

**Feminist Theories and Masculinities**  
Department of Gender and Women's Studies (546)

SPRING 2020  
TU, TH 9:30-10:45am  
STERLING 1339

Professor Keisha Lindsay  
Room 3311-Sterling Hall  
263-2763  
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-Credit Hours: 3 via Traditional Carnegie Definition  
-Credit Hour Justification - This class meets for two 75-minute class periods each week over the fall/spring semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, problem sets, studying, etc) for about 3 hours out of classroom for every class period. More information about meeting times and expectations for student work are detailed below.  
-Course Level: Intermediate  
-Course Prerequisite: Gen&WS 333, 370, 441, 445, 449, or 547  
-Course Breadth: Letters & Sciences (LAS) and Either Humanities or Social Science (Z)  
-Instructional Mode: Face to Face  
- Canvas URL:  
<https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/191631>

Office Hours:  
TU 8:25 am – 9:25 am  
TH 2:25 pm – 3:25 pm

**Course Description and Learning Objectives:**

The aim of this course is to critically examine important assumptions, questions, and debates regarding the relationship between feminist theory, pro-feminist theory, and the practice and performance of various masculinities. This course is interdisciplinary in its approach. Course materials include texts, films, and other multimedia resources drawn from an array of disciplines including sociology, critical race theory, history, political theory, and cultural studies.

Feminist Theories and Masculinities explores feminist-informed definitions of and debates about masculinity. It does so by paying particular attention to conversations regarding whether masculinity is a gender role, a type of cultural expression, and/or a mode of sexuality. This course also examines key tensions related to men's status, or their lack thereof, as subjects of feminist theory. These tensions include whether persons who identify as men can be oppressed, if they can be feminists, and if so-called "masculinity studies" helps or hinders feminist theory and practice. Feminist Theories and masculinities is equally attentive to the practice and performance of specific masculinities. The particular masculinities we will analyze include but are not limited to African American masculinities, trans masculinities, and faith-informed masculinities.

Finally, the course will: 1) help develop the analytical skills necessary to think critically about masculinities in theory and practice; 2) pay particular attention to how feminist-informed theorizing shapes and is shaped by other hierarchies of power including race and sexuality and 3) draw on a range of texts and films to situate feminist and feminist-informed theory not only as intellectual projects but also as personal and an activist ones. Our ultimate aim is to build the skills and background that will enable us to apply these ideas and approaches to our own intellectual and political projects.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

*Graduate and Undergraduate Students –*

1. Develop the writing and analytical skills necessary to think critically about masculinities in

theory and practice

2. Determine how feminist theorizing about masculinity shapes and is shaped by other hierarchies of power including race and sexuality

*Graduate Students –*

1. Use feminist theorizing about masculinity to help develop graduate level research including but not limited to thesis and dissertation research

### **Course Readings:**

The following **anthology** is available for purchase at A Room of One's Own Bookstore, 315 W. Gorham. Tel: 608-257-7888. *Masculinity Studies and Feminist Theory* (MSFT). Edited by Judith Kegan Gardiner. ISBN-10: 0231122799 and ISBN-13: 978-0231122795. The anthology is also on reserve at the Undergraduate Library, Helen C. White Building.

*All other course readings are available on Canvas.*

### **Course Requirements - UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS**

#### *1. Attending class and participating in class discussion (10%)*

You must sign the sign-in sheet at the beginning of every class, except for the first class when I will take attendance. **You are allowed two absences without explanation.** Any absences greater than this number will drop your total participation grade by one full letter grade regardless of the extent to which you participate in class discussions. If you miss more than half of all of the class meetings without the instructor's permission you will receive a failing grade for the course. Finally, please note that this is an **honors course** in which close reading of the assigned texts is key to successfully participating in class discussions.

You will complete a mid-term participation self-evaluation form using an instructor provider rubric. This form, combined with the instructor's own written evaluation of your participation, are designed to help improve both the quantity and the quality of your contribution to class discussion.

#### *2. Discussion Questions (10%)*

You will submit a total of two discussions questions throughout the semester. Use each question to comment on anything that you find contradictory, controversial, confusing or otherwise noteworthy in one or more the readings. Your question may seek to clarify particular terms or ideas; it may challenge the author's presumptions; it may interrogate the implications of an author's claims; or it may attempt to relate assigned readings to materials beyond the course. A discussion question is **open ended. It cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no."** You **must be present** in class to solicit responses to and receive credit for your discussion question.

