

**Introduction to Cultural Studies**  
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**Lecture – 45**  
**Bell Hooks - Understanding Patriarchy - VI**

So hello and welcome to this introduction to cultural studies in NPTEL course where we are looking at Bell Hooks essay understanding patriarchy. So we have arrived in to the essay at the moment. So I will just dive into it right away. Just so repeat little bit about where we stopped in the last essay where Hooks look up patriarchy as a pathological problem, as a mental problem and she so equates it with the level of insanity.

It is actually very irrational form of behaviour but one which she rationalises itself to accept corroboration, to rituals of corroboration until it becomes natural, you know, biological narrative. But it is actually deeply irrational, insane narrative and its insanity and irrationality is something that Hooks constantly highlights in this particular essay. So this section that we will study in this particular lecture is on your screen where Hooks talks about how patriarchy promotes insanity.

Again, it is a very provocative sentence and this entire provocative quality is what makes this essay very distinguish. It marks this essay, it categorizes this particular essay either provocative personal quality often trying a anecdotal evidence, often trying on very personal evidence and this constant entanglement between the personal and the discursive orders, the exponential and the discursive orders, exponential and ideological orders is what makes this particular essay a very fascinating.

And as it may happen when he said, come into this essay from Hawkins or social construction of what, we see how this essay moves away from so of a narrow social construction in the series of looking up patriarchy and draws an exponential lived realities of patriarchy and offers a very interesting mixture of this lived reality and discursivity together which is what we need in terms of looking at a complex model such as patriarchy.

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Patriarchy promotes insanity. It is at the root of the psychological ills troubling men in our nation. Nevertheless there is no mass concern for the plight of men. In *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man*, Susan Faludi includes very little discussion of patriarchy:



Ask feminists to diagnose men's problems and you will often get a very clear explanation: men are in crisis because women are properly challenging male dominance. Women are asking men to share the public reins and men can't bear it. Ask antifeminists and you will get a diagnosis



So patriarchy promotes insanity. It is at the root of the psychological ills troubling men in our nation. Nevertheless, there is no mass concern for the plight of men. In *Stiffed: the Betrayal of the American Man*, Susan Faludi includes very little discussion of patriarchy. So this particular book by Susan Faludi is called *Stiffed to the Betrayal of the American Man*. So the very title suggests how patriarchy, stiffed sorry, how patriarchy basically cripples man, patriarchy basically destabilizes men at the emotional level.

And this particular book, it does not really engage so much with patriarchy except for a few scattered sections and this is one section that Hooks is highlighting, okay. And this is a quotation from the book by Susan Faludi. Ask feminists to diagnose men's problems and you will often get a very clear explanation: men are in crisis because women are properly challenging man dominance.

Women are asking men to share the public reins and men cannot bear it. Ask antifeminists and you will get a diagnosis that is in one respect similar.

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antifeminists and you will get a diagnosis that is, in one respect, similar. Men are troubled, many conservative pundits say, because women have gone far beyond their demands for equal treatment and are now trying to take power and control away from men... The underlying message: men cannot be men, only eunuchs, if they are not in control. Both the feminist and antifeminist views are rooted in a peculiarly modern American perception that to be a man means to be at the controls and at all times to feel yourself in control.



Men are troubled, many conservative pundits say, because women have gone far beyond their demands for equal treatment and are now trying to take power and control away from men. Then underlying message: men cannot be men, only eunuchs, if they are not in control. Both the feminist and antifeminist views are rooted in a peculiarly modern American perception that to be a man means to be at the controls and at all times to feel yourself in control.


So this section is quite revealing, instead it tells us quite clearly that both feminists, say the kind of feminists and antifeminist sentiments often have a structures similarity, so both assume the fact that men love to be in control. They both assume the fact that men are meant to be in control. So when they are dismantled from the control position, they feel crippled, they feel threatened, they feel sort of castrated at an exponential level.

And then, you know, if you ask some kind of feminist, they would say that, you know, men are troubled today because woman have taken over all power. Men cannot bear not being in power. And if you ask more conservative, regressive pundits who want men to be in power, they say, you know, women have gone too far, they have demanded, they have taken much more than they, what they can rationally demand.

And as a result men feel naturally and legitimately threatened for having been voted out of power. So the question of power and the equation between male and power, maleness and power,


becomes like a natural and easy question for both, this brand of feminism and conservative, regressive people. So therein lays a problem that Hooks is addressing quite clearly through this particular book by Susan Faludi.

