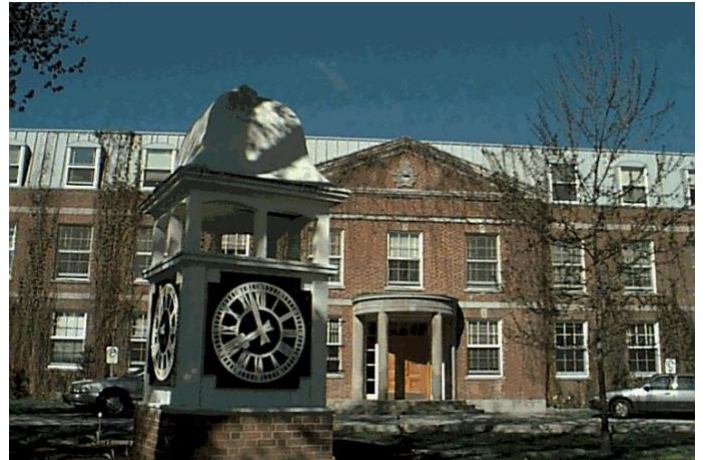


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## HOW THE CAF AND DND CAN USE INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY TO AVERT A SOCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE NIGHTMARE

Major Ryan McClement

### JCSP 45

#### Solo Flight

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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE – COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

JCSP 45 – PCEMI 45  
2018 – 2020

SOLO FLIGHT

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AVERT A SOCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE NIGHTMARE**

**Major Ryan McClement**

*“This paper was written by a student attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfilment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus contains facts and opinions, which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada and the Canadian Department of National Defence. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied, except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence.”*

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## HOW THE CAF AND DND CAN USE INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY TO AVERT A SOCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE NIGHTMARE

*If equality is what is being sought, then surely men should be awarded equal opportunities to have their emotional, physical and mental wellbeing treated as seriously as women's. International Men's Day is what we make of it. Used responsibly, it can highlight very tangible problems that face men across the world and ultimately help us achieve a more balanced society where 'gender' is just an after thought.<sup>1</sup>*

- Sheena Madden, Controversy Over International Men's Day

There is a male and masculine crisis in Western countries that threatens to have dramatic effects on society and culture for which the outcome is unclear. Whether it be higher suicide rates, lower academic attainment, more severe criminal punishments, or a plethora of other issues, all highlighted in the International Men's Day (IMD) initiative, males and men are not immune to societal disenfranchisement. Unlike the numerous societal problems faced by women and females, male's and masculinity's problems do not receive nearly the same amount of attention from either a legal, societal, or political perspective. Consequently, groups of males are marginalized to the fringes of society with no immediate end in sight; this is not a situation any civilized society should tolerate, and those who have the power to intervene, should.

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) has such power. Within its mandate, the CAF can make positive differences in the lives of males which is of benefit to both the force and society. With 86% of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) being male<sup>2</sup>, obstacles and issues that affect males and masculinity have a disproportionate effect on its workforce.

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<sup>1</sup> Sheena Madden, "Controversy over International Men's Day," 25 Nov 2015, accessed 12 May 2020, <https://www.rte.ie/lifestyle/living/2015/1120/747938-controversy-over-international-mens-day/>

<sup>2</sup> Government of Canada, Statistics Canada, "Men and Women in the Canadian Armed Forces – 2019", accessed 14 May 2020, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019072-eng.htm>

Matters systemically affecting males and masculinity amplify within the CAF based solely on sex and gender demographics; as such, the CAF has a higher vested interest in addressing these problems. Thus, this paper thesis is that the CAF and DND, as Federal employers of males and men, has the ability, human resource (HR) interest, and moral responsibility to take actions to address male and masculinity specific issues. Although there are many possible courses of action that can be taken by the CAF, this paper argues that celebrating IMD is an excellent place to start.

