

BROTHER

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Special Silver Anniversary Edition



*25 years of changing men ~
history, progress & opportunities*

**Presenting: Abstracts from the 12th Men's
Studies Association Meeting**

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Introduction to the 12th Annual Men's Studies Association Meeting

David Greene, PhD, Ramapo College, MSA Co-chair

The Men's Studies Association (MSA) of NOMAS was founded in 1982. The organization links together a diverse group of national and international pro-feminist scholars, students, teachers, practitioners and others who study issues of men and masculinity. Over the years, the MSA has made significant contributions to the growing field of men's studies. This has been accomplished primarily through the *Men and Masculinities Journal* and the annual meeting.

The journal, which presents cutting-edge scholarly research and theory, began as *The Men's Studies Review*. It then evolved into *Maculinites*, published by Guilford Press. The current journal, *Men and Masculinities*, made its debut in July of 1998. This widely available quarterly is published by Sage under the editorship of MSA Co-Chair Michael Kimmel.

The MSA Annual Meetings began in 1989. The content and format of these meetings have varied widely. But several elements have remained constant. First and, perhaps foremost, the MSA meetings have provided a place where men's studies scholars can share their current research. Presenters typically include a mix of well-established figures in the field; those early in their careers; and those just starting out--graduate students presenting aspects of theses and dissertations. In addition, the MSA meetings have often included workshops and papers that deal with the teaching of men's studies. Here this same mix of scholars, most of whom teach, can talk about resources, pedagogy and ways to effectively bring pro-feminist men's studies to greater and greater numbers of college students.

Another typical feature of the MSA meetings has been a workshop designed to de-mystify the publication process and assist new scholars in learning the nuts-and-bolts of getting their work published. While the MSA is primarily an organization of men's studies researchers and teachers, issues of application and activism are also often addressed at the annual meeting.

Most of the elements described above can be found in this year's program. While there is no publication workshop, the eleven presentations represent an engaging sample of work currently being done in men's studies. I hope that the abstracts that follow give some sense of the wealth of the information, ideas and issues that make up the substance of this twelfth meeting of the MSA. As co-chair of the MSA I am pleased that we are able to provide these abstracts for publication in this special Silver Anniversary Edition of **BROTHER**.

David Green
Men's Studies Association Co-Chair
August 10, 2000

Gender-role Conflict & Psychological Well-Being: An Exploration in Men Enrolled to Attend an "Initiatory Weekend"

Christopher Burke, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

The existing empirical literature consistently shows that younger college aged men with higher levels of gender role conflict (GRC) report higher levels of depression and anxiety and lower levels of self-esteem (O'Neil et al., 1995). However there have not been as many studies with older men. And in the studies conducted with older men, the relationship between GRC and psychological well-being is more tenuous (O'Neil et al., 1995).

The study discussed in this presentation examines the link between reported levels of GRC and well-being in a sample of non-college age men (mean age = 43.92) who were scheduled to attend a weekend workshop offered by the ManKind Project, a mythopoetic men's organization. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire before the weekend. Part of the questionnaire contained the depression and anxiety sub-scales of the Brief Symptom Inventory (the Rosenberg self-esteem scale - 1979), and part contained three of the sub-scales of the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS).

As predicted, higher levels of GRC were related to significantly lower levels of well-being ($p < .01$) in this sample of older men. A modestly statistically significant relationship was found between age and two of the GRCS sub-scales (GRC declining with higher ages). However when compared with previously studied samples of both older and younger men, different levels of GRC were found in the present sample. In addition, a significant link was found between participants' level of therapy experience and GRC. Higher GRC was associated with more therapy experience, a finding opposite to what was predicted. Future research directions are discussed.

Friendship Among White Middleclass Males

Don Levy, University of Connecticut

Rather than simply describing current patterns of male friendship, Mr. Levy explores how the manner in which men construct or fail to construct same-sex friendships affect not only their cross-sex relationships but their contribution to gender equality on a social level. The presentation addresses the tension between belief and behavior in male friendships in regards to sexism. The presentation proposes that the manner in which white middleclass men engage in friendship impacts the rate and depth of gender equality in society. Further research comparing the friendship patterns of men who self-describe as pro-feminist and those who don't is discussed.

