

Literature, Culture and Media
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Lecture – 19
Men's and Masculinity Studies

Welcome dear participants, we have discussed up till now how gender is a compulsory part of our cognition. In fact, everything which we see around us is already gendered. Gender is a part of the production and has always been so.

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- Gender is part of the relations of production and has always been so.
- In other words, "There is nothing outside gender. To be involved in social relations is to be inextricably "inside" gender. If everything, in this sense, is within gender, why should we be worried about the exteriority of the forces for social change? Politics, economics, technology are gendered."
(Donaldson)

And in other words to quote Donaldson "There is nothing outside gender". "To be involved in social relations is to be inextricably inside gender. If everything in this sense is within gender why should we be worried about the exteriority of the forces for social change. Politics, economics, technology are gendered." It is the pervasive presence of gender as a critical aspect, as a critical perspective has encouraged critics to think about not only femininity as a culture construct, but also about masculinity as being essentially a culture construct.

The idea germinated that if women are a culture product so are men and as gender norms influence women's life so do they influence the lives of men. So the masculinities started with this idea. People had started to talk about mens studies or masculinity studies as early as 1970s, but it was established only in 1990s as an independent discipline and people had to

started to take it somewhat seriously as you can imagine rightfully. It is an interdisciplinary discipline.

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Men's and Masculinity Studies

- Emerged as a discipline in the 1970s; Established itself as a discipline which received serious attention only in the 1990s
- Interdisciplinary field of study
 - Draws upon and combines the insights of various fields such as gender studies, feminist studies, anthropology, sociology, history, political science, and cultural studies
- Not a repudiation of feminist or gender studies
 - Emerges in tandem with the development of gender studies which was pivotal in challenging the sex/gender binary system to examine the ways in which gender, sex and sexuality are constructed socially and politically

It combines the insights of various fields particularly the feminist studies, the gender studies, anthropology, sociology, history, political science, law, cultural studies also. So masculinity studies should not be seen as a repudiation of feminist or gender studies. In fact, it emerges in tandem with the development of gender studies which was pivotal in challenging the binary of sex and gender and to examine the ways in which gender, sex and sexuality are constructed socially and politically,

influencing the lives not only of women, but also of men. The contribution of gender studies as well as women's study problematizing the category of gender has been tremendous.

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Contribution of Gender and Women's Studies in Problematizing the category of Gender

- Women and Gender Studies
 - Examine the material effects of gender on identities and the experience of women
 - Problematized the easy one-to-one correspondence between gender and sex
- The traditional understanding of sex as a biological essentialist category that corresponded to the behavioral traits and characteristics understood as belonging to a certain gender was increasingly being challenged and questioned.
 - Male/masculine and female/feminine dyad examined to reveal the ways in which gender was socially constructed to correspond to the biological category of sex as either male or female.

They had started by examining the material effects of gender on the experiences and identities of men and therefore the traditional understanding of sex as a biological essentialist category was studied thoroughly in the context of a women. However, it was thought that in the dyad of female and feminine and or versus male or masculine it has to also examine the ways in which it influences and impacts the lives of men also.

So we find that when the characteristics and behavioral traits of a particular component of gender is influenced by culture, the traits and behavioural aspects of the other component would also be influenced by the culture. The patriarchy or the absence of patriarchy is going to influence every human being. Feminist had also started to question literature as a cultural artefact and they saw it with certain type of suspicion and they felt that it is complicit with the regimen of patriarchy.

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Feminist and Gender Criticism

- Literature as a cultural artifact regarded with suspicion
 - Its complicity with the oppressive regime of patriarchy – a regime which uses this tool to maintain the status quo
- Feminist Literary criticism excavates forgotten traditions of writing by women in literary history overlooked by male or 'masculinist' critics
 - Exposes the ways in which literature itself becomes a vehicle through which patriarchy perpetuates itself
 - How submissive role models for women are constructed and disseminated for the emulation of the female reader
- The critic is bound by what Paul Ricoeur followed by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick calls the 'hermeneutics of suspicion'
 - Aim is to detect, like a sleuth in a murder mystery, the deep structures of patriarchal thinking that are concealed in the fictional text

Which is oppressive for women and has been used as a tool to maintain the status quo. They had also started to talk about the forgotten traditions of writing by women as well as how women have always been viewed by the male version of situations. Feminist criticism has also exposed the way literature itself becomes a vehicle through which patriarchy perpetuates itself.