As evident by the above thesis statement, this paper is formatted in such a way as to address specifically male and masculinity issues. This is not to say that female issues should be forgotten or superseded in any way, quite the contrary. The CAF should adopt strategies to ensure all personnel, regardless of sex or gender, have their specific concerns met. This paper also makes the distinction between sex and gender. Although the word *male* and *men* are often interchanged in ordinary discourse to represent both gender and biological sex, this paper will use *male(s)* to refer to an individual's biological sex, and *man/men* and *masculinity* to refer to gender or gender-related issues. This paper will cover why men's issues are a *wicked* problem for policymakers and the existing policy gap and lack of political and social support for male individuals. The paper will also discuss the benefits of IMD and its implementation, as well as counterarguments to addressing male's and men's issues as a separate initiative. In conclusion, the argument will have been made that the current male and masculinity problems deserve attention and that the CAF can be a change agent for a more inclusive workforce, and potentially a catalyst for more substantial societal changes.

As far as *wicked* problems go, the crisis of males and masculinity is a textbook example. Val Morrison defines wicked problems as “a variety of particularly complex,

persistent and resistant problems in public policy.”<sup>3</sup> What makes these public policy problems wicked is that unlike typical mathematic and engineering issues that have a definitive formulation, policy problems lack agreement on both a definition and a solution.<sup>4</sup> One crucial caveat identified by Morrison is that wicked problems are resolved only through collaboration.<sup>5</sup> Thus to address male and masculinity issues, precisely how it relates to personnel within DND and the CAF, would require collaboration from all levels of leadership. Horst Rittel and Melvin Webber point out that these different collaborators are likely to differ widely in their judgments based on “their group or personal interests, their special value-sets, and their ideological predilections.”<sup>6</sup> The difficulty with wicked problems is that there will never be agreement on both a definition and a solution to the issue. Rittel and Webber added, “there are no criteria which enable one to prove that all solutions to a wicked problem have been identified and considered,”<sup>7</sup> and that “every implemented solution is consequential. It leaves *traces* that cannot be undone.”<sup>8</sup> The ambiguity leads many collaborative planners into an *analysis paralysis* mindset where avoidance and delay creep into solution formulation as there is fear in providing a wrong solution. Yes, wicked problems are hard to solve *just right*, but these tend to be the problems that have the highest impact on societal change. A society which addresses male's and masculinity's critical issues without subversion, and through collaboration

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<sup>3</sup> Val Morrison, "Wicked Problems and Public Policy," *National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy* (June 2013),1.

<sup>4</sup> Val Morrison, "Wicked Problems and Public Policy," *National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy* (June 2013),1.

<sup>5</sup> Val Morrison, "Wicked Problems and Public Policy," *National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy* (June 2013),2.

<sup>6</sup> Horst Rittel, and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1973), 163.

<sup>7</sup> Horst Rittel, and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1973), 164.

<sup>8</sup> Horst Rittel, and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1973), 160.

would benefit all. There is no easy solution and celebrating IMD may not be the panacea to the problems facing males and masculinity, but it is a natural and logical place to start.

IMD is celebrated annually on November 19<sup>th</sup> and highlights, “the positive value men bring to the world, their families and communities.”<sup>9</sup> IMD is not solely to celebrate males, but also men – signifying the embrace of the evolving understanding of gender and masculinity. IMD has six core pillars:

- To promote positive male role models;
- To celebrate men’s positive contributions to society,
- To focus on men’s health and well-being;
- To highlight discrimination against men;
- To improve gender relations and promote gender equality; and
- To create a safer, better world;<sup>10</sup>

IMD, or variations thereof, has been attempted since the 1960s (vice 1909 for International Woman’s Day).<sup>11</sup> the current iteration was founded in 1999 in Trinidad and Tobago and is currently celebrated in one form or another in 80 countries worldwide.<sup>12</sup> Within Canada, there is no national celebration for IMD, yet smaller regional events are held with increasing frequency with the first-known event occurring in 2009 in Vancouver, British Columbia.<sup>13</sup> The lack of recognition of IMD at the Canadian Federal level will be discussed later in the paper, however, with the support the movement has, and its gaining popularity, it should not be considered an extreme ideological stance.

