Gender & Sexuality Studies Student Work
Collection

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Redefining Masculinity

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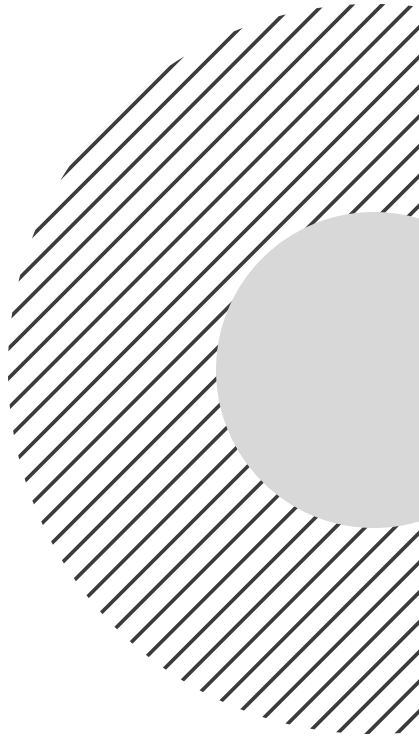
REDEFINING MASCULINITY

TREVOR NHAN

Defining toxic masculinity

The term referred to as "toxic masculinity" is one that attributes society's specified norms of male behavior such as violence, dominance, aggressiveness, and lack of emotion as one that defines a real man. A male's lack of performing these associated behaviors typically experience a devaluation or shame to one's self by his peers.

Men in society are pushed to accept the boundaries of these norms and shun anything that is feminine. These accepted norms, as mentioned above, are viewed as "normal", but in reality, are detrimental to all men, both mentally and physically.

Boys within society are one's that are specifically at risk developing these toxic behaviors, as they are ones in the critical development period of their lives. This concept of "toxic masculinity" has been discussed and attributed to the performing of recent, violent acts such as mass shootings by males in their teens.

The effects of toxic masculinity

DEPRESSION

ANXIETY

STRESS

"The truth is, most males associate **man up** with a deficit. It's used by the coach who tells his player to stiffen up and play through the pain. It underpins the way they hurl insults like, don't be a girl. Or pussy. Or fag."

Society's definition of masculinity has enforced behavioral norms to ignore physical, mental, and emotional issues. The suppression of emotions has developed a social construction to hide emotional distress, as a sense of expression is associated with feminine qualities. With the pressure of living up to the standard of a true man, those who do not meet the stereotype suffer from mental and emotional distress as a result.

MALES REPRESENT 77.9% OF SUICIDES

Changing the definition

Major athletes, such as NBA all-star DeMar DeRozan, is one of many that have just recently opened up about their struggles with mental health. Society and the media have developed toxic stereotypes that associate the lack of expression or emotion with a "real" man. That definition is being challenged today.

CHALLENGING TOXIC MASCULINITY

- **RAISING AWARENESS THROUGH ALL PLATFORMS**

- **GOVERNMENT, WORKPLACE, INDIVIDUAL, AND GROUP SUPPORT**

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD ENFORCEMENT**

"IT'S ONE OF THEM THINGS THAT NO MATTER HOW INDESTRUCTIBLE WE LOOK LIKE WE ARE, WE'RE ALL HUMAN AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE ALL GOT FEELINGS... SOMETIMES... IT GETS THE BEST OF YOU."

DeMar DeRozan VIA DOUG SMITH IN THE TORONTO STAR