

Spring 2009
 Dr. Lois West
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SYLLABUS for SYD 4820: Sociology of Men

Description: This course examines the social construction of masculinities from perspectives on the influences of race and ethnicity, social class, sexuality/gender and age as these themes get organized into the life course of the American male. We will consider if there is a “war against boys?” Why are there fewer men in higher education? Are there crises in masculinities? The goal of the course is to gain a sociological perspective on being a man in the contemporary U.S., and to challenge the taken-for-granted nature of everyday life.

Required Readings: The following texts can be purchased at the university bookstore, local book stores or on-line and they are all in paperback:

- 1). Michael S. Kimmel and Michael A. Messner, Men’s Lives. Seventh Edition 2007 (make sure you get this one), Allyn and Bacon (www.ablongman.com)
- 2). Christina Hoff Sommers. The War Against Boys, 2000, Touchstone.
- 3). Norah Vincent, Self-Made Man, 2006, Viking.

Requirements: Successful completion of the following assignments done **on time** (assignments turned in late will not be accepted; no make-ups):

1. In class oral **presentations of the required readings** (4 worth 5 points each, 20 points total). If you are not here the date your reading is due, you will not receive points. Students can earn extra credit with extra presentations.
 2. Essay **exam #1 on the readings** (3 questions @ ten points each, 30 points)
 3. A **research project presented to the class** (20 points)
 4. Essay **exam #2** on the readings (3 questions worth ten points each, 30 points)
- Final points add up to 100 possible (20+30+20+30=100)

NOTE: I do not accept emailed assignments. You must turn in a hard copy in class or in my box in the sociology department on the due date.

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction to the sociology of men and the history of men’s studies.

Required Reading (henceforth RR): Kimmel and Messner (K/M) Men’s Lives, Introduction and article 1, Part One. Recommended: R.W. Connell, The Men and The Boys, Part One.

Week 2 and Week 3: Being a **Boy**—boy toys, sports, schooling.

RR: K/M Part Two; Sommers all.

No class January 19--Martin Luther King Day

Week 4: College Men—transitions to manhood

RR: K/M Part Three.

Week 5: Varieties of Masculinities—the difference race/ethnicity/history makes.

RR: Part One—articles 2-6.

Week 6: Men at Work

RR: K/M Part Four. **Your research project topic DUE.**

Week 7: Sex and Health

RR: K/M Part Seven; Part Five.

Week 8: Relationships

RR: K/M Part Six.

ESSAY EXAM #1

Week 9: Families

RR: K/M Part Eight.

Week 10: Overview of **Becoming a Man: Looking from the outside in.**

RR: Vincent all.

Week 11: SPRING BREAK No Classes

Week 12: Media manhood

RR: K/M Part Nine. **Your research bibliography with 20 sources DUE.**

Week 13: Aggression and violence; social movements

RR: K/M Parts Ten and Eleven.

Week 14-15: Your research PRESENTATIONS.

ESSAY EXAM #2 DUE