For examples the projection of subordinate roles of women, for women are constructed and they are disseminated for the emulation of the female reader through literary pieces, through popular literature, through TV shows, through cinema et cetera. The critic is bound by what Paul Ricoeur followed by Eve Sedgwick has called “the hermeneutics of suspicion”.

The aim of the critic is to detect very much like a detective or a sleuth in a murder mystery, the deep structures of patriarchal thinking that are concealed in the fictional text. We may also question the need to study masculinity or why men's studies is relevant at all.

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Why Study Masculinity and Men's Studies

- Women's studies emphasized the material effects of gender on women and its connection to patriarchal forms of exploitation and oppression.
 - Masculinity studies extended the field by revealing ways in which gendering affects the identities and experiences of men as well as women.
- Looks at masculinity as a provisional, fluid and socially constructed category that manifests differently across different time periods and cultures
 - An important extension of feminist studies and an ally to feminist studies in a multifarious and continuously fluctuating relationship

Whereas women's studies had emphasized the material effects of gender on women and its connection to patriarchal forms of exploitation and oppression, Masculinity studies simply extended the field by revealing in ways the gendering affects the identity and experiences of men as well as women. So masculinity studies look at masculinity as being a provisional, fluid and socially constructed category that manifest differently across different time periods and cultures.

So masculinity studies should be seen as an important extension of feminist studies and an ally to it in a multifarious and continuously fluctuating relationship.

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- Michael Kimmel argues that Masculinity studies is “not necessarily the reactionary defensive rage of the men's rights groups, the mythic cross-cultural nostalgia of mythopoetry, nor even the theologically informed nostalgic yearning for separate spheres of Promise Keepers.”
- “Rather, masculinity studies can be informed by a feminist project to interrogate different masculinities, whether real (as in corporeal) or imagined (as in representations and texts).”

Kimmel here argues that masculinity studies are not necessarily the reactionary defensive rage of the men's rights group. Nor even the theologically informed nostalgic yearning for

separate spheres of what it terms as Promise Keepers. He says that masculinity studies can be informed by a feminist project to interrogate different masculinities whether real as in corporeal or imagined as in texts and representations. Masculinity studies begin by questioning the role of men in the society.

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It deals with questions like:

- Do all men have power? Do all men need power?
- Are men only the recipients of male privilege under patriarchal societies?
- Does masculinity intersect with race, class and sexuality to produce different kinds of experiences for men across time and space?
- Are there different kinds of masculinities?
- If so, how are they constructed?
- What is hegemonic masculinity?

They ask questions like whether all men have power, do they require power et cetera and they gradually move on to the presence of different kinds of masculinities and questioning how they are constructed and what exactly is their role.

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- What are the different ways to counter hegemonic manifestations of masculinity?
- How does toxic and protest masculinity inhibit men from engaging in certain forms of behaviors or desires?
- How does patriarchy function to establish acceptable form of expressing one's masculinity?
- Are men also victims of patriarchy?
- What is the relationship of heterosexuality and homophobia to hegemonic masculinity?
- An increasing number of studies theorize on a wide range of topics:
 - Male violence, masculinity and crime, male aggression in films and media, pornography, homosexuality and counter masculinity, different notions of fatherhood, male femininity, female masculinity, transgenderism and so on.

They look at the issues of different types of masculinities like toxic masculinity, hegemonic masculinity or protest masculinity and how do these different types of masculinities inhibit men from engaging in certain forms of behaviour or desires. They also try to find out whether

men like women have become victims of patriarchy and they also look at issues related with heterosexuality and homophobia.

So these questionings were not possible only within the umbrella term of feminist studies, or gender studies. So we find that an independent studies of masculinity was very much the need. Even though there are various anxieties about the relevance in this scope of masculinity studies.

