



Module Outline for Course Participants

Thinking About Men and Masculinity

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This module was created by Professor Gary W. Dowsett and adapted by the Advancing Sexuality Studies short course team at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Abstract

Masculinity has become a problem. By this we mean that the concept of masculinity is now used in widely differing ways to problematise issues relating to men and boys, but stands as an accepted category of scholarly inquiry and political endeavour. Once, masculinity was regarded as merely a set of attributes or a quality that a man or boy had more or less of. Yet, in the media, at the UN and academic conferences, and more recently in policy development in health care, education, international development, welfare and justice, masculinity has become the conceptual framework for trying to understand a set of longstanding, if newly recognised, social issues. This module explores these issues and relates them specifically to questions of sexuality.

Module aims

- To provide participants with an overview of contemporary sociological thinking about masculinity, men and men's sexuality
- To provide a theoretical account of the ways in which ideas about masculinity are currently changing and explore some of the effects of these changes for men

Participants will:

- Develop a broad understanding of how masculinity has been conceptualised in gender and sexuality theory
- Explore the impact of contemporary social and cultural processes related to globalisation and consumerism on practices of masculinity
- Analyse contemporary debates in the field of masculinities related to sexuality and discuss possible future issues facing men at local, national and global scales.

Required pre-reading (to be discussed in module group work)

- Barker, G. T. (2005) In The Heat Of The Moment: Relating To Women, Having Sex. *Dying To Be Men: Youth, Masculinity and Social Exclusion*. London, Routledge.
- Connell, R. W. (2005 [1995]) The Science Of Masculinity. *Masculinities*. Berkeley, University Of California Press.

Optional pre-readings

- Allen, L. (2007) 'Sensitive and real macho all at the same time': young heterosexual men and romance, *Men and Masculinities*, 10, 137-152.
- Barker, G. T. (2005) Why The Worry About Young Men? *Dying To Be Men: Youth, Masculinity and Social Exclusion*. London, Routledge.
- Dowsett, G. W. (1993) I'll show you mine, if you'll show me yours: gay men, masculinity research, men's studies and sex, *Theory and Society*, 22, 697-709.
- Meiu, G. P. (2009) 'Mombassa Morans': embodiment, sexual morality, and Samburu men in Kenya, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 43, 105-128.
- Segal, L. (1993) Changing men: masculinities in context, *Theory and Society*, 22, 625-641.

Overview of module

Session 1. Introductory lecture: contemporary understandings of men, masculinity and sexuality

This lecture introduces students to dominant approaches to understanding masculinity, from role theory and masculine socialisation theory to hegemonic masculinity. It also looks closely at the relationship between masculinity and sexuality, observing the part homosexuality has played in sustaining a social hierarchy of masculinities, and at contemporary pressures on male sexualities.

Session 2. Raising boys

In this session, participants will read the stories from the reading 'Real Boys' Voices' (provided) before answering a series of questions in small groups.

Session 3. Changing masculinities

Session 3 explores the impact of objectification, commodification, and anxiety on contemporary understandings and practices of masculinity. Participants will analyse images, texts and videos in small groups, before reporting their findings back to the larger group.

Session 4. Men's sexual futures

Session 4 is a moderated panel discussion that explores four possible future issues in men's sexual lives.

Further reading

(includes lecture bibliography)