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<sup>9</sup> International Men’s Day, “Home – Men Leading By Example,” accessed 31 April 2020, <https://internationalmensday.com/>

<sup>10</sup> International Men’s Day, “Objectives of International Men’s Day,” accessed 31 April 2020, <https://internationalmensday.com/objectives-of-imd/>

<sup>11</sup> International Men’s Day, “History & Background,” accessed 31 April 2020, <https://internationalmensday.com/founders-statement/>

<sup>12</sup> International Men’s Day, “19<sup>th</sup> November: International Men’s Day,” accessed online 31 April 2020, <https://www.internationalmensday.info/>

<sup>13</sup> International Men’s Day, “First Canadian International Men’s Day 2009,” accessed 31 April 2020, <https://internationalmensday.com/2018/10/19/first-canadian-international-mens-day-2009/>

Instead, IMD is a way for males and men to highlight issues specific to their sex and gender.

When looking for disparities in policy and programs between male and female issues, one only must look at the UN. As 80 countries around the world celebrate IMD, the UN has declared the 19<sup>th</sup> of November as *World Toilet Day*.<sup>14</sup> As humorous and ironic as that fact may be, the UN has a policy on recognizing international days:

“International days are occasions to educate the general public on issues of concern, to mobilize political will and resources to address global problems and to celebrate and reinforce achievements of humanity. The existence of international days predates the establishment of the United Nations, but the UN has embraced them as a powerful advocacy tool.”<sup>15</sup>

To quote the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, “Gender equality is a human rights issue, but it is also in all our interests: men and boys, women and girls...”<sup>16</sup> From this quote, the UN’s policy on using international days as an advocacy tool, and the fact that a year has 365 days to choose from, one would expect to see some male or masculinity issues brought forward; disappointingly this is not the case. Female’s and women’s concerns, on the other hand, have eight separate days:

- 6 February, International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation;
- 11 February, International Day of Women and Girls in Science;
- 8 March, International Women's Day;
- 23 April, International Girls in ICT Day;

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<sup>14</sup> United Nations, “World Toilet Day 19 November,” accessed 01 April 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/events/toiletday/>

<sup>15</sup> United Nations, “Why do we mark International Days?” accessed 01 April 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/why-do-we-mark-international-days/>

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, “Why a Girls in ICT Day?” accessed 01 April 2020, <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Digital-Inclusion/Women-and-Girls/Girls-in-ICT-Portal/Pages/Why-a-Girls-in-ICT-Day.aspx>

- 11 October, International Day of the Girl Child;
- 18 September, International Equal Pay Day;
- 15 October, International Day of Rural Women; and
- 25 November, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.<sup>17</sup>

International Woman's Day was specifically designated to recognize women for "their achievements without regard to divisions, whether national, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic or political."<sup>18</sup> This day is also celebrated in the CAF through the Defence Champion for Women, Cmdre L. Patterson, and has formal support each year through the CANFORGEN process.<sup>19</sup> Acknowledging that females and women throughout the world suffer extreme hardships, celebrating days concerning their specific issues is morally worthy. This paper is not advocating reducing these worthwhile initiatives, but instead to look for a mutually inclusive partnership where male and masculinity adversities can also receive formal attention.