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Faludi never interrogates the notion of control. She never considers that the notion that men were somehow in control, in power, and satisfied with their lives before contemporary feminist movement is false.

Patriarchy as a system has denied males access to full emotional well-being, which is not the same as feeling rewarded, successful, or powerful because of one's capacity to assert control over others. To truly address male pain and male crisis we must as a nation be willing to expose the harsh reality that patriarchy has damaged men in the past and continues to damage them in the present. If patriarchy were truly rewarding to men, the violence and addiction in family life that is so all-pervasive



Okay, so Faludi never interrogates the notion of control. She never considers that the notion that men were somehow in control, in power, and satisfied with their lives before contemporary feminist movement is false. So Faludi does not go beyond this explanation. She is after to this very random glimpse of the problem and then she moves on. And then Hooks moves on and says how patriarchy affects men as well as women in different kind of discursive conditions.


Patriarchy as a system has denied males access to full emotional well-being, which is not the same as feeling rewarded, successful, or powerful because of one's capacity to assert control over others. So the victimhood over here also is located in the men, in men who are patriarchal and this is really complex and brilliant being a patriarchy in sense because what Hooks is saying over here is patriarchy has denied men access to a full emotional wing, full emotional swing.

So just like patriarchy has denied women some material conditions and the social conditions such as educational conditions, they have denied women certain basic existential conditions. They have also denied men certain basic emotional conditions by not giving them access to a full emotional state and therein lays the crippling effect of patriarchy for men. Okay, to truly address


male pain and male crisis.

We must as a nation be willing to expose the harsh reality that patriarchy has damaged men in the past and continues to damage them in the present. So the damage is done to the men as well as to the women and that is when the conditions of patriarchy that Hooks is highlighting throughout this essay really. If patriarchy were truly rewarding to men, the violence and addiction in family life that is also pervasive would not exist.

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or powerful because of one's capacity to assert control over others. To truly address male pain and male crisis we must as a nation be willing to expose the harsh reality that patriarchy has damaged men in the past and continues to damage them in the present. If patriarchy were truly rewarding to men, the violence and addiction in family life that is so all-pervasive would not exist. This violence was not created by feminism. If patriarchy were rewarding, the overwhelming dissatisfaction most men feel in their work lives—a dissatisfaction extensively documented in the work of Studs Terkel and echoed in Faludi's treatise—would not exist.



So look at the brilliance of this particular argument where she says if patriarchy were really rewarding to men, if patriarchy were really rewarding and fulfilling at an emotional level, then men would not need to be violent because active violence, the active alcoholism, the active addiction, they come out of a lack, they come out of a problem, they come of violence inside and that violence inside is exteriorized to active violences, externalized to active violence.

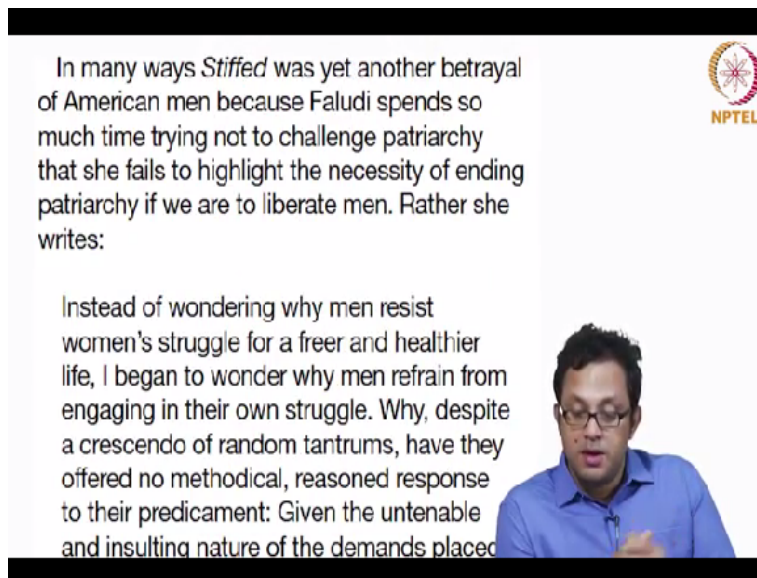
So when you abuse someone while being addictive, if you abuse someone while being an alcoholic, you are essentially externalizing an internal problem. So the internal problem is an emotional problem. That emotional problem can only come by being denied access to a full emotional state which is what patriarchy denies to men and males in general. So in a way the abuse of men can also be seen as an active victimhood, as an acting out of victim.

