

History of US Masculinities
HIST 380C
Summer I Term 2020
W-- Writing; N – Humanities ; P - Pluralism

Professor: Dr. Chelsea Gibson, cgibson2@binghamton.edu

Office Hours: Mondays, 2-4PM; and by appointment. (Conducted via Zoom)

PLEASE NOTE: If you are working over the semester during normal business hours, we can schedule meetings after 5PM when necessary

Course Description

What does it mean to be a man? This course will explore the history of US masculinities after 1776, from the Founding Fathers to the current debates about "toxic" masculinity. Throughout the course, we will interrogate how the imagined ideal "American man" changed across the centuries, with a particular emphasis on how race, class, and sexuality shaped definitions of manhood over time. This class will investigate archetypal masculine figures in US history, including the Native American warrior, cowboys, and Uncle Sam, as well as famous men like Theodore Roosevelt, Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, and John F. Kennedy.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. Learn basic gender theory
2. Become proficient in using gender as a method of historical analysis
3. Be able to think critically about the interplay between gender and politics, economics, warfare, religion, culture, and society in US history from 1776 to the present
4. Developed improved reading, writing, and analytical skills, particularly skills that help students make a reasoned argument backed by evidence

N -- Social Science courses will:

- impart a knowledge of major concepts, models and issues of anthropology, economics, geography history, political science, and/or sociology as recognized academic disciplines.
- provide an understanding of the methods used by social scientists to explore social phenomena including, when appropriate to the discipline, observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, and employment of mathematical and interpretive analysis.

W – Writing courses will:

- Provide considerable experience in and feedback on writing as a tool of college-level teaching and learning
- Typically consist of a minimum of 10 pages of writing

P – Pluralism courses will:

- Consider US society by paying substantive attention to three or more social groups and discuss how these groups have been affected by basic US institutions, including commerce, family, law, politics, or religion

Requirements

Students are required to:

1. Participate in Friday discussions on MyCourses
2. Complete all assignments as stated in the syllabus
3. Be respectful to their peers and use proper "netiquette"
4. Communicate any problems with the course instructor in a timely manner

Required Texts

There are no required texts that you must purchase in this course. We will be reading from books & articles that are available for free via the BU library.

Please note: while I've tried to find free films when possible, you will be expected to pay roughly **\$4** to rent movies online during the semester.

Recommended

For a basic overview of US History:

[*The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook*](#)

For writing in a history course:

Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide for Writing in History, 8th Edition* (2015)

Patrick Rael, "[Reading, Writing, and Researching for History](#)" (2004)

Course Expectations

This course is 4-credit. In a normal semester, students are expected to do at least **9.5 hours** of course-related work outside of class every week. Because we are in a compressed timeframe, this means that you should be doing **roughly 35 hours of work each week**. This includes watching lectures, listening to podcasts, reading, and completing assignments. **Your weekly readings average 100-120pgs and you will spend 4-6hrs per week watching films or listening to lectures/podcasts.** Please plan accordingly.

It cannot be said enough – this is an **intensive summer course**. I have tried to make this schedule as flexible as possible because I know many of you may be juggling work, school, family, etc. but you are expected to devote a considerable amount of time to this course.

Grade Breakdown

Initial Reflection	5%
Weekly Lecture Responses	20%
Weekly Reading Questions	20%
Weekly Encounters	10%
Friday Discussions	20%
Presentation	15%
Two (2) Office Visits	5%
Course Reflection	5%

Grading Scale

A	100-92.0
A-	91.99-90.0
B+	89.99-87.0
B	86.99-82.0
B-	81.99-80.0
C+	79.99-77.0
C	76.99-72.0
C-	71.99-70.0
D	69.99-60.0
F	59.99-below

Please note—All written assignments should be in 12pt, Times New Roman, double-spaced font, with 1-inch margins, and will be turned in online via Turn-it-in unless otherwise specified.

Initial Reflection (5%)

For the first day of class, you will write a self-reflection about your own understanding of masculinity and the way it has shaped US history. You will post this on MyCourses for both myself and your peers to read. This reflection should be between **350-500 words** and consider the following questions:

- What do you think masculinity is?

