



MEN AND MASCULINITIES

SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER

EDITED BY PONGPUNYA JACK KORPOB

LETTER FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR



Hello!

I just arrived back from The Placement Exchange (TPE) and NASPA 2014 in Baltimore, and it has been a whirlwind! I already miss the NASPA experience, but I'm already excited to join everyone in New Orleans next year!

I had the opportunity to attend my first MMKC Open Business Meeting at the Annual Conference! It was great to put faces to names on the Leadership Team, as well as meet people who have been submitting articles to this newsletter. Knowledge Communities exist because of their membership and the collective knowledge brought to the group by each individual. It was in Baltimore when I felt a strong connection to the membership, and knew that my work on each quarterly newsletter is never in vain! In this issue, I'm excited to present a series of wonderful articles ranging in topics, as well as a number of conference reflections! If you didn't get to attend a sponsored session or were not at NASPA 2014, this is your chance to get a taste of some of the exciting and thought provoking work that was shared at the conference!

I hope you enjoy reading as much as I enjoyed putting this newsletter together! I hope everyone had good Spring Term and congratulations on completing another academic year!

-Jack Korpob

MEN & MASCULINITIES KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

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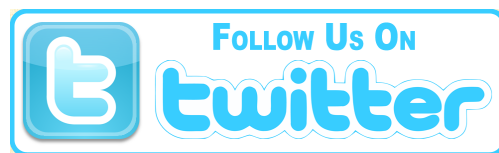
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<http://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/kcs/men-and-masculinities>

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



As I reflect on the conference in Baltimore, I realize that I am still on that "post conference high" that is often spoken of. I truly look forward to the learning, networking, and the opportunity to accomplish a variety of objectives at the conference, but one of the pieces that is sometimes forgotten is the continued energy and strength that so many people experience

and take home with them. I just hope that it doesn't wear off any time soon!!

MMKC members were reflecting that there was more energy around men's issues this year than ever before. As evidence, they cited the almost record attendance at both the MMKC Business Meeting and also the Scholar-Practitioner Address (which also included the announcement of our annual awards). They also noted the number of gender- and men's issues-related educational sessions. Our team had quite a task in terms of sponsoring only three of them!

Personally, I witnessed and experienced tremendous excitement around the MMKC. Never before had I seen so

many individuals coming to me with business cards and talking about how they wanted to play a role, get involved, propose new positions, and the like. There is truly a surge of passion regarding men on our campuses, and this makes me so happy. I've taken the time before to write about how amazing our Leadership Team is (because they are awesome), and I'll take just a moment here in this piece: I think at one point during the conference I publicly stated, "Golly, I just think they're great!" as I referred to the folks I get to work with around the country. Truly, the MMKC is what it is because of the time and dedication of these individuals.

So, it is with continued motivation that I look to the future of the MMKC. We have just elected two amazing individuals to take the helm and function as Co-Chairs for 2015-2017. We have eager folks who will be connecting with other 'identity' KCs in new ways, and we have a seasoned group of professionals in every region who will not only function as the point person for colleagues far and wide – but our region representatives are also busy planning drive-in conferences for each region.

It is easy to see why my spirits are so high. Thanks again to all who make this an enjoyable position – thanks to all who inspire others to learn more about themselves and others so that we can positively impact our campuses by speaking about the lives of men each day.

With all sincerity,

Patrick Tanner

A poster for the MMKC Drive-In Conference. It features a green signpost with five black arrows pointing in different directions. The arrows are labeled: "SEXUAL ORIENTATION", "RELIGION", "GENDER EXPRESSION", "CULTURE", and "RACE". To the right of the signpost, the text reads: "MMKC Drive-In CONFERENCE: MASCULINITIES IN THE INTERSECTIONS". Below this, it says "Oct 10th 2014 ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY 9:00AM-3:00PM". At the bottom right, it says "Questions? Contact Brian Anderson Loyola University Chicago banderson2@luc.edu". In the bottom left corner, there is a logo for NASPA Knowledge Community Men and Masculinities.

CAMPUS ATTACKS: A SERIOUS CALL FOR ADVOCATES OF MALE DEVELOPMENT (PART I) BY LOGAN DENNEY



In light of many recent shooting incidents on college campuses, including Purdue University & South Carolina State University, I want to approach the important and sensitive topic of campus attacks and their connection to male college students. What is it that drives an individual to bring a gun to campus and kill those they either know, or do not know? This is a profound question I hope to respond to

in this article, as well as many other articles in the months to come. I first want to start with my concern: as a higher education professional, as male who values a positive male gender role, I am concerned about the development of our young men on our campuses, especially in regards to the way men process anger, frustration, sadness, fear, and pain. I believe support systems are missing for men on college campuses, and from this gap men seem to lack value, resources, and opportunities to vet their emotions—leading to the aforementioned incidents and attacks. With this in mind, I would like to share some recent statistics and situations, as well as my thoughts on a response to serving and developing our young men in college.

In a recent study by three branches of the United States Government (Secret Service, Department of Education, and Federal Bureau of Investigation), researchers found the following information on campus attacks from 1900 to 2008 (see Photo 1). In an effort to highlight these numbers and people, I have shown these through pictures and numbers, in absence of discussion. My hope is to allow you to view and reflect on the reality of what they

mean—abrasive, egregious acts against humanity and higher learning. I also would like to remind you that these numbers correspond to those affected: students, staff, faculty, and people of higher learning who had their lives taken, or altered, by a campus attacker.

I do not know about you, but these statistics are as alarming as they are frustrating. For many of you, we work with students on daily basis from admissions meetings, residence hall interactions, athletic practices, class discussions, and campus life experiences. I bring attention to these numbers not to state that the primary attackers are male and that we should be cautious, but rather, that I feel we are missing the mark in supporting our students who identify as male. It is clear, for the majority of situations, men have different modes of response than women when it comes to aggression, depression, and even anger; however, we struggle to address these emotions or highlight the discussion on our college campuses. Rather, we (myself included) cater to the concept of the horrific incident, calling it another tragedy and a new opportunity to promote gun control. I think its time that we are honest with students and ourselves. We have a true issue here that is not rooted in a gun control problem. I believe it is a negative response perpetuated by hidden and stifled emotions of the male student heart and mind.

Campus Attackers from 1900-2008

Total Individual Attackers: 272



of all of these.. 97% were male students (156)



Information retrieved from
Drysedale, D. A., Modzeleski, W.,
Simons, A. B. (2010). pp.14-16.