- Allen, L. (2007) 'Sensitive and real macho all at the same time': young heterosexual men and romance, *Men and Masculinities*, 10, 137-152.
- Barker, G., Ricardo, C. & Nascimento, M. (2007) Engaging Men and Boys In Changing Gender-Based Inequity in Health: Evidence from Programme Interventions. Geneva, World Health Organization. Available At: [Http://www.who.int/Gender/Documents/Engaging_Men_Boys.Pdf](http://www.who.int/Gender/Documents/Engaging_Men_Boys.Pdf)
- Barker, G. T. (2005a) *Dying To Be Men: Youth, Masculinity and Social Exclusion*. London, Routledge.
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- Bordo, S. (1999) *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private*. New York. Farrar, Giroux & Strauss.
- Campbell, C. (2001) 'Going Underground and Going After Women': Masculinity and HIV Transmission Amongst Black Workers on the Gold Mines. In Morrell, R. (Ed.) *Changing Men in Southern Africa*. Scottsville, University Of Natal Press.
- Cockburn, C. (1983) *Brothers: Male Dominance and Technological Change*. London, Pluto Press.
- Connell, R. W. (1998) Masculinities and globalization, *Men and Masculinities*, 1, 3-23.
- Connell, R. W. (2000) *The Men and The Boys*. Sydney, George Allen and Unwin.
- Connell, R. W. (2002) *Gender*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Connell, R. W. (2005) Change among the gatekeepers: men, masculinities, and gender equality in the global arena, *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 30, 1801-1825.
- Connell, R. W. (2005 [1995]) *Masculinities*. Berkeley, University Of California Press.
- Connell, R. W., Ashenden, D. J., Kessler, S. & Dowsett, G. W. (1982) *Making the Difference: Schools, Families and Social Division*. Sydney, George Allen & Unwin.
- Dollimore, J. (1991) *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
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- Dowsett, G. W. (1993) I'll show you mine, if you'll show me yours: gay men, masculinity research, men's studies and sex, *Theory and Society*, 22, 697-709.
- Dowsett, G. W. (1996) *Practicing Desire: Homosexual Sex in the Era of Aids*. Stanford Ca, Stanford University Press.
- Dowsett, G. W. (2006) Moving Masculinities and Social Change: Why Do Men Matter? Canberra, Gender Relations Centre of the Australian National University. Available at [Http://Rspas.Anu.Edu.Au/Grc/Publications/Pdfs/Wp_20_Dowsett.Pdf](http://Rspas.Anu.Edu.Au/Grc/Publications/Pdfs/Wp_20_Dowsett.Pdf)
- Dunk, T. W. (2003) *It's a Working Man's Town: Male Working-Class Culture*. Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Farrel, K. (2003) Naked nation: The Full Monty, working-class masculinity, and the British image, *Men and Masculinities*, 6, 119-135.
- Fausto-Sterling, A. (2000) *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. New York, Basic Books.
- Flood, M. (2008) The Men's Bibliography. [Http://Mensbiblio.Xyonline.Net/](http://Mensbiblio.Xyonline.Net/).

- Frosh, S., Phoenix, A. & Pattman, R. (2002) *Young Masculinities: Understanding Boys in Contemporary Society*. Hampshire, Palgrave.
- Greene, M. E. & Biddlecom, A. E. (2000) Absent and problematic men: demographic accounts of male reproductive roles, *Population and Development Review*, 26, 81-115.
- Helliwell, C. (2000) 'It's only a penis': rape, feminism and difference, *Signs*, 5, 789-816.
- Jackson, P. A. (1997) Kathoey >< Gay >< Man: The Historical Emergence of Gay Male Identity in Thailand. In Manderson, L. & Jolly, M. (Eds.) *Sites Of Desire Economies Of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and The Pacific*. Chicago, The University Of Chicago Press.
- Jenkins, C. & Nahar, N. (1998) Hijras and HIV Risk - Transgender Communities in Bangladesh. *5th International Conference on Aids in Asia and the Pacific*. Kuala Lumpur.
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- Sedgwick, E. K. (1990) *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkeley & Los Angeles, University of California Press.
- Segal, L. (1990) *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men*. London, Virago Press Limited.
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- Seidler, V. J. (2006) *Young Men and Masculinities: Global Cultures and Intimate Lives*. London, Zed Books.
- Silberschmidt, M. (2005) Poverty, Male Disempowerment, and Male Sexuality: Rethinking Men and Masculinities in Rural and Urban East Africa. In Ouzgane, L. & Morrell, R. (Eds.) *African Masculinities: Men in Africa from the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present*. Scottsville, University Of Kwazulu-Natal Press.
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- Wood, K. & Jewkes, R. (2001) 'Dangerous' Love: Reflections on Violence Among Xhosa Township Youth. In Morrell, R. (Ed.) *Changing Men in Southern Africa*. Scottsville, University Of Natal Press.