Readings for Diversity and Social Justice

THIRD EDITION

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ROUTLEDGE

See Chapter 8 in *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* for corresponding teaching materials.

SECTION 5

SEXISM

Introduction

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Question: How do you manage to oppress over 50 percent of this society's population and not have a revolution on your hands? Answer: You make it seem "normal." So normal, in fact, that to question it would be akin to asking a fish about water. In the college classes I teach, students often illustrate this by denying examples of sexism and saying, "That's just the way it's always been." Even the most overt examples of sexism go unquestioned because these students have been completely immersed in the incessant narrative of sexism and know nothing else . . . "it's normal." Fortunately, however, once students do begin to see sexism in its various manifestations they want to know how on earth this is possible in a society that espouses "liberty and justice for all." This is an important question—how *did* we get to a place where economic inequality for women, violence against women, and the denial of women's basic rights over their own lives and bodies are still so commonplace and still so unquestioned?

In early 2012, as the election year continued to pick up steam, Melissa Harris-Perry of MSNBC asked a similar question: "Who would have thought in 2012 that contraception would be a matter of debate again?" (Harris-Perry, February 21, 2012). Who indeed. And yet, the use of women's legal rights, bodies, and overall role in society as a battleground for the 2012 political campaigns did just that. Were this the seventeenth century, the absolute control of women legally, economically, and physically in the name of politics and nation building would be commonplace and go unquestioned. Over the last century, however, women have steadily gained myriad rights regarding the control of their lives and bodies (e.g. *Roe v. Wade* in 1973), making the current encroachments on those rights more obviously problematic. Specifically, in the name of political expediency and the (re)assertion of male power, we are again seeing efforts to control women's legal rights (i.e. diluting national laws like the Violence Against Women Act), economic rights (popular demands that women leave the workplace so unemployed men can have their jobs), and bodies (decreasing contraception access for many women). Citing these examples and more, many observers described the tone regarding women in the 2012 election campaigns as single-mindedly regressive, and it was; not only in how it attacked women's rights, but in how it deeply wove class, race, and Christian hegemony into the efforts to do so. For example, the political lauding of the cult of (compulsory) motherhood and the assertion that to stay home and raise children is the highest and *only* calling a woman can have was not only sexist, but also deeply rooted in the class privilege of being able to afford to stay home, a racial history of white

supremacy and women's "purity," and the same religiously based heteronormative mindset that has now allowed thirty (and counting) states to mandate that marriage is only between a man and a woman. Thus, while the more things have certainly changed for the better for women in this country, the more they seek to stay the same by working to diminish women's rights and ultimately maintain sexism in this society.

Returning to my students' question then, exactly how can all this happen well over a decade into the twenty-first century; how does this system of oppression work? Most simply, oppression involves a dominant group (the group possessing societal power) exerting both ideological and structural control over a subordinate group (the group without societal power) in order to benefit the dominant group. Importantly, the dominant group does not have to be the numeric majority (as is the case with men in the United States since they make up only 48 percent of the population), but simply has to be in control of the most significant structures of power in the society. In the case of sexism, the ideological control comes through the creation and enforcement of socially constructed gender roles, while the structural control arises from the use of cultural and institutional power held by men to deny resources to and extract resources from women for the benefit of men. The symbiotic nature of these two forms of control then work together to create the dominant and subordinate statuses, assign meaning to them (through gender stereotypes and assumptions), and then use them to justify a system of gender inequality that benefits men. Over time, this system becomes omnipresent and naturalized, thus becoming self-maintaining and self-reinforced (hegemony). Comprehending how these two components operate is an essential step in being able to challenge sexism and is, therefore, the focus of this entire section.

IDEOLOGICAL CONTROL AND GENDER

Understanding how gender supports sexism requires the explanation of a few key concepts such as gender roles, gender socialization, and gender identity. Socially constructed *gender roles* are the rigid categories (and there are only two) that characterize what it means to be "feminine" and "masculine" in this society. They are clearly articulated, ruthlessly enforced, and inflexible in their expression. Men do not cry, women should always look beautiful (for men), men never ask for directions, women are "natural" caretakers, men are tough, women are emotional, men are studs, women are domestic, and so on. These roles are taught to us by a process of gender *socialization* (see Harro, selection 6) whereby the messages of what it means to be a man or woman are conveyed to us by every possible socializing structure in society—our families tell us how to behave, our schools tell us what we can achieve, and our media tells us what we need to look like. And because people who identify as women make up over half of the U.S. population, this socialization begins before birth to ensure the highest level of compliance from women, as well as men.

There are four characteristics of gender roles that ideologically support the overarching structures of sexism, heterosexism, and transgender oppression, and the intersections between them. The first is that while these gender roles are *social constructions* (something created by the dominant social identity group, i.e. men, and then repeatedly reinforced through socialization so they seem real), the story we are actually told in this society is that masculinity and femininity are *biological* instead of socially constructed, *natural* rather than cultural, *inherent* to being a man or a woman and not learned behaviors. Thus, even though there is no causal relationship between one's biology and one's gender identity, the instilling of these gender roles and rules in us from the moment we are born makes it *appear* as if there is, thereby implying that we are physiologically marked with these gender roles from birth and they cannot be changed. As a result, the sexist dynamics inherent in these socially constructed gender roles (e.g. women are

too emotional to be good leaders) are also labeled as "natural" and unchangeable, making any attempt to identify and challenge them almost impossible.

Fortunately, by shedding light on the social construction of gender, the feminist, LGB, transgender, and intersex communities have disproven the assumption that biology determines gender, thereby disentangling it from the notion that gender is "natural" (see website for further resources). For example, if gender roles were "natural," they would manifest similarly in societies all over the world, but a global analysis reveals a rather diverse understanding and expression of gender across societies (Nanda, 2000). Similarly, if these roles were set and unchangeable they would be consistent throughout history, and yet within U.S. history alone the notion of what it means to be a man or woman has changed over time due to political, economic, and social influences. As such, what is perceived as "real" regarding gender roles is actually a manifestation of certain rules and expectations put on all of us by the macro gendered power structure.

