out’ of their busy lifestyles.” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. Home).

This statement imparts knowledge to the potential client that it is normal practice for men to not only want to work upon their bodies, but that looking good is an acceptable behaviour for men. It also suggests that men are acting upon this right now, so much so that one salon (*Face of Man*) has had to move to extended premises to accommodate the number of men engaging in contemporary beautification. Knowledge, however, is not only located in the dissemination of information surrounding the normalcy of this practice for men, it is present in the treatment descriptions, the technological specifications and the imagery used to convey this information. Knowledge is present in many formats. In one of its more fundamental forms, it refers to the genetic makeup of the masculine body as being different to the feminine:

“A males’ [sic] cosmetic and medical needs ... a comprehensive range of medical and spa therapies specially designed for the male client” ... “The males’ [sic] unique physiology and anatomy ... need to take into account the extremes of oily-ness and dryness a male’s skin is often subject to.” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Male Day Sap, para. 2), and

“A males’ [sic] unique requirements and anatomy ... Kiora’s cosmetic doctors are expert at tailoring Anti-Wrinkle injection treatments to suit the male patient.” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Male Anti-Wrinkle Injections, para. 2), and

“Step into Trampas and treat yourself ... professional staff cater exclusively for the body, skin and hair needs of men.” (*Trampas*, 2011, p. Welcome, Para. 4).

This allows the websites to demonstrate to men that not only are they able to provide a wide range of appearance medicine treatments, they are skilled in doing so specifically for men, as men are different to women, as are their needs. Such knowledge allows men to feel secure in simultaneously rationalising their actions to undertake male specific treatments and allaying any potential anxieties experienced in doing so.

Masculinity: language and discourse as power

The language and masculinised enticements used by the websites impart a different knowledge to men and are often founded within the constructs of traditional hegemonic masculinity. This offers men a security in the knowledge that the treatments will not completely disengage them from their traditional masculinity but also involves them in the evolving masculinity associated with the newly idealised aesthetic of the male body:

“Skin analysis & face mapping ... by using a combination of traditional technique and modern technology we will let you know what will give you the best results.” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Skin Health, para. 3), and

“Skin Ceuticals city recovery facial ... to address the skin health issues of clients exposed to the environmental aggression of city living.” (*The Refinery*, 2011, p. Face and Eyes, para. 3), and

“Skin Bar Experience ... come and play at our Dermalogica skin bar. Dive into our product pool ...” (*Maschio*, 2011, p. Services & Treatments), and

“Your experienced Destination for Men grooming therapist ...” (*Destination for Men*, 2011, p. Skin Treatments – Facials, para. 1).

These examples of language imparting knowledge demonstrate the dichotomous nature of the narrative through an association of the newer appearance medicine treatments with the traditions of hegemonic masculinity. The *Face of Man* extract exemplifies this association through educating men that their treatment is located both in the past, but simultaneously within the advancements of contemporary practices. *The Refinery* locate their descriptions within the business districts of modern cities; with *Maschio* playing upon the masculine associations of a bar, but in this instance it refers to a beauty treatment bar and not one for alcohol consumption.

The notion of language implying masculine traits is added to with *Destination for Men* locating their employee titles within masculinised grooming and not beauty; referring to them as ‘grooming therapists’. This reference to grooming offers men the reassurance that they are not participating in the feminised world of beautification with ‘beauty therapists’, but within the realms of acceptable masculinity, as ‘grooming’ is perceived as being more masculinised. This rationale occurs irrespective of the fact that the ‘grooming therapists’ are female and predominantly young, slender and aesthetically pleasing to the masculine eye (Retrieved 1 March, 2011, from URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2s2NioWjQ>).

The knowledge/power relationship is also evident with the websites educating men that to work on their bodies as projects to achieve success within contemporary work places, can often be achieved through the power of machines and technology; all of which are firmly located within traditional hegemonic masculinity. Such technology is marketed as being more suitable to men than women in some instances, but always with the emphasis on technological capabilities:

“Specially catering for men’s unique needs ... with the introduction of the Soprano XL. Its advanced rapid pulsing 810nm sapphire laser can fire 50 pulses every second enabling us to offer male patients a hair reduction procedure that is virtually pain free.” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Male Laser Hair Removal, para. 4), and

“Candela’s Dynamic Cooling Device represents an adjustable epidermal protection technology to maximize patient safety and comfort. Integrated computer controls assure consistent, reproducible protection, regardless of who is operating the laser ...” (*Face of Man*, 2011, p. Men’s Grooming Guide), and

“... teeth whitening laser blaster ...” (*Planet Man*, 2011, p. Menu – Laser Teeth Whitening Blaster), and

“Advanced pneumatic delivery gun ... The Pneumatic “gun” delivers our FDA-approved pharmaceuticals with a speed, precision and accuracy that is impossible to match with purely human delivered injections ... because of the larger surface area of the male patient the pneumatic gun allows a quicker, less painful treatment.” (*Kiora*, 2011, p. Lipodissolve for males, para. 2).