These shortfalls in policy and programs continue when looking at a Canadian Federal Government. For instance, the Status of Women Canada (recently renamed Women and Gender Equity Canada (WAGE)) has a mandate that "works to advance equality for women by focusing its efforts in three priority areas: increasing women's economic security and prosperity; encouraging women's leadership and democratic participation; and ending gender-based violence."<sup>20</sup> No such department exists for men. The CAF is said to be fully "committed to creating a welcoming and fair work

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<sup>17</sup> United Nations, "International Days," accessed 01 April 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/sections/observances/international-days/index.html>

<sup>18</sup> United Nations, "International Woman's Day 8 March," accessed 01 April 2020, <https://www.un.org/en/observances/womens-day/background>

<sup>19</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, "CANFORGEN 014/19 CMP 007/19 312132Z Jan 19 – International Women's Day 2019," accessed 7 May 2020, <http://vcds.mil.ca/apps/canforgens/default-eng.asp?id=014-19&type=canforngen>

<sup>20</sup> Government of Canada, Status of Women Canada, "Status of Women Canada," accessed 12 May 2020, <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/index-en.html>



environment for all its members. To take full advantage of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Canada's population, the CAF seeks to be an inclusive workforce, representative of the Canadian society.”<sup>21</sup> Through the Employment Equity Act (EEA), the CAF is trying to eliminate discrimination and opportunities to those who might otherwise be excluded, specifically “women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.”<sup>22</sup> As such, the creation of four Defence Advisory Groups occurred “to provide unfettered advice and grassroots insight to DND and the CAF leadership on issues relevant to their respective designated group on the implementation of EE.”<sup>23</sup> Thus male and men issues only become discussed when an individual male's or man's intersectional category gets considered first. Realizing there is exclusion males and men in the original EEA, it is logical as to why no such group exists for males and men in the military. This paper acknowledges there is a difference between equity and equality and that males and men may not need a specific *Champion* for their issues in the same vein as provided through the EEA. However, there should at least be some formal ability, yet less formal than a complaint through the chain of command, that exists to address their gender and sex-related concerns publicly. As Konow, Saijo and Akai describe, “equity and equality imply very large and important differences in the allocation of social and economic resources, but no consensus has yet emerged about what rule is fair...”<sup>24</sup> The debate over equity versus equality is outside the scope of this

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<sup>21</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, “Employment Equity and Diversity,” <http://cmp-cpm.mil.ca/en/support/employment-equity/employment-equity-index.page>

<sup>22</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, “Employment Equity and Diversity,” <http://cmp-cpm.mil.ca/en/support/employment-equity/employment-equity-index.page>

<sup>23</sup> Canada, Department of National Defence, “Employment Equity and Diversity,” accessed 07 May 2020, <http://cmp-cpm.mil.ca/en/support/employment-equity/employment-equity-index.page>

<sup>24</sup> James Konow, Tatsuyoshi Saijo, and Ken Akai, 2009, “Morals and Mores: Experimental Evidence on Equity and Equality,” accessed 20 May 2020,

paper, however, the fact remains that there are discrepancies between sex and gender inclusion in current policy package available to men and males. However inconclusive the debate, the CAF should realize that it does not need a law to address men's and masculinity related concerns.

Furthering the discussion on discrepancies, Bruno Lunenfeld indicates that, “although gender specific aging issues of women and female health in general has been the focus of a coherent medical approach for many years, the healthcare of males in their aging years has tended to be piecemeal and somewhat uncoordinated.”<sup>25</sup> Peter Baker backs up this statement when he identifies “men's health work is relatively new and under-resourced in every country.”<sup>26</sup> In places where coordinated male and men's health initiatives occurred, there have been positive results. The Men’s Health Forum in England and Wales develop policies that tackled growing problem of young men and suicide with positive results<sup>27</sup> and in the United States, the Congressionally backed Men’s Health Week “provides an opportunity for hospitals, clinics, military bases, churches, and voluntary organizations to hold local men's health education events”<sup>28</sup>

According to the Men's health foundation, Canadian males are:

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[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4820745\\_Morals\\_and\\_Mores\\_Experimental\\_Evidence\\_on\\_Equity\\_and\\_Equality\\_from\\_the\\_US\\_and\\_Japan](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4820745_Morals_and_Mores_Experimental_Evidence_on_Equity_and_Equality_from_the_US_and_Japan)