A second core characteristic of gender roles is that *they are based on heteronormativity*, which refers to the normalizing of heterosexuality and the pathologizing of being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer. In my classes I often conduct an exercise where we divide into groups and develop lists of what it means to "act like a 'man'" or "act like a 'lady.'" For the nineteen years I have been doing this exercise, every element of what it has meant to "act like a 'lady'" has been connected to the heterosexual male gaze. Looking pretty, acting feminine, knowing how to cook, wanting children, etc. are not at all problematic of and by themselves, but when analyzed through a lens of gender critique it is apparent that they are consistently tied to heterosexual relationships and the need for women to appeal to heterosexual men. The connection between heterosexuality and what it means to be a real woman implies that lesbians and bisexual women are not actually women, are a threat to these gender roles for their lack of compliance, and therefore should be met with contempt and even violence. Suzanne Pharr (1988) suggests that homophobia is a weapon of sexism precisely because of the relationship between gender role conformity and what Adrienne Rich (1986) termed "compulsory heterosexuality." The powerful connection between gender roles and homophobia is discussed by Blumenfeld in the next section (selection 77 and Introduction to Section 6).

A third important characteristic of gender roles is that masculine and feminine roles are *diametrically opposed*, as opposites in a binary, and *hierarchically positioned*, as superior or inferior. For every characteristic that students defined as "masculine," for example being tough and strong (superior), they defined "feminine" as the exact opposite, weak and docile (inferior). Looking even further, all human attributes labeled as feminine were found to be consistently devalued in this society and used to insult or harass men, thus speaking volumes about the true status of women in this society. As evidence, the two worst things a man can be called in this society is a "fag" (tied into the heteronormativity discussed above) and a "woman," and the worst thing a man can do is to act like a woman in any way. Of course, while most people transgress gender roles on a daily basis, the existence of these roles and the rules that shape them are well known by all as demonstrated by the fact that it never takes students more than ten minutes to generate multiple examples.

A fourth characteristic in the creation and maintenance of socially constructed gender roles is the use of violence to punish those who defy them. This violence can take innumerable forms but its purpose is single-minded: to make sure that no one deviates (too far) from their expected gender role performance. For cisgendered (see the introduction to the "Transgender Oppression" section for an explanation of this term) women, this violence can more obviously range from verbal harassment, to physical violence, to sexual assault, but it can also take slightly more subtle forms such as "ideal female beauty" (Jhally and Kilbourne, 2010), economic marginalization and poverty, and the constant pressure to "be a good girl." For cisgendered men the violence looks like bullying in our schools, ever-increasingly violent performances of masculinity in our media, and the ruthless policing of gender that men foist upon each other through verbal, emotional and physical taunts and confrontations in everyday life. While the impact of the violence is devastating

to this society socially, economically, and physically, it should be noted that the severity of the violence speaks volumes about the critical importance of the maintenance of these gender roles as the ideological foundation of sexism. Why else would there be such extreme enforcement of them? Clearly there is much at stake for the system of gender oppression in their furtherance, and thus the steady companion of these gender roles is the incessant use of violence individually, culturally, and institutionally to protect them.

Thankfully, *gender identity* can be thought of in ways that are more flexible than gender roles. *Gender identity* arises from an inner, self-reflective location and manifests as a person's more authentic gendered self as a woman, man, or transgendered person. While gender roles exist in relation to each other within a binary, gender identity exists along a continuum and has a range of expressions. The section on "Transgender Oppression" (Section 7) more thoroughly explains the concept of gender identity and its range of expressions, and is a critical companion section for fully understanding sexism in this society. Gender roles and identity are experienced by others through their "expression" or "presentation." A person's expression or presentation of a gender role is based on the dichotomous categories of what "man" and "woman" should look, act, and feel like, whereas the expression or presentation of a person's gender identity exists within a broader and more fluid expression that more accords with the complexity of gender. To present or express one's gender on the basis of accepted gender roles usually garners acceptance and approval from individuals and institutions. On the other hand, gender expression that does not conform to the dominant power structure's ideals, while being more true to the individual's felt sense of self, often results in disapproval, marginalization, and violence from the larger society.

STRUCTURAL CONTROL AND SEXISM

Understanding that socially constructed gender roles are not natural, are created as an extreme binary, and are violently enforced, let's discuss how that serves as the foundation of sexism. Simply put, all forms of oppression require a dichotomous relationship between dominant and subordinate groups because it is much easier to justify, and thus maintain, an unequal allocation of power and resources when two social identity groups (within the same axis of identity) are positioned as diametrically opposed to each other as possible (see selections 4 and 5). Therefore, these roles form the basis for the structure of oppression of women and girls, or *sexism*, in our society. In this reader's companion book, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice* (second edition), Botkin, Jones and Kachwaha define sexism as "a system of advantages that serves to privilege men, subordinate women, denigrate women-identified values and practices, enforce male dominance and control, and reinforce norms of masculinity that are dehumanizing and damaging to men" (2007, p. 174). Allan Johnson (selections 3 and 62) further advances our understanding of sexism by describing *patriarchy* as the system and ideology that supports the dominance of men and the oppression of women on all levels of society.

The bell hooks reading (selection 63) offers a different take on understanding sexism by explaining what *feminism* is. In the words of a favorite bumper sticker, "feminism is the radical notion that women are people." Contrary to popular backlash rhetoric, feminism is not about hating men, but it does unapologetically require an end to the domination of women by men. While feminism certainly has a range of theoretical underpinnings from liberal to Marxist to environmental, a common element among them is the need to dismantle the patriarchal power structures that serve to subordinate women and transgender folks and unfairly advantage men in every aspect of society. Because of the connections noted among sexism, heterosexism, and transgender oppression, feminism also seeks an end to gender binaries and heteronormative societal structures.

Upon the foundation of a gender binary and the exercising of patriarchal power on individual, cultural, and institutional levels, the day-to-day structural mechanisms used to keep sexism in place take many forms. For example, if gender roles state that women are to be "feminine" and look attractive to men, then the creation of limiting and dehumanizing notions of "ideal female beauty" for women is an effective tool for keeping women powerless, especially in the public domain. Caroline Heldman's article on body image (selection 65) aptly describes the societal impact of these fabricated images of beauty on women and how they conspire to disempower women economically, psychologically, and politically. The Chernik reading (selection 67) adds to this discussion by demonstrating the deadly effects of this imagery on women in the form of eating disorders and the illusory power that the cult of thinness (Nagy Hesse-Biber, 2007) creates in this society. Other mechanisms of sexism such as the wage gap discussed in Aaron Bernstein's piece (selection 66), violence against women discussed in the Katz article (selection 64), or the use of language as seen in both the Morgan and Kirk and Okazawa-Rey pieces (selections 68 and 69) should be understood as both products of sexism and tools used to maintain it in our society.