Obviously that acting out of it effects women, effects some of the physical, corporeal existential emotional level but if you look at the root of the problem, it actually may be quite true that the root of the problem lies in an insufficient access to your emotional state, to your emotional echo and that insufficient accesses is a result due to access not given or the denial by the patriarchy. It denies men access, it refuses access to men, to that kind of emotional state.

And therein lies the violence giving rise a course to violence that men have against women, domestic as well as cultural levels. So this violence was not created by the feminism. If patriarchy were rewarding, the overwhelming dissatisfaction most men feel in their work lives, a dissatisfaction extensively documented in the work of Studs Terkel and echoed in Faludi's treatise, would not exist.

So dissatisfaction of men, the violence of men which existed much before feminism became a movement, is a result of the sufferings caused by patriarchy on men. So men suffer from patriarchy at an emotional level and that emotionally insufficiency, that emotional inadequacy, the emotional ill-health is often what causes the problems of violence at domestic level. And which is obviously a good case in point of patriarchy affecting men viscerally.

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In many ways *Stiffed* was yet another betrayal of American men because Faludi spends so much time trying not to challenge patriarchy that she fails to highlight the necessity of ending patriarchy if we are to liberate men. Rather she writes:

Instead of wondering why men resist women's struggle for a freer and healthier life, I began to wonder why men refrain from engaging in their own struggle. Why, despite a crescendo of random tantrums, have they offered no methodical, reasoned response to their predicament: Given the untenable and insulting nature of the demands placed

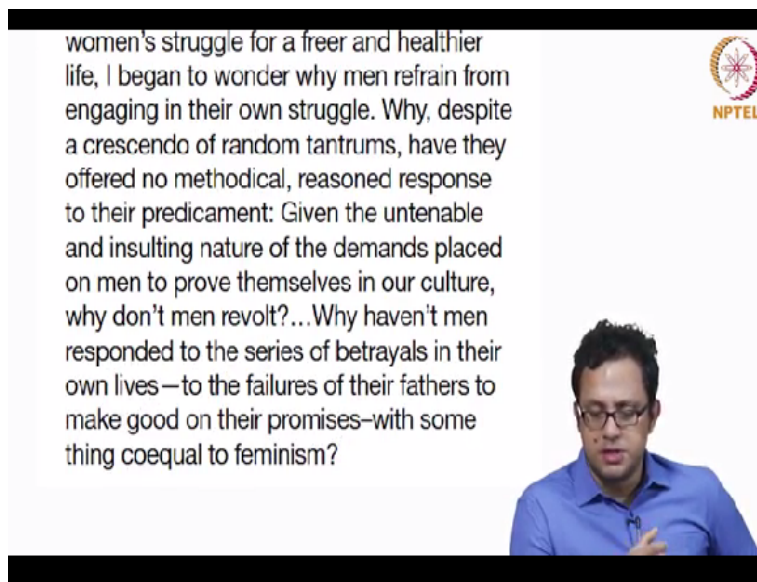
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patriarchy if we are to liberate men. Rather she writes, and this is a critique of Faludi's book which Hooks is offering.

And I quote, "instead of wondering why men resist women's struggle for a freer and healthier life, I began to wonder why men refrain from engaging in their own struggle. Why, despite a crescendo of random tantrums, have they offered no methodical, reasoned response to their predicament given the untenable and insulting nature of the demands placed on men to prove themselves in our culture and why do not men revolt?"

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A video slide featuring a man in a blue shirt and glasses speaking. The slide has a white background with black text on the left and the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. The text reads: "women's struggle for a freer and healthier life, I began to wonder why men refrain from engaging in their own struggle. Why, despite a crescendo of random tantrums, have they offered no methodical, reasoned response to their predicament: Given the untenable and insulting nature of the demands placed on men to prove themselves in our culture, why don't men revolt?... Why haven't men responded to the series of betrayals in their own lives—to the failures of their fathers to make good on their promises—with something coequal to feminism?"

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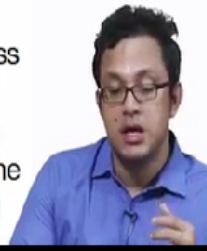


Why have not men responded to the series of betrayals in their own lives, to the failures of their fathers to make good on their promises with something coequal to feminism?