<sup>25</sup> Bruno Lunenfeld, 2009, “An aging world - the role of the International Society of Men’s Health and Aging and its European arm,”, *Aging Male*, Vol.12 Issue 4, P 119-121

<http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c12e617c-caf5-46b2-b426-e94ee754ae39%40pdv-v->

[sessmgr03&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=45131709&db=a9h](http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c12e617c-caf5-46b2-b426-e94ee754ae39%40pdv-v-sessmgr03&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=45131709&db=a9h)

<sup>26</sup> Peter Baker, 2001, The international men's health movement, *BMJ : British Medical Journal* 323, (7320) (Nov 03): 1014, accessed 21 May 21, 2020, <https://search-proquest-com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/docview/1777613264?accountid=10524>

<sup>27</sup> Peter Baker, 2001, The international men's health movement, *BMJ : British Medical Journal* 323, (7320) (Nov 03): 1014, accessed 21 May 21, 2020, <https://search-proquest-com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/docview/1777613264?accountid=10524>

<sup>28</sup> Peter Baker, 2001, The international men's health movement, *BMJ : British Medical Journal* 323, (7320) (Nov 03): 1014, accessed 21 May 21, 2020, <https://search-proquest-com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/docview/1777613264?accountid=10524>

- 57% more likely to die from diabetes
- 79% more likely to die from heart disease
- 29% more likely to be diagnosed with cancer and 40% more likely to die as a result
- 54% more likely to die from kidney disorders
- More than twice as likely to die from liver disease
- 3 times more likely to commit suicide
- 67% are overweight or obese”<sup>29</sup>

Statistics indicate that men are more likely than women to suffer an early death.<sup>30</sup>

When looking at military males, both active and retired, the data gets more ominous.

Study's point to the fact that men are reticent to seek help, especially when it comes to mental health, yet Military men are even more reserved when seeking assistance for their mental illness.<sup>31</sup> Studies also indicate that military men are more vulnerable to mental illness, have increased avoidant behaviours, and have been culturally conditioned for a higher degree of self-reliance.<sup>32</sup> Braswell and Kushner argue that “exposure to hypermasculinized military culture drives high suicides as occupational stress.”<sup>33</sup> Marie Deschamp’s scathing report on sexual misconduct in the CAF caused in part by a hypersexualization of the culture, states “comprehensive cultural change is therefore

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<sup>29</sup> Canadian Men’s Health Foundation, “Canadian Men’s Health Week”, accessed 12 May 2020, <https://menshealthfoundation.ca/events/>

<sup>30</sup> Bruno Lunenfeld, 2009, “An aging world - the role of the International Society of Men’s Health and Aging and its European arm,”, *Aging Male*, Vol.12 Issue 4, 119-121, accessed 13 May 2020, [http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c12e617c-caf5-46b2-b426-e94ee754ae39%40pdc-v-](http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c12e617c-caf5-46b2-b426-e94ee754ae39%40pdc-v-sessmgr03&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=45131709&db=a9h)

[sessmgr03&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=45131709&db=a9h](http://web.b.ebscohost.com.cafvl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=c12e617c-caf5-46b2-b426-e94ee754ae39%40pdc-v-sessmgr03&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWWhvc3QtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=45131709&db=a9h)  
<sup>31</sup> Carson Kivari, John Oliffe, William Borgen, and Marvin Westwood, “No Man Left Behind: Effectively Engaging Male Military Veterans in Counseling”. *Am J Mens Health*. 2018;12(2):241-251. doi:10.1177/1557988316630538

<sup>32</sup> Carson Kivari, John Oliffe, William Borgen, and Marvin Westwood, “No Man Left Behind: Effectively Engaging Male Military Veterans in Counseling”. *Am J Mens Health*. 2018;12(2):241-251. doi:10.1177/1557988316630538