HISTORY AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Acquiring a basic understanding of the ideological and structural dynamics of sexism in society begs the question of what to do about it. In my teaching and training throughout the years, I have encountered many people who suggest that while sexism is wrong, it is just too pervasive and there is nothing we can do about it. I am sure there are a range of reasons for their thinking this, but one that warrants highlighting is the often complete lack of knowledge about the long history of women's (and some men's) organizing, resistance, and social change movements in this country. While complicated and often problematic, the history of the women's movements in the United States demonstrates powerful and effective ways to challenge both the manifestations of sexism and the foundations that give rise to it. From the first "women's rights convention" in Seneca Falls, NY, in 1848 to the presidential, congressional, and local elections of 2012, we have seen examples of women making history through their challenges to the limiting gender roles and power structures that marginalize them. At its best, this history demonstrates the need for a broad-based platform addressing women's rights, the power of consciousness-raising groups, the transformational power of claiming voice, and the necessity for cross-issue organizing. There were also a range of mistakes made along the way and in particular the first and second waves' inaccurate, simplifying assumptions concerning a single, uniform, universal woman's experience. In the first wave, while the agenda called for "women's rights," the needs of women of color, and poor and working-class women, were marginalized in favor of the eventual limited agenda of suffrage for white, middle-class women. In the second wave, these same groups as well as lesbians and bisexual women, women with disabilities, and women who were not Christian were also pushed to the side in favor of the white, middle-class agenda for "equal rights."

Due to space limitations, this section cannot discuss the many important lessons gleaned from these movements and the value of knowing this history (see section website for resources). It does, however, take these lessons seriously and highlights how we can actualize them in this current moment of fighting for women's rights—the "third wave." The Next Steps part of this section includes Ross Neely's explanation of why, as a cisgendered man, he believes all men have a personal investment in feminism and a responsibility to end sexism (selection 70). This selection, along with Jackson Katz's list of "ten things men can do to prevent gender violence" (Katz, 1999), illustrate the importance of men taking action to end sexism. It is crucial that men as well as women acknowledge that no form of oppression can be eradicated until the advantaged group can see how their core values are compromised by the existence of that oppression. These pieces are followed by Alice Walker (selection 71) where she addresses the impact of

internalized oppression. Her article calls this out in simple but powerful ways, and while it does not blame women for sexism, it does demand that women take responsibility for the internalization of negative messages and transform these debilitating ideas into sources of power.

As stated above, one of the most egregious mistakes of both waves of the women's movement was the racist lack of attention to the needs and voices of women of color. For example, while the brief statement from the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health (selection 72) helps to counter the historic mistake of white feminists assuming that what works for white, middle-class women's health works for all women, it is but one small step in broadening the women's health agenda to truly include all women. Similarly, the Hurdis reading (selection 73) discusses the critical importance of including the voices of women of color in today's third-wave feminism, while the Russo and Spatz reading (selection 74) helps white women remember not to be seduced by the apparent political expediency of white privilege and class privilege to advance their own agenda at the expense of women of color and working-class women. Similarly, Winona LaDuke (selection 75) and Dr. Wangari Maathai (selection 76) both offer lasting insight into the overall mindset and framework necessary to end the oppression of women and create social change from the ground up all over the world.

All of the readings in this section are meant to show the real-life complexity of addressing the oppression of women and girls. More and more the discussion of what has traditionally been known as "sexism" has broadened and deepened into a complicated nexus of gender, race, class, and sexual orientation axes of identity compounded by the structurally oppressive realities of age and ability. This is not to say that the history of feminist thought is outdated or should be dismissed in any way, but to simply note that knowledge of sexism must be complicated, as it was by radical feminists of color, and then built upon even further by postmodern theory, trans theory, critical race theory, and of course social justice theory. Thus for there be an effective and sustained movement to end the sexism, there must be an understanding of how the issues in this section intersect with all other issues of oppression. To that end the reader should also explore selections from other sections in this book such as the U.S. Department of State, Romero and Morgenson selections (32, 34, and 38) located in the "Classism" section which discuss class and gender intersectionality, burdensome debt, and human (often women for sex) trafficking. In the section on racism, the Chung, Fayad, Castañeda, and Smith readings (selections 16, 18, 23, and 24) highlight the role of heteropatriarchy in the maintenance of racism, the connections between sexism and racism, and ways to cross-culturally communicate about issues of race. Similarly, in the section on ableism, the Colligan reading (selection 100) explains why the intersexed should not be "fixed" and is key to understanding that biological sex exists on a continuum and thus supports the deconstruction of the "essentialist" position regarding gender. And, of course, the readings of the "Heterosexism" and "Transgender Oppression" sections are vital in fully understanding the overlapping complexity and mutually reinforcing structures of oppression among these three forms of oppression.

SUMMARY

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that this section offers only a sampling of issues and ideas for readers to consider regarding the very complex and multifaceted issue of the oppression of women and girls in this society. As mentioned above, there is no single voice for "women's issues" and therefore I strongly encourage the use of the supplemental materials from the section website as well as the intersectional guide in the front of this book as tools to gain a more comprehensive view of sexism in the United States. On the website you will find additional book and article references, specific articles themselves (e.g. the oft-used "The 'Rape' of Mr. Smith"),

links to websites and to current sources of discussion and action, and activities that can be used in the classroom or training settings.

In moving forward with this information, I would like to emphasize the importance of taking action, however subtle it may be, to end the oppression of women and girls. In an era where for the first time a woman has made a viable run for the White House, increasing numbers of women are in professional positions of power, and women are more represented in college admissions than men, it is tempting to say that sexism is over and do nothing. Scratching beneath the surface of these changes, however, it is obvious that sexism and patriarchy are both still firmly intact. Therefore, *now* is the time for broad-based and consistent action on the part of all us to end sexism and transform our society into one where women and girls feel safe and free and able to exercise their humanity to its fullest.

See Companion Website for Additional Resources and Material

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"Night to His Day"

The Social Construction of Gender

Judith Lorber

Talking about gender for most people is the equivalent of fish talking about water. Gender is so much the routine ground of everyday activities that questioning its taken-for-granted assumptions and presuppositions is like thinking about whether the sun will come up. Gender is so pervasive that in our society we assume it is bred into our genes. Most people find it hard to believe that gender is constantly created and re-created out of human interaction, out of social life, and is the texture and order of that social life. Yet gender, like culture, is a human production that depends on everyone constantly "doing gender."