Double Injustice: Sex and the Crisis in Childcare Employment.

Stephanie Chastain, PhD, University of Washington

This paper outlines a text in preparation, a text that challenges the injustices imposed on both men and women in the childcare workforce. It focuses on particular experiences and case studies to examine the design and presentation of the corresponding and conflicting stereotypes that both exclude men from the childcare field and press women into it. The paper questions the sexual and biological foundations attributed to the relationship between children and the gendered and sexual beings that care for them. Finally, it explores the ways that our particular division of labor has manipulated and controlled access to children by both sexes. (Marx, Engels, Freud, Foucault, Mead, Masson, Chodorow)

Adolescent Fathers

Candan Duran-Aydintug, PhD
Susan Wigington
Adam Brittain
University of Colorado, Denver

This study is part of a larger "adolescent fathers" project. The project focuses on father identity, informal and formal support, and interaction/involvement of the adolescent father with his child. This paper presents the preliminary results of a study done in a formal organization dealing with training adolescent fathers. It aims at understanding the formal support available to teen fathers. Data were collected based on observations, in-depth interviews, and participant observations. How this program relates to the lives of the adolescent fathers and feedback from both the fathers and the researchers are presented with suggestions for future research.

Mothers and Sons: Feminism, Masculinity and the Struggle to Raise our Sons

Andrea O'Reilly, PhD, York University, Ontario, CA

This paper is based on the presenter's forthcoming edited book on Mothers and Sons. It seeks to move forward the feminist dialogue on mothers and sons and to shed new light on this important relationship that has increasingly engaged the minds and hearts of mothers and feminist academics alike. This paper reflects on what emerged as the three central, albeit overlapping, themes of the book.

The first section "Mothering and Motherhood" looks at women's mothering and considers the various ways that the institution of motherhood oppresses women, circumvents mother-son attachment and causes boys to be raised sexist and masculine, as defined in patriarchal culture.

The next section, "Men and Masculinities" examines the various ways feminist mothers seek to dismantle, destabilize, and deconstruct normative patterns of male socialization and traditional definitions of masculinity.

Spreading the Word: Teaching Men's Studies Beyond the Classroom

Christopher Kilmartin, PhD, Mary Washington College

This workshop focuses on strategies for reaching the male campus population in places other than just the classroom. The presenter has participated in several such efforts including:

1. Gender-aware programming on fully respectful relationships for the general population of males as well as for specific populations of athletes, fraternity members, and military school cadets. These programs address sexual assault and sexual harassment, but also aspirational standards for relationships and the benefits that men accrue by striving for such standards.
2. The White Ribbon Campaign: Men working to end men's violence toward women. A grass-roots effort to identify gender-based violence as a men's issue and to get men involved in raising awareness of this widespread problem.
3. A theatrical presentation that stimulates men to re-examine their feelings about masculinity and about themselves.

4. The social norms approach to attitude change. An environmental intervention to correct the demonstrated distortion that college men underestimate other men's discomfort with sexist behaviors in all male peer groups.

For programs 2, 3, and 4, the presenter has original research to demonstrate their effectiveness. Workshop participants are invited to contribute their own ideas and experiences to growing men's studies beyond the classroom.

Tufts University Men Against Violence: A Study in Personal Activism & the Importance of Vulnerability in Men's Organizations

Zev Schuman, Tufts University

This presentation/workshop introduces the philosophy of 'personal activism' as it has been employed by Tufts University Men Against Violence (TMAV). The presenter shares a 3-year history of TMAV, focusing on the development of the concepts of 'personalist leadership' and 'spheres of vulnerability.' Mr. Schuman uses his experience as Senior Co-Chairman of TMAV to demonstrate how a leadership that practices personal vulnerability can strengthen a men's activist organization. He shows the essential importance of addressing men's comfort, or lack thereof, with feelings of vulnerability and the effects of these feelings on causes of men's violence. Attendees are invited to provide input on these fledgling concepts and brainstorm on directions for testing or propagating these ideas.

Male "Insecurity" and Violence?