How do we teach men to approach emotions of anger, frustration, aggression, and depression in a healthier way? Clearly, the media that they consume rapidly and readily has its own agenda: violence, rage, assault, and verbal harassment are key markers of video games, movies, and TV shows. There is a mixed message being sent about masculinity, and unfortunately the support systems for men are ill-equipped to respond.

Colleagues, I write this article not as an expression of doubt or negativity for the work we do for men, but rather as a gut check and a call to catalyze our focus on positive examples of male development (not issues) on our campuses. I agree there are no cure-all solutions, but rather holistic opportunities to offer. Therefore, in order to begin to find answers and to be considered developers of men, we must first begin to commit to address the needs of masculinity needs on our college campuses. Here are four basic steps all higher education professionals can take:

- I. First, choosing a commitment to bring change—a values statement to stand on and truly see we have a problem and need positive solutions.
- II. Then, we must know our facts, theories, and best practices—we need to begin to research more on the college male experience, specifically in regards to developing positive masculinity through our roles, policies, and programs. Each of us needs to research and create a working definition of what masculinity is and what it means for us personally. This will be your guide to your practice.
- III. From this focus, we then need to come up with solutions and strategies that will best serve men. We create amazing programs for first-year experience, sophomore slump, athletic success, cultural diversity, gender awareness, and even sexual assault programs that are survivor-focused. All of these are great and awesome extensions/creations of our research prowess, and the continued implementation of these will be crucial to higher education success! However, I would like to interject... its time for us to roll out men's programs in full force on our campuses. It is time to offer support groups and initiatives that allow men to feel comfortable to express themselves. It is time to talk down the lies men receive through the media and tell the truth of what a man really is, does, and feels. It is time we show men that we care for their growth in programs, passive and active, stating explicitly that their development as MEN matters. It is time.
- IV. Finally, we need to model an example and affirm positive masculinity in front of our students (especially our men). This means we call out the negative pretenses of "what it means to be a man" and we talk up the positive values of true masculinity. We share our story, we describe our definition, we model our values, and we recognize our men's successes when we see them. Affirmation is a key to building positive behavior with

our students. Let's empower our men with truth. Colleagues, I will close by saying when we champion this cause, men will see and they will note that they matter on our campuses. The key is what will you commit to do to help them matter? In conclusion, I would like to point you to this video that was recently promoted by the MMKC twitter feed, may it be a source of inspiration in your commitment to serving and leading our college aged men: ow.ly/tXBO4.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article and championing positive male development on your campus.

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**STAY ENGAGED WITH THE MMKC
AND OTHERS IN THE FIELD BY JOINING
IN THE PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS
INITIATIVE (PCI) WITH THE
THE MENTORS & MENTEES
(M&M'S) PROJECT,
OR THE COLLABORATE! PROJECT!**

**SEE THE NEXT PAGE
FOR DETAILS!**

Interested in Male Mentorship and Professional Accountability??

Join the MMKC's Professional Connections Initiative today! See the links below to sign up.

Cohort II Deadline is July 1, 2014 for the 2014-2015 academic year!

Mission of the MMKC:

The purpose of the Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community is to provide a venue for discussion, research, and the distribution of information about men's gender identity development in the context of college campuses.

Professional Connections Initiative Vision (PCI):

The soul vision of the MMKC PCI project is focused on inspiring research, initiating accountability, connecting professional networks, and also fostering future programs for men's development within higher education. This will be accomplished through the Initiative's two projects: "Mentors & Mentees" and "Collaborate!" The initiative will be cohort model focused in which participants sign up for the respective project they would like to be a part of for the coming academic year.



Mentors & Mentees (M&M's) Project Statement:

Through M&M's, professional male mentorship is an opportunity for upcoming professionals, or mentees (graduate students and new professionals), to have a one-on-one professional relationship with a seasoned higher education professional, the mentor. The mentor/mentee relationship will be a co-beneficial experience as each participant will gain opportunities to learn from one another, reflect on professional practice, as well as sharpen each other's practice within male identity development in higher education in order to best serve male students on their campuses. "M&M's" will foster enhanced networking and growth of the MMKC membership by reaching out to undergraduates, graduates, and new professionals who are interested in joining the MMKC. See abstract for project logistics. See the following link for more info and join this project today at: <http://tinyurl.com/pphjsjo>



Collaborate! Project Statement:

Through Collaborate!, professionals will have a one-on-one professional relationship with another seasoned higher education professional. The collaboration relationship will be a co-beneficial experience as each participant will gain opportunities to learn from one another, reflect on professional practice, as well as sharpen each other's practice within male identity development in higher education in order to best serve male students on their campuses. Collaborate! will foster enhanced networking and growth of the MMKC membership by reaching out to seasoned male professionals across our membership. See the following link for more info and join this project today at: <http://tinyurl.com/oe3fqmk>

Questions, want to get help with this initiative?

Email the MMKC's Mentorship Coordinator, Logan Denney at logan.denney@oregonstate.edu.

ONLY YES MEANS YES: MALE PERSPECTIVES ON A CONSENT CAMPAIGN

BY BRIAN DANIEL AND STEVEN MORAN



Many institutions of higher learning are becoming more intentional in educating their communities on sexual consent as a result of the "Dear Colleague" letter from the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights and the more recent "Montana Resolutions Agreement". In 2013, Guilford College, a small private liberal arts school in North Carolina organized a "Year of Consent." The aim of this campaign was to create a visible kick-off year to start a continued dialogue and sustained educational initiative about sexual assault. The campaign, titled "Only Yes Means Yes: Keep it Consensual" is currently supported by the Office of the President, the Office of Campus Life, the Women and Gender Studies Program, as well as various student organizations.

One semester into the "Year of Consent," students were surveyed on their perceptions of this new endeavor. The surveyors were particularly interested in how male students would perceive the intentions of this campaign. In order to collect feedback, they created a basic 10-question electronic survey through SurveyMonkey. This included two classification questions, and eight questions about the campaign. The survey was distributed by tabling in the student union over a three-week period. All together, there were 204 respondents, consisting of 104 males, 99 females, and one transgender individual. 33% of the respondents were first-year students, which was the largest percentage of respondents by class. This is a significant sample size as the traditional student population at Guilford College for spring 2014 was 1105 students.