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Note that Faludi does not dare risk either the ire of feminist females by suggesting that men can find salvation in feminist movement or rejection by potential male readers who are solidly antifeminist by suggesting that they have something to gain from engaging feminism.

So far in our nation visionary feminist movement is the only struggle for justice that emphasizes the need to end patriarchy. No mass body of women has challenged patriarchy and neither has any group of men come together to lead the struggle. The crisis facing men is not the crisis of masculinity, it is the crisis of patriarchal



Note that Faludi does not dare risk either the ire of feminist females by suggesting that men can find salvation in feminist movement or rejection by potential male readers who are solidly antifeminist by suggesting that they have something to gain from engaging feminism. So what Hooks says that the Faludi's book ends up being a binary. Ends up rejecting the idea that men can actually draw on feminism, the men can be feminism, and the feminist can get along.

You do not have to be a biological female in order to be a feminist. So men have to be very strong feminist. So that kind of a collaborated approaches, not drawn out in the Faludi's book. So she, in that particular book, retains a binary of men being victims, men being oppressors and women being passive sufferers of patriarchy and that so far very convenient construct, a very convenient binary that Faludi ends up retaining and something that is obviously critiqued by Hooks quite extensively in this particular book.


Okay, so far in our nation, visionary feminist movement is the only struggle for justice that emphasizes the need to end patriarchy. No mass body of women has challenged patriarchy and neither has any group of men come together to lead the struggle. The crisis facing men is not the crisis of masculinity, it is the crisis of patriarchal masculinity and this is a very important distinction that Hooks makes and something that we need to bear in mind those of us interested in gender studies, masculinity studies, this is a very key thing that Hooks is mapping out away.



So the crisis are not really a crisis of masculinity, the crisis is that of crisis of patriarchal masculinity. It is not a question of being male, is the question of being a patriarchally male. Unless we get rid of this patriarchal masculinity, unless we address, forget about getting rid of it unless we address the question of patriarchal masculinity, we will always have male violence. We will always have domestic abuse; we will always have addiction.


We will always have sexism at work, etc. Because the root problem is patriarchy and need to address the problem in all this complexity in order to find out means through which we can get over and resolve this problem and move on to a clearer understanding of patriarchy and perhaps some more equal world.

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masculinity. Until we make this distinction clear, men will continue to fear that any critique of patriarchy represents a threat. Distinguishing political patriarchy, which he sees as largely committed to ending sexism, therapist Terrence Real makes clear that the patriarchy damaging us all is embedded in our psyches:

Psychological patriarchy is the dynamic between those qualities deemed “masculine” and “feminine” in which half of our human traits are exalted while the other half is devalued. Both men and women participate in this textured value system.



Okay, until we make this distinction clear, men will continue to fear that any critique of patriarchy represents a threat. So the question that Hooks, the proposal of Hooks is offering over here is to distance or divorce masculinity from patriarchy. So she says when you are critiquing patriarchy, it should not appear that you are critiquing masculinity. It should not appear that you are critiquing men in general.

Because when you are critiquing patriarchy, you are critiquing a system, you are critiquing a construct, you are critiquing any particular narrative, particular social and domestic and cultural narrative. And men have nothing to do with that narrative at a biological level. It is something

which is culturally constructed, okay. And then it is lived exponentially, is lived on a day to day life basis.

It is a lived reality. It is a lived suffering, etc. However, any critique of patriarchy should not be synonymous to critique of masculinity. It is a completely different thing. So masculinity and patriarchy are different categories, different ideological and different exponential categories according to Hooks and that is a very important distinction that she is making and that is something that we need to bear in mind for the purpose of this particular cause.

Okay, distinguishing political patriarchy which he sees as largely committed to ending sexism, therapist Terrence Real makes clear that the patriarchy damaging us all is embedded in our psyches. So again she draws on Terrence Real's book. It is very interesting psychological book of patriarchy and that that particular book says quite clearly and unequivocally embedded. The problem is psychological.

It is embedded in our psyches, the problem of patriarchy, the root of patriarchy unless we address the problem psychologically, unless we address the problem, you know, with all the psychological complexity, we will never be able to move on from patriarchy. We are never going to end to put a stop to violence against women, to violence of men, etc. And again the question is not about male or female.

It is not a question of masculinity or femininity. It is a question of patriarchy which can be appropriated by men as well as by women. And this is a quotation from the Terrence Real book that Hooks is offering us. Psychological patriarchy is the dynamic between those qualities deemed masculine and the feminine in which half of our human traits are exalted while the other half is devalued.