<sup>33</sup> Carson Kivari, John Oliffe, William Borgen, and Marvin Westwood, “No Man Left Behind: Effectively Engaging Male Military Veterans in Counseling”. *Am J Mens Health*. 2018;12(2):241-251. doi:10.1177/1557988316630538

required, and such change cannot occur without the proactive engagement of senior leaders in the CAF.”<sup>34</sup> As of April 08 2020, a total of 175 CAF personnel have died by suicide (sex and gender unreleased by the CAF) since 2010<sup>35</sup> Whether its hypersexualization, hypermasculinity, or numerous other compounding factors, men's and male's issues become CAF issues, addressed or not.

If health concerns were the only male and men's issue facing society, a focused healthcare campaign might be the answer, but unfortunately, this is not the case. As Rittel and Horst remark, there was a time in the 1950s that predicted that society would be, "a rather homogeneously shared culture in which most persons would share values and beliefs, would hold to common aims, would follow similar life-styles, and thus would behave in similar ways."<sup>36</sup> What happened, in reality, was that Western societies became more heterogeneous and, “irregular cultural permutations are becoming the rule.”<sup>37</sup> In contrast to the American ideal of the *melting pot*, Canada is a pluralist society where differences coexist.<sup>38</sup> With this diversity, the classical Western definitions of what it was to be a man changed, and many men have yet to adapt to this ambiguous new reality. What makes this somewhat troubling to men, and as pointed out by Rittel and Webber, Western society does not have a theory on “what might be considered a societally best

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<sup>34</sup> Marie Deschamp, “External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces,” March 27 2015, [https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES\\_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services-harassment/era-final-report-april-20-2015-eng.pdf](https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/dnd-mdn/migration/assets/FORCES_Internet/docs/en/caf-community-support-services-harassment/era-final-report-april-20-2015-eng.pdf) II

<sup>35</sup> Lee Berthiaume, “Canadian Armed Forces says 20 service members died by suicide in 2019,” *Globe and Mail*, accessed 20 May 2020, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-canadian-armed-forces-says-20-service-members-died-by-suicide-in-2019/>

<sup>36</sup> Horst Rittel, and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1973), 167.

<sup>37</sup> Horst Rittel, and Melvin Webber, "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning," *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1973), 167.

<sup>38</sup> Leo Driedger, "Multiculturalism: Sorting Identities, Rights, and Conflicts," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 43, no. 1/2 (2011): 234.

state.”<sup>39</sup> This ambiguity and open discussion are where initiatives like IMD can begin to bridge the cultural gap, and constructively engage men.

Another demographic challenge indicated by Ng and Gosset is that “Canada's public service is facing the prospect of a massive shortage of knowledge and managerial workers”<sup>40</sup> with millennial males and men being of the biggest concern. Ng and Gosset acknowledge that “millennials consider an inclusive work environment and having diverse colleagues to be important factors when accepting employment.”<sup>41</sup> This diversity does not stop at racial or religious, but for all forms of diversity. Millennials have grown up in a more diverse West and have been exposed continuously to messages of equal treatment for all.<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, Ng and Gossett indicate that “women, people with disabilities, aboriginal peoples, and sexual minorities are all more likely to be interested in public service employment opportunities”<sup>43</sup> than men and males. While male underrepresentation is yet to be openly discussed in the public service – currently only 44.7%<sup>44</sup>, there is soon likely to be significant gender parity issues. A male supportive initiative such as IMD would be supported by most millennials regardless of sex, gender, or other definable characteristics. Showing equal treatment may also help alleviate the upcoming male shortage of public servants and potentially soldiers. As such, both DND

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<sup>39</sup> Horst Rittel, and Melvin Webber, “Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning,” *Policy Sciences* 4, no. 2 (June 1973), 168.

<sup>40</sup> Eddy Ng and Charles W. Gossett, “Career Choice in Canadian Public Service: An Exploration of Fit with the Millennial Generation,” *Public Personnel Management* 42, no. 3 (September 2013): 338.

