

SOC 253: Men and Masculinities

Spring 2018

11:30-12:20 M-TH; C-164

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Course Introduction:

What does it mean to be a “real man” in contemporary society?

How are men hurt by the unattainable ideals of manhood?

What impacts does masculinity have on men’s relationships (with women, with other men, as fathers or sons)?

How does race and sexuality impact masculinity?

Is masculinity innately violent?

Can men be feminists?

These are just a few of the questions that we will begin considering in this course. This course addresses and critically analyzes manhood and masculinity as a socially constructed and ever-changing concept where we will dispel myths about gender as “natural,” “innate,” and “fixed” and explore masculinity in conjunction with analyses of race, class, disability, and sexuality in the U.S. This course will interrogate how masculinities shape influences men’s actions and the way men perceive themselves as well as analyze how masculinity promotes hierarchies of power and privilege in groups, organizations, and institutions, such as education, work, religion, sports, family, media, and the military. Most importantly, this class will begin discussing ways that toxic forms of masculinity can be broken down and rewritten to work toward a healthier, more just (and less oppressive) society for all.

Required Texts:

1. All course readings are posted on *Canvas* under “Files.”
2. The only thing you will need to purchase is a movie ticket to see *Black Panther* (I suggest the sooner the better – I do not know how long it will be in theatres and it will not be on Netflix until September)

Learning Atmosphere:

I believe that students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Thus, this is an active and interactive course where you will often learn by doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our class as a collaborative learning community where we all teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning – I think you’ll enjoy it and learn a lot in the process.



A note about course content: Since sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world, we will sometimes talk about provocative material in class. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will be framed in an academic context. Topics run the gamut in sociology and at times there may be material that makes people uncomfortable. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it’s an opportunity for learning. You may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. You are free to leave the room at any time, but please know you will be

responsible for any course material you may have missed while you were gone. Also, profanity exists in our social world and thus will be used throughout this course - so please be advised. If you have any questions or concerns about course content or climate, don't hesitate to let me know.

A note about instructor availability: I have noticed that, sometimes, students have unreasonable expectations about their Instructor's availability. Please be aware that I am not available 24-hours a day. In general, I am in my office for a couple of hours per day (before and after my classes), and I always check my email a few times a day. As a result, you will rarely be able to reach me by phone or by email in the evenings or on the weekends. I am, obviously, an active member of this course, but I do my coursework during the week, during daytime business hours. *Thus, please do not send me late-night or weekend emails expecting an immediate response.* Thank you in advance for your understanding and consideration.

A note about this classroom environment: It is important that *all* students feel welcome in this classroom. Please think about how your language (including body language) contributes to a safe/empowering or disempowering/unsafe learning environment. I want this class to be a space where everyone should feel comfortable enough to disagree with each other. Thus, this classroom needs to be safe space. Reflect on the ways you engage others with your own statements and how you react (with words, body language) to their statements. Also note that I cannot witness or hear everything that occurs in this classroom. If you overhear or witness something that would contribute to an unsafe classroom climate for yourself or fellow classmates, please let me know so that it can be dealt with immediately.

Additionally, since this course is a survey of the theories and research that have come out of Sociology as a discipline, we will use the social categories that have been thoroughly researched. We will often refer to "women" and "men" in our class as well as the research data about "women" and "men." Although these categories are clearly and obviously socially-constructed (and in fact limiting and restrictive), they do have very real and significant social meaning in our culture. Thus, these categories will be referred to often in this course.

Some basic premises to this course:

1) We will be focusing a lot of this course around the idea of **hegemonic masculinity**. Hegemonic masculinity is the term used to explain the criteria for being the ideal man in a particular culture. The term serves as a model for all men and to show how they "should" be. Ultimately, hegemonic masculinity subordinates any alternative masculinities as well as femininities. As Michael Kimmel notes:

"In an important sense there is only one complete unblushing male in America: a young, married, white, urban, northern, heterosexual, Protestant, father, of college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight, and height, and a recent record in sports... Any male who fails to qualify in any one of these ways is likely to view himself—during moments at least— as unworthy, incomplete and inferior" (Kimmel & Aronson 2008:4).

We will be challenging, critiquing, and discussing the damaging effects of hegemonic masculinity (note – not masculinity in itself). This leads to two other basic premises:

2) **This course is not "anti-male."** The social problems that come with hegemonic masculinity (which we will be discussing at length) are a problem with how masculinity has been (and continues to be) conceptualized in the U.S., not with men per se. All of us are responsible for defining gender and masculinity. We don't have to just uncritically accept what we are taught about what it means to be a man (or a woman). Ultimately, this class is about how hegemonic masculinity is harmful ALL of us.