- How do you relate to masculinity? (Please only provide details you feel comfortable sharing)
- How do you think masculinity has shaped US history? Which historical figures do you immediately think of?
- What do you hope to learn in this course & why did you take it?

Office Visits (2) (5%)

You are required to meet me a minimum of two times over the semester, either in office hours or in a separate scheduled appointment. The purpose of these meetings is to make sure you are on track, answer any questions you might have, and give us an opportunity to actually know each other. Although I only require two, I highly recommend that you meet me once per week. I recommend that you split your two visits and see me in Week 1 and Week 4. My office hours are Mondays, 2-4PM. If you need a different time, please just email me and we can set up an appointment.

Weekly Lecture Responses (20%)

This class is going to cover a lot of material in a very short time. I am posting weekly lectures to help guide you through the course. My goal is to break these up into short chunks of about 15-20min each (with the exception of the first week when we have a lot of basic info to discuss). Your responsibility is to watch these and respond to them each week. The response can take the form of a written response (google doc/word doc) of **300 words** minimum, or a **4-6 minute** video (6 min is the absolute maximum). **These are due by Friday at 10AM each week.**

In your responses to the lectures should consider the following questions:

- What new information did you learn? What struck you as particularly important or surprising?
- (After Week 1) How do these lectures build on information we've already covered in class?
- What kind of questions are you left with after the lectures?
- What do these lectures ultimately contribute to your understanding of the way gender and/or masculinity specifically shaped US history?

If you answer these questions thoughtfully and demonstrate that you watched each of the lectures, you will earn full credit each week.

Weekly Reading Questions (WRQ) (20%)

In order to succeed in this class, you must keep up with the reading. For each week, I will post a link to a google form of questions (roughly **10-12 questions each week**). These questions will help you to understand the primary & secondary readings, podcasts, and films and practice your gender analysis. This is an important space in which I am going to train you to read like a historian – look for thesis statements, examine footnotes, consider historical significance – I expect these to be completed in a thorough and thoughtful manner. **These are due by Friday at 10AM each week.**

Grading Requirements for WRQ:

- Must answer each question & show a good-faith effort
- Must practice your analysis – either by using gender or historical analysis
- Must use direct quotes from the text. You can use parenthetical citations – ([Last name], 3) – to cite. If it is a podcast or film, still try to use direct quotes although without pg numbers.

If you do these things, you will earn full credit each week.

Please note, google forms can sometimes be unreliable and there is not a way to save your answers. I highly recommend that you first type your answers up in a word/google doc, then paste them into the form.

Weekly Encounters (10%)

Masculinity is something we encounter every day—it influences politics, culture, media, personal interactions, capitalism, and more. One of the purposes of this class is to help you develop a kind of gender x-ray vision,

so you can identify the way gender shapes our world. To achieve this goal, I would like to you to make one observation each week of **100-200 words** (or a 3-5min video) to post on MyCourses about an encounter you had with masculinity. I will do this along with you each week! This is **due by midnight each Friday**.

Each weeks' posting has a theme:

- Week 1 – Politics/Foreign Relations
 - How did masculinity appear in your regional, national, or global politics this week? Did it impact foreign relations? Did you read a history about a president or watch something about a war? Is there a new bill that is causing controversy?
- Week 2 – Consumption
 - How does masculinity shape consumerism? Next time you're at the store, look for things clearly marketed to men and examine them. (Look online at Wegmans.com or another website if going to the store isn't possible due to COVID-19)
- Week 3 – Media (Film, TV shows, Video Games)
 - Is there a character in a TV show or video game that you're watching/playing right now that you could analyze? Did your mom just watch a film with an interesting male lead?
- Week 4 – Social Media (Twitter, Snapchat, GroupMe, etc.)
 - What are men doing on the internet this week? How are people reacting to men on the internet? Is there a big kerfuffle over something a man did or did not say?
- Week 5 – Personal relationships
 - You might take an opportunity to talk to someone in your family about our class. What does your dad/brother/grandfather (or mother/sister/grandmother) think it means to be a good American man? Or maybe you had a conversation this week organically that made you think about masculinity?

