

Contemporary Masculinities

W St/Soc 302/ CES 305 ~ Spring 2010 Syllabus~ 3 Credits

Meets: Tuesday and Thursday~4:15-5:30~Todd 220

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Office Hours: 1:00 (Mon) and 1:00 (Tue)
-And by appointment

...gender is a kind of imitation for which there is no original. ~Judith Butler

*Our lives are proof that sex and gender are much more complex than a delivery room doctor's glance at genitals can determine,
more variegated than pink or blue birth caps.*

We are oppressed for not fitting those social norms...~Leslie Feinberg

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course will explore the social construction of gender as it pertains to masculinities in conjunction with analyses of race, class, gender, ability, and sexuality. Masculinities, in its various forms, shapes the lives of both women and men and this course will examine the construction, reproduction, and impact of masculinities on the institutions of education, work, religion, sports, family, media, and the military (to name a few). This course will interrogate how masculinities shape individual lives, groups, organizations, and institutions and will analyze the ways in which power functions within these cultural formations.

The main objectives of WST/SOC 302/CES 305 include:

- 1) to understand how masculinities are constructed in different social contexts
- 2) to develop an understanding of how masculinities shape individual lives, relationships, and institutions
- 3) to recognize how masculinities intersect with race, class, gender, ability, nationality, and sexuality
- 4) to emphasize the importance of seeing these categories as connected to systems, structures, and institutions which continue to perpetuate and simultaneously construct gender binaries (i.e. masculinities and femininities)

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Baldwin, James. *Giovanni's Room*. 1956.

Scholinski, Daphne. *The Last Time I Wore a Dress*. 1997.

Sherman, Alexie. *Flight*. 2007.

Course Reader (CR)

Readings on Angel, located in "Readings" Folder

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Class Attendance and Participation: Attendance at every class is expected. You are allowed up to three absences without penalty, after that you will lose ten participation points for every class missed. The maximum allowed number of absences is SIX course periods, upon the event of you SEVENTH absence you will fail this course. Please note: I do not discriminate between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. The only exceptions are approved and documented university excuses. It is mandatory that you arrive on time for class. Two tardies, beyond 15 minutes late, will constitute an absence and 10 point reduction from your participation points.

Class will consist of lecture, discussion, and group work; therefore, I expect you come to class having completed all the readings assigned and be prepared to thoughtfully respond to the topic. This class will rely on students' intellectual interchange and active participation. Simply discussing your personal opinion is not considered class participation. We will be discussing texts and concepts that will challenge you to think beyond your micro-level experiences. We will very likely cover topics that cause you some measure of discomfort. I encourage you to sit with that discomfort and try to identify its source. Very often this discomfort comes from encountering information that forces us to rethink and renegotiate our individual "truths," and in some cases selves. This sensation is a normal part of the processes of growth and learning. You are entitled to your own beliefs and opinions and there is no requirement that you allow the material we cover to change them. Please do not offer anecdotal evidence/experience as sufficient support to negate established systems within our society, or macro- and global level trends and realities.

When responding to classmates' comments please write your question or response down and allow your classmate to finish before you begin your response. In some cases, I will intervene in your discussion if I deem that you are straying from our topic of discussion or omitting relevant information from your position.

At no time should you feel entitled to openly disrespect any member of the class or any group of people. This includes verbal as well as nonverbal responses. If you cannot refrain from disrespectful behavior, you may be asked to leave the class for the day. We will also work to remove racist, sexist, heteronormative and gendernormative language and assumptions from our discussions. It is imperative that we remain aware of the biases that we bring to discussion and work to remove them from our language.

Class attendance and participation are worth **50 points**.

Reading Quizzes: There will be a total of six random quizzes, the purpose of reading quizzes are to show your engagement with the text. You will be allowed to drop the lowest quiz grade. There will be a total of five quizzes (for credit) worth 10 points each—**total 50 points**.

Semester Writing Assignments: There will be several in-class and out of class writing assignments. The purpose of these assignments is to encourage you to connect the material discussed in class with the readings and relevant social issues. These are worth a combined total of **50 points**.

Article/Book Discussions: You are required to sign up and discuss one of the class readings with a group. This will involve collaboratively writing, with your group, a short review of the reading (2-3 pages long, typed and double-spaced), as well as discuss your findings briefly to the class (5-10 minutes) highlighting 2 or 3 key points of your review, and providing 2-4 open-ended questions for a discussion. Your review and discussion should draw on previous readings to elaborate on gendered analyses and masculinity. The review/summary must thoughtfully engage and discuss the assigned readings. The written account of the presentation is due the day of the reading in class—**25 points**.

Essay Exam: There will be a final take-home essay exam. This exam will be based on connecting course materials and readings—**75 points**.

Total Points: 250 points

COURSE POLICIES

Incompletes

No incompletes will be given in this course unless there are extraordinary circumstances (i.e., medical or family emergency), and the student must be passing the class at the time the incomplete is requested.

Academic Etiquette

You are expected to demonstrate standard academic etiquette and participate according to the following criteria:

- Arriving on time and staying for the entire period
- Turning off all electronic devices
 - **Note: If I catch you texting during class or hear your cell phone you will be marked as absent for the day.**
- No lap tops allowed in class, unless you have a documented disability
- Bring paper and a writing utensil for each class period, there will be no learning through voyeurism
- Coming to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings/homework and **BYB**—bringing your book
- Completing assigned in-class work
- **No** work will be accepted late **OR** via e-mail
- E-mails should be of a professional manner
 - I will not respond to e-mails that do not pertain to classroom materials and have no signature
 - I will respond to emails Monday-Friday from 8-6, please plan your correspondence accordingly
- **NO HATE SPEECH:** Racist, ethnocentric, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, and other discriminatory acts are **NOT WELCOME HERE!**

Extra Credit:

WSU Women's Transit Volunteering (20 pts)

You must complete all training and shift hours or no credit will be received. Mary Anderson, Women's Transit Coordinator from the Women's Resource Center, will be visiting our class and providing you with more specific information on this option.