And everyone "does gender" without thinking about it. Today, on the subway, I saw a well-dressed man with a year-old child in a stroller. Yesterday, on a bus, I saw a man with

CONTEXT

a tiny baby in a carrier on his chest. Seeing men taking care of small children in public is increasingly common—at least in New York City. But both men were quite obviously stared at—and smiled at, approvingly. Everyone was doing gender—the men who were changing the role of fathers and the other passengers, who were applauding them silently. But there was more gendering going on that probably fewer people noticed. The baby was wearing a white crocheted cap and white clothes. You couldn't tell if it was a boy or a girl. The child in the stroller was wearing a dark blue T-shirt and dark print pants. As they started to leave the train, the father put a Yankee baseball cap on the child's head. Ah, a boy, I thought. Then I noticed the gleam of tiny earrings in the child's ears, and as they got off, I saw the little flowered sneakers and lace-trimmed socks. Not a boy after all. Gender done.

Gender is such a familiar part of daily life that it usually takes a deliberate disruption of our expectations of how women and men are supposed to act to pay attention to how it is produced. Gender signs and signals are so ubiquitous that we usually fail to note them—unless they are missing or ambiguous. Then we are uncomfortable until we have successfully placed the other person in a gender status; otherwise, we feel socially dislocated. . . .

For the individual, gender construction starts with assignment to a sex category on the basis of what the genitalia look like at birth. Then babies are dressed or adorned in a way that displays the category because parents don't want to be constantly asked whether their baby is a girl or a boy. A sex category becomes a gender status through naming, dress, and the use of other gender markers. Once a child's gender is evident, others treat those in one gender differently from those in the other, and the children respond to the different treatment by feeling different and behaving differently. As soon as they can talk, they start to refer to themselves as members of their gender. Sex doesn't come into play again until puberty, but by that time, sexual feelings and desires and practices have been shaped by gendered norms and expectations. Adolescent boys and girls approach and avoid each other in an elaborately scripted and gendered mating dance. Parenting is gendered, with different expectations for mothers and for fathers, and people of different genders work at different kinds of jobs. The work adults do as mothers and fathers and as low-level workers and high-level bosses, shapes women's and men's life experiences, and these experiences produce different feelings, consciousness, relationships, skills—ways of being that we call feminine or masculine. All of these processes constitute the social construction of gender.

Gendered roles change—today fathers are taking care of little children, girls and boys are wearing unisex clothing and getting the same education, women and men are working at the same jobs. Although many traditional social groups are quite strict about maintaining gender differences, in other social groups they seem to be blurring. Then why the one-year-old's earrings? Why is it still so important to mark a child as a girl or a boy, to make sure she is not taken for a boy or he for a girl? What would happen if they were? They would, quite literally, have changed places in their social world.

To explain why gendering is done from birth, constantly and by everyone, we have to look not only at the way individuals experience gender but at gender as a social institution. As a social institution, gender is one of the major ways that human beings organize their lives. Human society depends on a predictable division of labor, a designated allocation of scarce goods, assigned responsibility for children and others who cannot care for themselves, common values and their systematic transmission to new members, legitimate leadership, music, art, stories, games, and other symbolic productions. One way of choosing people for the different tasks of society is on the basis of their talents, motivations, and competence—their demonstrated achievements. The other way is on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity—ascribed membership in a category of people. . . .

Western society's values legitimate gendering by claiming that it all comes from physiology—female and male procreative differences. But gender and sex are not equivalent, and gender as a social construction does not flow automatically from genitalia and reproductive

organs, the main physiological differences of females and males. In the construction of ascribed social statuses, physiological differences such as sex, stage of development, color of skin, and size are crude markers. They are not the source of the social statuses of gender, age grade, and race. Social statuses are carefully constructed through prescribed processes of teaching, learning, emulation, and enforcement. Whatever genes, hormones, and biological evolution contribute to human social institutions is materially as well as qualitatively transformed by social practices. . . . Thus, . . . gender cannot be equated with biological and physiological differences between human females and males. The building blocks of gender are *socially constructed statuses*. . . .

FOR INDIVIDUALS, GENDER MEANS SAMENESS

Although the possible combinations of genitalia, body shapes, clothing, mannerisms, sexuality, and roles could produce infinite varieties in human beings, the social institution of gender depends on the production and maintenance of a limited number of gender statuses and of making the members of these statuses similar to each other. Individuals are born sexed but not gendered, and they have to be taught to be masculine or feminine. As Simone de Beauvoir said: "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman . . . ; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature . . . which is described as feminine."

. . .

Many cultures go beyond clothing, gestures, and demeanor in gendering children. They inscribe gender directly into bodies. . . . In Western societies, women augment their breast size with silicone and reconstruct their faces with cosmetic surgery to conform to cultural ideals of feminine beauty. Hanna Papanek notes that these practices reinforce the sense of superiority or inferiority in the adults who carry them out as well as in the children on whom they are done. . . .

Sandra Bem argues that because gender is a powerful "schema" that orders the cognitive world, one must wage a constant, active battle for a child not to fall into typical gendered attitudes and behavior. In 1972, *Ms. Magazine* published Lois Gould's fantasy of how to raise a child free of gender-typing. The experiment calls for hiding the child's anatomy from all eyes except the parents' and treating the child as neither a girl nor a boy. The child, called X, gets to do all the things boys *and* girls do. The experiment is so successful that all the children in X's class at school want to look and behave like X. At the end of the story, the creators of the experiment are asked what will happen when X grows up. The scientists' answer is that by then it will be quite clear what X is, implying that its hormones will kick in and it will be revealed as a female or male. That ambiguous, and somewhat contradictory, ending lets Gould off the hook; neither she nor we have any idea what someone brought up totally androgynously would be like sexually or socially as an adult. The hormonal input will not create gender or sexuality but will only establish secondary sex characteristics; breasts, beards, and menstruation alone do not produce social manhood or womanhood. Indeed, it is at puberty, when sex characteristics become evident, that most societies put pubescent children through their most important rites of passage, the rituals that officially mark them as fully gendered—that is, ready to marry and become adults.

