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Title

"Men Have a Long Way to Go...': The Crisis of Masculinity According to the Profeminist, Men's Rights, and Mythopoetic Men's Movements.

Presenter

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Vita

Education

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Professional Presentations

American Sociological Association, Annual Meeting, August 18, 2001. "Crooked Frames: A Frame Alignment Analysis of the Profeminist, Men's Rights, and Mythopoetic Men's Movements."

Current Research

- ◆ "Men Have a Long Way to Go...': The Crisis of Masculinity According to Participants in the Profeminist, Men's Rights, and Mythopoetic Men's Movements."
- ◆ "The Emerging Social Identities of Hospice Volunteers."

Abstract

Many scholars claim that there is a contemporary crisis of masculinity, in which men are confused as to what it means to be "real men." In response to economic, geographical, political, and familial changes and feminism, men's movements have emerged in the form of: an antifeminist backlash, represented by the men's rights wing; a promale response, shown by the mythopoetic men's movement; and a profeminist response represented by the profeminist men's movement.

In this comparative study of these men's movements, three important questions are addressed: 1) How do participants in these movements define masculinity? 2) What do participants think are the challenges men face? 3) What are the opinions of movement participants of other men's movements? To answer these questions, I surveyed profeminist, men's rights, and mythopoetic activists regarding, among other things, the components of the ideal man, the challenges men face, and how they saw other men's movements.

19 profeminist, 17 men's rights, and 18 mythopoetic activists returned responses, for a total of 54 surveys. The profeminist activists saw the challenges men face to include the challenge of a social system which oppresses other groups and male socialization. For men's rights activists, the challenge is to control their emotions and regain control of the social institutions spoiled by feminism. For mythopoetic men, the challenge is to connect with their essential nature, their emotions, other people, and their spirit.

The respondents had definite ideas pertaining to definitions of masculinity, challenging the idea that men are confused as to definitions of masculinity and thus the "crisis of masculinity." The definition of the crisis of masculinity is multivocal, and one definition may be that the crisis of masculinity is "the conflicts over what definitions of masculinity are dominant."