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other half is devalued. Both men and women participate in this tortured value system. Psychological patriarchy is a “dance of contempt,” a perverse form of connection that replaces true intimacy with complex, covert layers of dominance and submission, collusion and manipulation. It is the unacknowledged paradigm of relationships that has suffused Western civilization generation after generation, deforming both sexes, and destroying the passionate bond between them.



Both men and women participate in this tortured value system. Psychological patriarchy is a dance of contempt, a perverse form of connection that replaces true intimacy with complex, covert layers of dominance and submission, collusion and manipulation. So look at the words that have been used over here. So connection, domination, manipulation, collusions of patriarchy like any narrative when it becomes grand narrative, it walks through collusions and manipulations.

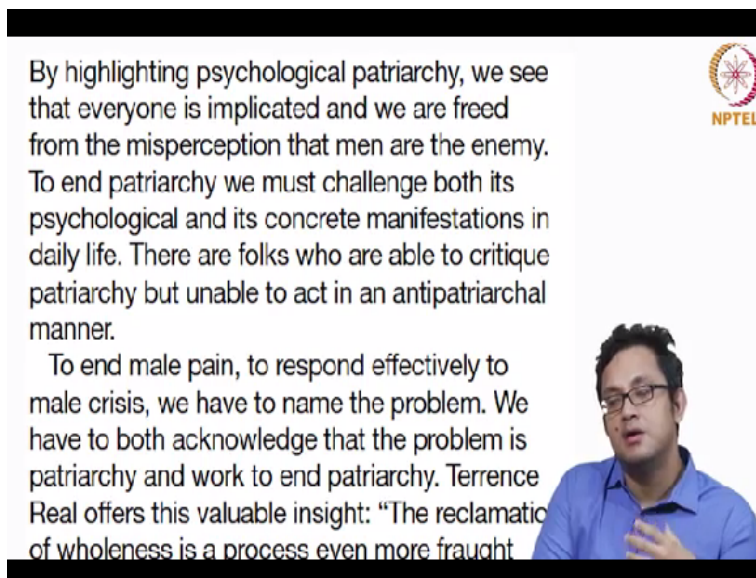
So it must make this very collusive connections in order to become a seamless narrative. So the seams must not show. The constructive quality must not show and it can only be effaced away through an active manipulations. So patriarchy proceeds as a narrative but acts the manipulation and then becomes a grand narrative which effaces and very conveniently conceals any active construction, any end seam which may reveal as constructed quality, as conveniently concealed.

Okay, so it is a question of covert layers of dominance and submission, collusion and manipulation. It is the unacknowledged paradigm of relationships that has suffused Western civilization generation after generation, deforming both sexes and destroying the passionate bond between them. So this particular section is very important. You know, it is intergenerational mobility is something which is affected generation after generation.

And this entire idea of patriarchy as being a narrative, as being a cultural narrative which must be


questioned, which must be unpacked, which must be deconstructed and then it must be done away with, is great clement call that Hooks is making at this point of time. And again moves away from, it is a movement which looks at patriarchy as been divorced from masculinity. So masculinity and patriarchy are different paradigms, different exponential systems, a different ontological categories all together.

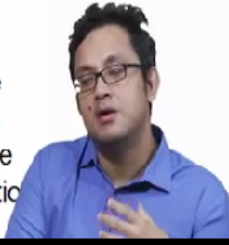
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By highlighting psychological patriarchy, we see that everyone is implicated and we are freed from the misperception that men are the enemy. To end patriarchy we must challenge both its psychological and its concrete manifestations in daily life. There are folks who are able to critique patriarchy but unable to act in an antipatriarchal manner.

To end male pain, to respond effectively to male crisis, we have to name the problem. We have to both acknowledge that the problem is patriarchy and work to end patriarchy. Terrence Real offers this valuable insight: "The reclamation of wholeness is a process even more fraught





By highlighting a psychological patriarchy, we see that everyone is implicated and that we are freed from the misperception that men are the enemy. So again the idea of alterity becomes important. So we do not need to make, we do not have to generate or create an order of alterity where men becomes the enemy by default, right.

So it is an inclusive system which is looked at more collaborated approach where men and women walk together to dismantle patriarchy, to address the questions of patriarchy, to address the oppression of patriarchy because both the sufferers as well as perpetrators of patriarchy are different levels. To end patriarchy, we must challenge both its psychological and its concrete manifestations in daily life.