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Anxieties about Men's and Masculinity Studies

- Many theorists within Feminist Studies display skepticism and wariness when it comes to focusing on men and masculinities
 - Believe that it would derail the cause of feminism which is to emphasize the ways in which women experience oppression and suppression within sexist and patriarchal systems
 - Would divert attention from the women's issues and the problem of structural inequalities that women have to deal with

So many theorists within the feminist circle display certain skepticism towards it. So they feel that the focus on men and masculinities as an academic enquiry perhaps would derail the cause of feminism which is to emphasize the ways in which women experience operation and suppression within sexist and patriarchal culture. They also believe that such a project would divert attention from the women's issues and problem of a structural inequalities that women have to deal with.

In general, their anxieties lie in the question that an emphasis on masculinities studies would derail the focus from issues which women's studies have raised from time to time. This is opposed and critically viewed not only by women in the women's study circle.

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- Critics in men's and masculinity studies opine that simply focusing on women's issues runs the danger of erasing the effects of normative masculinities on the psyche of men.
- They believe that since both femininities and masculinities are socially and culturally produced; they are both worthy of critical attention if one wishes to unpack and reveal the ways in which hierarchical power relations dynamically interact with the category of gender, sex and sexuality to produce their unequal relations of power between men and women.
 - Tania Modleski, *Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a 'Postfeminist' Age* (1991).

But critics in men's studies also opine that simply focusing on women's issues runs the danger of erasing the effects of normative masculinities on the psyche of men. They believe that since both femininities and masculinities are socially and culturally produced. They are both worthy of critical attention and if one wants to understand the ways in which power hierarchies work, then one has to study not only women but also men.

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A Note on Etymology

- The term 'masculinity' has achieved a remarkable pre-eminence across the cultural landscape:
 - Been in use only since the mid-eighteenth century, originates out of the Latin word *masculines*.
 - Terms like 'manly' and 'manliness' were part of everyday vocabulary during Victorian and Edwardian periods.
 - Manliness (in Victorian and Edwardian eras) was to be more openly 'not feminine'—direct association with physical strength, muscularity, physical trial, denial (of luxury) and endurance in the face of death and torment
- Far from being a naturally given attribute, masculinity/manliness is now seen as historically variable and subject to change within and across social groupings.

While the term masculinity has achieved a remarkable pre-eminence in today's critical scenario, in the cultural landscape so to say. The word masculinity has been induced only since the mid-18th century originating from the Latin word masculine. However, by contrast the terms manly and manliness were part of everyday vocabulary much earlier and during the Victorian and Edwardian periods they had come to establish a certain meaning.

Manliness in these eras was to mean openly something which is not feminine, something which is more associated with what we can understand as physical strength, muscularity, physical trait, denial of luxury and endurance in the face of death and torment. Far from being given as a natural attribute masculinity or manliness is now seen as being historical, variable and subject to change within and across social groups.

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Defining Masculinity/-ies

- To paraphrase Richard Dyer, it is not male sexuality but masculinity per se that “is a bit like air, you breathe in all the time but you aren’t aware of it much.”
- In her book *Masculinities* (1990), Connell describes masculinity as “the pattern or configuration of social practices linked to the position of men in the gender order, and socially distinguished from practices linked to the position of women.”
 - It is “substantially a social construction” that “refers to male bodies, but is not determined by male biology.”
 - “Masculinities and femininities are best understood as gender projects, dynamic arrangements of social practice through time, in which we make ourselves and are made as particular kinds of human beings.”

A major difference from feminist studies can also be seen in the sense that it is not male sexuality which is the focus normally, but masculinity per se which to paraphrase Dyer, is a bit like air, you breathe in all the time, but you are not aware of it much. So in a way if you would find that masculinity is a concept as a cultural projection is around us all the time.

Connell in her book *Masculinities* which was published in 1990 has described masculinity as the pattern or configuration of social practices which are linked to the positions of men in the gender order and socially distinguished from practices which are linked to the position of women. So it has to be seen substantially as a social construction that refers to male bodies, but at the same time it is not determined by a male biology.