Sarah Hautzinger, PhD, Colorado College

Is the notion that men's social insecurity may be meaningfully linked to male violence mere apologia, as critics argue, or a useful framework for analysis, policy and prevention? Drawing from long-term ethnographic research on masculinity and violence in Brazil, as well as a survey of cross-cultural research, this paper argues that the insecurity proposition offers important insights for distinguishing between different patterns of male violence. Related theories of male violence, including resource theory and status inconsistency, are incorporated in proposing two contrasting models of conjugal violence: the abuser/victim model and the contestatory model.

Traumatized by Other Men: Pain and Healing Among Survivors of Sexual Abuse by Professionals

Estelle Disch, PhD, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Sexual abuse of men by men is only recently beginning to get the attention it deserves. Sexual abuse by male professionals (doctors, psychologists, etc.) often has long-term devastating effects. In a study of sexual abuse by professionals, 17 men (16 white, 1 Latino) reported having been sexually abused, either as a child or as an adult, by a male professional. This paper briefly describes these survivors' childhoods, the abuses, the effects of the abuses, their healing and empowerment strategies, and their lives now. Data from a 55-page questionnaire as well as from interviews with several of the men are used in the presentation. Implications for both gay and straight men are addressed.

Interrogating Corporate Cultural Hegemony: Racial and Gender Coded Discourses of Identity, Work and Social Control

Brian Klocke, Colorado University, Boulder

This paper focuses on the overlapping systems of corporate cultural hegemony, patriarchy and white supremacy. The core values of mainstream western culture have become synonymous with corporate values. Corporate values have developed within a pre-existing system of patriarchy and white supremacy. bell hooks addresses these intersecting systems of oppression with the term, "White Supremacist Capitalist Patriarchy."

Corporate power in the US historically has been, and continues to be, dominated by white, upper-class males. Patriarchy has furthered male domination over women, over nature and over marginalized men who don't fit into or support the dominant paradigm. Since corporate hegemony developed out of a historical system of patriarchy and white supremacy, hyper-masculinity and racist issues are integrated into corporate values.

This paper, drawing on the work of Patricia Hill Collins, applies the metaphor of the slavery-era plantation to the U.S. historical discourse around identity, work and social control as embodied in today's corporate society. Historical topics covered are: the Industrial Revolution and the invention of industrial morality; white supremacist movements from the 1860s to 1990s; changes in management control from Fordism to Taylorism to Flexible Production and Socio-Technical "Empowerment;" and the "modern plantation" in society today.

The paper also examines the re-articulation of racial and gender coded projects in debates about two contemporary social issues -- welfare and affirmative action.

Evolution and Male Homosexuality: The 'Gay Gene,' Male Femininity and a Few Other Good Reasons Why Men Have Sex with Men

Stephen Forssell, University of Denver

The nature vs. nurture argument concerning the etiology of homosexuality is an old and contentious debate. The early 1990s saw a surge in psychological and biological evidence in support of the importance of nature, none more prominent than the discovery of the so-called "gay gene" (Hamer et al., 1994). More recently, a swing toward the environmental has occurred, encouraged largely by a lack of corroborative evidence to support the Hamer et al. findings.

The maelstrom of media hype and sociopolitical debate surrounding the "gay gene" appear to have clouded the issue, however, giving undue credibility to attempts to discredit a genetic link to sexual orientation. Lost in the chaos is the fact that evidence supporting a genetic component to sexual orientation continues to hold, providing credence to theories that homosexuality has a part in the grander scheme of the survival of the species, an evolutionary role in the reproductive success of Homo sapiens.

Many evolutionary theories are indeed fatally flawed. However, many are valid and hold promise for explaining why homosexuality is ubiquitous throughout history and across species. Moreover, sound evolutionary psychological principles can help explain the great range of variability in sexual behavior and diversity of expression in gay men, including why many are predominantly gender non-conforming and others are not. This paper reviews the evidence for various evolutionary theories and proposes new areas of inquiry regarding the etiology of male homosexuality.

The final section, "Mothers and Sons: Connections and Disconnections," challenges the assumption, both lay and academic, that sons must separate from their mothers to achieve psychological wellness and maturity. The contributors contend, in fact, that it is mother and son disconnection that harms men psychologically. This section imagines and investigates ways to foster mother-son connection; and it identifies and interrogates those cultural forces that cause disconnection.