These quotations are representative of website content and offer a flavour of how the websites engage men with appearance medicine. However, these excerpts simultaneously normalise the treatments through discourse suggesting that machines have been created specifically for this purpose. The machines not only treat men’s appearances and reconstitute them to comply with present day cultural ideologies, but do so through the power invested in them by men; men who had the knowledge and insight in the first instance to create them. Moreover, the machines are labelled to not only appeal to men through their hegemonic masculine practices, but the labels ensure that men know exactly what these machines are capable of. A ‘pneumatic gun’ or a ‘laser blaster’ suggests a power held within these machines which can transform men from their hegemonic state towards the new aesthetic requirements for work place success, but within the dominance of hegemony.

Knowledge and power are not always obvious within the website content. The subtext of the narratives implies that through engagement with the treatments offered specifically for men, they may gain a power base through which they can improve their self-identity and self-worth. Through reflexive evaluation of the narratives, and in particular the forums and blogs, I noted that power is gained through the erasing of the ageing process, resulting in middle-aged men being able to participate on an equal footing with those younger than themselves. This potential equality can provide men, who undertake Botox for example, to attain a more inscrutable facial appearance and so enhance their work place authority.

The success of appearance medicine for men is achieved through complex marketing techniques and results in men acquiring power to become more successful in the youth driven competitive work places of contemporary society. With such power being achieved through an adherence to the less traditional models of masculinity, many young men are feeling the wrath of expectation to ensure their appearance conforms to current ideology, but are simultaneously enduring a backlash that they are not masculine enough, and are seen as incapable of fulfilling traditional roles. This contradictory practice of being masculine, but not sufficiently or traditionally masculine poses difficulties for this generation. The forum debates on the *Kiora* website offer a brief insight into this situation for Generation Y

“...I think it must be very difficult for young men these days because they are still expected to fulfil a lot of traditional roles at the same time as being in touch with their feminine side.” (*Kiora*, 2007, p. Male Forums – Is metrosexuality destroying the identity of the Aussie bloke?), and

“You can tell there is a fair bit of tension between my husband and my son ... the kids of today just have different priorities and they are expected to look good instead of being useful at all the handyman tasks.” (*Kiora*, 2007, p. Male Forums – Is metrosexuality destroying the identity of the Aussie bloke?).

Power is, therefore, gained through the knowledge imparted by websites, irrespective of the man’s age, ensuring alignment with current ideals of the male aesthetic. This

raises the notion that a power shift from traditional hegemonic masculinity prerequisites of physical strength and courage has become reconstituted into a newly defined masculinity focused on the male aesthetic. Such a move demonstrates that men may be accepting of this new form of masculinity, as power would not be accessible based upon appearance only, if this were not the case. However, the relocation of power is only achieved through the acquisition of a new *habitus* that informs masculine practice, with men being able to perform through appearance, yet simultaneously is embedded within the traditional practices of hegemony.

The potential relocation of masculine power suggests that a subtle sub-culture of masculine domination remains at play within men's lives, with middle-aged men, in particular, being dominated by the youth driven culture of contemporary work places. The perceived dominance, expressed through the narratives of the websites reflects the empowerment embedded in the *habitus* of youth and the subordination of the ageing male, but is constructed through the subtle subversion of what it now means to be a successful man in contemporary Western cultures.

These symbolic channels of communication, however, may not necessarily be a position of dominance associated with symbolic violence. Men, and their engagement with appearance medicine, may actually result from their choice to pursue a more youthful and aesthetically pleasing exterior as a form of covert self-regulation. This implies that men may actually choose to improve their bodies; that they are not naïve to the power located within website narratives espousing the necessity of body changes to conform to cultural ideals. It suggests that men are nurturing self-determination to inform and change their *habitus*, and it is their own self-regulation that directs them towards the progressive practice of body enhancement.

Foucault (1982) refers to self-determinism as a form of self-government, whereby in this instance, men autonomously are able to decide to invest in their bodies as projects to successfully participate in contemporary work places. This, according to Foucault (1988), can be viewed as being “technologies of the self”. This statement in itself is invested in the power of technology associated with traditional hegemonic

masculinity, yet men are self-empowering to align with the necessitated masculine aesthetic of the contemporary, interactive service, work place.