Connell further states that masculinities and femininities are best understood as gender projects. Dynamic arrangements of social practice through time in which we make ourselves and are made as particular kinds of human beings. Here we would find that masculinity has been defined as being a transcendental anchor.

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Masculinities

- “Masculinity has for so long stood as the transcendental anchor and guarantor of cultural authority and ‘truth,’ demonstrating its materiality, its ‘constructedness,’ requires an especially energetic rhetorical and critical insistence” (Bryce Traister 2000).
- Masculinity is “a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture” (Connell 1995; 2005).
 - Argues that there are *multiple conceptions of masculinity* or manliness
 - No single or unified masculine role in terms of “configurations of practice”

This is the point of reference in our gendered world. This idea has been presented by feminist thinkers starting with Simone de Beauvoir when they had started to define women as the other. So masculinity demonstrates its materiality, its constructedness and it requires an especially energetic rhetorical and critical insistence because it has been always been a dominant cultural motive for us to refer to or respond to or explain further.

Masculinity is a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture. The idea that there is an inbuilt plurality in masculinities was first aggressively suggested by R. Connell, who has said that there are multiple conceptions of masculinity or manliness and as far as the configurations of practice determine there cannot be any single or a unified definition of what constitutes a masculine role in the society.

We find that this concept of plurality which had started in the feminist thought much earlier started slightly at a later date in the context of masculinity studies. There are different types of masculinities also. As it is a social, cultural and historical construct. It relies and is connected to factors such as race, class, caste, sexuality, age, et cetera. So there are hierarchical power structures not only between men and men, but also among different kinds of men.

So Connell maintains that there are many kinds of masculinities; however, it is suggested by Connell that there is always a particular hegemonic masculinity, a particular kind of masculinity which is superior to others at any given moment in every society.

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Different Types of Masculinities

- Masculinity is a social, cultural, and historical construct, reliant on and connected to factors such as race, class, caste, sexuality, age etc.
 - Hierarchical power relations between different kinds of masculinities
 - There are many kinds of masculinities but that there is always one that is hegemonic or ideal to the rest and marginalizes others in a gender system (Connell)
 - Does not mean that hegemonic masculinity is either monolithic or static, but, rather, that it is the kind of masculinity that is in a superior position
- Each culture will prefer one kind of masculinity over others.
- Connell maintains that most men do *not* live in the model of hegemonic masculinity, and that masculinity (as femininity) has internal contradictions and historical ruptures.

At the same time this hegemonic masculinity is neither monolithic or static, rather it is the kind of masculinity that has a superior position. Connell also maintains that most men do not live in the model of hegemonic masculinity and that masculinity has internal contradictions and historical ruptures in the same way as femininity possesses.

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Characteristics of Ideal or Hegemonic Masculinity

- There are infinite number of ways to be a man which exist within a hierarchy of manhood. "Hegemonic masculinity" is characterized by few key tenets:
 - 1) Distance oneself from femininity
 - 2) Restrict emotions
 - 3) Be tough and aggressive (avoid vulnerability)
 - 4) Be seen as highly sexual with women
 - 5) Prove one's heterosexuality via homophobia

Source: <<http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/men-and-masculinities>>

These different types of masculinities begin with the discussion of an ideal masculinity or hegemonic masculinity which has normally a superior place in the gender hierarchy within men. There are infinite number of ways to be a man which exist within hierarchy of manhood and there are certain key tenets which are normally associated with hegemonic masculinity.

The first term is distancing oneself from femininity and you would find that when we had studied the different ways in which the idea of gender is constructed, the different ways in which gender can be referred to as a technology distancing oneself from femininity has always been a particular way of teaching a child what is the gender appropriate behaviour. Another key tenet is considered to be one's restrictions or the expression of one's emotions.

In hegemonic masculinity we find that normally it is not expected that men would display too many emotions. At the same time, it is expected they have to be tough and aggressive, they have to avoid any show of vulnerability and at the same time they have to be heterosexual and they have to display it by an obsessively sexual behaviour with women. So this aspect of homophobia as well as heterosexuality is a key term of hegemonic masculinity.