Most parents create a gendered world for their newborn by naming, birth announcements, and dress. Children's relationships with same-gendered and different-gendered caretakers structure their self-identifications and personalities. Through cognitive development, children extract and apply to their own actions the appropriate behavior for those who belong in their own gender, as well as race, religion, ethnic group, and social class,

rejecting what is not appropriate. If their social categories are highly valued, they value themselves highly; if their social categories are low status, they lose self-esteem. Many feminist parents who want to raise androgynous children soon lose their children to the pull of gendered norms. My son attended a carefully nonsexist elementary school, which didn't even have girls' and boys' bathrooms. When he was seven or eight years old, I attended a class play about "squares" and "circles" and their need for each other and noticed that all the girl squares and circles wore makeup, but none of the boy squares and circles did. I asked the teacher about it after the play, and she said, "Bobby said he was not going to wear makeup, and he is a powerful child, so none of the boys would either." In a long discussion about conformity, my son confronted me with the question of who the conformists were, the boys who followed their leader or the girls who listened to the woman teacher. In actuality, they both were, because they both followed same-gender leaders and acted in gender-appropriate ways. (Actors may wear makeup, but real boys don't.)

For human beings there is no essential femaleness or maleness, femininity or masculinity, womanhood or manhood, but once gender is ascribed, the social order constructs and holds individuals to strongly gendered norms and expectations. Individuals may vary on many of the components of gender and may shift genders temporarily or permanently, but they must fit into the limited number of gender statuses their society recognizes. In the process, they re-create their society's version of women and men: "If we do gender appropriately, we simultaneously sustain, reproduce, and render legitimate the institutional arrangements. . . . If we fail to do gender appropriately, we as individuals—not the institutional arrangements—may be called to account (for our character, motives, and predispositions)" (West and Zimmerman 1987).

The gendered practices of everyday life reproduce a society's view of how women and men should act. Gendered social arrangements are justified by religion and cultural productions and backed by law, but the most powerful means of sustaining the moral hegemony of the dominant gender ideology is that the process is made invisible; any possible alternatives are virtually unthinkable.

FOR SOCIETY, GENDER MEANS DIFFERENCE

The pervasiveness of gender as a way of structuring social life demands that gender statuses be clearly differentiated. Varied talents, sexual preferences, identities, personalities, interests, and ways of interacting fragment the individual's bodily and social experiences. Nonetheless, these are organized in Western cultures into two and only two socially and legally recognized gender statuses, "man" and "woman." In the social construction of gender, it does not matter what men and women actually do; it does not even matter if they do exactly the same thing. The social institution of gender insists only that what they do is *perceived* as different.

If men and women are doing the same tasks, they are usually spatially segregated to maintain gender separation, and often the tasks are given different job titles as well, such as executive secretary and administrative assistant. If the differences between women and men begin to blur, society's "sameness taboo" goes into action. At a rock and roll dance at West Point in 1976, the year women were admitted to the prestigious military academy for the first time, the school's administrators "were reportedly perturbed by the sight of mirror-image couples dancing in short hair and dress gray trousers," and a rule was established that women cadets could dance at these events only if they wore skirts. Women recruits in the U.S. Marine Corps are required to wear makeup—at a minimum, lipstick and eye shadow—and they have to take classes in makeup, hair care, poise, and etiquette.

This feminization is part of a deliberate policy of making them clearly distinguishable from men Marines. Christine Williams quotes a twenty-five-year-old woman drill instructor as saying: "A lot of the recruits who come here don't wear makeup; they're tomboyish or athletic. A lot of them have the preconceived idea that going into the military means they can still be a tomboy. They don't realize that you are a *Woman* Marine" (1989).

If gender differences were genetic, physiological, or hormonal, gender bending and gender ambiguity would occur only in . . . [those] who are born with chromosomes and genitalia that are not clearly female or male. Since gender differences are socially constructed, all men and all women can enact the behavior of the other, because they know the other's social script: "'Man' and 'woman' are at once empty and overflowing categories. Empty because they have no ultimate, transcendental meaning. Overflowing because even when they appear to be fixed, they still contain within them alternative, denied, or suppressed definitions" (J.W. Scott 1988). Nonetheless, though individuals may be able to shift gender statuses, the gender boundaries have to hold, or the whole gendered social order will come crashing down.

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GENDER AS PROCESS, STRATIFICATION, AND STRUCTURE

As a social institution, gender is a process of creating distinguishable social statuses for the assignment of rights and responsibilities. As part of a stratification system that ranks these statuses unequally, gender is a major building block in the social structures built on these unequal statuses.

As a *process*, gender creates the social differences that define "woman" and "man." In social interaction throughout their lives, individuals learn what is expected, see what is expected, act and react in expected ways, and thus simultaneously construct and maintain the gender order: "The very injunction to be a given gender takes place through discursive routes: to be a good mother, to be a heterosexually desirable object, to be a fit worker, in sum, to signify a multiplicity of guarantees in response to a variety of different demands all at once" (J. Butler 1990). Members of a social group neither make up gender as they go along nor exactly replicate in rote fashion what was done before. In almost every encounter, human beings produce gender, behaving in the ways they learned were appropriate for their gender status, or resisting or rebelling against these norms. Resistance and rebellion have altered gender norms, but so far they have rarely eroded the statuses.

Gendered patterns of interaction acquire additional layers of gendered sexuality, parenting, and work behaviors in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Gendered norms and expectations are enforced through informal sanctions of gender-inappropriate behavior by peers and by formal punishment or threat of punishment by those in authority should behavior deviate too far from socially imposed standards for women and men.

Everyday gendered interactions build gender into the family, the work process, and other organizations and institutions, which in turn reinforce gender expectations for individuals. Because gender is a process, there is room not only for modification and variation by individuals and small groups but also for institutionalized change.

As part of a *stratification* system, gender ranks men above women of the same race and class. Women and men could be different but equal. In practice, the process of creating difference depends to a great extent on differential evaluation. As Nancy Jay (1981) says: "That which is defined, separated out, isolated from all else is A and pure. Not-A is necessarily impure, a random catchall, to which nothing is external except A and the principle of order that separates it from Not-A." From the individual's point of view, whichever gender

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is A, the other is Not-A; gender boundaries tell the individual who is like him or her and all the rest are unlike. From society's point of view, however, one gender is usually the touchstone, the normal, the dominant, and the other is different, deviant, and subordinate. In Western society, "man" is A, "wo-man" is Not-A. (Consider what a society would be like where woman was A and man Not-A.) . . . The dominant categories are the hegemonic ideals, taken so for granted as the way things should be that, . . . [t]he characteristics of these categories define the Other as that which lacks the valuable qualities the dominants exhibit.