We will use Canvas for discussion questions. You can access Canvas from the University of Wisconsin's home page. Discussion questions are **due at noon** on the **morning** before class. Please type your discussion question directly into the relevant text box (no attachments). Discussion questions are due at **noon**, via Canvas, on the **day before** class. You must be present in class to solicit responses to and receive credit for your discussion questions. If you are absent you must post an additional discussion question (and be present in class to discuss it) in order to receive "make up" credit.

3. *Short Essay (15%) – Due Feb 21 at 1:00 pm*

Write a 3-4 page essay that critically analyzes an article, book chapter or other assigned text to date. You may choose a text because it provides novel analysis and interpretation, a controversial perspective, and/or because it serves an example of how *not* to proceed in relation to a particular topic or topic. Pay attention to: 1) how the author moves from topic to problem; 2) what the author posits as evidence; 3) the author's narrative strategies and 4) how the author constructs the subjects/objects of their research.

4. *Abstract (ungraded) – Due Mar 11 at 1:00 pm*

Prepare a one page, double spaced abstract outlining the main claim of your research paper, the possible significance of your work, the types of materials/sources you plan to examine, and how you propose to examine them. At this stage, you may not have finalized your main argument or the types of materials you will examine. However, the point of this exercise is to narrow down your topic in a way that is intelligible to others. So, if there are aspects of your project that remain uncertain, make temporary choices or posit a claim that may be relevant or useful in the weeks to come.

5. *Annotated Bibliography (10%) – Due March 25 at 1:00 pm*

Prepare an annotated bibliography of four external sources relevant to the major socio-economic or political change that you will examine in your research paper (see #7 below for more details). Bibliographic entries should refer to scholarly journal articles, books, and/or book chapters. In your annotation, please describe each source's main argument. Each annotation should be 3-4 sentences long.

6. *Prospectus – (15%) Due April 8 at 1:00 pm*

Prepare a 3 page, double-spaced prospectus that describes your research paper. Detail your thesis, rationale, methodology, and how you plan to structure/organize your paper.

7. *Research Paper (40%) – Due May 5 at 3:00 pm*

Write a 12-15 page research paper in which you: a) use feminist and pro-feminist theorists' understandings of masculinity to analyze the emergence and implications a major (post 1960) socio-economic or political change (more single parent families, rising rate of criminal incarceration, implementation of "Don't ask, Don't Tell," etc.) and b) detail how and why this same, major (post 1960) socio-economic or political change complicates feminist and pro-feminist theorists' understandings of masculinity.

**Course Requirements - GRADUATE STUDENTS**

1. *Graduate Student Discussion Sessions (10%)*

*You are expected to meet with me, as a group, 2-3 times during the semester. Group members will work in pairs to critically analyze and make informal presentations about assigned readings. Dates to be scheduled.*

2. *Discussion Questions (10%)*

*You will submit a total of two discussions questions throughout the semester. Use each question to comment on anything that you find contradictory, controversial, confusing or otherwise noteworthy in one or more the readings. Your question may seek to clarify particular terms or ideas; it may challenge the author's presumptions; it may interrogate the implications of an author's claims; or it may attempt to relate assigned readings to materials beyond the course. A discussion question is **open ended**. It **cannot** be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." You **must be present** in*

class to solicit responses to and **receive credit** for your discussion question.

3. *Abstract (ungraded) - Due Mar 11 at 1:00 pm*

*Prepare a one page abstract outlining the main claim of your research paper, the possible significance of your work, the types of materials/sources you plan to examine, and how you propose to examine them. At this stage, you may not have finalized your main argument or the types of materials you will examine. However, the point of this exercise is to narrow down your topic in a way that is intelligible to others. So, if there are aspects of your project that remain uncertain, make temporary choices or posit a claim that may be relevant or useful in the weeks to come.*

4. *Annotated Bibliography (10%) – Due March 25 at 1:00 pm*

*Prepare an annotated bibliography of six external sources relevant to the major socio-economic or political change that you will examine in your research paper (see #7 below for more details). Bibliographic entries should refer to scholarly journal articles, books, and/or book chapters. In your annotation, please describe each source's main argument. Each annotation should be 3-4 sentences long.*