3) As many of us have experienced in talking about any kind of –ism within U.S. society, **voices that are the loudest** come from those who are directly and disproportionately impacted by them. For example, people of Color in challenging racism, women in combating sexism, queers in calling out heterosexism, and working-class and poor folks critiquing capitalism. However, **voices that are more often listened to**, are those with privilege who speak out against the given –ism (whites talking about racism, men discussing sexism,

heterosexuals calling out about heterosexism, etc.) Therefore, I have strategically chosen readings, videos, and other materials that are written, produced, and articulated **by men** to alleviate some of these issues.

Learning and Course Outcomes:

After participating, discussing, and completing this course, a successful student will demonstrate:

- Explain how masculinity is socially constructed and the socio-political influences on masculinity.
- Critically assess the ways hegemonic masculinity impacts all facets of men's lives.
- Discuss the impacts of race, class, sexuality, and disability on masculine identities.

General Course Rules and Expectations:

- **Attendance:** Attend all class meetings and come to class on time. Your presence in class contributes significantly toward your final grade in the course as I cover a lot of material in class that cannot be found in the readings. More than two unexcused absences or late attendances will significantly lower your grade and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with me prior to the absence or tardy, unless it is an emergency. Excused absences include doctor's visits, family emergencies, and sometimes work-related issues. If you miss class, please connect with your colleagues to find out what you missed. I highly recommend that you get the names and contact information of one or two of your classmates so you can contact them for any assignments or notes you may have missed while absent.
- **Preparation:** You should come to class having done all the assigned reading and homework and you should always bring the proper supplies with you daily, including your textbook. Note that the BC guideline for homework is two hours outside of class for each hour spent in class.
- **Assignments:** All assignments are due promptly at the start of the class period. Assignments, papers, homework, or exams must be typed, printed out, stapled, and handed in at the beginning of class. Emailed assignments are not accepted. If you know you are going to be absent on the day an assignment is due, then turn it in early. All major due dates are indicated on the attached Course Calendar.
- **Late Work:** I believe that one of the major lessons students take away from college is the importance of meeting deadlines. As a result, **no late work will be accepted** unless you have had it approved by me BEFORE the due date. Late work will receive a zero grade.
- **Contribution:** Learning about each other's experiences and perspectives is an integral part of the learning process in this course. I believe that you will learn a lot about yourself and your fellow classmates. Therefore, you are expected to be an active participant in our learning environment. An active participant can include contributing to discussions, but can also mean getting to class on time, taking notes, listening to your peers, and coming to class prepared. You should do your best to contribute to class discussions and activities.
- **Classroom Etiquette:** All electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom at all times. This includes cell phones, tablets, laptops, music devices, etc. If you need a laptop to take notes, I will need you to talk with me. All texting devices should be placed in your bag for the duration of the class. Please note that texting, excessive talking, or other disruptive behavior is not only disrespectful to me, it is also disrespectful to the people around you. Your participation grade will be affected and lowered by these types of behaviors.
- **Respect:** I expect that your behavior in class be respectful. Learning about diverse experiences is central to this course, so it is of the utmost importance that you respect your classmates' experiences, differences, and opinions. In order for us to learn from each other, we have to allow each other to make mistakes and to offer unpopular positions for debate. This is a college classroom and as such, I expect students to behave as adults. I do not tolerate excessive talking or whispering, consistent late arrivals, or early departures. *Students who are disrespectful to their classmates or the instructor will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent until arrangements are made with the instructor to return to class and will result in your participation credit lowering.*
- **Plagiarism:** Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College.

This is a serious offense which can result in possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College and go on your permanent academic record. Do not do it! If you cheat/plagiarize, you fail. No excuses will be taken into account. Your work must be your own, except when you are asked to work with other students. Furthermore, you are required to acknowledge in your papers if you have borrowed any ideas, terms or phrases. Do not copy and paste material from Wikipedia or any other website into your assignments, as with is a severe form of cheating (that is very easy to catch, by the way). In this class your assignments should be grounded in the textbook rather than web resources, which are often wrong. If you have any hesitation or if you are in doubt about one of these issues, feel free to ask me.