The possibility of self-regulation, making men responsible for their own aesthetic, transforms the movement away from traditional hegemonic masculinity and towards the appearance focused masculinity, to a problem of self-care. Self-care is necessary for ageing men, resulting in the power to reconstruct their appearance to remain successful in the changing working environment today. Yet the youth of the work place do not possess the same power, as they are preconceived as already being less masculine than their aging counterparts, through a *habitus* already associated with personal grooming.

Conclusion

It is notable, therefore, that the websites in my study rely on a complex combination of marketing strategies through which they endeavour to engage men with the contemporary beautification tool of appearance medicine. The advancement of machines together with projection of power, imparted through knowledge within discourse are of particular relevance, as they offer men an opportunity to embrace appearance medicine, and align their bodies with contemporary cultural ideals of imagery to meet the demands of interactive service work, but do so within the comforting and secure framework of traditional hegemonic masculine practices. Furthermore, although some men are engaging with the contemporary beautification of appearance medicine, this engagement is achieved through the restructuring of masculine practices, the reflexive modification of the *habitus*, and the movement of power between one form of masculinity to another.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

Introduction

The beginning of my thesis introduced not only the cultural context of modern masculine grooming and supporting statistical data, but my background and interest in this modern day phenomenon. I noted in my literature review the substantive research that provides a foundation to a movement within masculinities. In particular I drew upon the works of Pierre Bourdieu, *habitus* and capital; Chris Shilling's body projects, R.W. Connell's contribution to theories on masculinity and Michel Foucault's work on power and knowledge.

My research, supported by my personal experiences in the appearance medicine field, enquired into men's need to change their physical appearance to successfully participate in the interactive services of contemporary work places. More specifically, my research is broken down into two categories within the discussion. The first part of my discussion covers the tensions present between traditional hegemonic masculinity and the emerging forms of masculinity attained through the modification of the *habitus*. Here I pay particular attention to the masculinisation of appearance medicine, the websites' attempts to normalise appearance medicine treatments through the location of their marketing strategies within traditional hegemonic practices, and the use of nostalgic rhetoric as a comforting tool. The second part of my discussion covers the advancement of machines, men's participation in this and the use of power and knowledge within discourse as a means of masculine engagement with appearance medicine.

In this final chapter I, therefore, reflect upon the contribution I make to the literature on the male consumption of appearance medicine, the key findings of my research and finally offer suggestions for future study into masculine grooming.

The aims and contributions of the thesis

The dominant themes of masculinities, the *habitus* as a facilitator of change and the emergence of a new masculinity; the normalisation of appearance medicine treatments for men, the reliance upon traditional hegemonic masculinity and nostalgic rhetoric as a means of men engaging with appearance medicine, together with the advancement of machines and the use of power and knowledge within discourse, are all equally relevant to men, masculinities and appearance medicine. They are all, also, inextricably related.

In determining the significance of the categories, however, I acknowledge that both my academic interest in masculine theories, together with my lived experiences, provided a foundation for this outcome. In particular, I was aware of a need to facilitate this transition for men, as men will not simply move from, or between, one form of masculinity to another without a mediator, with the concept of *habitus* presenting itself as useful in the changes afoot within the constructs of masculine practice. However, what I did not envisage was the juxtaposed marketing methodologies used by the websites to engage men with appearance medicine, nor the constant relationship between traditional hegemonic practices and the contemporary field of appearance medicine.

More specifically, my thesis confirms the close relationship between traditional hegemonic masculinity with other, more fluid, and contemporary forms of masculinity. I demonstrate how the demise of traditional work places associated with industrialisation, and the need for physical strength, remains present in the psyche of men, despite the physical erosion of such environments. My research offers confirmation that masculine work places are changing, and that there is a defined need to not only look more youthful, but men must present a polished appearance to successfully participate in contemporary interactive employment roles (McDowell, 2009). There is evidence to suggest that the facilitator for change is the masculine *habitus*, with websites presenting narratives focused upon changing the consciousness of men, therefore, subtly influencing their minds to promote adherence to the new perceived norms of male identity. Finally, within the field of masculinities my research exposes the porosity in the construct of traditional

hegemonic masculinity, and offers the possibility of a masculinity emerging focused primarily upon the male aesthetic as a means of work place performance.

My thesis contributes to the body of work available on normalising contemporary masculine beautification through an adherence to traditional masculine practices. The most interesting finding, and therefore contribution to the field of study, is the use of traditional hegemonic practices as a marketing focus to promote appearance medicine treatments. This was an unexpected outcome of my research, as I had not expected appearance medicine to be located within narratives of traditional masculine practices or institutions. It is a fascinating discovery and one that stimulated my analysis and, therefore, my discussion.