5. *Prospectus (20%) - Due April 8 at 1:00 pm*

*Prepare a 4 page, double-spaced prospectus that describes your research paper. Detail your thesis, rationale, methodology, and how you plan to structure/organize your paper.*

6. *Research Paper (50%) – Due May 5 at 3:00 pm*

*Write a 15-20 page research paper in which you: a) use feminist and pro-feminist theorists' understandings of masculinity to analyze the emergence and implications a major (post 1960) socio-economic or political change (more single parent families, rising rate of criminal incarceration," etc.) and b) detail how and why this same, major (post 1960) socio-economic or political change complicates feminist and pro-feminist theorists' understandings of masculinity. Strive to incorporate a topic and/or methodology that advances your master's thesis, dissertation, or other graduate level research.*

**Email Communication:** I aim to respond to student emails within a 24-hour period Monday to Friday.

**Classroom Conduct:** Laptops and smartphones are allowed if and when they are used to access assigned readings and other class materials. Please do not use your laptops and smartphones to text or to browse the web. Our aim is to foster a non-distracting and intellectually productive learning environment. If you are found using the above devices in an unauthorized manner your class attendance will be "zeroed" for the day in question.

**Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism and Cheating):** By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review.

For more information, refer to [studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/](http://studentconduct.wiscweb.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/)

**Grading:** Final grades will be determined according to the following official UW grading scale: A 93-100%; AB 88-92%; B 83-87%; BC 78-82%; C 70-77%; D 60-69%; F below 60%.

**Grading Related Questions and Appeals:** If you have questions about a grade, please speak to me first. If the question is not resolved, speak with the department Chair, Aili Tripp, who will attempt to resolve the issue informally and who will notify you of the Appeals Procedures if further, formal action is required. I will only discuss questions about grades during office hours or by appointment - not over email or before/after class. If you would like to challenge your grade, please wait 24 hours after receiving the grade before contacting me.

**Late Paper Policy:** Papers and exams turned in late will be penalized by **ten (10) percentage points** for each 24-hour period after the due date.

**Accessibility:** The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

## **What is Masculinity?**

### Interrogating Masculinities – An Introduction and Rationale

*Jan 21:*

-Course Overview/Syllabus Review/Meet and Greet

*Jan 23:*

-Judith Gardiner. "Introduction" (MSFT)

-Gail Bederman: "Why Study "Masculinity," Anyway? Perspectives from the 'Old Days'"

-C.J. Pascoe and Tristan Bridges. "Historicizing Masculinities"

### Masculinity and/as Binary Gender

*Jan 28:*

-Judith Lorber. "Night to his Day: The Social Construction of Gender"

-Carole Pateman. "Contracting In"

*Jan 30:*

-R. W. Connell. "The Social Organization of Masculinity" (p. 30-)

-bell hooks. "Reconstructing Black Masculinity"

### Masculinity and/as Binary Sexuality

*Feb 4:*

-Catherine MacKinnon. "Sexuality"

-Lynne Segal. "Belly of the Beast: Sex as Male Domination"

*Feb 6:*

- Michael Kimmel. "Masculinity as Homophobia"
- C. J. Pascoe. "'Dude, You're a Fag': Adolescent Masculinity and the Fag Discourse"

### Masculinity and/as Culture

*Feb 11:*

In-Class Film - Tough Guise2

*Feb 13:*

- Michael Kimmel: "The Birth of the Self-Made Man"
- Lionel Cantu. "Entre Hombres/Between Men"

## **Querying Men as Feminist Subjects: The Perils and the Possibilities**

### Are Men Oppressed?

*Feb 18:*

- Susan Faludi. "The Son, The Moon, and the Stars"
- Harry Brod. "Studying Masculinity as Superordinate Studies" (MSFT)

*Feb 20:*

- Marlon Ross. "Race, Rape, Castration: Feminist Theories of Sexual Violence and Masculine Strategies of Black Protest" (MSFT)
- Peter Chua, Dune C. Fujino. "Negotiating New Asian-American Masculinities: Attitudes and Gender Expectations"

