PURPOSE OF THE MEN AND MASCULINITIES KNOWLEDGE COMMUNITY

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. The goals for this KC 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.

MEMO FROM NATIONAL CO-CHAIRS--RACHEL WAGNER & RYAN BARONE

The state of NASPA’s still newest KC, Men and Masculinities, is strong. Our membership has grown to an all-time high of 700+ members. We sponsored some exceptional programs at the national NASPA conference, and while our MMKC events were not exhaustingly attended, the dialogues that ensued were productive and thought-provoking. Men and Masculinities has a unique place in the NASPA KC structure, and we continue to refine our niche in NASPA and nationally. Welcome to our new KC Representatives: Ty Chrisman from Region II, and Dhanfu Elston from Region III. We are excited about their energy and experience as we continue to grow our regional presence in Region II & III.

We are thrilled to have the strong leadership and commitment to scholarship that Brian Reed brings as incoming MMKC National Chair. His term will officially begin with the NASPA National conference next spring in Seattle. His experience and passion will help the KC maintain and better our presence in NASPA.

As always, folks interested in being involved in the KC just need to let us know! As a new KC we are always looking for new ways to get people engaged. Please check out our MMKC website (http://www.naspa.org/communities/kc/community.cfm?kcid=25) for information how to join our list-serv, how to interact with our blog, and for information about our leadership team. Soon a committee will be established planning the Second Conference on College Male’s to take place next spring. This joint effort by ACPA and NASPA represents our field’s commitment to explore and examine masculinities and gender on our college campuses. More info to come soon.

Finally, thanks to our Technology Chair, Osvaldo Del Valle. His leadership with our MMKC newsletters has provided an exceptional way to reach the NASPA community, and they have provided a model initiative for all of the NASPA KC’s. Thanks Osvaldo!

HOW TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE TO THE HIP AND HAPPENING MMKC NEWSLETTER

The Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community is a young, but ever growing KC. Our newsletter is even younger than that. This is the third issue of the MMKC Newsletter and we’re happy to report that we are making great strides as a tool for communication and dissemination of valuable information on masculinity issues. We are always looking for great articles, news and tidbits pieces for the newsletter. Did you have a great men’s workshop? Tell us about it. If you would also like to announce an upcoming event at your school or tell us about an upcoming seminar or workshop…let us know.

The submission guidelines are as follows:

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 be accompanied with the name of the author, job title, and school affiliation.
4. All articles that are “time sensitive” should inquire with the editor of the newsletter for deadlines.
5. Please proof read your work. The more you proof read, the less editing I have to do.
6. All work should be saved in " .doc" (Word) or in Apple's Pages word processor.
7. Photos and artwork should be saved as: jpeg, jpg or png.
8. All submissions must be sent to Delvalle@bu.edu.
MANTALK: HELPING COLLEGE-AGED MALES LEARN MORE ABOUT THEMSELVES, THEIR PEERS, AND THEIR CONSTRUCTION OF MASCULINITY

In my six years in Residential Life I have never been a part of a program that was as successful and live-changing for both the residents and the facilitator until I began ManTalk this past year at Gonzaga University. ManTalk is a group that provides men an opportunity to come together to share their experiences, lives, and discuss other topics around men and masculinity with one another in a supportive and nonjudgmental environment.

When I first had the idea to develop ManTalk I never thought it would be so successful or well-attended by the residents. This year I facilitated thirteen ManTalk’s on a bi-weekly basis in my all-male residential hall of approximately 150 freshmen and sophomores. On average there were about 10 residents that attended, but on some occasions we had as many as 15 people attend. While attendance could have been higher I was pleased with the men that attended, their willingness to open up to one another, and their commitment to the program. The thirteen ManTalk’s took the men through a variety of topics, beginning at the superficial level and getting deeper as the weeks progressed. Below is the list of the thirteen ManTalk topics used this year:

- ManTalk: Purpose, Ground Rules and Goals
- Men and Friendship
- Men and Relationships
- Men and Relationships: Part Deux
- Women and Relationships
- Men, Failure, and Feelings
- Men and Success
- Men and Spirituality
- Men Giving Thanks
- Men and Body Image
- Men and Pornography
- Men and Sports
- Men Answering and Discussing Your Important Questions

I think one of the most important aspects of ManTalk is the fact that everyone involved learns together. ManTalk gives men an avenue to voice their deepest worries about life, love, school, their family, and their future. And it also allows men to talk and connect at a deeper level than they may be able to with their roommates or friends. One resident stated in a survey, “ManTalk has allowed me to develop more profound friendships. That is supportive and accountable friendships rather than unhealthy and disabling ones.”