Moreover, the use of traditional masculinity as a means for normalising appearance medicine for men is apparent throughout all the websites studied. The offering of enticements focused upon the masculine practices of alcohol consumption, playing sport, video gaming and television viewing were identified consistently, as was the use of masculine discourse. However, there was a negative side to the normalising of appearance medicine, that being the derision of ageing as a natural and acceptable process. The websites did focus on the undesirability of ageing in contemporary cultures, and sought methods of promoting youth and vitality as a preferential state.

A further contribution of my work relates to the notion that men are anxious about their bodies and they are seeking security when reconstructing them, therefore opening an unexpected discussion on men's comforting needs. This unforeseen outcome of my research indicates that, through the on-going use of traditional hegemonic practices as a foundation for marketing, the websites construct a platform to provide comfort and security for men when engaging with the feminised world of appearance medicine. A further notable theme emerging from my analysis was the reliance upon nostalgia as a means of masculine engagement with appearance medicine and, in particular, the rhetoric of nostalgia associated with traditionally hegemonic interests.

The use of industrial settings, colonial artefacts and the construction of 1930's cigar lounges, all contribute to normalising appearance medicine for men, and do so within

the comfort and confines of practices perceived as masculine. The promotion of by-gone eras as being idealistic, reminiscent of times when men were seen, or imagined, to be real men, physically strong and courageous, offers men an artificially constructed sanctuary through which they can allay their fears of feminised beautification. The promotion of traditional barbershop environments being the most notably used location, indicating that this is not an uncommon practice, indeed it is a repetitive occurrence throughout many of the websites.

Nostalgia is a subjective concept and, as such, relies upon men to envisage and construct their own concepts of what the websites are referencing in their marketing pitch. However, it is obvious that elements of the nostalgic rhetoric refer to the process of industrialisation, the advancement of technology and the production of machines as masculinised practices.

Finally, another interesting contribution of my work is the notable use of power by the websites, as a means of securing masculine engagement with appearance medicine. The websites use masculine discourse to impart knowledge to men, to advise of the treatments available and, more significantly, the potential results that are attainable; with these being a more youthful appearance associated with acceptance and success within contemporary work places. It is, however, the coexistence of power and knowledge that presents an opportunity for men to rely upon the machines, developed by man, to achieve the reconstruction of the masculine body. Moreover, men's association with machines ensures their comfort with the processes involved in reinventing their appearances, which are becoming normal and acceptable masculine behaviours. This dependence, therefore, upon the masculinity of machines to reconstruct the body, feeds directly into the tension between the emerging forms of masculinity and their interdependence upon traditional practices for actualisation.

This thesis, therefore, confirms the inextricable link between men, their masculinity and their reliance upon the power of machines to allay their insecurities when reaching beyond their comfort zones, and into the appearance medicine market. Furthermore, my work suggests that men may only feel able to work upon their bodies through the security of appearance medicine being located within the

constraints and safety of traditional masculine practices, despite men's need to engage with interactive service work, and its dependence upon a pleasing appearance.

Key findings

The key findings of my research are generally interrelated and offer an opportunity to look at men's venture into appearance medicine in a holistic manner, accounting for the multi-faceted nature of this change in masculine practice. There are, however, four key findings that demand acknowledgement, and which provide significant contributions to the knowledge base around men, masculinities and appearance medicine.

The primary finding is the assurance that changes are afoot within the construct of masculinity. The security of traditional hegemonic masculinity appears to be less resolute than previously, with an acknowledged porosity. Working environments continually change for men, and historically have always done so; but since the last quarter of the twentieth century this change has witnessed men moving from the physical labour associated with industrial productivity towards office based interactive service employment. The shift in employment practices has been the precursor to men needing to conform to the new ideals of work place appearance. The new ideology of the masculine aesthetic contradicts that of traditional hegemonic masculinity and is reliant upon an appearance that is neither strong nor courageous, but one that is youthful, energised, beautiful and pleasing.

The erosion, therefore, of traditional hegemonic masculinity is inevitable, but that does not mean it will be extinguished. It will remain visible, but will sit alongside the emerging multitude of masculinities necessitated to function in contemporary cultures. Moreover, the road has been opened for a masculinity focused upon the male appearance to emerge, and assist men in their shift towards a work place 'performance of appearance'.

The second point of note is the need for a facilitator to assist men in their move from, or between, traditional hegemonic masculinity towards a masculinity of appearance. The websites' subtle, but noticeable, promotion of a need for men to change exists, yet it is the engagement sought by the websites that feeds into the masculine psyche to expedite that change. *Habitus* is the ingrained sense of being, and men need to acquire an awareness of both their *habitus*, and the need to change this, in order to achieve their goals of body reconstruction. Moreover, the websites' use of aspirational narratives, whereby men can achieve their goals if they use appearance medicine, influences the male *habitus* and provides a platform for transformation. The relevance, therefore, of the *habitus* is significant as the architect for masculine change.