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- "Hegemonic masculinity contains within it the image of the 'man' in power, a man **with** power and a man **of** power. We equate manhood with being strong, successful, capable, reliable, in control. The very definitions of manhood we have developed in our culture maintain the power that some men have over other men and that men have over women."
(Kimmel, 1997)
- In Western societies, Hegemonic masculinity hinges upon:
 - Heterosexuality, financial autonomy, rationality, success and status, being able to support one's family, being able to remain stoic and aloof, and above all by rejecting any attribute or behavior that is considered "feminine"

Hegemonic masculinity contains within it, the image of a man who is in power, a man who is with power and a man who is off power. We equate manhood with being strong, successful, capable, reliable, in control. The very definitions of manhood we have developed in our culture maintain the power that some men have over other men and necessarily overall women. So in western societies we find that hegemonic masculinity hinges upon and the situation is not very different in non-western societies I would say.

So it hinges upon heterosexuality, financial autonomy, rationality, success and status, being able to support one's family, being able to remain stoic and aloof despite disturbances and above all by rejecting any attribute or behaviour that is considered feminine.

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- It's not so much an actual personality type or a real male character/being. It is a set of *prescriptive societal norms* and rules that men are expected to emulate or follow.
- Critics suggest that hegemonic masculinity operates as an aspirational model or goal rather than an actual lived reality for most men.
 - A key feature of this notion is its “phantasmic” quality
 - Argues that these ideals of hegemonic masculinity are found in fantasy characters, role models, and literary and film heroes who are constructed as larger than life characters (Donaldson 1993)

It is not so much in actual personality type or a real male character or a being. It is a set of prescriptive societal norms and rules that men are expected to follow. Critics suggest that hegemonic masculinity operates as an aspirational model or a goal rather than actuality which is lived reality for most men. In other words, a key feature of this notion is its phantasmic quality.

Donaldson has also argued that the ideals of hegemonic masculinities are readily available in our culture and culture artefacts. He said that they are found in fantasy characters, in different role models which are projected through history and culture, the film heroes, the heroes and protagonist, then literary products and they are normally constructed as larger than life figures.

So role models in terms of this particular type of masculinity, the hegemonic masculinity are readily available in different types of cultural products.

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- Heterosexuality and homophobia are the bedrock of hegemonic masculinity.
 - The term "hegemonic masculinity" was invented and is used primarily to maintain this central focus in the critique of masculinity
 - Fundamental element of hegemonic masculinity: women exist as potential sexual objects for men while men are negated as sexual objects for men. Women provide heterosexual men with sexual validation, and men compete with each other for this. (Donaldson 3)

Heterosexuality and homophobia are the bedrock of hegemonic masculinity. In fact, the term hegemonic masculinity was invented and is used primarily to maintain its central focus in the critique of masculinity. A fundamental element of hegemonic masculinity then is that women exist as potential sexual objects only for men, while men are negated as sexual objects for men, so that is heterosexuality.

Women provide heterosexual men with sexual validation and men compete with each other for this. So heterosexuality and homophobia go hand in hand as far as the understanding of hegemonic masculinity and related role models are concerned. Another type of masculinity which we normally look around is considered or named as toxic masculinity. Toxic because it is related with violence and aggression in relationships.

Violence and aggression in relationships, which is exactly harmful for other people, for the society and also for the perpetrator.

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2. Toxic Masculinity

- The term toxic masculinity defines “those aspects of hegemonic masculinity that are socially destructive, such as misogyny, homophobia, greed, and violent domination...”(Terry Kupers 2001).
- Toxic as it promotes violence and aggression in relationships
- Characteristics which harm the society

So toxic masculinity normally talks about those aspects of hegemonic masculinity which are socially destructive such as extreme misogyny, extreme homophobia, greed, violent, domination et cetera. It often results in criminal behaviour towards women and transgender.