Some key findings from this survey included awareness and participation rates. 95% of male respondents were aware of the campaign. The event that made the most male students aware of "The Year of Consent" was the red "Yes Means Yes" t-shirts that were handed out in September as part of the kick-off event. A majority of male students were also

aware of the condoms with printed messages on the wrapper (55%), and large print media (such as banners) (52%). 95% percent of the respondents were aware of the campaign, however, the rate of participation in the campaign events was significantly lower. Only 51.9 % of male respondents had attended at least one campaign event. At 20%, the kick-off event was the most popular of the campaign. Orientation small group sessions (16%) and the Community Senate/ SAASA (Sexual Assault Awareness, Support and Advocacy Organization) sexual assault forum (14%) were the next two most well-attended events.

Another important finding of the survey was about perceptions of the campaigns' target audience. Male respondents felt that the campaign was more targeted towards men. Female respondents felt that it was more targeted toward all community members. 45% of male students believed the campaign was primarily aimed at them, with 8% believing it was aimed at women and 47% believing it was aimed at all students equally. On the other hand, only 8.1% of women believed that it was aimed toward men, while 14.4% of female students believed it was aimed at women, and 77.8% believe it was aimed at all students equally. These initial findings are consistent with important research on masculinity.

Men commonly perceive that they are the targets of campaigns surrounding sexual assault awareness. This perception is in contrast to patterns of communities creating an environment of defense for males. Michael Kimmel, the author of *Guyland*, describes "entitlement, silence, and protection" (227) as some of the contributing core elements to the distorted world of young masculinity. Communities often protect young men in situations involving sexual assault, through victim blaming and rallying around "their guys" with such justifications as "poor judgment" or "things getting a little out of hand," (Kimmel, 2008). Kimmel (2008) argues even further that men feel "entitled to women's bodies, entitled to sex". It is not surprising then, that when these notions are challenged, many men feel uncomfortable and disproportionately targeted by consent or sexual assault awareness campaigns. The Guilford College "Year of Consent" campaign intentionally targeted all students equally; therefore these perceptions of gender-specific targeting were unfounded.

We must not let young men withdraw from the conversation on account of these perceptions, but instead it is important to find ways to educate and empower them to create a truly consensual campus environment. Harper (2011) asserts that male students are generally less engaged in campus activities and campus dialogues than their female counterparts. Additionally, Sax (2008) finds that

male students are more likely to participate in non-educational enriching activities while on campus, such as using technology as a form of engagement. Therefore, institutions must be especially intentional in how they attempt to involve all students in the dialogue surrounding sexual consent.

Based on this research that suggests a lack of engagement of male students, a next step for the "Only Yes Means Yes: Keep it Consensual" campaign would be to use technology to market the campaign more effectively to male students. Increased use of social media could be one solution. More actively using sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram could serve as an effective tool in promoting awareness and engagement in the campus discourse surrounding sexual consent.

While there is much work to be done, the "Year of Consent" campaign has been a beneficial endeavor for Guilford College. Along with increased awareness on the issue of sexual consent, there was positive feedback from all respondents. Despite their perceptions about whom this campaign targeted, evidence showed that the males on campus are still learning a great deal.

A large majority (74%) of male respondents felt that they would be able to "think more critically about this issue" as a result of campus conversations around consent through the campaign. 87% of male respondents noted that they were aware that alcohol and other drugs impaired an individual ability to give consent, and 68% percent of male students said they were more likely to speak up when they see or hear about a situation that has led to (or could lead) to sexual contact without consent.

It is imperative that all higher education institutions commit time, energy, and resources into sexual consent education

in order to create safer, healthier, more inclusive environments for *all* students.

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- Sax, L.J. (2008). The gender gap in college: Maximizing the developmental potential of women and men. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass . Kimmel, M.

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THE DECLINING SIGNIFICANCE OF TESTOSTERONE

BY THOMAS A. WALKER, JR.



Those of us who are more conspiratorial in nature, it speaks to a possible communist plot where Marx's concept of the state as father resonates. A review of history quickly reveals that the emasculation of men is a central pillar in controlling populations. Even the biblical story of Moses hints to the importance of eradicating the male threat. The American slavery holocaust saw lynching as primarily a phenomena enacted upon African American men. Additionally, they were more often sold than women slaves. More recent examples can be found in the "purging" of populations in Darfur or Bosnia. This purging always meant killing the men.

Less conspiratorial in nature is the subtle messaging that sees the traditional masculine attributes of strength, honor, and pursuit of excellence aligned with negative characteristics such as abusive, violent, and uncompassionate. Descriptive words such as "redefining" and "nurturing" are common at workshops for men. Conference sessions focus on the "plight of the male."

In the midst of all this is a silent majority of men who believe in strength and honor as positive attributes of masculinity. Men's rights organizations are popping up everywhere, but many are extremists and anti - female. What is there for the Renaissance man? The man who moves from camouflage hunting gear to a tuxedo with equal ease is forced to react silently for fear of being labeled "homophobic" or worse still participating in a "war against women." These men are everywhere and constitute the majority and not the exception.

In the early study of animals, zoologists studied animals in captivity. Only later did zoologists note the "territorial imperative" of animals; particularly the male species. This has implications for humans as well. This silent majority of men now shrink in corners waiting for the storm to pass. We are in a period of transition, and my hope is that we will strive to be more courageous, willing to go out there, like the lions in the jungle, instead of being comfortable like an indoor cat.

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It becomes very apparent with just the casual viewing of television today that men are being made aware of the decline in testosterone as men age. Products abound to assist men with this challenge, and in fact, there has been a decrease over the last few decades of testosterone levels in men. That coupled with a marketing push for chest – shaving, and other metrosexual habits have demonstrated that the media, and its' male imagery, has grown comfortable with the notion that men are becoming more comfortable with their estrogen - enriched lifestyle.

This is not just a notion. It has been clearly demonstrated in recent research that men (and women) today are living in an era where we are ingesting compounds from soft plastic water bottles, aluminum cans, and dietary choices that are producing higher levels of estrogen in our bodies. This in turn has led to more obesity among men, and in some cases, the dreaded "man – boobs." What to make of all this?

THIS BAND IS SO GAY! - A LESSON IN HOMOPHOBIA AND PERFORMATIVE MASCULINITY IN THE METAL MUSIC SCENE

BY CRAIG BIDIMAN

[TRIGGER WARNING: Homophobic language.]

I had to sign a waiver before I entered the venue. That's how I could tell this was going to be a great metal show.