The third significant finding is the contradictory presence of appearance medicine being marketed through the constraints and comforts of traditionally masculine practices. This contribution to the literature signifies the enduring importance of traditional hegemonic masculinity, despite its erosion as a dominant and contemporary model of men's behaviours. The very fact that the websites use this as the foundation of their marketing denotes to men that it remains significant in their lives, despite their need to improve their external aesthetic using appearance medicine. The websites rely upon men's acceptance of traditional practices as being relevant and normal, together with men's willingness to engage with them as a means of normalising appearance medicine treatments.

Furthermore, my research notes the extensive use of nostalgic rhetoric as a means of comfort for men. The notion that men may have anxieties and fears with regard to undertaking appearance medicine treatments, beyond those founded in pain or physical discomfort, was an unexpected outcome. However, website reliance upon promoting masculine practices of by-gone eras as a resource for comfort is interesting and also significant. The use of nostalgia, and in particular the promotion of the traditional barbershop environment, industrialisation and colonial nostalgia, relates closely to the continuing dominance of traditional hegemonic masculinity.

Yet, the importance of such practices dominating the website marketing strategies suggests that such references serve as the only means through which treatment

providers can engage men with appearance medicine. The significance of this implies that multiple masculinities may exist; however, the dominance of traditional hegemonic masculinity remains at the forefront of masculine practice.

The final key finding from my research is the websites' use industrialisation, together with the rise of technology and the advancement of machines, as resources for masculine power. Such resources provide men with a comforting platform from which they may engage with body reconstruction, albeit within the masculinised confines of post-industrial practices. However, the websites use power in a more subtle, almost restrained manner, through the imparting of knowledge through discourse. Such knowledge, given freely by the websites, reassures men that to work upon their bodies is not only a normal activity for men, but provides a confidence and comfort that this is now an everyday masculine practice. Yet, with these findings in mind, it remains notable that the potential emergence of a new masculinity focused upon the appearance of men, remains constrained by the dominance of traditional hegemonic masculine practices.

The findings, therefore, are undeniably interrelated, with the dominance of traditional hegemonic masculinity remaining at the forefront of both masculine practices, and the marketing of appearance medicine. This is significant considering the new pressure to conform to an identity of masculinity focused on a pleasing appearance, and no longer that of physical strength. It is possible that the *habitus* provides the facilitation necessary for men to produce masculine bodies suitable for contemporary work place participation, yet this relies upon men's ability to reflexively consider their needs for contemporary work place success. However, despite the need for men to embrace the reconstruction of the masculine body, and the emergence of a new masculinity focused upon appearance, the alleged erosion of traditional hegemonic practices appears less frail than my notions at the outset of this research.

Possibilities for further research

The opportunities for further research into the field of men, masculinities and appearance medicine are both numerous and necessary to expand the body of literature. However, at present there are two areas of research that I propose warrant further exploration. Firstly, it is the reliance of both the marketing mediums, and men themselves, upon traditional hegemonic masculinity as a resource and comfort through which they can engage in appearance medicine. Despite the acknowledgement and existence of alternative forms of masculinity through which men can present their reconstructed bodies, traditional models of masculinity remain at the forefront of their practice. To engage with men directly, to ascertain their views on this practice, and to determine the significance of traditional hegemonic masculinity, would not only present a real and dynamic insight into men and appearance medicine, it would provide a foundation upon which websites can reconstitute their marketing and focus upon the expressed needs of men.

The second recommendation I have stems from the websites alluding to the ageing masculine appearance as being a negative phenomenon. Men previously were deemed to be growing old gracefully if they refrained from dyeing their hair or attending to facial needs. However, according to the website narratives and subtexts, this has now changed, and men are no longer afforded the privilege of growing old without attending to increased grooming habits; but are deemed invisible and redundant if they do not conform to contemporary ideals of appearance. Therefore, to gain an understanding of men's views on ageing and their required compliance with body modification would provide a platform through which ageing men would have a voice, and be able to respond to the demands of contemporary employment, thus offering an insight into the pressures experienced by men today.