Bellevue College's Rules and Regulations:

- **Incomplete:** If a student fails to complete all the required work for a course, an instructor may assign the grade of Incomplete ("I"). The student must complete the coursework by the end of the next quarter, or receive the assigned letter grade (usually an "F").
- **F Grade:** Students who fail a course will receive a letter grade of "F."
- **Final Examination Schedule:** The Social Science Division will adhere to the final examination schedule as stated in the BC Schedule. Final examinations will be held at the end of each quarter at fixed times. Instructors will not give examinations in advance of the regular schedule. A student who is absent from any examination held at any time during the quarter may forfeit the right to make up the examination. If, for illness or some other circumstance beyond the student's control, the student is unable to be present at any scheduled examination and has contacted the instructor on a timely basis, the student may be permitted to take such examination at a time designated by the instructor.
- **Withdrawal from Class:** College policy states that students must formally withdraw from a class by the end of the seventh week of the quarter (Registration Office, B125). If a student has not withdrawn by that date, an appropriate letter grade will be assigned for the course.
- **Hardship Withdrawal:** Instructors may assign the grade of "HW" (hardship withdrawal) at their discretion in the event that a student cannot complete the coursework due to extreme and exceptional circumstances. Students may also contact the Enrollment Services office BEFORE grades are assigned in cases of hardship.
- **Cheating, Stealing and Plagiarizing:** Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Dean of Student Services. If you are accused of cheating, stealing exams and/or plagiarism, there is a Bellevue College Student Discipline and Appeals Procedure (the right to due process) which you may pursue. Contact the office of Division Chair (D110), the Dean of Student Services (B231A) or the Associated Student Body (C212) for information regarding the appeals process.

Students with Disabilities:

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact us as soon as possible.

If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter. If you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. Contact asn@bellevuecollege.edu or 425.564.2764. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125. www.bellevuecollege.edu/autismspectrumnavigators/

The DRC office is located in B132 or you can call our reception desk at 425.564.2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Please visit our website for application information into our program and other helpful links at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc

SOCIOLOGY DROP-IN TUTORING

Drop-in tutoring is an option for ALL students enrolled in classes at BC to seek assistance regardless of your current grade.

Maybe you have a question about a sociological concept or would like to have someone who specializes in Sociology look at your paper before you submit it.

Our Sociology tutor is available to help you in D204!

Grading:

Grades are based on **five factors**. (1) Participation and Discussion, (2) Daily Notecards/notes on the Readings, (3) In-Class Activities, (4) Exams, (5) and Photo Journal and Reflection Homework. Each of these elements is awarded a specific number of points:

Participation/Discussion	50 points
Daily Notecards/Notes on Readings (10 at 10 points/each)	100 points
In-class activities (10 at 10 points/each)	100 points
Exams (2 at 100 points/each)	200 points
Photo Journal and Reflection (5 at 30 points/each)	150 points
TOTAL	600 points

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	555-600	93–100%
A–	537-554	90–92%
B+	525-536	88-89%
B	495-524	83-87%
B-	477-494	80-82

Grade	Points	Percentage
C+	465-476	78-79%
C	435-464	73-77%
C-	417-434	70-72%
D+	405–416	68–69%
D	357–404	60–67%
F	356 & Below	59% & Below

Description of 6 Grading Components:

1. Participation/Discussion: (50/600 points)

Participation is essential to the format of this class and will therefore contribute significantly toward your grade. In short, your success in this class depends on your active participation. Participation includes attendance, getting to class on time, class discussions, and group work. As mentioned under *General Course Rules and Expectations*, more than two unexcused absences or late attendances will lower your grade, and continue to do so as you miss more classes. To have an absence or tardy considered excused, you must discuss it with me prior to the absence or tardy, unless it is an emergency. Excused absences include doctor's visits, family emergencies, and sometimes work-related issues. Furthermore, disruptive behavior, excessive talking, texting while in class, or other interruptions will lower this portion of your grade. See the *General Course Rules and Expectations* for details about what is considered disruptive behavior. Do not take this portion of your grade lightly!

2. Daily Notecards/Notes on the Readings: (100/600 points; 10 points each)

For each day that a reading is assigned, you will need to submit a notecard about the readings for that day. If there are multiple readings, you must write on all readings assigned on a given day. At the beginning of each class period, I will collect your notecard. Notecards must be turned in at the start of class at 11:30 – late notecards will not be accepted and I will not accept notecards submitted at the end of the class period. The purpose of these cards is to help you keep up with the readings as well as help facilitate a more informed discussion for that day's class period. I will collect the cards every day in order to keep track of your attendance, although they won't always be graded. *So if you are in class, but have not done the reading, turn in a notecard with your name on it so I can mark you as present for that day.* Ten times during the quarter, however, I will announce at the beginning of class that "your notecards will be graded today." For those graded notecards, you will receive a score of between 0 and 10. Notecards must be a minimum of 5-6 sentences providing the thesis (or main ideas) of the article, and any definitions or key terms that is discussed in the reading. **Doing notecards helps you retain information (I have LOTS of data to back this up!) and you will be able to use these on your exams** - so spending some time now defining key terms, identifying major themes, and providing examples for yourself will help you when the exam comes. The suggested guidelines for submitting your notecards are as follows:

NAME	TITLE OF READING (pg. #s) & AUTHOR	DATE
THESIS or Main Ideas presented in the reading- a minimum of 5-6 sentences or bullet points describing the main arguments of the article List/Define any Key terms discussed in reading		

3. In-Class Activities and Homework Assignments: (100/600 points; 10 points each)

Over the course of the quarter, you will be asked a total of 10 times to submit work that you have completed during the class session. These in-class activities most often occur in groups. **They will be randomly delivered and cannot be made up.** Usually, they will consist of a short piece of writing/reflection or response to something we have read or an application of terms/material covered in readings.

4. Exams: (200/600 points; 100 points each)

Over the course of the quarter, you will take two exams that integrate the course's in-class activities (lectures, films, etc.) and readings. Exams are designed to make sure you understand important course concepts and themes. Exams will include multiple choice and short answer questions. Please note that you cannot make up missed exams. Your second exam is not comprehensive. Both exams will be on Canvas.

5. Photo Journal and Reflection Homework (150/600 points; 30 points each):

According to the American Journal of Men's Health (Sept. 2017), in multiple studies, visual images/art/photography have aided men in expressing and exploring emotion as well as enriching conversations on structures and identities of masculinity. As a result, over the course of the quarter, you will complete 5 photo journal and reflection homework assignments. The goal of these assignments is to have you personalize course content, get creative in your reflections, connect the head (academic theorizing) to the heart (emotions/feelings coming up while reading), and apply key concepts to your analysis. There are two parts to this assignment.

- A) A one-page (8x10) visual illustration. This could be a drawing that you create, a collage, a photo, a painting, digital art, etc. Create something! Please note that I am not “grading” you on how good of an artist you are (this is not an art class).
- B) A one-two page analysis and reflection. Explain your visual illustration and connect it to key concepts or ideas from readings, videos, course content. Why are you representing things the way you are? What is the significance and how does this connect to the class?

Grading of photo journals and reflections will be based on the following criteria:

- how insightful is your analysis (does it go beyond a superficial treatment of the subject)?
- does your analysis integrate key concepts in meaningful ways and demonstrate a correct understanding of content?
- have you effectively discussed your visual images?
- does it appear that you spent time thinking about the subject and creating this photo journal/reflection or does it seem like it was thrown together at the last minute?

Instructor Notes:

If at any point throughout the quarter you are confused or unclear about the expectations of the course, course material, a grade you received, or any other matters, I strongly encourage you to come talk with me early. It is my goal that all students succeed in this course; but, I can only help you if you meet me half way. Furthermore, if you are having personal problems or other issues going on outside of school, please let me know. I recognize that we all have lives outside of school, and am very willing to work with students, but I can only do so if I know there is a problem!



Syllabus

You should be looking at your syllabus on a daily basis so you know what is expected of you in class.
You are to have read the readings assigned for the current day by the time you arrive in class!

**Though I will try to remain as faithful as possible to this syllabus, I reserve the right to make changes. These will be announced in advance in class. **

Week 1

Monday, April 2nd: Introduction to the Course

Go over syllabus; class introductions; beginning definitions

Tuesday, April 3rd: Course Introductions: Getting to Know Your Peers

Readings: "Wanted: Men Who Love"

Wednesday, April 4th: Understanding Toxic Masculinity

Readings: "Understanding Patriarchy"

In class film – *The Mask You Live In*

Thursday, April 5th: Understanding Toxic Masculinity

Readings: "The Stoic Mask"

In class film – *The Mask You Live In*

Friday, April 6th: Photo Journal & Response #1 Due by 11:59 pm on Canvas



Week 2

Monday, April 9th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Athletic Mask"

Tuesday, April 10th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

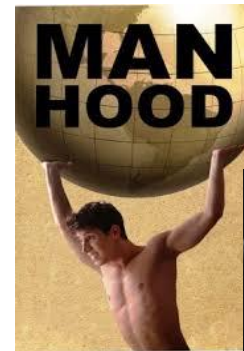
Readings: "The Material Mask"