Amid the musk of body odor and PBR, through the swaying bodies of beard, flannel, gauges, and tattooed fists, I found my way to the pole in the middle of the floor—there's always a pole. It supports me through most metal shows, which often take their toll on my body after a few bands.

I was nodding along to the opening act, giving them some credit for playing what appeared to be a hard to please Clifton Park, NY crowd. And boy was I right.

Between the Buried and Me was the headlining act. I love those guys. They prove vegans can kick ass. The crowd was overwhelmingly a BTBAM crowd. It seemed there was little room to be impressed.

Which brings me to right before BTBAM when deafheaven

performed, which is the band I truly came to see, seeing as I have been to a number of BTBAM shows in the past. Deafheaven released what I considered the most important metal album last year, *Sunbather*, on what I consider to be the most important record label today, Deathwish Records. The band combines beautiful atmospheric elements of Explosions in the Sky with the power and sheer brutality of black metal.

However, their sound hasn't been completely accepted among metal purists because it is too atmospheric and uplifting at times while the lyrics are screamed completely incoherently to the untrained ear.

I was in love with their opening number, "Dream House," the first track on the aforementioned, *Sunbather*. The track has so many elements of dynamic emotion and raw, heinous, unbridled metal. After the euphoria of the nine-minute epic, I was given a chance to breathe.

That's when I heard it.

"This band is so gay!"

George Clarke of deafheaven consistently brings a dynamic performance.



The man who said it resembled a young Rutherford B. Hayes—with one full sleeve of tattoos, a Bud Light, and an unkempt beard. I turned my head immediately and responded, "Not cool, bro." He smirked at me and said some other unsavory words. The next song, my favorite song, started, so I turned my attention back to the stage.

Ten minutes passed as I enjoyed the next song—however, I couldn't enjoy it because of what that man said about deafheaven. I wasn't okay with it.

I've heard disparaging statements like this many times at many shows. I often let it slide because it's whatever. I know that music doesn't have a sexual orientation. I know that people say things like this out of ignorance. But I couldn't let this one slide.

When their set ended, I turned to the dude and asked him to explain why he said what he said. He didn't give me a straight answer. Well, he did and he didn't.

"They aren't even metal—it's hipster bullshit. They don't belong here," he told me. I turned my head, confusingly, "And what does that even have to do with sexual orientation?"

"Don't be so sensitive, dude," he told me.

Sensitive? Obviously, this dude didn't know me or my history of allyship.

He said, "They don't belong here," and all that flashed in front of my face was the discrimination of the Civil Rights movement, the women's suffrage movement, and even today in places like Arizona and Kansas, where homosexuals have recently had legislature proposed to ban them from certain services. Situations like this are moments for learning and for growth. So, that's what I wanted to do.

I kindly and coolly explained to him and his snickering friends the reality of his words, the reality of the persecution those, like me, in the LGBTQ+ community face every day because of people tactlessly throwing around abusive language like that.

I obviously didn't want to cause a scene--the man was bigger than me--yet, I simply wanted to make a point that men shouldn't be afraid to call out other men when we hear offensive and abusive language that disenfranchises other men.

He sipped his beer, obviously annoyed to have been called out.

"Well, they have this faggot-ass pink album cover," he told me after a long drag on his Bud Light. "Oh, and pink isn't metal?" I respond. "No. It's fucking gay." He said.

Classic gender roles on display right there. Pink isn't masculine. Are we still at that point in history? Boys are blue, and girls are pink? I'm tired of that form of gender role association.

Yes, deafheaven's new album, *Sunbather*, has an all-pink cover. And no, it is in no way homosexual. In fact, I praise the high level of irony and beauty the cover brings to the metal scene. I have a sticker of the album cover on my water bottle. I see the album cover every day. Also, the vinyl release for this record is also all pink! It's quite wonderful to hear such rawness emanating from a pink vinyl record.

The fact that deafheaven is willing to present themselves with such allure, such care for their sound, and release their tunes behind a gender role-shattering album cover makes me so proud to be their fan. Sure, that probably wasn't their point, and they may never read this, but I felt the need to stand up to the man who made such a bigoted comment in regard to something he doesn't understand.



Album cover for deafheaven's album, *Sunbather*, released June 11, 2013.



Japan's Baby Metal is an example of brilliant intersectional metal that crosses gender and musical stereotypes.

Dudes often use offensive and derogative language when confronted with anything they don't understand. That is in no way excusable. Men who talk and act like this at shows give metal a bad name, give men a bad name, and make me ashamed to identify in either category. I'm tired of this gross lack of respect for art and sexual identity.

"I'd rather be water-boarded than listen to this band again."

After the show, my friend told me he had heard another person in the crowd say that in reference to deafheaven as the flamboyant vocalist, George Clarke, kissed the crowd goodnight and walked offstage.

I was shocked beyond compare—almost more than the homophobic slur because this was purely an instance where absurd hyperbole is at play, and ignorant stupidity is at fault. While the metal scene is largely based around hyperbolic epic lyrics and language, so too is its fan's reactions to acts they do not like.

Music is an artform of sound, harmony, beats that fall into varying genres, subgenres and postgenres—of which some styles don't appeal to everyone. And that's fine. Yet, what

this deeper demonstrates is the power and gross misuse of language.

What it all comes down to is that whatever band it is, the band really doesn't matter—this applies to any band in any genre at any show, anywhere. What matters is that we, as concertgoers, act as active bystanders when we hear potential harmful language, see harmful actions, and speak up!

I call for all concertgoers to intervene in any of these situations—like I did—stand up for the voiceless, be willing to confront ignorance and disrespect. Because if you won't, who will?

I'm not sure this will resonate with all readers; yet, this is something that reaches far beyond music—it happens everywhere. That doesn't mean we must tolerate this sort of behavior.

Speak up in the face of disrespect.

Lemme know your thoughts!

Be well, all.

- Craig.

About the Author:

Craig Bidiman is a first-year Higher Education M.Ed. graduate student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He earned his undergraduate degrees in English and Secondary Education at Oregon State University, where he served as Memorial Union President for a year and was forever transformed and encouraged to enter the realm of student affairs.

Craig currently holds assistantships in the Center for Health Promotion at UMass Amherst, where he serves as a Masculinity Educator and advises the sex positive comedy troupe, Not Ready for Bedtime Players. Craig also holds an assistantship with the UMass Graduate Student Senate, where he manages advertising and social media marketing.

Craig is also an avid music reviewer, tattoo and vinyl collector, and professional wrestling nerd.