. . .

Societies vary in the extent of the inequality in social status of their women and men members, but where there is inequality, the status "woman" (and its attendant behavior and role allocations) is usually held in lesser esteem than the status "man." Since gender is also intertwined with a society's other constructed statuses of differential evaluation—race, religion, occupation, class, country of origin, and so on—men and women members of the favored groups command more power, more prestige, and more property than the members of the disfavored groups. Within many social groups, however, men are advantaged over women. The more economic resources, such as education and job opportunities, are available to a group, the more they tend to be monopolized by men. In poorer groups that have few resources (such as working-class African Americans in the United States), women and men are more nearly equal, and the women may even outstrip the men in education and occupational status.

As a *structure*, gender divides work in the home and in economic production, legitimates those in authority, and organizes sexuality and emotional life. As primary parents, women significantly influence children's psychological development and emotional attachments, in the process reproducing gender. Emergent sexuality is shaped by heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and sadomasochistic patterns that are gendered—different for girls and boys, and for women and men—so that sexual statuses reflect gender statuses.

When gender is a major component of structured inequality, the devalued genders have less power, prestige, and economic rewards than the valued genders. In countries that discourage gender discrimination, many major roles are still gendered; women still do most of the domestic labor and child rearing, even while doing full-time paid work; women and men are segregated on the job and each does work considered "appropriate"; women's work is usually paid less than men's work. Men dominate the positions of authority and leadership in government, the military, and the law; cultural productions, religions, and sports reflect men's interests. . . .

Gender inequality—the devaluation of "women" and the social domination of "men"—has social functions and a social history. It is not the result of sex, procreation, physiology, anatomy, hormones, or genetic predispositions. It is produced and maintained by identifiable social processes and built into the general social structure and individual identities deliberately and purposefully. The social order as we know it in Western societies is organized around racial, ethnic, class, and gender inequality. I contend, therefore, that the continuing purpose of gender as a modern social institution is to construct women as a group to be the subordinates of men as a group. The life of everyone placed in the status "woman" is "night to his day—that has forever been the fantasy. Black to his white. Shut out of his system's space, she is the repressed that ensures the system's functioning."

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There is no core or bedrock human nature below these endlessly looping processes of the social production of sex and gender, self and other, identity and psyche, each of which is a "complex cultural construction." *For humans, the social is the natural.* Therefore, "in its feminist senses, gender cannot mean simply the cultural appropriation of biological sexual difference. Sexual difference is itself a fundamental—and scientifically

contested—construction. Both 'sex' and 'gender' are woven of multiple, asymmetrical strands of difference, charged with multifaceted dramatic narratives of domination and struggle" (Haraway 1990).

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Masculinity as Homophobia

Fear, Shame, and Silence in the Construction of Gender Identity

Michael S. Kimmel

We think of manhood as eternal, a timeless essence that resides deep in the heart of every man. We think of manhood as a thing, a quality that one either has or doesn't have. We think of manhood as innate, residing in the particular biological composition of the human male, the result of androgens or the possession of a penis. We think of manhood as a transcendent tangible property that each man must manifest in the world, the reward presented with great ceremony to a young novice by his elders for having successfully completed an arduous initiation ritual. . . .

I view masculinity as a constantly changing collection of meanings that we construct through our relationships with ourselves, with each other, and with our world. Manhood is neither static nor timeless; it is historical. Manhood is not the manifestation of an inner essence; it is socially constructed. Manhood does not bubble up to consciousness from our biological makeup; it is created in culture. Manhood means different things at different times to different people. We come to know what it means to be a man in our culture by setting our definitions in opposition to a set of "others"— racial minorities, sexual minorities, and, above all, women.

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This idea that manhood is socially constructed and historically shifting should not be understood as a loss, that something is being taken away from men. In fact, it gives us something extraordinarily valuable—agency, the capacity to act. It gives us a sense of historical possibilities to replace the despondent resignation that invariably attends timeless, ahistorical essentialisms. Our behaviors are not simply "just human nature," because "boys will be boys." From the materials we find around us in our culture—other people, ideas, objects—we actively create our worlds, our identities. Men, both individually and collectively, can change.

MASCULINITY AS A HOMOSOCIAL ENACTMENT

Other men: We are under the constant careful scrutiny of other men. Other men watch us, rank us, grant our acceptance into the realm of manhood. Manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval. It is other men who evaluate the performance. Literary critic

David Leverenz argues that "ideologies of manhood have functioned primarily in relation to the gaze of male peers and male authority." Think of how men boast to one another of their accomplishments—from their latest sexual conquest to the size of the fish they caught—and how we constantly parade the markers of manhood—wealth, power, status, sexy women—in front of other men, desperate for their approval.

That men prove their manhood in the eyes of other men is both a consequence of sexism and one of its chief props. "Women have, in men's minds, such a low place on the social ladder of this country that it's useless to define yourself in terms of a woman," noted playwright David Mamet. "What men need is men's approval." Women become a kind of currency that men use to improve their ranking on the masculine social scale. (Even those moments of heroic conquest of women carry, I believe, a current of homosocial evaluation.) Masculinity is a *homosocial* enactment. We test ourselves, perform heroic feats, take enormous risks, all because we want other men to grant us our manhood.

Masculinity as a homosocial enactment is fraught with danger, with the risk of failure, and with intense relentless competition. "Every man you meet has a rating or an estimate of himself which he never loses or forgets," wrote Kenneth Wayne in his popular turn-of-the-century advice book. "A man has his own rating, and instantly he lays it alongside of the other man." Almost a century later, another man remarked to psychologist Sam Osherson that "[b]y the time you're an adult, it's easy to think you're always in competition with men, for the attention of women, in sports, at work."

