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**ISAAC ASIMOV**  
THE  
**FEELING  
OF  
POWER** AND OTHER STORIES

The common misconception is that Pickup Artistry (hereafter, PUA) is about "tricking" women into bed with you. In fact it has nothing to do with this, because you can't trick a woman into bed any more than you can trick a cat into eating a treat. The cat is complicit

At the turn of the century, millennial men were in a similar situation to the erstwhile mathematicians in Asimov's story; in a future of ubiquitous sex, we forgot how to seduce women, because we forgot the fundamentals of being a man

Notice how just saying this, "how to be a man" creates tension. Being a man is not the same as merely being male. When I stand up and tell you this, it's audacious, because if you don't match my definition, that implies your manhood is deficient

When a man says, "I am a man" he is making a declaration to the world, and I see today how often men are embarrassed to describe themselves this way. Instead they say "I'm a guy," or "I'm a dude." This is how slaves talk, when they doubt their own manhood

Women hate males, but they like men. This is the paradox of misandry. Pickup artists, who desired to seduce women, discovered instead that when you are a man, women require little convincing to sleep with you, and when you are only a male, it is a Sisyphean task to persuade them

This is also why feminists tend to spiral into ever deeper levels of misandry; they are surrounded by male feminists (notice no one ever says "feminist men" - a man cannot be a feminist), and so they are daily exposed to the thing they hate: males who are not men

Most any male can become a man, though many never will. Manhood is something in the soul: it's a bit like courage, a bit like will, but really it's the strength that comes from ownership of yourself, from owning your choices and your outcomes.

<https://t.co/YCRW0tNTxj>

Nothing is your fault, everything is your responsibility

— Zer\u0033o\u0033\u00304 \u0036\u00300\u00347H\u0034\u00302\u00332P\u00335\u0031a\u00354 Lovecraft \U0001f6e1 (@0x49fa98) February 8, 2019

Women can't own themselves. They are either owned by their fathers, their husbands, or their society. Those are the choices. That's why women never stand against society, unless they do so under the leadership of a man. They can't own themselves. Law of the jungle.

“But why—but why should any wish to kill me?” said Mowgli.

“Look at me,” said Bagheera. And Mowgli looked at him steadily between the eyes. The big panther turned his head away in half a minute.

“That is why,” he said, shifting his paw on the leaves. “Not even I can look thee between the eyes, and I was born among men, and I love thee, Little Brother. The others they hate thee because their eyes cannot meet thine; because thou art wise; because thou hast pulled out thorns from their feet—because thou art a man.”

“I did not know these things,” said Mowgli sullenly, and he frowned under his heavy black eyebrows.

“What is the Law of the Jungle? Strike first and then give tongue. By thy very carelessness they know that thou art a man. But be wise. It

I didn't say women can't be responsible. They clearly can. I said women can't own themselves. Ownership is peculiar; you can own something by law and still not own it in fact. More than stewardship, true ownership is autonomy, which means that you make your own laws

"A woman who is a law unto herself" – whoever heard of such a thing? Liberals are incapable of hearing this truth, but leftists know it; they know women don't have agency, which is why they believe (rightly) that all bad things in the world are the fault of men.

All the feminist writing in the world bears the mark of this deficit. They call for female autonomy, they demand it, they beg for it. But true autonomy is not something anyone else can bestow upon you. To ask for it is to lack it.

The pickup artists tried to learn how to seduce women, but they accidentally discovered how to be men, and they did this just the same way the technician learned math in *The Feeling of Power*. They learned the mechanics of seduction by observing the machine in action

PUA set out to develop "lines" and "routines" and they ended up developing autonomy. They went "into the field" to women they didn't know and they approached them cold; they said anything and everything, trying to find the magic incantation to get the girl <https://t.co/oH3iVCKbDs>

Pickup artistry is a religion.

I know, I know, I call everything a religion. But when I say this word, religion, I mean there are certain affordances in the human psyche, and they are filled by memetic egregores, and when they are empty, they long to be filled

— Zer\u0335o\u0335\u0304 \u0336\u0300\u0347H\u0334\u0302\u0332P\u0335\u031a\u0354 Lovecraft \U0001f6e1 (@0x49fa98) January 4, 2019

And they learned there is no magic incantation, but because the thing they were doing was against society, against propriety, they had no choice but to invent their own laws. The act of mastering this skill, the act of self-authorship, was an onramp to manhood

And I get that it seems ridiculous to hold up someone like Mystery or Roosh as a sterling example of manhood, because they're obviously not, not in the way you would like them to be, but it's important to note that manhood itself is distinct from morality and even aesthetics



Passing from malehood into manhood occurs when you become autonomous. That doesn't mean you don't follow the laws of others, but it means your own personal judgement and understanding come before the law. One way to think of it is having a code.