For your short write-up (or video), you should:

- Clearly explain what you watched, found, etc. that week, and include a picture, screenshot, or hyperlink if possible
- Explain *why* you chose to write about it
- Try to explain how masculinity functions in your source (gender analysis)
- Try to connect it to themes/events in US history (either current or past)

If you fulfill these basic criteria, you will earn full credit each week.

Friday Discussions (20%)

This course is designed very purposefully to maximize the usefulness of your peer discussions. You are expected to complete your readings, watch lectures, listen to podcasts, or watch films between Monday and Thursday on your own. This give you time to take notes and think about what you've discovered that week. Then, on Friday, I will give you a writing prompt that you must answer in **250-300 words** and post by **12PM** on Fridays that will ask you to synthesize what you learned for your peers. You will then have to respond to your peers' posts and comments before **11:59PM** on Friday.

This is the breakdown:

- 50pts -- Friday by 12PM, post your response to that weeks' writing prompt. **You are welcome to post a video response rather than a written one!** (Should be 3-4min long)
- 25pts -- Post a thoughtful response (**100-150 words**) to at least **five (5)** of your peers' posts (4). This should include at least ONE question.
- 25pts -- Respond to at least **five (5)** comments elsewhere in the discussion. This can either be a response to peer responses on your own post, or to responses on other posts.

Presentation (15%)

Gender is something that impacts everything around us, especially media. As a final project, you will prepare a **8-10 minute presentation** (recorded with Zoom) about a film, TV series, novel, comic book, music album,

video game, fictional character, or topic of your choosing from any point in the 20th century. The only stipulation is that you choose your topic from **US media**. You can choose a movie you've never seen before, or perhaps you have a favorite TV series that you think has something very interesting to say about masculinity.

You need to tell me what you will be presenting on by **Week 3**. You will post this presentation by **Saturday, June 27th at 11:59PM**. Please note: this will act like your final exam for the class, so please choose an appropriate topic that demonstrates both your new mastery of gender analysis and your understanding of US history.

Requirements:

- 8-10minutes
- Prepare a visually interesting powerpoint/google slide
- Incorporate clear gender analysis
- Connect your topic clearly to themes/events in US history
- Use four (4) secondary sources to support analysis/research. Two (2) can come from our class, two (2) must come from outside of class

Final Course Reflection (5%)

After you finish everything in the course, you need to type up a **2-3pg** course reflection that, well, reflects on your experience in this course. This should be informal and can use first-person narrative.

The rest of the reflection can consider any of the following questions (but feel free to talk about anything):

- What did you learn in the course?
- What was your experience in the course? (Assignments, discussions, readings)
- How did learning gender history shape the way you think about US history or your own lived experience?
- What do you find most valuable about the course?

Draft Policy

I will review any assignment up to **12 hours** before its due date. Please note that I strongly advise you to visit my office hours to discuss a draft of your assignment at least once during the semester.

Student Hours

I cannot tell you how many students I have visit my office for the first time and leave saying, "Wow, that was really useful!" Student hours (AKA office hours) are an opportunity for me to help you one-on-one on literally anything in the class. Are you uncomfortable writing? Zoom with me. Do you have a question about an assignment? Drop in. Are you confused about a grade? Come ask me about it.

Late Work & Missed Assignments

Students may turn in assignments late for a penalty of 3 points per day. If your choice is between plagiarizing an assignment and turning it in three or four days late, *please just turn it in late*. **If you think you will miss a major deadline, contact me immediately.**

Plagiarism

You must distinguish clearly between your work and the work of others. To do otherwise may constitute plagiarism. You can avoid plagiarizing by doing the following: When you incorporate another person's words into your work, you must enclose them in quotation marks and provide a citation (footnote, endnote, or parenthetical citation). Even when you *paraphrase* another person's words or use another person's ideas or information, you *must* provide a citation. Only when the ideas, information, and words are yours alone is it permissible to include no citation.