Join the dialogue on Twitter at [@CrigBididman](https://twitter.com/CrigBididman)...or on Facebook at [Facebook.com/bidimanc](https://www.facebook.com/bidimanc). He can also be reached at CraigBidiman@gmail.com.

Thank you for reading.

THE HIGHER EDUCATION GENDER GAP REVISITED FOR PARENTS

BY PRESTON CROTEAU

If you have ever taken a stroll through a bookstore, chances are you came across a section of books on parenting. They are hard to miss; shelves upon shelves of 'expert' advice on how to raise a child, how to discipline, what to expect, and so on. For those inclined to shopping at home, a quick entry of the word "parenting" into a popular online retailer shows over 95,000 book results alone. This does not count the overwhelming number of expos, classes and communities dedicated entirely to parenting. The simple truth is that the market for parenting resources is staggering.

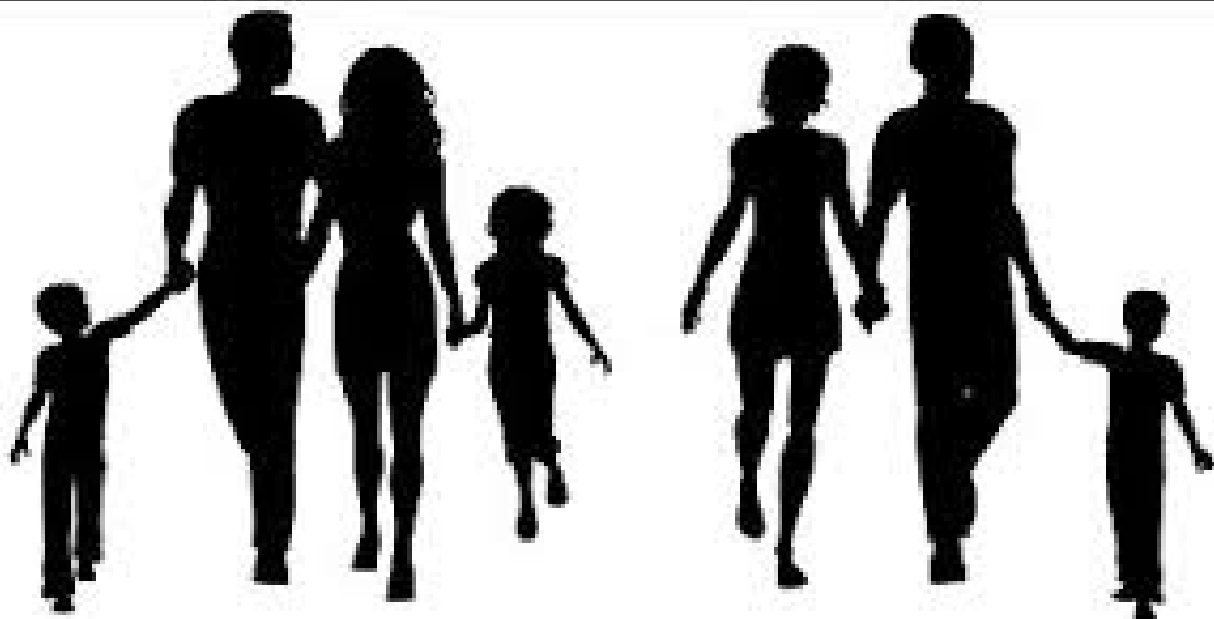
Two years ago, I was an expecting father, thrilled to have these resources available, though admittedly overwhelmed by the sheer volume of it all. I tried to immerse myself in the pool of knowledge, soaking up as much information as I could. My wife did the same. We were first-time parents, excited and nervous at the prospects of our growing family. We spent countless hours reading books, articles, and forums. We attended four separate classes held at our doctor's offices on everything from feeding to bathing to infant CPR. By the time our son arrived, I felt like I had done as much research as I possibly could and was incredibly well prepared for what was about to transpire. I was wrong.

Despite countless hours of preparation and my access to these resources, I quickly learned that parenting is simply not something that can be learned from a book or taught in a class. To be clear, I did learn a few things from the hours of research. But there are things that you cannot prepare for until you experience them, like that very first diaper change, or the first several weeks of nonstop feeding and nonexistent sleep. As time goes on, you learn to adapt to these unpredictable and unpreventable occurrences.

You identify what is important to you and learn to choose your battles. As my son has grown, I like to think that I have become a better father. But as I reflect upon my first few years of parenthood, I cannot help but acknowledge the advantages I have had while raising my son. As a student affairs professional, I worry about the young men I meet who do not have the same advantages I do and wonder how they balance learning microbiology or business administration with simultaneously learning how to warm a bottle, or install a car seat.

It can be easy to forget that there are fathers on our campuses and in our classrooms. So much of our work in student affairs focuses on developing these students into young adults that we forget that some of them are also focusing on developing infants into toddlers. Often times, you may not even know that you are meeting with a student who is also a parent unless they self-disclose. And don't fall into the trap of thinking this trend only affects graduate students. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, there are nearly 4 million undergraduate students who are also parents, or over 20% of the total number of undergraduate students in the United States. Half of these are single parents.

These trends are magnified for minority undergraduate students. The *Future of Children* is an advocacy organization born out of a collaborative effort between the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and the Brookings Institution. Their research shows over a third of African American female undergraduate students in the United States are single mothers, compared to 15% of African American male undergraduates who are single fathers. The same can be





said for Native American (20%), Latino (16%) and Asian (9%) undergraduate men and women. Comparatively, an estimated 10% of Caucasian undergraduates are single parents.

Women in general are more likely than men to matriculate in college, receive financial aid, participate in student organizations and complete their degree program within six years. In the past decade, women have made up almost 60% of the student population at American colleges and universities. Logic might dictate that, considering the disproportionate physical impact that raising a child has on women than it does on men, these numbers might balance out when considering the case of parents.

But the research from *Future of Children* suggests that these gender gaps may be even wider for parents. Overall, 8% of undergraduates are single fathers, while more than twice that number (17%) are single mothers. Part of the explanation for this difference is the emergence of scholarships and financial aid considerations specifically for single mothers, including those that enable women to enroll in college in their late twenties to early thirties, after their children have started attending grade school.

