

Required Texts

- R. Bly, *Iron John: A Book about Men* (Vintage 1992 reprint)
- S.B. Boyd, *The Men We Long To Be: Beyond Lonely Warriors & Desperate Lovers* (Pilgrim 1997)
- S.B. Boyd, et al. (eds), *Redeeming Men: Religion & Masculinities* (Westminster/John Knox 1996)
- J.M. Clark, *Doing the Work of Love: Men & Commitment in Same-Sex Couples* (Men's Studies 1999)
- K.L. Hagen (ed), *Women Respond to the Men's Movement* (Pandora/HarperSanFrancisco 1992)
- B. Krondorfer (ed), *Men's Bodies, Men's Gods: Male Identities... (Post)Christian Culture* (NYU 1996)

Strongly Recommended Text

- A. Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (Viking Critical Library 1996 reprint)

Purpose & Rationale: During the 1990s, profeminist men in religious studies increasingly engaged in fruitful dialogue with their feminist peers. That dialogue resulted in numerous rich analyses of the constructions, meanings and implications of masculinity(ies) in Western, Judaeo-Christian culture, both within the Men's Studies Group of the American Academy of Religion, the American Men's Studies Association, and the *Journal of Men's Studies*, as well as in several excellent anthologies and single-author texts. This seminar is designed to test the fruits of this dialogue.

We will examine the effects of (hetero)patriarchy on the construction of masculine identity, men's relationships with one another and with women, men's sexuality and ethics, and other topics, while also exploring how masculine socialization and male experience both shape religious ideas, symbols, rituals, institutions, and spirituality, and are in turn shaped by them. We will read, discuss, and respond to a wide range of profeminist men's studies writers/articles—seeking to discover what issues men are raising as they seek to clarify their own identity(ies) and vocation(s) in the pluralistic and multivocal, postmodern early 21st century—as well as examining in depth several single authors in both fiction and nonfiction.

General Requirements & Grading: Each student is expected to stay current on assigned readings (both texts and handouts), to attend class regularly, and to participate in class discussions; ***class time will depend very heavily on group discussion and response.*** In fact, students will be welcomed and encouraged to discover and distribute additional relevant readings for discussion other than those already listed in this syllabus. Formal written assignments will include four 2-3 page critically reflective papers (15% each = 60%). Students will also be expected to provide discussion leadership on multiple occasions as scheduled (20%); in addition, students will also be assigned a grade for discussion group and general classroom participation and attendance (20%).

The evaluation of each student's classroom and discussion performance will be based not simply on the quantity of his/her contribution, but on the student's ability to bring challenging questions to the group, to add creatively to the conversation at hand, and to be a sensitive and responsive listener to his/her colleagues. Especially in view of our numbers, regular attendance is **vital** to the functioning of the seminar group; more than a total of five (5) absences for **any** reason (so-called "excused" **or** unexcused) during the semester will constitute automatic failure. Valid, written excuses and/or emergency situations will be handled rigorously on an individual basis. Similarly, excessive, routine tardiness will also be noted. Late written assignments will also be subject to grade penalties (one-third letter grade for each week day late, not just class day). Most importantly, we should all nurture and maintain an openness to new ideas and new perspectives, willing to engage each other in fruitful dialogue and in looking at issues in depth. Final grade computation is summarized below:

Four reflection papers (@15% each =)	60%
Discussion leadership	20%
Participation & attendance	20%

Tentative Schedule (subject to revision as necessary)

INTRODUCTIONS & BEGINNINGS

- Tu 1/21 Opening Class: Introduction to the Course
Th 1/23 “Men, Masculinity, & the Study of Religion” (Boyd, et al., xiii-xxii)
“Introduction” (Boyd, 1-15)
Tu 1/28 “Introduction” (Krondorfer, 3-16)
“Teaching Men’s Studies ... at an All-Women’s College” (*JMS* 9.2:267-283) (reprint)

Th 1/30	<u>Case Study Discussion #1</u> Bly, <i>Iron John</i> , ??-??	_____
F 1/31	<u>Case Study Discussion #2</u> Bly, <i>Iron John</i> , ??-??	_____

- Tu 2/4 Faludi, *Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man* (conclusion) (reprint)

EARLY FEMINIST WOMEN’S RESPONSES

- Th 2/6 Steinem, “Foreword” (Hagen, v-ix)
Hagen, “Introduction” (Hagen, xi-xiv)
Ruether, “Patriarchy & the Men’s Movement” (Hagen, 13-18)
Tu 2/11 Brown, “Essential Lies: ...the Mythopoetic Men’s Movement” (Hagen, 93-100)
Randall, “...Robert Bly’s Men’s Movement” (Hagen, 141-148)
Spretnak, “Treating the Symptoms, Ignoring the Cause” (Hagen, 169-175)
Th 2/13 Eisler, “What Do Men Really Want?” (Hagen, 43-53)
Adair, “Will the Real Men’s Movement Please Stand Up?” (Hagen, 55-66)
F 2/14 Starhawk, “A Men’s Movement I Can Trust” (Hagen, 27-37)
hooks, “Men in Feminist Struggle” (Hagen, 111-117)
Carlin, “The Men’s Movement of Choice” (Hagen, 119-125)
Tu 2/18 Heyward, “Men Whose Lives I Trust, Almost” (Boyd, et al., 263-272)
AMSA [history of the academic profeminist men’s movement] (reprint)

