

**The Bristlecone Project:
Male Survivors
Defy the Stigma**

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**THE
BRISTLECONE
PROJECT**

Men Overcoming Sexual Abuse

Isaac Andrade

"...the intersection between being raised Mormon and being gay, but also being a survivor."


Growing up gay in an often hostile world can be dangerous. It was for Isaac.

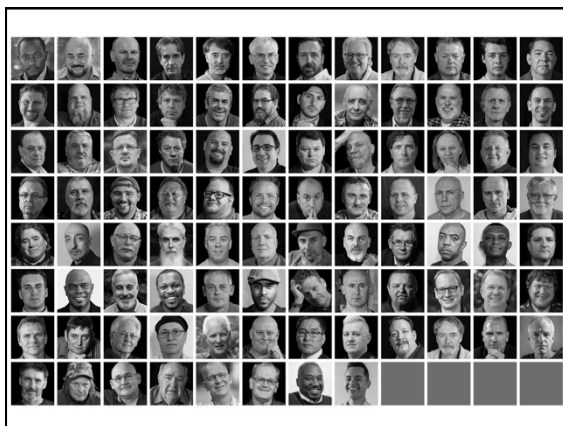
By the age of 13 Isaac was ready to come out, to begin exploring what it meant to be gay. But that kind of exploration often leaves a 13 year old boy very vulnerable. Isaac was soon "dating" a man who was a decade older than him. Only much later did he begin to see the coercion and abuse that was intrinsic to this "relationship".

But that was not the only trauma he endured at 13. One night he snuck out of his home and went with some friends to a party on a nearby college campus. Late in the evening, and alone upstairs, he was unbound by someone who physically restrained him and raped him.

Isaac swore himself to secrecy. But burying a rape is not possible. So Isaac found help in alcohol. "I thought that was the best way to cope with it, because I couldn't tell anyone. I had made that decision." For a while, Isaac coped. Gradually, depression seeped in, and Isaac began a long sequence of treatments. But the secret remained.

It was a violent fight with his step-father that finally released the secret. Man-handled into helplessness while being verbally abused, the rape came flooding back. Isaac became suicidal.





**Why is it so
important that
survivors come
forward publicly?**

To Confront the Stigma

The Stigma

**“I was sexually abused
so I’m not a real man.”**



Mitch Mathai

The Stigma

The Vampire Myth



Tony Rodgers



Bret Holton

How Bad is the Stigma?

- Boys don't disclose (and predators know this)
- Men don't disclose
- Men don't seek help
- Men don't get answers...



At a US Air Force Base in England

Sexual Identity Confusion & Masculinity Issues

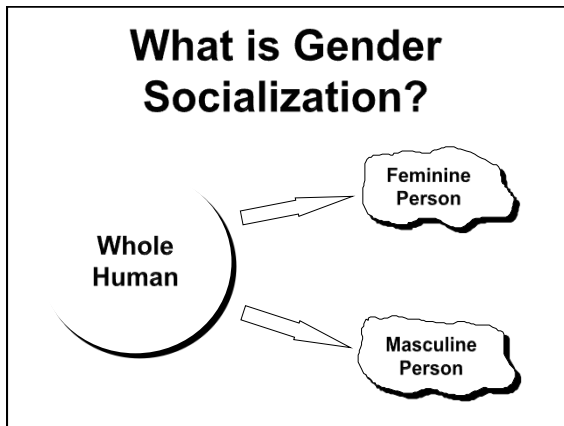
Sex & Gender

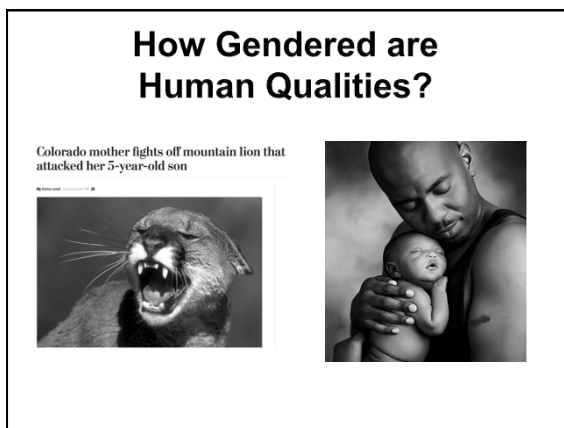
Sex:
A biological
category

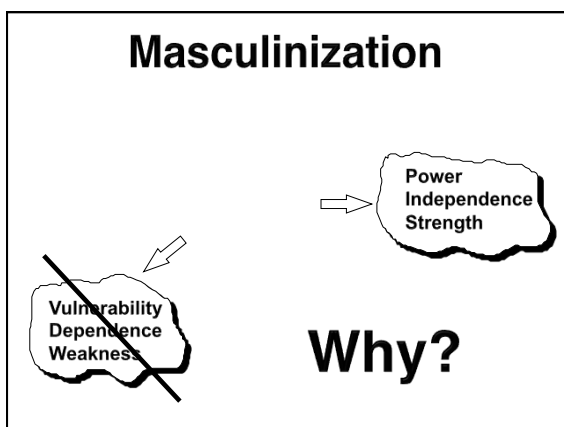


Gender:
A cultural
category









Origins of Masculinity




- Adaptation to harsh environments
- Increased reliance on scavenging & hunting
- Competition with other animals
- Competition with other hominid groups

Essence of Masculinity

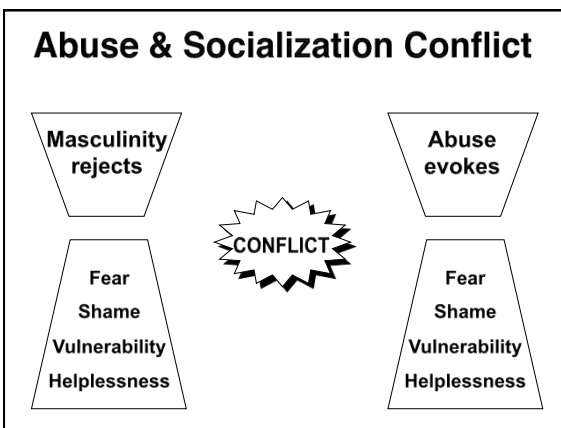


- Suppress vulnerability
- Suppress physical pain
- Suppress fear
- Exalt toughness





**Tomas Callanan on the
Code of Masculinity**



**The Role of Spirituality
in
Healing**

**The Role of Spirituality
in
Healing**

General Spirituality



Tony Rodgers

**The Role of Spirituality
in
Healing**

**Specific Spiritual
Experiences**



Manassah Bradley



Jason Lee