<sup>41</sup> Eddy Ng and Charles W. Gossett, “Career Choice in Canadian Public Service: An Exploration of Fit with the Millennial Generation,” *Public Personnel Management* 42, no. 3 (September 2013): 337.

<sup>42</sup> Eddy Ng and Charles W. Gossett, “Career Choice in Canadian Public Service: An Exploration of Fit with the Millennial Generation,” *Public Personnel Management* 42, no. 3 (September 2013): 339.

<sup>43</sup> Eddy Ng and Charles W. Gossett, “Career Choice in Canadian Public Service: An Exploration of Fit with the Millennial Generation,” *Public Personnel Management* 42, no. 3 (September 2013): 351.

<sup>44</sup> Government of Canada, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, “Demographic Snapshot of Canada’s Public Service, 2018,” accessed 20 May 2020, <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/innovation/human-resources-statistics/demographic-snapshot-federal-public-service-2018.html>

and the CAF need to act together; neither is immune to the other's demographic challenges.

In addition to demographic concerns, the Men's Movement has grown extensively for the last four decades<sup>45</sup> under the impression that male and men's issues "have become neglected and subordinated, largely due to the political and cultural dominance of feminism."<sup>46</sup> This movement alleges that there is a disparity of equality biased against men on the "outcomes in the legal system concerning alimony and child support, the presumption of male guilt in cases of sexual assault, and domestic violence experienced by men."<sup>47</sup> Male underachievement in school is often brought up as a concern as well,<sup>48</sup> and although many of the points brought up are worthy of discussion, as a movement, it has garnered significant criticism from feminists as misogynistic.<sup>49</sup> To avoid needless controversy and potentially cloud the aim of this paper, the Men's Movement concerns have been brought up primarily as a case study on the consequences of not addressing male and men's grievances formally and on how the Men's Movement should not be considered equivalent to the paper's suggestion of recognizing IMD.

This leads to the first main criticism of recognizing IMD, in that it is a front for the extreme aspects of the Men's Movement and misogynistic. Perhaps C.S Lewis said it best in his book, *The Abolition of Man*, "...we make men without chests and expect

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<sup>45</sup> Patrick Rafail and Isaac Freitas, "Grievance Articulation and Community Reactions in the Men's Rights Movement Online," *Social Media + Society*, (April 2019), doi:10.1177/2056305119841387.

<sup>46</sup> Patrick Rafail and Isaac Freitas, "Grievance Articulation and Community Reactions in the Men's Rights Movement Online," *Social Media + Society*, (April 2019), doi:10.1177/2056305119841387

<sup>47</sup> Patrick Rafail and Isaac Freitas, "Grievance Articulation and Community Reactions in the Men's Rights Movement Online," *Social Media + Society*, (April 2019), doi:10.1177/2056305119841387

<sup>48</sup> Eddy Ng and Charles W. Gossett, "Career Choice in Canadian Public Service: An Exploration of Fit with the Millennial Generation," *Public Personnel Management* 42, no. 3 (September 2013): 351.

<sup>49</sup> Maeve MacKinnon, "Men's right movement: A cover for violent misogyny," October 23, 2018, <https://peoplesworld.org/article/mens-rights-movement-a-cover-for-violent-misogyny/>

virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful.”<sup>50</sup> The toxic elements of the Men’s Movement are a result of a culture that has lost the initiative of engaging men. Society’s failures and rapidly changing construct has been damaging for a subsection of males and men. With constructive masculinity ignored, either by ignorance or design, society has allowed valid grievances of men to become an underground movement and pushed to the fringes of society. Instead of constructively tackling the issue in the public sphere, aggrieved males and men take their frustration to the dark corners of the internet where a valid complaint often morphs into misogyny with few counterbalances to address the toxicity created. As Matthew Auer pinpoints, “the proliferation of electronic social media portals, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn, ... are new, powerful communication tools capable of influencing users’ opinions in the realms of politics and policy.”<sup>51</sup> Community emerge online<sup>52</sup> and the direction they turn is not always positive. IMD is not the Men’s Movement; it is a simple way to start the conversation and perhaps redirect males and men from finding less than ideal means of venting their frustration.