PROFEMINIST MEN’S RESPONSES

- Th 2/20 Culbertson, “Explaining Men” (Nelson & Longfellow, 183-194) (reprint)
Mirsky, “Three Arguments for the Elimination of Masculinity” (Krondorfer, 27-39)
Due: Reflection Paper #1

Tu 2/25	<u>Case Study Discussion #3</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 18-43	_____
Th 2/27	<u>Case Study Discussion #4</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 44-68	_____
F 2/28	<u>Case Study Discussion #5</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 69-97	_____

RELIGIOUS ROOTS & PROBLEMATIC(S): JUDAISM

- Tu 3/4 Brod, “Of Mice & Supermen: Images of Jewish Masculinity” (Boyd, et al., 145-155)
Eilberg-Schwartz, “God’s Phallus & the Dilemmas of Masculinity” (Boyd, et al., 36-47)

RELIGIOUS ROOTS & PROBLEMATIC(S): CHRISTIANITY

- Th 3/6 Kirkley, “Is it Manly to be Christian? ... Victorian & Modern America” (Boyd, et al., 80-88)
- Muesse, “Religious Machismo: Masculinity & Fundamentalism” (Boyd, et al., 89-102)
- Tu 3/11 Fout, “Religious Right in Contemp. America ... Moral Purity Ideas” (Boyd, et al., 112-113)
- Boyd & Lippy [two articles on the Promise-Keepers] (reprints)

THE CONSEQUENCES OF WESTERN MASCULINE SOCIALIZATION: A DRAMATIC INTERMISSION

- Th 3/13 & Video & Discussion:
- F 3/14 Miller, *Death of a Salesman*
Due: Reflection Paper #2

3/17-3/21 Spring Break: No Classes

Tu 3/25	<u>Case Study Discussion #6</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 100-122	_____
Th 3/27	<u>Case Study Discussion #7</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 123-143	_____

MARGINALIZED MEN/MARGINAL MASCULINITIES: NATIVE AMERICAN & IMPOVERISHED MEN

- Tu 4/1 Jocks, “Defending their People & their Earth: Native American Men” (Boyd et al., 132-144)
- Nonn, “...Survival & Hope among Poor Men” (Boyd et al., 156-168)

MARGINALIZED MEN/MARGINAL MASCULINITIES: AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN

- Th 4/3 Baker-Fletcher, “Black Bodies, Whose Body? African-American Men” (Krondorfer 65-93)

MARGINALIZED MEN/MARGINAL MASCULINITIES: GAY MEN

- F 4/4 Stemmeler, “Empowerment: Construction of Gay Religious Identities” (Krondorfer 94-107)
- Gorsline, “Facing the Body on the Cross: A Gay Man’s Reflection...” (Krondorfer 125-145)
- Tu 4/8 Clark (1992), “Men’s Studies, Fem. Theology, etc.” (Nelson & Longfellow 216-228)(reprint)
- Clark (1995), “Gay Men, Masculinity, & an Ethic of Friendship” (Boyd et al., 252-262)
- [student presentation] _____
- [student presentation] _____

MARGINALIZED MEN/MARGINAL MASCULINITIES: LESBIANS RESPOND TO GAY MEN

- Th 4/10 Heyward, “Embodying the Connections” (GMIRS 5: 133-145) (reprint)
- Hunt, “Opposites Do Not Always Attract” (GMIRS 5: 147-163) (reprint)
- Due: Reflection Paper #3**

[F 4/11 – S 4/13, American Men’s Studies Association annual meeting, Vanderbilt University, Nashville]

Tu 4/15	<u>Case Study Discussion #8</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 146-154	_____
Th 4/17	<u>Case Study Discussion #9</u> Boyd, <i>The Men We Long to Be</i> , 155-176	_____

- F 4/18 *Good Friday* (TBA)

THE CONSEQUENCES OF WESTERN MASCULINE SOCIALIZATION: A DRAMATIC INTERMISSION

Tu 4/22 & Video & Discussion

Th 4/24 *Fight Club*

“Faludi, *Fight Club*, & Phallic Masculinity” (*JMS* 11.1:65-76) (reprint)

Tu 4/29 Case Study Discussion #10

Boyd, *The Men We Long to Be*, 177-201

Th 5/1 Case Study Discussion #11

Boyd, *The Men We Long to Be*, 202-233

HEALING MEN & MASCULINITY(IES)

F 5/2 Nelson, “Male Sexuality & the Fragile Planet” (Boyd et al., 273-284)

Nelson, “Epilogue” (Kronorfer 311-318)

Mirsky, “Men & the Promise of Goddess Spirituality” (Boyd et al., 197-208)

Tu 5/6 Case Study Discussion #12

Clark, *Doing the Work of Love*, 53-75, 96-126

PROFEMINIST MEN’S STUDIES FUTURES

Th 5/8 Boyd et al., “Where Do We Go from Here?” (Boyd et al., 285-293)

Boyd, “Trajectories in Men’s Studies in Religion” (*JMS* 7.2:265-268) (reprint)

Baker-Fletcher, “Critical Theory, Deconstruction, Liberation” (*JMS* 7.2:275-280) (reprint)

Due: Reflection Paper #4

Tu 5/13 Students Present: *Best of the Reflection Papers*

Th 5/15 Concluding Discussion & Course Evaluations

F 5/16 Last Day of Classes (TBA)