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3. Protest Masculinity

- Instances of extreme forms of sex-typed behavior on the part of some males.
 - High levels of physical aggression
 - Destructiveness, low tolerance for delay of gratification, crime, drinking, and similar dispositions
- A form of marginalized masculinity which appropriates some of the features of hegemonic masculinity in the society but reconfigures and reworks them in the context of deprivation and poverty (Connell, 2005).
 - A distorted image of hegemonic form of masculinity in socially and economically dispossessed and underprivileged contexts

Protest masculinity is also a term to denote certain extreme forms of sex type behaviour on the part of some males. Key to the concept of protest masculinity are high levels of physical aggression. It is definitely less than the toxic masculinity, but the protest masculinity profile is also proposed as including destructiveness, low tolerance for delay of gratification, petty crimes, drinking behaviour and similar dispositions.

A form of marginalized masculinity which appropriates some of the features of hegemonic masculinity in the society, but reconfigures them and reworks them in the context of

deprivation and poverty is normally named as protest masculinity. In other words, we can understand that in terms of a distorted image of hegemonic form of masculinity in socially and economically dispossessed and under privileged context,

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- Theorists suggest that men who have limited power and are unable to derive and construct a sense of hegemonic masculinity through economic autonomy, ownership of wealth and property and education will often indulge in a “spectacular display” of masculine protest to compensate for their fears, anxieties and feelings of powerlessness.
 - Display of male aggression, sexual violence, domestic violence, criminal behavior etc.
 - These acts become acceptable ways of reaffirming their traditional manliness

the behaviours of men who have limited power and therefore they are unable to derive a construct a sense of self-respect, a sense of hegemonic masculinity because they have failed to achieve economic autonomy, they have failed to own a wealth or a property or education and therefore they often indulge in a spectacular display of masculine protest to compensate for their fears, anxieties, inadequacies and feelings of powerlessness.

Such display of masculinity can occur in the form of their aggressive behaviour, sexual violence, domestic violence, criminal behaviour et cetera. However, when we compare it with toxic masculinities we find that it remains to be a low key affair. These acts become acceptable ways in the society of reaffirming their traditional manliness and therefore they are in a way supported indirectly by the social norms.

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4. Metrosexual Male

- Over the years because of changing dynamics in our socio-cultural set-up we have seen the rise of the Metrosexual male pushed by the capitalist market economy which saw the single heterosexual metropolitan male as its new market in the early 90s
 - Characterized by his meticulousness with regards to grooming and appearance thereby spending a lot of time and money on shopping

Metrosexual male is the term, which we use for a male figure which has been created by the capitalist market economy. Over the years the socio-cultural setup and related dynamics have changed and metrosexual male is characterized by its meticulousness with regards to grooming and appearance; a person who spends a lot of time and money on shopping, on self-care, on manicure.

So let us say that the capitalist market economy which started sales of for example in Indian context fairness creams for men has depended on the creation of the image of a metrosexual male. So metrosexual male and related masculinity traits are often conceived to be a creation of a market driven capitalist economy.

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5. Spornosexual Male

- In the year 2014, Mark Simpson, a journalist who writes extensively on masculinity, proposed that the era of the metrosexual has been taken over by the rise of the '**spornosexual**'
 - Aesthetics of male beauty are derived from a combination of sports and porn
 - Spends a lot of time in the gym; style emphasizes musculature and tattooing
 - Heterosexualizes the metrosexual because the metrosexual aesthetics were close to homosexual aesthetics.
- 'Metrosexual' was a pejorative adjective given that the social framework continues to remain homophobic.
 - Spornosexuals, on the other hand, take pride in their body and spend a lot of time bulking it up and posting photographs of their bodies on social media.

However, a new term has been suggested by Mark Simpson, in the year 2014 and the term is spornosexual male. Mark Simpson who is a journalist, who has written extensively on masculinity proposed that the era of metrosexual has been taken over by the spornosexual. Spornosexual combines the aesthetics of male beauties and derives from a combination of sports and porn.

The spornosexual male spends also a lot of time in the gym and his style also emphasizes musculature and tattooing; however, the spornosexual in a way has heterosexualized the metrosexual. Because the metrosexual aesthetics were often considered to be close to the homosexual aesthetics. There is a lot of emphasis on self-care, beautification of the male body which was often considered in a pejorative way.