Wednesday, April 11th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Sexual Mask"

Thursday, April 12th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Aggressive Mask"



Week 3

Monday, April 16th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Joker Mask"

Tuesday, April 17th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Invincible Mask"

Wednesday, April 18th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Know-It-All Mask"

Thursday, April 19th: Unpacking the Masks of Masculinity

Readings: "The Alpha Mask"

Friday, April 20th: Photo Journal & Response #2 Due by 11:59 pm on Canvas



Week 4

Monday, April 23rd: Lessons of Boyhood

Readings: "Being a Boy"

Tuesday, April 24th: Parents Teaching Childhood Masculinity

Readings: "No Way My Boys Are Going to Be Like That"

Wednesday, April 25th: Classroom Wars

Readings: "A War against Boys?"

Thursday, April 26th: Gender Performance in School

Readings: "Making a Name for Yourself"



Week 5

Monday, April 30th: Doing Heterosexuality

Readings: "Guys are Just Homophobic"

Tuesday, May 1st: Collegiate Masculinities

Readings: "Guyland"

Wednesday, May 2nd: Manhood in a Bottle

Readings: "Why College Men Drink"

Thursday, May 3rd: No Class

Friday, May 4th: Photo Journal & Response #3 Due by 11:59 pm on Canvas



Week 6

Monday, May 7th: Male Sexualities

Readings: "Male Sexual Being"

Tuesday, May 8th: Hook-Ups and "Game"

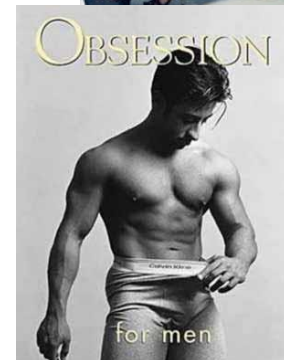
Readings: "He's Got No Game"

Wednesday, May 9th: Pornotopia

Readings: "A Pornographic World"

Thursday, May 10th: Wrap up and review for Exam 1

Friday, May 11th: Exam #1 Due by 11:59pm on Canvas



Week 7

Monday, May 14th: Gay Masculinity

Readings: "Gay Men's Attitudes Toward Masculinity"

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/09/gay-men-attitude-masculinity-sexuality-women>

"When Toxic Masculinity Infects our Queer Spaces"

https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/ev55y4/when-toxic-masculinity-infects-our-queer-spaces-we-all-lose

"Masculinity is in Crisis" <http://www.newnownext.com/attitude-masculinity-survey-effeminate-gay-men/11/2017/>



Tuesday, May 15th: Gay Men of Color and Masculinity

Readings: They Don't Want to Cruise Your Type"

Wednesday, May 16th: Providers and Breadwinners

Readings: "Work: What's Love Got to Do with It"

Thursday, May 17th: Race, Manhood, and the Workplace

Readings: "Racializing the Glass Escalator"



Week 8

Monday, May 21st: Masculinity and Boundary Management

Readings: "Sexual Harassment and Girl Watching"

Tuesday, May 22nd: Transitioning on the Job

Readings: "Just One of the Guys?"

Wednesday, May 23rd: Media and Pop Culture

Readings: "Popular Culture: Media Masculinity"

In Class Film: Tough Guise II

Thursday, May 24th: Music and Misogyny

Readings: "Misogyny in Rap Music"

In Class Film: Tough Guise II

Friday, May 25th: Photo Journal & Response #4 Due by 11:59 pm on Canvas



Week 9

Monday, May 28th: No School

Tuesday, May 29th: Toxic Geek Masculinity?

Readings: "Dick in a Box"

Wednesday, May 30th: Black Panther – reflections on the film

Thursday, May 31st: School Shootings

Readings: "Angry White Boys"



Week 10

Monday, June 4th: Violence and Masculinities

Readings: "Stopping Male Violence"

Tuesday, June 5th: Repairing Broken Masculinity

Readings: "Healing Male Spirit"

Wednesday, June 6th: Men and the Future of Resistance

Readings: "Reclaiming Male Integrity"

Thursday, June 7th: Men as Feminist Activists

Readings: "More than a Few Good Men"

Friday, June 8th: Photo Journal & Response #5 Due by 11:59 pm on Canvas



Week 11

Monday, June 11th: Toward Greater Gender Equity and Health

Readings: "Loving Men"

Tuesday, June 12th: Wrap-Up and Review for Final Exam

Exam #2 is due by 11:59 pm on Canvas