Because of the success of ManTalk in my building I have been charged with creating and developing ManTalk in every residential facility on-campus. As one resident put it, “I think it is a shame that not all men are exposed to this program.” To do this I will be developing a Peer Educator Model where I will train students (juniors and seniors) to lead ManTalk within their halls.

ManTalk has been extremely successful at Gonzaga and it can be equally as successful on any campus across the country. All you need is the right people on board. First find a facilitator. Maybe that’s you…or maybe it’s a Campus Minister, Student Activities Coordinator, Coach, or Faculty Member. Next you have to get RA’s on board. If your RA’s do not believe in the program they will not be able to sell it to residents. Thirdly, you need to be prepared with topics, questions, and ways to fill the silence that can fall over a room after a man opens up about his deepest and darkest secrets. And lastly, you have to be willing to be open, honest, and compassionate. One resident noted the reasons I was successful as a facilitator, “Shane knows how to break the ice and make everyone feel comfortable. And he does such a good job because he knows the issues men face, he has dealt with most of them, and he has a panoramic approach.”

ManTalk is a program that I am extremely passionate about and it is a program I would love to see you develop on your campus. Please feel free to email me at mckee@gonzaga.edu if you have questions on how to facilitate this program on your campus.

Shane McKee is a Professional Residence Director at Gonzaga University and the Region 5 Men and Masculinities Knowledge Community Representative.
1. What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?
Living life without ever finding a sense of passion.

2. Where would you like to live?
Any place that is sunny and has a beach. I have studied in Brazil on a few occasions, so that would have to rank high on my favorite places.

3. What is your idea of earthly happiness?
Nothing is better than spending time with my family and enjoying a good joke. I come from a long line of undiscovered comedians.

4. What is your most marked characteristic?
It is probably my huge smile. I also frequently like to wear bow ties.

5. What do you most value in your friends?
Loyalty. A good friend will tell you what you need to hear even though you don’t want to hear it.

6. The quality you most admire in a man?
Integrity.

7. The quality you most admire in a woman?
Strength.

8. What is your favorite virtue?
Justice. I have committed my life to pursuing social justice.

9. What is your favorite occupation?
Teacher. Working with students in the classroom is the most gratifying aspect of my job.

10. Is the glass half full or half empty?
Always half full.

11. Who are your favorite poets?
My fish. If they happen to croak, you can always flush them and not shed a tear.

12. What natural gift would you most like to possess?
The ability to sing, but that doesn’t stop me from trying.

13. How would you like to die?
Doing something adventurous. I am a thrill-seeker.
DEFYING STEREOTYPES: MALE RESIDENT ASSISTANTS AS EMPATHIZER VERSUS SECURITY AND CONTROL

In January 2005, I made a career change. I left the world of social work for the ivory towers of higher education administration. My first job was (like many of us who started in the field) as a residence hall director. I was at a large, private university on the east coast. I remember meeting with my predecessor, who’s position I would be filling and receiving advice about the building I would be in charge of. I remember this colleague giving me advice on hiring Resident Assistants (RA). This colleague advised that I should hire more female than male RAs on my staff. My colleague justified that both male and female residents would feel more comfortable approaching a female RA than a male one. That women are more empathetic than men are. This colleague went on to say that I should hire a few males to provide control in the building. I remember thinking to myself: that can’t be right.

Luckily for me, when it came time for me to hire RAs, I attempted to hire an equal amount of male and female RAs for my area. With my social work background, I trained my RAs on mediating conflicts with roommates, recognizing signs of students isolating themselves and gave them some tips on best approaching students about possible issues they may believe are going in their resident’s lives and so on. In other words, I trained them well. My male RAs were as capable of providing an empathetic ear for their residents as their female teammates were. The evidence for this was clearly visible within their daily and weekly logs. My male RAs dealt with many resident issues as RAs on campus and yes, including issues dealing with feminine hygiene.