Binghamton University defines plagiarism as:

Presenting the work of another person as one's own work (including papers, words, ideas, information, computer code, data, evidence-organizing principles, or style of presentation of someone else taken from the Internet, books, periodicals or other sources). Plagiarism includes:

- quoting, paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgement, even a few phrases;
- failing to acknowledge the source of either a major idea or ordering principle central to one's own paper;
- relying on another person's data, evidence or critical method without credit or permission;
- submitting another person's work as one's own; using unacknowledged research sources gathered by someone else.

You may also consult the following web resources on plagiarism:

Binghamton University Student Academic Honesty Code
<https://www.binghamton.edu/watson/about/academic-honesty.html>

Binghamton University Library's Guide to Citing Sources
<https://libraryguides.binghamton.edu/citation>

If you find yourself struggling with your writing assignments, please contact me and make an office appointment. You can also visit the BU Writing Center:

<http://www2.binghamton.edu/writing/writing-center/>

Plagiarism is a serious issue. If you plagiarize an assignment, you will receive a zero.

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting disability-related accommodations should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD). They are the appropriate entity on campus to determine and authorize disability-related accommodations. The office is located in the University Union, room 119. Phone number 607-777-2686. For students already registered with SSD, please provide your academic accommodation letter as soon as possible so that we can discuss the implementation of your accommodations.

Mental Health & Academic Stress

If you are feeling extremely stressed and/or depressed due to your academic workload or personal issues, I encourage you to seek out the resources that Binghamton University provides on campus. You are always welcome to visit me in my office if you are having trouble with my course; for other issues that may be troubling you, you can consult the following:

- * Dean of Students Office: 607-777-2804
- * Decker Student Health Services Center: 607-777-2221
- * University Police: On campus emergency, 911
- * University Counseling Center: 607-777-2772
- * Interpersonal Violence Prevention: 607-777-3062
- * Harpur Advising: 607-777-6305
- * Office of International Student & Scholar Services: 607-777-2510
- * Ombudsman: 607-777-2388
- * Services for Students with Disabilities: 607-777-2686

If something major comes up this semester that you know will impact your academic performance or cause you to miss classes, please contact me!

I recognize that the pandemic is creating uniquely difficult circumstances for students. I will work with you *no matter what* to help you finish this course.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

I am committed to ensuring that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives are well-served by this course, that students' learning needs are addressed in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class is used as a resource, strength and benefit. I endeavor to present materials and activities that reflect the vast diversity of human experience which is shaped by: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, level of language proficiency, race, nationality, religion, and culture. I am also committed to creating a welcoming course that does not discriminate against students based on the previously enumerated factors. If you experience discrimination, I encourage you to contact me personally or to reach out to the Binghamton University [Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#).

Please see the [Binghamton University Nondiscrimination Notice](#) and the [Binghamton University Diversity Statement](#).

Technology

Technology is essential for this course. Not everyone has stable access to internet or a working computer at this time, especially as libraries remained closed. If you run into a technology problem, contact me ASAP and I will work with you and our BU resources to see what we can do to ensure your successful completion of this course.

Special Accommodations & Athletes

If you need special accommodations for any reason, please let me know **as soon as possible**. Athletes should similarly let me know if and when you will be missing my course for your scheduled meets. It is the student's responsibility to ensure this happens, and to consult with me to provide arrangements for missed assignments or other issues.

How to Analyze Primary Sources (adapted from the [Carleton Dept of History](#))

We will be engaging with a number of different sources in this class, but you need to ask yourself the same basic questions of each text, be it primary or secondary. Here is a good break-down of the intellectual steps you should first follow as you approach any source:

1. When and where was the source created?
2. What kind of source is it, physically? Is it a letter, an interview, a paper, etc.?
3. Who created it? What do you know about that person?
 - a. Did their sex, race, class, occupation, religion, age, or political beliefs impact the source? How? Why?
4. What is the source's purpose? I.e., why was it created? For whom? Who was the expected audience?
 - a. What kind of methods did the author use to convey his/her purpose?
5. What information does the source convey? Either about the author, the subject, or the historical moment that it was created?