So metrosexual was a pejorative adjective given that the social framework continues to remain homophobic. Spornosexuals on the other hand take pride in their body, spend a lot of time of gym, post their photos on the websites et cetera and thrive on heterosexuality. At the same time masculinity studies feel that the experience of power for men is rather contradictory.

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Men's Contradictory Experience of Power

- Gender is the central organizing category of our psyches.
 - Axis around which we organize our personalities
- Patriarchy exists as a system not simply of men's power over women but also of hierarchies of power among different groups of men and among different masculinities.
 - Strange combination of power and powerlessness, privilege and pain in the lives of men
 - Enjoy social power and many forms of privilege by virtue of being male
 - But the way power has been set up, it causes immense pain, isolation and alienation not only for women, but for men.
- Most men cannot measure up to the dominant ideals of manhood— these maintain a powerful and often unconscious presence in their lives.
 - They have power because they describe and embody real relations of power between men and women and among men.

We know that gender is a central organising category of our psyches and patriarchy has always existed as a system of power of men over women. But this is a simplification and we find that hierarchies of power work not only in terms of men exploiting the women, but a men exploiting some other categories of men and therefore these types of power structures create a strange combination of power and powerlessness in a man's life.

Men in general enjoy social power and has certain privilege, certain set of privileges rather by virtue of being men, but within the masculine culture they may also have certain powerlessness because the hierarchies of power work for them. The way power has been set up this deprivation because of hierarchical nature of masculinities may also cause immense pain, isolation and alienation for men.

So whereas women feel isolated because they have been victim of patriarchy, we feel that some men can also be victims of the patriarchy and feel isolated and alienated. Although most man cannot possibly measure up to the dominant ideals of manhood these maintain still a powerful lure to them because these sets of you know projections of manhood have power they describe and embody real relations of power between men and women.

And also among men, so we would find that the cultural products related with hegemonic masculinity is always work as a lure towards men.

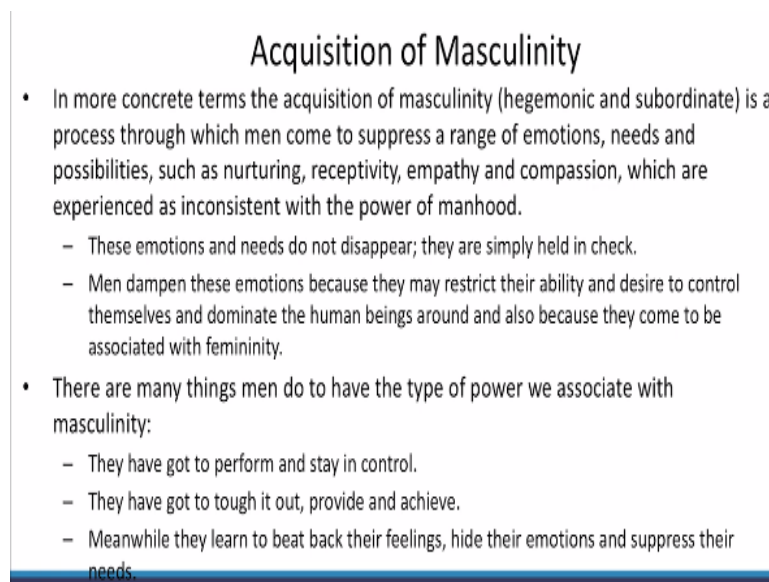
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- These dominant ideals vary sharply from society to society, from era to era.
 - Each subgroup, based on race, class, sexual orientation, or whatever, defines manhood in ways that conform to the economic and social possibilities of that group.
 - For example, part of the ideal of working class manhood among white North American men stresses physical skills and the ability to physically manipulate one's environment
 - While part of the ideal of their upper-middle class counterparts stresses verbal skills and the ability to manipulate the environment through economic, social and political means.

So these dominant ideals vary from society to society, from era to era and each subgroup which is based on race, class, sexual orientation defines manhood in ways that confirm to the economic and social possibilities of that group. For example, part of the ideal of working class manhood among white North American men stresses physical skills and the ability to physically manipulate one's environment.