Conversely, there is a scarcity of government, nonprofits, and scholarship programs that specifically target men. Most anti-poverty programs exclusively benefit women and children. And while these programs have been successful in helping many mothers exercise their right to achieve an education in an increasingly difficult financial climate, the lack of family resources specifically targeted to men no

doubt contributes to lower matriculation and higher dropout rates.

In general, men are more likely to drop out than women in part because men are more likely to feel discouraged about their debt caused by student loans (about \$2,000 sooner than women), according to The National Longitudinal Study of Youth. Fathers are even more at risk, as the pressures of fatherhood and the perceived need to be a “breadwinner” for their family can only exacerbate these feelings. This is counterintuitive. Studies show that college dropouts earn approximately \$20,000 less than those with a college degree by midlife. But too often, fathers enrolled in college do not identify the long-term ramifications of their decisions and can only focus on the short-term demands of parenting.

Colleges and universities can take steps to combat some of these issues. Many family-friendly institutions offer a variety of programs for mothers and fathers alike, including family housing, daycare centers, support groups, student organizations, family restrooms, and parenting classes. But the reality is that, equal to emotional and organizational support, fathers need financial assistance in the form of grants and scholarships, as well as planning and guidance. Only when access to these resources is truly equal can we know that these young families are in the best position to thrive.

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A REFLECTION ON THE NASPA CONFERENCE, HOOK-UP CULTURE, AND SEX POSITIVITY BY AARON HARTMAN



At this year's NASPA Conference, I had the pleasure of sitting in on a session led by some of the preeminent thinkers in men and masculinities. The session was focused on ways to educate college men to strive towards "positive masculinity," a term the presenters had partly defined as a

rejection of hook-up culture. On the surface this was an idea in line with the rest of the pro-feminist, anti-racist and queer-affirming ideals presented. However, upon reflection, I realized we had skewed a bit too far in this particular aspect of positive masculinity. This is not to say that I am in favor of our college men remaining in the hook-up culture as it stands now. I do, however, fear that an outright rejection of hook-up culture stigmatizes consensual sex and continues the outdated ideas that (when working in the context of heterosexual hook-ups) men are powerless to their own sex drives. I fear that college men and women are too emotionally immature to understand what type of relationship (or lack thereof) they are entering into, and thus should be protected from it, and lastly that women have no interest in sex outside of a relationship.

As we begin our discussion on hook-up culture, I believe it is also worth noting that I am focusing on a culture that is adjacent to but distinctly separate from the predator-prey culture that is at the root of many sexual assaults. I am working from the assumption that men and women (and of course men and men, or women and women, or any mix beyond the binaries) can search for sexual intimacy outside of a traditional romantic relationship assuming both partners are aware of the terms of the relationship and enthusiastically consent to them.

As we strive for positive masculinities, I think it is important for us to engage in the discussion with a sex-positive lens. Sex positivity, defined by sexologist Carol Queen as "the cultural philosophy that understands sexuality as a potentially positive force in one's life, and it can, of course, be contrasted with sex negativity, which sees sex as problematic, disruptive, dangerous. Sex positivity allows for and in fact celebrates sexual diversity, differing desires and *relationships structures*, and individual choices based on consent (emphasis mine)." We need to make sure that we are not mislabeling hook-ups as problematic, but rather hook-up culture specifically as something to disengage

from. In the context of hook-ups, I believe we need to educate our men and women in better understanding what type of interaction they are entering into when navigating the hook-up culture.

As it stands now, hook-ups are transactional, whereby sex is a currency, and the richest males, those who hook-up the most, are the males with the most power and prestige. It is a hypocritical system where the pursuer of goods, typically the male in the dynamic, receives the payout of popularity and respect in the eyes of others. Women for their part in the sexual economy are often left poorer, losing respect and social capital from their male and female peers; their only transactional gain is the title of "slut," or some derivative thereafter.

Where we need to move in our discussion of positive masculinities is differentiating between hook-ups, which I will again affirm are not inherently against our mission, and "hook-up culture" which, as it stands, currently is in direct opposition to our movement. If we take our transactional culture and educate our students on entering hook-ups from a relational stance, instead, I believe we can maintain our mission without stigmatizing sex outside of monogamy.

The idea of a relational hook-up seems counter-intuitive, but I believe possible. The first and most important step we can take is to de-glorify sex as a social metric by which to measure our peers and instead focus on sex as an activity that you can enjoy with other consenting adults. If we can shift the paradigm to a system where two consenting individuals (or more if that is the case) enter into a sexual relationship with the clear understanding that sexual activity is not the beginning of a romantic relationship, I believe the hook-up culture can remain. Ultimately, we need our men, and women, to better understand why they are looking for a hook-up. I believe we should strive for a culture in which sex is no longer used as a transaction by men to barter for a change in social status and to reaffirm an individual's masculinity but rather the culture should focus on the consensual and pleasurable relationship dimension of sex, leaving masculinity to be defined in relation to other factors outside of one's sexual history and prowess.

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Aaron Hartman is an Area Coordinator at Babson College. He can be reached at ahartman2@babson.edu.

REFLECTION OF MY FIRST NASPA 2014 CONFERENCE BY DAVID POLIZZI



I guess I should start first by introducing myself. My name is David Polizzi, and I am a Residence Hall Director at Ripon College in Ripon, Wisconsin. I am really excited to write about my first experience at NASPA because I had an incredible time. As I prepped to leave for the trip, I was eager to finally step into the professional world of Student Affairs, I knew I wanted to get everything I possibly could out of this conference.

Wanting to save money, a group of us decided to road trip our way to Baltimore. It was about a 13 hour car ride and was definitely worth it. We were a little late and missed the first attendee social; however, we would not be deterred. We quickly checked into the hotel, and then headed to the kick-off event. Exhausted, a little hungry and more than overwhelmed, we found our seats amongst the 5,600 other attendees. Wes Moore was the keynote speaker, and I could not have asked for a more impactful opening.

Monday morning came earlier than anticipated, however, I was up and ready to attend my first few sessions. The morning flew by, and I had gone to two sessions that I really enjoyed. Later in the afternoon, after I learned the hard lesson about why lunch reservations are important, I went to a session titled, "Lean Out: Men Engaging in the 'Lean In' Phenomenon." I really got a lot out of this session and always enjoy the opportunity to talk about ways in which men can be better allies. Not only was this session important because of the content, but this is where I had the opportunity to make some great connections. I learned that all three facilitators were a part of the Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community, so I made it a point to try and make a connection. I was able to learn about the Open Business Meeting happening the next morning and quickly added it to my schedule.