**(Undergraduate) Short Essay Due - Feb 21 at 1:00 pm**

### Can Men be Feminists?

*Feb 25:*

- Michael Kimmel. "Abandoning the Barricades: or How I Became a Feminist"
- Michael Awkward. "A Black Man's Place in Black Feminist Criticism"
- Calvin Thomas. "Reenfleshing the Bright Boys; Or How Male Bodies Matter to Feminist Theory" (MSFT)

*Feb 27:*

- Joy James. "Anti Racist (Pro)Feminsims and Coalition Politics: No Justice, No Peace"
- Tania Modleski. "Postmortem on Postfeminism"
- David Kahane. "Male Feminism is An Oxymoron"

### Masculinity Studies – Who, What, and Why?

*Mar 3:*

- Diane Richardson and Victoria Robinson. "Theorizing Women's Studies Gender Studies and Masculinity: The Politics of Naming"
- Judith Newton: "Masculinity Studies: The Longed for ProFeminist Movement for Academic Men?" (MSFT)
- Sally Robinson. "Pedagogy of the Opaque: Teaching Masculinity Studies" (MSFT)

Mar 5:

- Eric Anderson. "Introduction"
- Rachel O'Neill. "Whither Critical Masculinity Studies? Notes on Inclusive Masculinity Theory, Postfeminism, and Sexual Politics"

### **Learning from Specific Masculine Practices and Performances**

#### Masculinities At and Beyond Gender Binaries

Mar 10:

- Julia Serano. "There Is No Perfect Word: A Transgender Glossary of Sorts"
- Jamison Green. "Look! No, Don't! The Visibility Dilemma for Transsexual Men"
- Judith Halberstam. "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Men, Women, and Masculinity" (MSFT)

**Abstract Due – Mar 11 at 1:00 pm**

Mar 12: Library Visit

Mar 24:

- Emi Koyama. "The Transfeminist Manifesto"
- Miriam J. Abelson. "Trans Men Engaging, Reforming, and Resisting Feminisms"
- In-Class Film: Mind if I Call You Sir?

**Annotated Bibliography Due – March 25 at 1:00 pm**

#### Men's Rights Movements and Masculinities

Mar 26:

- Voice for Men. "Introduction to the Men's Rights Movement"
- Bill Moyers. (Interview) "A Gathering of Men with Robert Bly"
- Jeff Sharlet. "What Kind of Man Joins the Men's Rights Movement?"

Mar 31:

- Jane Caputi and Gordene O. MacKenzie. "Pumping Iron John"
- Judith Gardiner. "Theorizing Age and Gender: Bly's Boys" (MSFT)
- Michael Messner. "The Limits of 'The Male Sex Role': An Analysis of the Men's Liberation and Men's Rights Movements' Discourse"

Apr 2: In-Class Prospectus Review/Preparation

#### "Endangered" Black Masculinities

Apr 7

- Robert Staples. "Black Male Genocide: A Final Solution to the Race Problem in America."
- Richard Majors and Janet Billson. "Cool Pose: Expression and Survival"
- Barack Obama. "Father's Day Speech"

**Prospectus Due April 8 at 1:00 pm**

Apr 9:

- David Banks. "Somebody Needs to Help the Boys"

-Anthony Mitchell and James Stewart. "The Efficacy of All-Male Academies: Insights from Critical Race Theory (CRT)"

*Apr 14:*

-Michael Dumas. "My Brother as 'Problem': Neoliberal Governmentality and Interventions for Black Young Men and Boys"

-Paul Butler. "Black Male Exceptionalism? The Problems and Potential of Black Male - Focused Interventions"

### Masculinities, Empire, and Nation

*Apr 16:*

-Revathi Krishnaswamy. "The Economy of Colonial Desire"

-R.W. Connell. "Globalization, Imperialism, and Masculinities"

*Apr 21:*

-Ann McClintock. "The White Family of Man"

-Cynthia Enloe. "Nationalism and Masculinity: The Nationalist Story Is Not Over - and It Is Not a Simple Story"

### Faith-Informed Masculinities

*Apr 23:*

-Imran Siddiquee. "How to Hurt Like A Man"

-Su'ad Abdul Khabeer. "Cool Muslim Dandies"

*April 28:*

-Promise Keepers. "Mission Statement"

-Melanie Heath. "Soft Boiled Masculinity: Renegotiating Gender and Racial Ideologies in the Promise Keepers"

April 30: Research Paper Summaries/Course Evaluation

***Research Paper Due – May 5 at 3:00 pm***