MASCULINITY AS HOMOPHOBIA

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Homophobia is a central organizing principle of our cultural definition of manhood. Homophobia is more than the irrational fear of gay men, more than the fear that we might be perceived as gay. "The word 'faggot' has nothing to do with homosexual experience or even with fears of homosexuals," writes David Leverenz. "It comes out of the depths of manhood: a label of ultimate contempt for anyone who seems sissy, untough, uncool." Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate us, reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men. We are afraid to let other men see that fear. Fear makes us ashamed, because the recognition of fear in ourselves is proof to ourselves that we are not as manly as we pretend, that we are, like the young man in a poem by Yeats, "one that ruffles in a manly pose for all his timid heart." Our fear is the fear of humiliation. We are ashamed to be afraid.

Shame leads to silence—the silences that keep other people believing that we actually approve of the things that are done to women, to minorities, to gays and lesbians in our culture. The frightened silence as we scurry past a woman being hassled by men on the street. That furtive silence when men make sexist or racist jokes in a bar. That clammy-handed silence when guys in the office make gay-bashing jokes. Our fears are the sources of our silences, and men's silence is what keeps the system running. This might help to explain why women often complain that their male friends or partners are often so understanding when they are alone and yet laugh at sexist jokes or even make those jokes themselves when they are out with a group.

The fear of being seen as a sissy dominates the cultural definitions of manhood. It starts so early. "Boys among boys are ashamed to be unmanly," wrote one educator in 1871. I have a standing bet with a friend that I can walk onto any playground in America where 6-year-old boys are happily playing and by asking one question, I can provoke a fight. That question is simple: "Who's a sissy around here?" Once posed, the challenge is made. One

of two things is likely to happen. One boy will accuse another of being a sissy, to which that boy will respond that he is not a sissy, that the first boy is. They may have to fight it out to see who's lying. Or a whole group of boys will surround one boy and all shout "He is! He is!" That boy will either burst into tears and run home crying, disgraced, or he will have to take on several boys at once, to prove that he's not a sissy. (And what will his father or older brothers tell him if he chooses to run home crying?) It will be some time before he regains any sense of self-respect.

Violence is often the single most evident marker of manhood. Rather it is the willingness to fight, the desire to fight. The origin of our expression that one has a chip on one's shoulder lies in the practice of an adolescent boy in the country or small town at the turn of the century, who would literally walk around with a chip of wood balanced on his shoulder—a signal of his readiness to fight with anyone who would take the initiative of knocking the chip off.

As adolescents, we learn that our peers are a kind of gender police, constantly threatening to unmask us as feminine, as sissies. One of the favorite tricks when I was an adolescent was to ask a boy to look at his fingernails. If he held his palm toward his face and curled his fingers back to see them, he passed the test. He'd looked at his nails "like a man." But if he held the back of his hand away from his face, and looked at his fingernails with arm outstretched, he was immediately ridiculed as a sissy.

As young men we are constantly riding those gender boundaries, checking the fences we have constructed on the perimeter, making sure that nothing even remotely feminine might show through. The possibilities of being unmasked are everywhere. Even the most seemingly insignificant thing can pose a threat or activate that haunting terror. On the day the students in my course "Sociology of Men and Masculinities" were scheduled to discuss homophobia and male-male friendships, one student provided a touching illustration. Noting that it was a beautiful day, the first day of spring after a brutal northeast winter, he decided to wear shorts to class. "I had this really nice pair of new Madras shorts," he commented. "But then I thought to myself, these shorts have lavender and pink in them. Today's class topic is homophobia. Maybe today is not the best day to wear these shorts."

Our efforts to maintain a manly front cover everything we do. What we wear. How we talk. How we walk. What we eat. Every mannerism, every movement contains a coded gender language. Think, for example, of how you would answer the question: How do you "know" if a man is homosexual? When I ask this question in classes or workshops, respondents invariably provide a pretty standard list of stereotypically effeminate behaviors. He walks a certain way, talks a certain way, acts a certain way. He's very emotional; he shows his feelings. One woman commented that she "knows" a man is gay if he really cares about her; another said she knows he's gay if he shows no interest in her, if he leaves her alone.

Now alter the question and imagine what heterosexual men do to make sure no one could possibly get the "wrong idea" about them. Responses typically refer to the original stereotypes, this time as a set of negative rules about behavior. Never dress that way. Never talk or walk that way. Never show your feelings or get emotional. Always be prepared to demonstrate sexual interest in women that you meet, so it is impossible for any woman to get the wrong idea about you. In this sense, homophobia, the fear of being perceived as gay, as not a real man, keeps men exaggerating all the traditional rules of masculinity, including sexual predation with women. Homophobia and sexism go hand in hand.

The stakes of perceived sissydom are enormous—sometimes matters of life and death. We take enormous risks to prove our manhood, exposing ourselves disproportionately to health risks, workplace hazards, and stress-related illnesses. Men commit suicide three times as often as women. . . .

In one survey, women and men were asked what they were most afraid of. Women responded that they were most afraid of being raped and murdered. Men responded that they were most afraid of being laughed at.

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HOMOPHOBIA AS A CAUSE OF SEXISM, HETEROSEXISM, AND RACISM

Homophobia is intimately interwoven with both sexism and racism. The fear—sometimes conscious, sometimes not—that others might perceive us as homosexual propels men to enact all manner of exaggerated masculine behaviors and attitudes to make sure that no one could possibly get the wrong idea about us. One of the centerpieces of that exaggerated masculinity is putting women down, both by excluding them from the public sphere and by the quotidian put-downs in speech and behaviors that organize the daily life of the American man. Women and gay men become the "other" against which heterosexual men project their identities, against whom they stack the decks so as to compete in a situation in which they will always win, so that by suppressing them, men can stake a claim for their own manhood. Women threaten emasculation by representing the home, workplace, and familial responsibility, the negation of fun. Gay men have historically played the role of the consummate sissy in the American popular mind because homosexuality is seen as an inversion of normal gender development. There have been other "others." Through American history, various groups have represented the sissy, the non-men against whom American men played out their definitions of manhood, often with vicious results. In fact, these changing groups provide an interesting lesson in American historical development.

At the turn of the 19th century, it was Europeans and children who provided the contrast for American men. The "true American was vigorous, manly, and direct, not effete and corrupt like the supposed Europeans," writes Rupert Wilkinson. . . . By the middle of the century, black slaves had replaced the effete nobleman. Slaves were seen as dependent, helpless men, incapable of defending their women and children, and therefore less than manly. Native Americans were cast as foolish and naive children, so they could be infantalized as the "Red Children of the Great White Father" and therefore excluded from full manhood.