Final thoughts

The process of formally researching my academic interests, together with lived experiences, has offered me the opportunity to explore the changing routines of masculine grooming in recent years. I was already aware, anecdotally, that this was occurring, yet through formalising the research I have been able to demonstrate that

although men may be engaging increasingly with the contemporary 'fixes' offered through appearance medicine, they do so through a continued dependence upon traditional hegemonic practices. Such practices indicate the modicum through which symbolic violence remains existent within the lived experiences of men, albeit in a subtle and restrained manner. Moreover, the contemporary social construct of masculine identity being aligned to men becoming 'new men', allows men to produce an autobiographical narrative of their body, but constructed within the limitations imposed by the culturally marketed ideals of an acceptable work place appearance. Men, therefore, may be moving towards a masculinity focused upon the aesthetics of the body, achieved through men reflexively constructing their appearance to conform to contemporary ideals of masculine grooming and, as such, producing a work place 'performance of appearance'; but do so within the constraint, context and dominance of traditional hegemonic masculinity

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Appendices

Appendix A

Sampling

The systematic initial website search was conducted using the following phrases:

1. Mens beauty salon
2. Male beauty salon
3. Male beauty salon for men
4. Beauty salon for men
5. Male salon for men
6. Mens salon
7. Mens med spa (medispa)
8. Male medi spa (medispa)
9. Male medi spa (medispa) for men
10. Medi spa (medispa) for men
11. Mens cosmetic surgery clinic
12. Male cosmetic surgery clinic
13. Cosmetic surgery clinic for men
14. Male cosmetic surgery clinic for men
15. Appearance medicine clinic for men
16. Male appearance medicine clinic
17. Men's Botox salon

Results yielded from initial search

The search yielded 22 websites from Google and nine from Yahoo, with no duplication in websites generated between the search engines, indicating the advantage of using more than one search engine to capture a broader range of results.

From the Google search:

1. Mens Beauty Salon

➤ <http://www.the-refinery.com/>

2. Male Beauty Salon

➤ <http://www.jasonshankey.com/> - doesn't give exact list of treatments

➤ <http://www.Trampas.co.uk/>

3. Male Beauty Salon for Men

➤ no suitable websites

4. Beauty Salon for Men

➤ <http://www.beauty2000.co.uk/>

5. Male salon for Men

➤ no suitable websites

6. Men's salon

➤ no suitable websites

7. Men's medi spa

➤ <http://www.lmsmedspa.com>

➤ <http://spamadison.com/med-spa/mens/>

➤ <http://www.visagemedispa.com/man-spa/mensmedical.asp>

➤ <http://www.auroramedspa.com>

➤ <http://www.laserperfectmedspa.com/men.html>

8. Male Medi Spa

➤ <http://www.efmedispa.com/body/vaser-for-men/>

➤ http://www.ridgewaymedispa.com/Ridgeway/male_aesthetics/botox.asp

➤ <http://www.aleyramedispa.com/men.html>

9. Male Medi Spa for Men

➤ no suitable websites

10. Medi Spa for Men

- no suitable websites

11. Men's Cosmetic Surgery Clinic

- <http://www.themensclinic.com/>
- <http://www.thecosmeticclinic.com/cosmetic-surgery-for-men.html>
- <http://www.transforminglives.co.uk/mens-procedures.html>

12. Male Cosmetic Surgery Clinic

- <http://www.courthouseclinics.com/men>
- <http://www.landauercosmeticsurgery.co.uk/cosmetic-surgery/mens-plastic-surgery.html>

13. Cosmetic Surgery Clinic for Men

- <http://www.courthouseclinics.com/men>
- <http://www.landauercosmeticsurgery.co.uk/cosmetic-surgery/mens-plastic-surgery.html>

14. Male Cosmetic Surgery Clinic for Men

- http://www.nightingale-clinic.co.uk/therapies/cosmetic/male_cosmetic_surgery.shtml

15. Appearance Medicine Clinic for Men

- no suitable websites

16. Male Appearance Medicine Clinic

- no suitable websites

17. Men's Botox salon

- <http://www.Maschio-grooming.co.uk>
- <http://www.planetmangrooming.co.uk>

From the Yahoo search

1. Mens Beauty Salon

- <http://www.detailformen.com/>
- <https://www.faceofman.com.au/>

2. Male Beauty Salon

- no suitable websites

3. Male Beauty Salon for Men

- no suitable websites

4. Beauty Salon for Men

- www.vivobeauty.co.nz

5. Male Salon for Men

- <http://www.thespaformen.com/>

6. Mens Salon

- no suitable websites

7. Mens Med Spa

- <http://elysianmedspaonline.com/formen.htm>
- <http://www.genesisformen.com/>

8. Male Medi Spa

- <http://www.kiora.com.au/male-day-spa-melbourne.asp>

9. Male Medi Spa For Men

- no suitable websites

10. Medi Spa for Men

- <http://www.refinedskinmedispa.com/index.php?id=54>

11. Mens Cosmetic Surgery Clinic

➤ no suitable websites

12. Male Cosmetic Surgery Clinic

➤ no suitable websites

13. Cosmetic surgery Clinic for men

➤ <http://www.sandiegoplasticsurgeryclinic.com/plastic-surgery-for-men.php>

14. Male cosmetic surgery clinic for men

➤ no suitable websites

15. Appearance medicine clinic for men

➤ no suitable websites

16. Male appearance medicine clinic

➤ no suitable websites

17. Men's Botox salon

➤ no suitable websites

Appendix B

Secondary Search Criteria

Secondary search criteria are as follows:

1. The website must offer any of these as treatments, but at least one of the following:
 - Laser hair removal or IPL hair removal
 - Botox or Dysport
 - Dermal fillers – Juvederm, Restyline, etc
 - Laser vein removal
 - Laser skin rejuvenation
 - Facial peels
 - Liposuction
 - Microdermabrasion
2. Websites that represent male only salons or have a specific male appearance medicine treatment menu
3. Appearance medicine treatments specifically targeted at men
4. Websites that located appearance medicine within the constraints of traditional models of masculinity
5. The websites must not offer cosmetic surgery procedures

The results yielded from this secondary search reduced the sample size to the following seven websites, which all meet the essential research criteria:

1. *Destination for Men*: Retrieved 1 March, 2011, from <http://www.destinationformen.com.au/about/htm>
2. *Face of Man*: Retrieved 7 March, 2011, from <https://faceofman.com.au/about-skin-care-for-men.html>

3. *Kiora Medi-Spa*: Retrieved 19 March, 2011, from <http://www.kiora.com.au/male-day-spa-melbourne.asp>
4. *Maschio Grooming*: Retrieved 9 March, 2011, from <http://www.Maschio-grooming.co.uk>
5. *Planet Man Grooming Lounge*: Retrieved 2 March, 2011, from <http://planetmangroominglounge.co.uk>
6. *The Refinery*: Retrieved 28 March, 2011, from <http://www.the-refinery.com/treatments/hair-removla.html>
7. *Trampas: The men's room*: Retrieved 23 March, 2011, from <http://www.Trampas.co.uk>

Appendix C

Coding schedule

Website characteristics, appeal and technology

Date:

Coder Initials:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Website | 1. <i>Destination for Men</i> 2. <i>Face of Man</i> 3. <i>Maschio</i> 4. <i>The Refinery</i> 5. <i>Trampas: The men's room</i> 6. <i>Planet Man Grooming Lounge</i> 7. <i>Kiora Medi-Spa</i> |
| 2. Location of Salon | 1. City centre 2. Urban 3. Suburban 4. Rural |
| 3. Salon type | 1. Beauty salon 2. Day spa 3. Medi-Spa |
| 4. Treatments offered | 1. Beauty 2. Holistic 3. Botox (or Dysport) 4. Fillers (Juvederm/Restyline) 5. Laser hair removal 6. Schlerotherapy 7. Laser skin rejuvenation 8. Microdermabrasion 9. Glycolic peels 10. IPL 11. Laser vein therapy 12. Barbering 13. Teeth whitening ³⁵ |
| 5. Name | 1. Defines what the salon does 2. Defines their target market (men) 3. Has man/men/masculine references in name 4. Name is abstract or has no obvious meaning 5. Name is abstract but has some relevance to the business |
| 6. Visual design | 1. Old fashioned (barbering)/vintage 2. Minimalist of website 3. Refined/polished appearance 4. Masculine 5. Unisex 6. Military 7. Professional 8. Exclusive 9. Luxurious 10. Clinical 11. Simple 12. Complex 13. Cluttered 14. Easy to navigate 15. Difficult to navigate 16. Upmarket and sophisticated 17. Fun & funky 18. Expensive 19. Softened images 20. Industrial 21. Prestigious 22. Bright 23. Contemporary 24. Accessible 25. Space age |

³⁵ Beauty services include waxing, facials, manicure/pedicure, massage and spray tanning; barbering services include all shaving and beard trimming services