The second main criticism of IMD, as argued by the University of York, “a day to celebrate men's issues does not combat inequality but merely amplifies existing, structurally imposed, inequalities.”<sup>53</sup> As Leo Driedger points out, “we need to accept that all have equal rights and work at it. Yes, much conflict may result, but human relations

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<sup>50</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, (Las Vegas: Lits, 2010), 19.

<sup>51</sup> Matthew Auer, "The Policy Sciences of Social Media," *The Policy Studies Journal* 39, no. 4 (November 2011): 709.

<sup>52</sup> Matthew Auer, "The Policy Sciences of Social Media," *The Policy Studies Journal* 39, no. 4 (November 2011): 711.

<sup>53</sup> Stuart C Wilson, “Why is International Men’s Day so controversial?” *The Week*, Nov 19, 2015, accessed 12 May 2020, <https://www.theweek.co.uk/67041/why-is-international-mens-day-so-controversial>

must remain central within the family, the community and democracies.”<sup>54</sup> The administration at York have a misunderstanding of the intent of IMD and have projected ideological rhetoric instead of rational thought. When referring to males and men’s issues, Pankaj Mishra goes a step further and states that a “compassionate analysis of their rage and despair, however, would conclude that men are as much imprisoned by man-made gender norms as women.”<sup>55</sup> Denying males and men a day is perpetuating inequality and only leads to a further divide amongst the sexes and genders.

In conclusion, the CAF and DND, as a federal employer of men, has the ability, human resource (HR) interest, and moral responsibility to take actions to address male and masculinity specific issues. Addressing male's and men's health crisis, suicide rates, the rapidly changing definition of masculinity, inequalities in law, policy and programs, and destructive social alienation will have both positive short term ramifications as well as address the generational shift as more Millennials and Gen Z's enter and replace the current workforce. As male's and men's issues extend beyond the biological and enter the gender domain, a solution to this wicked problem will be elusive. As Ryan Holiday states, “Perceptions can be managed. Actions can be directed. We can think clearly, respond creatively. Look for opportunity, seize the initiative.”<sup>56</sup> This call to action follows well within the CAF’s and DND’s culture. With that said, DND and the CAF must prepare for the possibility that even with confronting male and masculine concerns directly, none of the solutions may work. “All creativity and dedication aside, some

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<sup>54</sup> Leo Driedger, "Multiculturalism: Sorting Identities, Rights, and Conflicts," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 43, no. 1/2 (2011): 234.

<sup>55</sup> Pankaj Mishra, “The crisis in modern masculinity,” *The Guardian*, 17 March 2018, last accessed 04 May 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/mar/17/the-crisis-in-modern-masculinity>

<sup>56</sup> Ryan Holiday, *The Obstacle Is The Way*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2014), 123.



obstacles may turn out to be impossible to overcome. Some actions are rendered impossible, some paths impassable. Some things are bigger than us”.<sup>57</sup> As male issues and masculine identity are wicked problems to tackle, even the most well thought out initiatives may fail. But as Holiday further states, “...this is not necessarily a bad thing. Because we can turn that obstacle upside down, too, simply by using it as an opportunity to practice some other virtue or skill.”<sup>58</sup> Let the CAF be bold, let the leadership be wise, and allow us to begin the conversation of male and masculinity issues with bringing this conversation public with recognizing IMD.

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<sup>57</sup> Ryan Holiday, *The Obstacle Is The Way*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2014), 123.

<sup>58</sup> Ryan Holiday, *The Obstacle Is The Way*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2014), 123.

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