As time past, I began attending regional and national conferences within the field of student personnel administration. I was surprised to find out that my predecessor was not unique in his/her thoughts. In informal conversations, I met a few (not many), other student personnel administrators who held the same belief that male RAs were best suited for providing control. In essence, the role of providing empathy, consolation and heart-to-heart interactions was the realm of female RA. One hall director informed me that both male and female residents would feel more comfortable approaching a female RA about their problems than a male RA. This hall director went on to say that male residents would also not feel comfortable approaching another male with their problems because they did not want to be perceived as being weak. Another hall director, even justified this thinking by saying that most of their male RAs were jocks. I did not push them further for clarification regarding what they meant by that. In retrospect, I should of had, but I did not want to make any waves at the time.

The realization that a few of my colleagues (even a tiny proportion) had this mind set lead me to ask: Are there male RAs who subscribe to this idea that they are there to provide control and not empathy and advice? I decided to do something about it. I started to conjecture some ideas base on the conversations I had.

I first spoke with my own male RAs and asked them what they thought about this issue. One of my RAs reported that his male residents do not approach him as much as his female residents do. Another reported not feeling as connected to his male residents as his female residents. I asked my RAs if it was something that maybe they were not doing correctly. They said no and referred to their training they had received. One RA replied: Guys are not programmed to talk or seek help. Its easier for girls to express themselves than the guys. And that was it! Apparently, reaching guys needed some new approaches that their previous training did not provide them.

I researched online and discovered this to be the case. Some colleges and universities had begun using new innovative methods of reaching out to its male population. It seemed that male participation in extra-curricular activities was waning and student personnel administrators were scrambling for ways to raise up the numbers. I took what I researched online and used some of my own training to assembled a workshop on teaching male RAs about masculinity issues and reaching out to their male residents. I entitled it (albeit a clinically sounding title not suitable for a student audience): Millennial college Males: barriers to accessing services. I have since changed the title.

This workshop encouraged conversations on masculinity issues: What does it mean to be a man in the U.S. today? It explored identity & manhood and finally, encouraged male RAs to exchange ideas on best practices for reaching their male residents within their respective communities.
SOME PERSpectives On ‘MEn & MASCULINITY’

What does it actually mean to be a ‘man’? Generally, men are thought to be the powerful gender yet, why are they three times more likely to kill themselves? Live seven years less than women? Make more money but have a lower net worth? Three times as likely to be homeless? Just as likely to die of prostate cancer as women who die of breast cancer yet, consider this; the difference of funding for breast cancer research is 660% greater. The pervasive anguish a man experiences should concern us all. It is common knowledge that they are entering college less, graduating less, more likely to face judiciary sanctions, and yet, there doesn’t seem to be a clue as to how to address these factors in higher education today.

A major rationale for having Women’s Studies (i.e. studying women without studying men) is because HISTORY is perceived as “Men’s Studies”. The conclusion has been that women needed an equivalent to what men already had. However, while Women’s Studies examine the female role, history demonstrates to men/boys the traditional male role models of hero, performer and protector. Has academia unwittingly created a double standard it set out to abolish? For example, when Rodney King was beaten by police, it was called violence against blacks, not against men. Had a woman been beaten; wouldn’t it be described as violence against women?

Briefly, let’s examine some myths and facts about the status of men. A common myth is that women are more likely to be victims of violence. FACT: men are twice as likely to be victims of violent crimes and three times as likely to be murdered. FACT: ninety-four percent of occupational deaths occur to men. FACT: nine out of ten people incarcerated in America are men. Another myth is that widows are perceived to be left in greater despair but the FACT is that widowers are ten times more likely to commit suicide. Let’s continue, myth: more women than men suffer from mental illness; FACT: in actually, more men suffer from mental illness whereas twice as many women are likely to be treated for a mental illness.