Events

I will make an announcement in class if there are any extra credit events to attend. After each attended event you will be required to hand in a 2 page reflection connecting your attendance to classroom content.

-An upcoming event for extra credit will be held January 27th at 7 p.m. in the CUB auditorium- Jackson Katz "The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help"

Disability Accommodation:

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and may need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please visit the Disability Resource Center (DRC). All accommodations **MUST** be approved through the DRC (Washington Building, Room 217). Please stop by or call 509-335-3417 to make an appointment with a disability specialist.

Campus safety plan/emergency information:

In the interest of campus safety and emergency procedures, please become familiar with the information available on the WSU-provided websites.

- <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu> Campus Safety Plan
- <http://oem.wsu.edu/emergencies> Emergency management web site
- <http://alert.wsu.edu> WSU Alert site

Academic Integrity

Washington State University's Student Handbook on Academic Dishonesty provides specific definitions (WAC 504-26-010) of "dishonesty" "cheating," and "plagiarism" (www.conduct.wsu.edu). In addition to the "use of any unauthorized materials in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations, or giving or receiving unauthorized assistance by any means, including, talking, copying information from another student, using electronic devices, or taking an examination for another student," you should be aware that cheating includes, "submitting a false excuse for absence or tardiness or a false explanation for failing to complete a class requirement or scheduled examination at the appointed date and time."

Plagiarism, a form of cheating, is "presenting the information, ideas, or phrasing of another person as the student's own work without proper acknowledgement of the source. This includes submitting a commercially prepared paper or research project or submitting for academic credit any work done by someone else. The term 'plagiarism' includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials."

As a condition of enrollment in this class it is assumed that you understand and agree to refrain from academic dishonesty. At the least, students guilty of cheating in this course will receive a zero for the work in question, but the consequence of cheating may include failure of the course. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the University's definitions and policies to understand your rights and responsibilities.

Syllabus subject to change with advanced notice

Schedule

(There will be films shown based on availability)

1/12	T	Introduction to the Course
1/14	Th	Introduction to Social Construction Theory Read: "The Politics of Masculinity" (Angel) and Intersecting Axes (CR)
1/19	T	Read: Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender" (Angel)
1/21	Th	Read: Kimmel, "Inequality and Difference" (CR)
1/26	T	Read: Halberstam, "Female Masculinity" (CR)
1/28	Th	Patriarchy: The Gendered Politics of Privilege and Oppression Read: hooks, "Understanding Patriarchy" and Johnson, "Patriarchy, the System" (CR)
2/2	T	Problematics of Sex-Gender Conflation Read: <i>The Last Time I Wore a Dress</i> prologue-51
2/4	Th	Read: <i>The Last Time I Wore a Dress</i> 53-129
2/9	T	Read: <i>The Last Time I Wore a Dress</i> 131-200
2/11	Th	Masculinity as Homophobia Read: Pascoe, "Dude, You're a Fag" and Kimmel, "Masculinity as Homophobia" (Angel)

- 2/16 T Read: Halberstam, "Shame and White Gay Masculinity" (Angel)
- 2/18 Th **Colonialism: Gender as Systemic Violence**
Read: "Terminology for the Anti-Racist" and Bederman, "Remaking Manhood through Race And Civilization" (CR)
- 2/23 T Read: Espirtu, "All Men are Not Created Equally" (CR)
- 2/25 Th Read: Fung, "Looking for My Penis" (CR)
- 3/2 T Read: hooks, "It's a Dick Thing" (CR)
- 3/4 Th Read: "Why Soldiers Rape" (Angel)
- 3/9 T **The Political Economy of Masculinities**
Read: Connell, "Masculinities and Globalization" (CR)
- 3/11 Th Read: "What My Dick Did Last Summer" (CR)
- 3/16 **Spring Break!**
- 3/18 **Spring Break!**
- 3/23 T **Masculinity and Violence**
Read: Kaufman, "The Construction of Masculinity" and Kivel, "Act Like a Man Box" (CR)
- 3/25 Th Read: Kimmel, "Men, Masculinity, and Rape" (CR)
- 3/30 T **Masculinity and Media**
Read: McCaughey, "Caveman Mystique: Homo Habitus" (CR)
- 4/1 Th Read: "Remaking Masculinity: Queer 'T' for the Straight Guy" and "Will and Grace" (Angel)
- 4/6 T **Examining Masculinities in Literature**
Read: *Giovanni's Room* part 1
- 4/8 Th Read: *Giovanni's Room* part 2
- 4/13 T Continue discussion of *Giovanni's Room*
- 4/15 Th Read: *Flight* 107-180
- 4/20 T Read: *Flight* 1-106
- 4/22 Th **Gender Liberation and Resistance to Patriarchal Oppression**
Read: Feinberg, "We are All Works in Progress" and Koenig "Walk like a Man" (CR)
- 4/27 T Read: hooks, "Men Comrades in Struggle" (CR)
- 4/29 Th **Evaluations, Course Re-cap, Handout Final Exam**
- 5/4 T **Essay-Exam due in my mailbox (Wilson 10) by noon!**