Now that you've thoroughly read the source, it's time to think about how you would analyze it as a historical document:

1. What does this source tell you about the moment of its creation?
 - a. Does it describe political ideology, religious beliefs, cultural ideals, gender expectations, etc?
2. Is it a source from the "top," meaning that it was created by a government or other authority, or from the "bottom," that is, "regular" people?
3. Whose perspective is excluded from the source and how did that influence its creation?
 - a. Eg. An article written by a white feminist about birth control in the 1970s likely does not reflect how black women felt about birth control

4. What historical questions can we answer from this source? What can we not answer?
 - a. Eg. A presidential speech can tell us about a government policy, but cannot tell us much about what “ordinary” citizens thought about that policy
5. Did we read something in class that can help you understand the source? How do historians traditionally use this source? Is your analysis the same as theirs, or does it differ? How?

Here are some additional questions you should ask because this course is gender-focused:

1. In what ways are masculinity and femininity presented and/or defined?
 - a. How do these definitions compare and contrast to other moments in history covered in this course?
2. In what ways are gender roles in the document related to other factors, including political ideology, race, sexual orientation, class, or ethnicity/nationality?
3. How can you use this source to comment on the state of US attitudes toward gender and/or sexuality during the period in which it was published?
4. Does the source reflect the prevailing gender expectations of its period or challenge them in some way?

Library and Research Skills

I highly recommend that you complete the [research skills tutorial](#) offered on our library website. I recommend especially the following videos:

- [Thesis Statements](#)
- [Primary and Secondary Research](#) and [Types of Sources](#)
- [Searching as Exploration](#)
- [Evaluating Sources](#)
- [Synthesizing Information](#)
- [Plagiarism](#)
- [Copyright](#)

Class Schedule

Please note that this schedule reflects all your assigned readings and should be consulted each week. This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

A Note on Course Structure – I recommend following this order: lectures → reading secondary (scholarly) articles/book chapters → listening to podcasts → watching films/reading primary documents

Week 1 (1776-1820) – May 26-29

Lectures (Response due 5/29 at 10AM)

Intro to the Course [44:00]
Masculinity – What is it? How do we study it? [31:00]
Historical Context (1776-1820) [43:00]

Readings/Etc. (Questions due 5/29 at 10AM)

Preparatory

Patrick Rael, "[How to Read a Secondary Source](#)" [2pgs]
Patrick Rael, "[Predatory Reading](#)" [2pgs]
Patrick Rael, "[How to Read a Primary Source](#)" [3pgs]
Judith Lorber, "The Social Construction of Gender" (1994) [7pgs]

Secondary

Kahn, *A Republic of Men* (1998) – Ch. 1 [25pgs]
Sidbury, "Slave Artisans in Richmond Virginia, 1780-1810" (1995) [8pgs]
Compeau, "[Dishonoring the Loyalists](#)" [3pgs]

Podcasts

"[Suit Up](#)" *DIG* [68min]
"[Farms & Farm Families in Early America](#)" *Ben Franklin's World* [47min]
"[Sex & the Founding Fathers](#)" *Ben Franklin's World* [31min]

Primary

Toner, *Washington's Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior* (1888) [30pgs]

Discussion (First post due 5/29 at 12PM)
Weekly Encounter (Due 5/29 at 11:59PM)

Week 2 (1820-1898) – June 1-5

Lectures (Response due 6/5 at 10AM)

Masculinity and the Emergence of the Middle Class [26:77]
Abolitionism, Manly Resistance, & John Brown [28:06]
The Age of the Common Man [13:23]
Industrialism's Challenge to Manhood [18:29]
The West – Real & Imagined [28:55]

Readings/Etc. (Questions due 6/5 at 10AM)

Secondary

Minardi, *Making Slavery History* (2010) – Ch. 5 [30pgs]
Greenberg, *Honor and Slavery* (1996) – Ch. 1 [21pgs]