By the end of the century, new European immigrants were also added to the list of the unreal men, especially the Irish and Italians, who were seen as too passionate and emotionally volatile to remain controlled sturdy oaks, and Jews, who were seen as too bookishly effete and too physically puny to truly measure up. In the mid-20th century, it was also Asians—first the Japanese during the Second World War, and more recently, the Vietnamese during the Vietnam War—who have served as unmanly templates against which American men have hurled their gendered rage. Asian men were seen as small, soft, and effeminate—hardly men at all.

Such a list of "hyphenated" Americans . . . composes the majority of American men. So manhood is only possible for a distinct minority, and the definition has been constructed to prevent the others from achieving it. Interestingly, this emasculation of one's enemies has a flip side—and one that is equally gendered. These very groups that have historically been cast as less than manly were also, often simultaneously, cast as hypermasculine, as sexually aggressive, violent rapacious beasts, against whom "civilized" men must take a decisive stand and thereby rescue civilization. . . . But whether one saw these groups as effeminate sissies or as brutal uncivilized savages, the terms with which they were perceived were gendered. These groups become the "others," the screens against which traditional conceptions of manhood were developed.

Being seen as unmanly is a fear that propels American men to deny manhood to others, as a way of proving the unprovable—that one is fully manly. Masculinity becomes a defense

against the perceived threat of humiliation in the eyes of other men, enacted through a "sequence of postures"—things we might say, or do, or even think, that, if we thought carefully about them, would make us ashamed of ourselves. After all, how many of us have made homophobic or sexist remarks, or told racist jokes, or made lewd comments to women on the street? How many of us have translated those ideas and those words into actions, by physically attacking gay men, or forcing or cajoling a woman to have sex even though she didn't really want to because it was important to score?

POWER AND POWERLESSNESS IN THE LIVES OF MEN

I have argued that homophobia, men's fear of other men, is the animating condition of the dominant definition of masculinity in America, that the reigning definition of masculinity is a defensive effort to prevent being emasculated. In our efforts to suppress or overcome those fears, the dominant culture exacts a tremendous price from those deemed less than fully manly: women, gay men, nonnative-born men, men of color. This perspective may help clarify a paradox in men's lives, a paradox in which men have virtually all the power and yet do not feel powerful.

Manhood is equated with power—over women, over other men. Everywhere we look, we see the institutional expression of that power—in state and national legislatures, on the boards of directors of every major U.S. corporation or law firm, and in every school and hospital administration. Women have long understood this, and feminist women have spent the past three decades challenging both the public and the private expressions of men's power and acknowledging their fear of men. Feminism as a set of theories both explains women's fear of men and empowers women to confront it both publicly and privately. Feminist women have theorized that masculinity is about the drive for domination, the drive for power, for conquest.

This feminist definition of masculinity as the drive for power is theorized from women's point of view. It is how women experience masculinity. But it assumes a symmetry between the public and the private that does not conform to men's experiences. Feminists observe that women, as a group, do not hold power in our society. They also observe that individually, they, as women, do not feel powerful. They feel afraid, vulnerable. Their observation of the social reality and their individual experiences are therefore symmetrical. Feminism also observes that men, as a group, *are* in power. Thus, with the same symmetry, feminism has tended to assume that individually men must feel powerful.

This is why the feminist critique of masculinity often falls on deaf ears with men. When confronted with the analysis that men have all the power, many men react incredulously. "What do you mean, men have all the power?" they ask. "What are you talking about? My wife bosses me around. My kids boss me around. My boss bosses me around. I have no power at all! I'm completely powerless!"

Men's feelings are not the feelings of the powerful, but of those who see themselves as powerless. These are the feelings that come inevitably from the discontinuity between the social and the psychological, between the aggregate analysis that reveals how men are in power as a group and the psychological fact that they do not feel powerful as individuals. They are the feelings of men who were raised to believe themselves entitled to feel that power, but do not feel it. No wonder many men are frustrated and angry.

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The dimension of power is now reinserted into men's experience not only as the product of individual experience but also as the product of relations with other men. In this sense, men's experience of powerlessness is *real*—the men actually feel it and certainly act

on it—but it is not *true*, that is, it does not accurately describe their condition. In contrast to women's lives, men's lives are structured around relationships of power and men's differential access to power, as well as the differential access to that power of men as a group. Our imperfect analysis of our own situation leads us to believe that we men need *more* power, rather than leading us to support feminists' efforts to rearrange power relationships along more equitable lines.

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Why, then, do American men feel so powerless? Part of the answer is because we've constructed the rules of manhood so that only the tiniest fraction of men come to believe that they are the biggest of wheels, the sturdiest of oaks, the most virulent repudiators of femininity, the most daring and aggressive. We've managed to disempower the overwhelming majority of American men by other means—such as discriminating on the basis of race, class, ethnicity, age, or sexual preference.

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Others still rehearse the politics of exclusion, as if by clearing away the playing field of secure gender identity of any that we deem less than manly—women, gay men, nonnative-born men, men of color—middle-class, straight, white men can reground their sense of themselves without those haunting fears and that deep shame that they are unmanly and will be exposed by other men. This is the manhood of racism, of sexism, of homophobia. It is the manhood that is so chronically insecure that it trembles at the idea of lifting the ban on gays in the military, that is so threatened by women in the workplace that women become the targets of sexual harassment, that is so deeply frightened of equality that it must ensure that the playing field of male competition remains stacked against all newcomers to the game.

Exclusion and escape have been the dominant methods American men have used to keep their fears of humiliation at bay. The fear of emasculation by other men, of being humiliated, of being seen as a sissy, is the leitmotif in my reading of the history of American manhood. Masculinity has become a relentless test by which we prove to other men, to women, and ultimately to ourselves, that we have successfully mastered the part. The restlessness that men feel today is nothing new in American history; we have been anxious and restless for almost two centuries. Neither exclusion nor escape has ever brought us the relief we've sought, and there is no reason to think that either will solve our problems now. Peace of mind, relief from gender struggle, will come only from a politics of inclusion, not exclusion, from standing up for equality and justice, and not by running away.

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Patriarchy, the System

An It, Not a He, a Them, Or an Us

Allan G. Johnson

"When you say patriarchy," a man complained from the rear of the audience, "I know what you *really* mean—me!" A lot of people hear "men" whenever someone says "patriarchy," so that criticism of gender oppression is taken to mean that all men—each and every one