So where to begin? Women and men need to be natural allies. Both are eager to be in a close, warm and loving relationship with each other regardless of sexual orientation and are not natural enemies. It is important for each to listen to the other’s stories and struggles to begin to eliminate the rigid roles of the past and for taking responsibility for our own lives in order to move forward. A primary obstacle are the labels and generalizations society has placed on gender and their preconceived roles. Just take a look at the Feminist Dictionary definition of “misogyny”: the hatred of women as a refusal to suppress the evidence of one’s experience with women; a man’s defense against fear and pain; an affirmation of the cathartic effects of justifiable anger. Now consider their definition for “Misandry”: the hatred of men includes the beliefs that men are stupid, petty, dishonest, silly, irrational, incompetent, undependable, narcissistic, dirty, unemotional, oversexed, undersexed and continues to state that “Such beliefs culminate in attitudes that demean our bodies, our abilities, our character sand our efforts and imply that we must be controlled, subdued, abused and used, not only for female benefit but our own.” Are these acceptable concepts? What’s implied here is that the hatred of men is justifiable but the hatred of women is a sexist attitude. Truth is, men are inherently gentle, intimate, responsible, enthusiastic, sensual, tolerant, courageous, honest, vulnerable, affectionate, proud, spiritual, committed, wild, nurturing, peaceful, helpful, intense, compassionate, happy but still struggle to safely and fully express their emotions. It would be important to understand that anger is an emotion, NOT a behavior, and violence is only one manifestation out of many behaviors that can be drawn upon. An important lesson here is that the more men learn expressive language, the less likely they will become violent.

Unfortunately, a continued portrayal of a man in a men’s group or who is engaged in personal growth, is running around nude in the woods beating a drum keeps men from taking the essential risks of self discovery. It is necessary to figure out some way to get men out of their caves rather than pushing them further into them. It takes people, and that means all of us, who can give warmth to a cold, lost, and angry heart. That folks is our mission and we must make our priority if we hope to change the male culture on college campuses today.

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CHECK OUT THE Men AND Masculinities BLOG AT:

HTTP://MENKGC.BLOGSPOT.COM
Summer Book Reading

**Impossible Bodies: Femininity and Masculinity at the Movies**
Impossible Bodies investigates issues of ethnicity, gender and sexuality in contemporary Hollywood. Examining stars from Clint Eastwood and Arnold Schwarzenegger to Whoopi Goldberg, Jennifer Lopez and Dolly Parton, Christine Holmlund focuses on actors whose physique or appearance puts them at the margins of Hollywood film, and yet who occupy shifting and key positions in contemporary mainstream cinema. Grouped into three sections, "fixing on figures," "siding with sidekicks" and "staring at stars," chapters examine a range of "impossible bodies" on film from the Pumping Iron documentaries to The Nutty Professor.

**Wrestling and Hypermasculinity**
Professional wrestling revels in its exaggeration of masculinity. This hyper-masculinity is evident in the physical appearance of wrestlers, the sexuality-charged and violent moves used in and out of the ring, the role assigned to women and the extensive use of weapons such as chains, barbed wire and steel folding chairs. This study explores the link between watching televised wrestling matches and increases in verbal aggression, rebellion and propensity toward violence and retaliation. Wrestling is placed within the larger context of popular culture and other hyper-masculine entertainment.

**Manliness and Its Discontents: The Black Middle Class and the Transformation of Masculinity, 1900-1930**
In a pathbreaking new assessment of the shaping of black male identity in the early twentieth century, Martin Summers explores how middle-class African American and African Caribbean immigrant men constructed a gendered sense of self through organizational life, work, leisure, and cultural production.

**Cultures of Masculinity**
Cultures of Masculinity presents a survey of the social, cultural and theoretical issues which surround and inform our understanding of masculinity. Beginning with an analysis of the so called "crisis" of masculinity--in which men are repeatedly reported to be experiencing employment, health and educational failings--Tim Edwards considers the validity of the concerns and anxieties which surround masculinity in the contemporary world.

**Country Boys**
Rural masculinity is hardly a typical topic for a book. There is something unexpected, faintly disturbing, even humorous about investigating that which has long been seen and yet so often overlooked. But the ways in which we think about and socially organize masculinity are of great significance in the lives of both men and women.

**Conferences**
Jun 2-Jul 31
NASPA Tech Tools for Student Affairs Professionals

Jun 11-Jun 15
International Assessment & Retention Conference

June 15 - June 17
Region II Annual Conference
Pittsburgh, PA

Jun 21-Jun 24
2008 Small College & University Institute

**New MMKC Regional Representatives**

**Region II**

TYLER CRISMAN
Community Development Educator,
New York University

**Region III**

DHNFU ELSTON
Academic Professional for Student Retention,
Georgia State University