Tuesday morning started with my first Knowledge Community meeting. I loved everything about it and wanted to get my foot in the door somehow, some way, and that is how I ended up writing this article for you all. Tuesday was difficult because there were so many sessions offered, which made it hard to decide what to attend. I was always torn between what I have a passion for versus a session that speaks directly to a demographic I serve in my role at Ripon College. Luckily, I was able to do a little bit of both.

Before we knew it, Wednesday was here, and it was the last day of the conference. I went to a session early that morning, and then quickly headed over to the convention center to hear our final keynote speaker, John Lovett. Although John was not a practicing student affairs professional, I really enjoyed his words. A comedy writer for President Obama has a knack for reminding us not to take ourselves too seriously.

NASPA came and went, and I was back at Ripon College preparing for the work load that the second half of spring semester brings. Something great that my supervisor did when I returned was that I was asked to share how I will use the information, instead of just recapping my experience. This was vital because that is why I went to this conference. As I look back and reflect, I realize that NASPA was both challenging and reaffirming. Challenging to me in ways I still need to grow and different practices I could try out. Reaffirming in that this is exactly the field I want to be in, and what we do as professionals still matters.

David Polizzi is a Residence Hall Director and Intramural Sports and Fitness Center Program Coordinator at Ripon College. He can be reached at polizzid@ripn.edu.

#PosMASC: A REFLECTION FROM THE NASPA 2014 CONFERENCE

BY DENNIS COY DENMAN AND ROBERT ALEXANDER

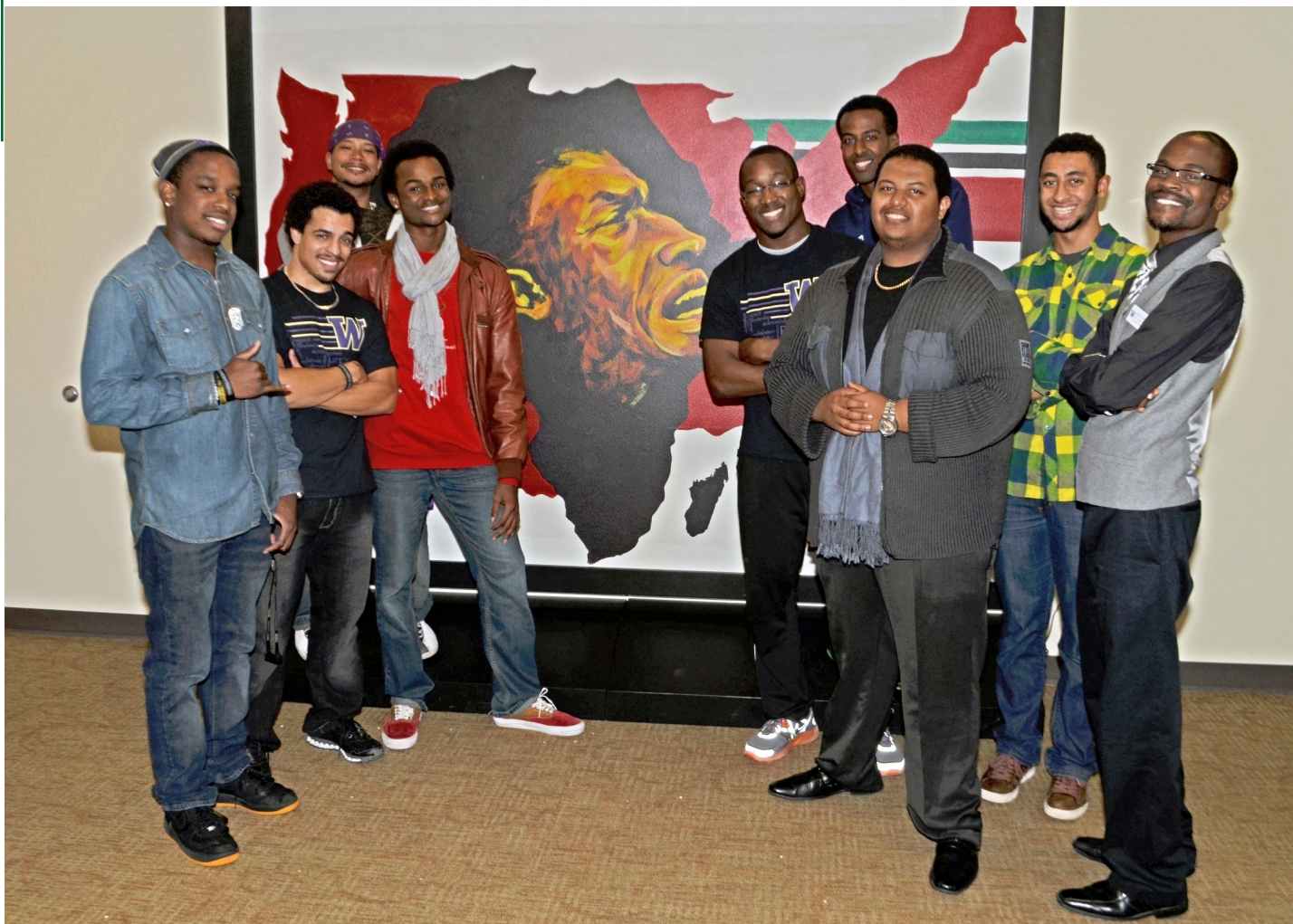
During the annual NASPA conference, I had the pleasure of attending the Men & Masculinities Knowledge Community sponsored session "Toward a Shared Concept of Positive Masculinity" presented by Dr. Frank Harris, Dr. Jorg Viaden, and Dr. Shaun Harper. This interactive and engaging session helped reframe/move the conversation of college men behaving badly toward a more positive, healthier, and well-rounded masculinity.

The presenters all shared different examples of college men, trying to make meaning of their gender roles and masculinities. For example, the straight white college male, who was not necessarily involved in social justice or diversity efforts; or the college male who stands up for others, but in very violent and aggressive ways; or the challenges of developing a positive masculinity with intersecting identities for LGBT men, men of color, or men with strong religious backgrounds, for instance.

"We know what the bad stuff looks like. How do we identify and elevate the good stuff in men?" was the question

presenters invited participants to answer in small groups by different functional areas. My group consisted of colleagues from Fraternity & Sorority Life, Housing & Residence Life and myself, from Multicultural Affairs. While we all came from very broad areas of campus life, we were all able to relate to experiences working with men in a living group situation (residence hall floor, or fraternity chapter house).