Great leadership can only come from men who are fully realized as men. This is obvious. But the same is true of followership. The greatest subordinates are also men who have transcended malehood into manhood.

PUA is a masculine folk religion. It's not against the law of the state, but it is against the law of the herd. This is a man's special and unique power. It's what makes him a man: his power to stand on his own. <https://t.co/8z04j3IW0T>

The more political and financial power we grant to women, the more stable our society becomes, because women are risk averse. The problem is that, in an entropic world, stability is a gradual decline.

— Zer\u0335o\u0335\u0304 \u0336\u0300\u0347H\u0334\u0302\u0332P\u0335\u031a\u0354 Lovecraft \U0001f6e1 (@0x49fa98) April 8, 2019

The reason we forgot how to be men is very strange to me, as real life is often much stranger than fiction: our society now teaches young men, very emphatically, that there is nothing that makes them different from women <https://t.co/palTjD5NA7>

How do you think people get mixed up in far-right politics? The pipeline is this:

1. You learn a feminized social theory wherein men and women are functionally equivalent
2. you try to apply this model to dating; it doesn't work
3. you realize evolution doesn't stop at the neck

— Zer\u0335o\u0335\u0304 \u0336\u0300\u0347H\u0334\u0302\u0332P\u0335\u031a\u0354 Lovecraft \U0001f6e1 (@0x49fa98) December 19, 2018

There are men who are susceptible to ideas, and men for whom ideas are relatively inert. You might call them dads and cads, or virgins and chads. It's curious; we relabeled the dichotomy with almost the same word for the ch/cad, but inverted the other pole, from dad to virgin

cooperate



defect



The point is that no matter what you tell them, some men become men all on their own, and they don't need anyone to tell them what manhood is or how to get there. And those men can act really obnoxious when you talk about these things; they find men of ideas repulsive

But many of us here cannot help but feel enthralled to ideas. Growing up this was always an implicit lesson in every cartoon and movie; it was taught in school, and by authority figures: A girl can do anything boys can, just as well. She can be just as tough, smart, creative, &c

And maybe that's true. But when you shout to the heavens that boys have no quality to make them different from girls (except for some bad ones), then the boys who rely on ideas never learn how to be men, because they have no understanding of manhood

And because they have no understanding of manhood, they also don't know how to get girls. Many young men struggle with romance because they think they want a girl who "understands" them. This is stupid, but forgivable naivete.

<https://t.co/0lJeuuvFRh>

so horny i let him explain his PC build

— \U0001d660\U0001d656\U0001d669\U0001d65d\U0001d664\U0001d659\U0001d65a  
\U0001d667\U0001d656\U0001d66e (@bitchasskathy) August 22, 2020

A man makes his own laws, but as every entrepreneur learns, to become a master is to make the market your master, which is to say, to make NATURE your master. A man is always subject to the laws of nature <https://t.co/sXxkFosge2>

It's better to see women as a force of nature. Her weakness is her strength, her submission is her domination. Giving her explicit and nominal political power substantially raises her above man, since her power is informal, covert, almost impossible to describe

— Zer\u0335o\u0335\u0304 \u0336\u0300\u0347H\u0334\u0302\u0332P\u0335\u031a\u0354 Lovecraft \U0001f6e1 (@0x49fa98) October 30, 2018

So let me tell you something men will always do better than women, because they have to, because nature commands it. One of the laws PUAs learned was hypergamy, which means women want to marry up. This truth is suppressed, because it is inegalitarian to the core

Women want to marry up. They want men who are richer than they are, taller, more prestigious. They are not turned on by men who are "equal," and erotic desire is the precondition to romantic desire. So men will always do whatever it takes to succeed more than women

A woman in our society now is a creature who simultaneously demands that men be above her, and also her equal. As with all impossible requests, it falls on men to stand against the herd, and tell her no. <https://t.co/8pApAzpcLc>

#EspeciallyFemale [pic.twitter.com/F3WUKxtgQ9](https://pic.twitter.com/F3WUKxtgQ9)

— MeidasTouch.com (@MeidasTouch) October 23, 2020

In Asimov's story, the man who rediscovers math kills himself, because he doesn't want his discovery to be used for evil. But the point of the story is that once the knowledge is unleashed, its spread cannot be stopped. The use of lost knowledge gives us the feeling of power.