So its psychological manifestation as well the external manifestations in daily lives, again we are looking at this entanglement between the inside and the outside. And this entanglement which we keep drawing on in cultural studies that we, this constant loop between what is happening inside

narrowly psychologically add an embodied level and the way it is manifested at a cultural macro extended level.

And that is something which is very interesting loop and patriarchy like any other system operates in that kind of a loop. So you must challenge both its psychological and its concrete manifestations in daily life. There are folks who are able to critique patriarchy but unable to act in an antipatriarchal manner. So it is often easy to intellectually critique patriarchy, is often used to pessimistically critique patriarchy through discussions, dialogues and linguistic subversion.

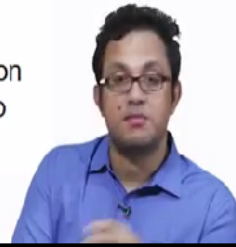
But that can often become a very difficult task to actually enact antipatriarchal behaviour in daily real life. So this question of reality and you know, pure discursivity becomes the key question here as well. And this is again where Hawkins becomes important for us. If we are limited, if we are constrained but its construction is logic, then obviously we do not end up being real. We do not end up being in a subversive or a real daily lived bodily level.

And that is something that Hooks wants. Hooks wants entanglement, a combination of discursive subversion as well as exponential lived subversion, that is the only way to go about on critiquing patriarchy. To end male pain, to respond effectively to male crisis, we have to name the problem. We have to note, we have to classify, we have to address the problem, we have to hold the problem, pin point the problem and that is patriarchy according to Hooks.

We have to both acknowledge that the problem is patriarchy and work to end patriarchy. Terrence Real offers this valuable insight. The reclamation of wholeness is a process even more fraught for men than it has been for women, more difficult and more profoundly threatening to the culture at large.

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have to both acknowledge that the problem is patriarchy and work to end patriarchy. Terrence Real offers this valuable insight: "The reclamation of wholeness is a process even more fraught for men than it has been for women, more difficult and more profoundly threatening to the culture at large." If men are to reclaim the essential goodness of male being, if they are to regain the space of openheartedness and emotional expressiveness that is the foundation of well-being, we must envision alternatives to patriarchal masculinity. We must all change.



So it is more difficult for men to recover the wholeness. Because they have lived a fractured life, all their lives, because they have been denied access to the emotional wholeness, they have been denied access to the existential wholeness. So patriarchy, essentially metonymizes men. It essentially fractures male lives, it fractures male psyche and that fracture generates violence, that fracture generates abuse, that fracture generates addiction and all kinds of threatening impulses.

Okay, so if men are to reclaim the essential goodness of male being, if they are to regain the space of openheartedness and emotional expressiveness that is the foundation of well-being, we must envision alternatives to patriarchal masculinity, we must all change. The entire act of reclamation becomes important.

If male were to reclaim their wholeness, their well-being and men are to reclaim the existential wholeness, the existential holistic quality, openheartedness and becomes sufficiently opens, sufficiently whole, then the obvious condition and obvious requirement is to address and find alternatives of patriarchal masculinity and look at other models of masculinity, look at more holistic models of masculinity, more emotional models of masculinity, more empathetic models of masculinity rather than looking on expansionists, capitalist patriarchal models of masculinity.

And that can only change when we must all change, when we can all change. So by we, the collective pronoun that Hooks uses at the end is very important, is very significant. It is

addressed to a collective, it is addressed to men as well as women. It is addressed to the entire population, entire species on the planet, entire human species on the planet where everyone must change the notions of patriarchy and antipatriarchy.

So unless we change, unless we address the problem, we will remain fraught with binaries, will remain the battlefield of binaries where men become the bad people, women becomes passive victims and that kind of feminism, that kind of antifeminism will always excel, will always besides the abreacted and will never get anywhere even close to understanding or critiquing patriarchy.

Will this be forever doomed in this battlefield of binaries, the Hooks wants to move away from as illustrated in this particular essay. So with that we conclude this essay. It is a very important essay, I am sure that we will agree on and we will just go through that with all this details, we have done it line by line. Just because it is very important essay and also it is quite anecdotal than directing personal, unexponential in the way it is written.

It is not strictly discursive or technical, jargon heavy. So in it, and that quality, it has a lot of commonality with funnels plashing web marks. I did not find different kinds of discursive connection between, across all the text that we covered in this particular course. So I thank you for your attention and move on with the new text in the next lectures. Thank you.