7. Colour scheme 1. Grey 2. Black 3. White 4. Red/Rust
5. Brown 6. Beige 7. Khaki 8. Blue 9.
Pastel 10. Primary 11. Purple 12. Orange
8. Vision of salon 1. Interior images 2. Treatment rooms 3. Reception
..... 4. Lounge/waiting room 5. Masculine
ornaments/decorations & pictures 6. Nostalgic/old
fashioned décor 7. Modern/minimalist décor 8. Bar
..... 9. Coherent design 10. Confused design 11.
Exterior images 12. Gentleman's club/cigar lounge
13. Futuristic 14. Fun & funky 15. Clinical
9. Human models present? 1. Yes 2. No
- If No* *Go to Q 14*
- 9a. *If yes* 1. Photographic image 2.
Illustration 3. Video
10. Sex of model 1. Male 2. Female
11. Age of model 1. Under 18 years 2. 18-30 years 3. 31-40
years 4. 41-59 years 5. 60+
12. Race/ethnicity of model 1. White 2. Black 3. Asian 4. Mixed
race 5. Undetermined race
13. Type of model 1. Celebrity 2. Politician 3. Sports person 4.
Business Executive 5. Professional/MD/Lawyer/Banker
..... 6. Wealthy ... 7. White collar worker 8. Blue collar
worker 9. Model 10. Manual labourer 11. Actor
..... 12. Young/youthful 13. Old/mature 14.
Middle-aged 15. Perfect/idealised 16. Lined/
wrinkled 17. Client 18. Child
14. Before/After photographs 1. Images present 2. No image present
15. Language used 1. Simple 2. Complex/lengthy 3. Thorough 4.
Technical Specifications 5. Normalising treatments
6. Health orientated 7. Wellbeing orientated 8.
Traditional masculine language 9. Slang terminology
10. Lay terminology 11. Beauty terminology 12.
Medical terminology 13. Sensual 14. Euphemisms/
play on masculine phrases 15. Informative 16.
Functional 17. Pampering 18. Vintage 19.
Basic 20. Clinical

16. Language refers to 1. Celebrity 2. Politician 3. Sports person 4. Business Executive 5. Professional/MD/Lawyer/Banker 6. Wealthy ... 7. White collar worker 8. Blue collar worker 9. Model 10. Manual labourer 11. Actor 12. Fathers 13. Husbands 14. Sons 15. No reference to any of these
17. Language used when detailing treatments 1. Functional & descriptive 2. Masculinised 3. Plays on masculine practices 4. Appeals to modern man 5. Appeals to traditional masculine practices 6. Holistic/relaxing 7. Clinical 8. Pampering 9. Technical 10. Offer packages 11. Do not offer packages
18. Enticing features 1. Alcohol/premium beer 2. Coffee shop 3. Magazines 4. Plasma televisions 5. Games room 6. Chocolates 7. Health bar 8. Gaming platforms (PS3, Xbox) 9. Wi-Fi 10. Non-alcoholic refreshment 11. No enticing features
19. Social networking 1. Facebook 2. Twitter 3. LinkedIn 4. Blogs 5. News items/features 6. Grooming guides 7. Franchising Opportunities 8. Advertising 9. Salon etiquette 10. Client testimonials 11. Male specific forums 12. Online evaluator 13. You Tube 14. None of the above
20. Reference to staffing 1. Clearly identified staffing 2. Staffing mentioned but no clear identification 3. Staffing omitted 4. Clinical staff – MD 5. Clinical staff – RN 6. Beauty/spa therapist 7. Hairdresser 8. Qualifications stated 9. Qualifications not listed
21. Treatment benefits highlighted 1. Yes 2. No
- If no* *Go to Q 22*
- 21a. *If yes* 1. Social gain 2. Capital gain 3. Economic gain 4. Work place gain/benefits..... 5. Affordable 6. No down time needed ... 7. Healthy/healthier 8. Innovative treatment 9. Painless/no comfort 10. Natural treatments 11. Improve physical attractiveness 12.

Makeover/reinvent 13. Scientific claims 14. Safe/safety of treatment 15. Youthful 16. Vitality & wellbeing 17. Freshness 18. Reduce lines & wrinkles 19. Polished appearance 20. Anti-ageing 21. Relaxing 22. Detoxifying 23. Destressing 24. Revitalising 25. Unwind 26. Wallet friendly costs 27. Smoother skin 28. Therapeutic 29. No embarrassment 30. Improved appearance 31. Refreshed 32. Feel amazing 33. Firmer skin 34. Energised 35. Regenerated

22. Sales promotions 1. Yes 2. No

If no Go to Q 23

22a. *If yes* 1. One off offers 2. Discount for pre-paid course of treatments 3. Discounts for subsequent treatments (but not pre-paid) 4. Loyalty cards/schemes 5. Discount in percentage or dollar amount 6. Discount, not quantified 7. Seasonal promotion ... 8. Facebook discount 9. Credit/finance facilities – Yes No

23. Product promotion 1. Yes 2. No

If no Go to Q 24

23a. *If yes* 1. Male specific products stocked/used 2. Generic range 3. Low cost products stocked/used 4. Mid-range cost products stocked/used 5. Expensive products stocked/used 6. Exclusive products stocked/used 7. Online shopping – Yes No 8. Supply products not used in their treatments 9. Own brand products 10. Make up – generic 11. Make up – men’s range

24. Risks of treatment 1. Yes 2. No

If yes 1. General risk advice 2. Allergic reactions 3. Bruising 4. Recovery /down time 5. Swelling 6. Discomfort

..... 7. Pain 8. Play down risks associated
with treatment 9. Safety of
equipment/treatment