While part of the ideal of their upper middle class counterpart stresses verbal skills and the ability to manipulate the environment through economic, social and political means. Acquisition of masculinity is also a process which teach us certain skills to encourages them to opt for a certain behaviour. For example, it is expected that men would be able to suppress a range of emotions,

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Acquisition of Masculinity

- In more concrete terms the acquisition of masculinity (hegemonic and subordinate) is a process through which men come to suppress a range of emotions, needs and possibilities, such as nurturing, receptivity, empathy and compassion, which are experienced as inconsistent with the power of manhood.
 - These emotions and needs do not disappear; they are simply held in check.
 - Men dampen these emotions because they may restrict their ability and desire to control themselves and dominate the human beings around and also because they come to be associated with femininity.
- There are many things men do to have the type of power we associate with masculinity:
 - They have got to perform and stay in control.
 - They have got to tough it out, provide and achieve.
 - Meanwhile they learn to beat back their feelings, hide their emotions and suppress their needs.

Needs and possibilities for example nurturing, showing empathy towards other, showing compassion to others, which are normally associated with being feminine. These emotions and needs do not disappear; they are simply held in check. So men dampen these emotions because they may restrict their ability and desire to control themselves in dominate human beings around them and also because they come to be associated with femininity.

So we would find that men also have their compulsions in a patriarchal setup and masculinity studies also tell us about these possibilities. Cultural theories for example like Raymond Williams have also argued about the impact of media.

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- Cultural theorists such as Raymond Williams have argued that while it's people who produce the images that bombard us daily on tv etc., it's also true that this virtual landscape of images, in some sense produces us.
 - These images have a profound impact on who we are, and on our tastes, attitudes and the choices we make
 - One major male image as a stereotype in media content from movies, advertising and other forms is the “macho” male image
 - Often one sees the image of the strong father/breadwinner who saves his family from danger, surviving in threatening situations
 - Stereotype of the masculine, heterosexual, dominant and aggressive male makes recurring appearances in comic strips, superhero cinema, dark thrillers, action drama and romance novels

And media related projections on the psyche of men. They say that we are bombarded daily by certain images on TV, in newspapers, on social media and these images are created by men, for example by human beings, but let us say that these images also have a profound impact on who we are and they also determine our taste, attitudes and the choices we make. In our discussions on gender and media we would exclude this idea further.

One major male image as a stereotype in media, in movies, in advertisement et cetera is known as the macho male image. For example, in police and detective dramas, in action movies it is always the macho mens image which is projected before us. So we often see the images of a strong father, a breadwinner who saves his family from danger, who survives in threatening situations.

So from comic strips to superhero cinema, from thrillers and action movies, to romance novels, TV, media et cetera the social media the stereotype of the masculine heterosexual dominant and aggressive male makes recurring appearances and this has certain impact on the way manhood is perceived not only by men, but also by a woman for example.

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- Hence, we can conclude that masculinity is not static but a dynamic ideological force which changes its face according to history
 - It is socially constructed and culture plays a prime role in disseminating models of ideal masculinity through cinema, mythologies, advertising, novels, etc.
 - Society continue to trick its male subjects to conform to standard behaviors that it has designed for them
- Masculinity is a deception in which male bodies are fashioned to perform dangerous and life-threatening tasks to save one culture from other rival cultures.

So we can conclude that masculinity is not static, but a dynamic ideological force which changes its face according to history. It is socially constructed and culture plays a very important role in disseminating models of what it considers to be the ideal masculinity and this dissemination takes place through cinema, mythology, advertisements, novels et cetera. So the society continuous to trick its male subjects to confirm to certain standard behaviours.

Very much it tricks women to behave in a certain fashion. So masculinity is a description in which male bodies are fashioned to perform dangerous and even life threatening task to save our culture from other rival cultures. So I would end my discussion on masculinities here. In the next module we would be discussing how the queer studies have taken shape and how the media representation of gender reinforces our understanding of gender, thank you.