We shared different programs and best practices for highlighting positive masculinities on campus. Sometimes, a "Man of the Month" recognition program works, as is the case with many chapter houses and few residence hall programs. The peer-to-peer recognition program recognizes men who are role models and uphold the values of their community every day. For others, it's providing the space for men to talk about "men's stuff" that do not always take place in a counseling center, or in a violence prevention program. We've been able to engage men through various means of workshop style programs, from having men reflect on where they learned "what it means to be a man" to unpacking your "manbox" - an activity around



men unpacking prized possessions that illustrate, or represent, their masculinity. Another opportunity for engaging men in programs about hypermasculinity and gender performance as in "Why Men Don't Say Cute?", a program that engages participants in attempting to answer just that question. We know men are interested in talking about men's issues, but practitioners have to work creatively to engage men in these conversations.

A part of the larger group conversation was titling masculinity programs for what they really are, or do you lure college men to programs under the guise or title of something else? The "truth" and the "gotcha" method (as I've come to call it from my time in residence life) have both proven to be successful, given the audience of men you hope to attract. When we offer programs and workshops, men who will benefit the most, won't show. But for those men who do show up, we can continue to build the support system for those few men on our campuses and use their positive influences and contributions on campus to help us move toward a more positive masculinity. Another important reminder is that we cannot do men and masculinity work without involving women! We should try not to exclude women in these conversations and understand women are our strongest allies. Female student leaders and colleagues are often times better at getting men to have these conversations and seek the resources to support healthy and positive masculinities.

A positive masculinity is inherently inclusive, it does not attempt to put borders on itself. A positive decision matrix is a decision-making matrix absent influence outside the family or origins of said person, granted some people are not raised "right" but we have to exhibit some faith in human beings, and say that where the human being is left to his human nature absent negative external influences, we will make decisions that uplift humanity. A positive masculinity decision matrix is a thought process that is not steeped in double consciousness, or dedicated to the other. When I say "other," I mean all the people looking at you. I think the best thing to do is to ask people in a complete moment of honesty why they do what they do.

This exercise, can begin as a conversation between men, but eventually it evolves, and women enter the conversation. Expectations, are not changed easily, but first you have to identify what people think they are supposed to be doing, and at numerous levels. Ask people to identify what their parents, peers, and friends expect of them socially. Once expectations are identified, we can attack the motivating factors behind "negative masculinity" behaviors.

The session was also very innovative as participants took to twitter to respond with their thoughts and solutions to taking steps toward a positive masculinity using the tag **#PosMasc**, which sent Twitter into a trending frenzy in a matter of minutes. Some notable tweets included:

"College male athletes: Masculine perceptions vs. realities. We need to change the culture of aggression toward conversations of **#PosMasc**" - (@issabelle_Lark)

"Can we engage the "ring leaders" in our halls in one-on-one conversations, then charge them to bring other residents to programs? **#PosMasc**" - (@CoreyFriend)

"We need to create space which allows the exploration of gender development in men to promote **#posmasc**" - (@NASPA_MMKC)

All in all, this session (and many other sessions) were great and made me re-think my approach to men's programming. I should work harder to activate the community of men I work with on a daily basis. My personal end goal is to engage men of color in my center to take advantage of leaderships roles throughout our ethnic cultural center, in student organizations, and on-campus at large. By partnering with other colleagues across campus (very similar to my small group), I am able to connect with different colleagues all interested in doing this work, including women. I left the session with a clearer idea of how I can promote a shared positive masculinity on my campus in an intentional, tangible and even tweetable way. This MMKC session was extremely innovative and transformative.

Dennis Coy Denman is the Coordinator for Leadership Programs for the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity's Samuel E. Kelly Ethnic Cultural Center at the University of Washington. He can be reached at ddenman@uw.edu.

Robert Alexander is a graduate student in the Daniel Evans School of Public Administration at the University of Washington who also contributed to this article. He can be reached at rpa3@uw.edu.

THANKS FOR READING THE
SPRING 2014 ISSUE OF THE
MMKC NEWSLETTER!

INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING?

SEE THE LAST PAGE FOR DETAILS!



THE PURPOSE OF THE MEN & MASCULINITIES KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

The purpose of the Men & Masculinities Knowledge Community (MMKC) is to provide a venue for discussion, research, and the distribution of information about men's gender identity development, in the context of college campuses.

The goals of the MMKC are:

1. To make gender identity(ies) a salient lens for viewing and working with male staff and students.
2. To develop and distribute resources that will enhance student affairs professionals' ability to respond to the needs of male students
3. To inform the profession about new research and practices regarding the development of masculine identities as manifested in people in general, and men in particular (e.g. inclusive of masculinities performed by Trans/Queer, women.)
4. To offer technical and creative assistance to colleagues as they develop programs and services for male students.
5. To assist Student Affairs professionals in navigating the tensions between male privilege and men's personal needs (e.g. challenge and support,) including support through the professionals' personal frustrations in this regard.
6. To create guides to best practices in teaching male students about diversity, gender identity, and other critical issues affecting their personal growth.
7. To promulgate and/or distribute men's issues and development scholarship for use in graduate preparation programs.

This KC was founded upon a pro-feminist, anti-racist, gay-affirmative agenda with the hope of providing resources to increase multi-cultural competence among male students by providing the NASPA membership with tools to invite and engage men into this process. The underlying assumption is that men in general are interested in social justice, capable of enacting it, and that they need language and a connection to the process.

ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Articles should be no less than 300 words and no more than 1500.
2. All articles should be relevant to the mission and purpose of the Men and Masculinity Knowledge Community.
3. Articles should include the name of the author, job title, email and school affiliation.
4. Anyone with an article that is time sensitive should inquire with the Technology Chair for deadlines.
5. Please take the time to proof and edit your work.
6. All work should be saved in .doc (Word) format.
7. Photos and artwork should be sent as high quality .jpg files.
8. All submissions must be sent to the Newsletter Editor, Jack Korpob, at pkorpob@gmail.com.

MMKC NEWSLETTER

SUBMISSION TIMELINE

EDITION	CALL FOR ARTICLES	SUBMISSION DUE DATE	PUBLISH DATE
Summer	Late May	June 21 st	Early July
Fall	Late August	September 21 st	Early October
Winter	Late November	December 21 st	Early January
Conference	-	-	Annual Conference
Spring	Late February	March 21 st	Early April