Silber, *The Romance of Reunion* (1993) – Ch. 1 [26pgs]
Currarino, “Meat vs. Rice” (2007) [12pgs]

Podcasts

“[Papa Can You Hear Me?](#)” *DIG* [52min]
“[Fraternal Orders in the 19thc US](#)” *DIG* [73min]
“[Patriarchs, Brawlers, and Gentlemen](#)” *DIG* [60min]

Primary

Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845) – excerpt [15pgs]

Discussion (First post due 6/5 at 12PM)
Weekly Encounter (Due 6/5 at 11:59PM)

Week 3 (1898-1945) – June 8-12

Lectures (Response due 6/12 at 10AM)

Masculinity & Civilization at the Turn of the Century [29:11]
Reconstruction & Black Masculinity [35:38]
The Gendered Origins of the Spanish American War [20:12]
Male Gay Identity at the Turn of the Century [25:27]
WWI & the 1920s [32:31]

Readings/Etc. (Questions due 6/12 at 10AM)

Secondary

Lindquist, *Race, Social Science, and the Crisis of Manhood* (2012) – Ch. 1 [35pgs]
Ullman, “The Twentieth Century Way” (1995) [28pgs]
Shrock, “Desperate Deeds, Desperate Men” [18pgs]
Jarvis, *The Male Body at War* (2004) – Ch. 1 [30pgs]

Podcasts

“[Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of Sports in the US](#)” *In the Past Lane* [36min]
“[Masculinity and the Making of American Judaism](#)” *New Books in American Studies* [40min]

Film

[The Sheik](#) (1921)

Primary

Cartoons of the War of 1898 with Spain (1898)
New York Times – student search

Discussion (First post due 6/12 at 12PM)
Weekly Encounter (Due 6/12 at 11:59PM)

Week 4 (1945-1980) – June 15-19

Lectures (Response due 6/19 at 10AM)

Cold War Culture [34:10]
War & Masculinity in WWII, Korea, & Vietnam [40:08]
Fashion [19:09]
The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit [6:23]
Final Research Presentations [12:05]

Readings/Etc. (Questions due 6/19 at 10AM)

Secondary

Canaday, "Building a Straight State" (2003) [20pgs]
Osergby, *Playboys in Paradise* (2001) – Ch. 6 [25pgs]
Dean, "Masculinity as Ideology" (1998) [30pgs]
Wendt, "They Finally Found Out that We Really Are Men" (2007) [17pgs]
Freeman, "Hardhats" (1993) [13pgs]
Rosales, "Macho Nation?" (2013) [23pgs]

Podcasts

["The Martial Citizen with Amy Rutenberg"](#) *War Room* [23min]

Film

["The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit"](#) (1956)

Discussion (First post due 6/19 at 12PM)

Weekly Encounter (Due 6/19 at 11:59PM)

Week 5 (1980-2020) – June 22-26

Lectures (Response due 6/26 at 10AM)

From Reagan to Clinton [55:28]
9/11, Torture, and Cowboys [33:57]
Toxic Masculinity I & II [53:17; 51:42]
Trump & Final Thoughts [12:56]

Readings/Etc. (Questions due 6/26 at 10AM)

Secondary

Messner, "The Limits of the Male Sex Role" (1998) [20pgs]
Cooper, "Our First Unisex President?" (2009) [28pgs]
Carlson, "Police Warriors and Police Guardians" (2019) [16pgs]

Podcasts

["This Angry Email I get Over and Over"](#) *Man Up* [38min]
["The Real Threat of Video Games"](#) *Man Up* [25min]
["How the Dominant Was Left Behind, with Dr. Michael Kimmel"](#) *MASKulinity* [45min]

Documentary

["Transformer"](#) (2017)

YouTube Video

["The Adorkable Misogyny of the Big Bang Theory"](#) *Pop Culture Detective* [21min]

Primary

Brown, "The Return of Manly Men" (2001)
Miller, "The Invisible Women Firefighters of Ground Zero"

Discussion (First post due 6/26 at 12PM)

Weekly Encounter (Due 6/26 at 11:59PM)