

The Mask You Live In

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What is the overall point/purpose/perspective/lesson of the film?

The overall purpose of the movie is to show how preconceived ideas of masculinity are damaging men from an early age. The movie points out that being a man has nothing to do with athletic ability or economic success, that men can choose to do other things and still be good men. The permanent race to prove masculinity can turn into an empty unauthentic path and generate constant dissatisfaction.

What are all of the ways that it is relevant to the study of gender and society?

A man does everything, never backs down from anything, has to be proven his masculinity all the time, being a womanizer is ok, a man doesn't cry in public, these are all ideas that are not helping anyone or society.

What are the three most important things that you learned while watching the film?

The switch from childhood to the teenager is when usually men buy into the culture's pre-established ideas of manhood.

I learned how sharing is important to work on pain and that means being vulnerable.

Men feel lonely and isolated at times to avoid appearing weak.

What kind of impact/influence do you think this film has on its viewers? (Include the impact it had on you).

That things are getting better, men are getting more affectionate with their sons but that is still a lot of room for improvement. Many still suffer bullying as kids and contemplate suicide when they are not the ideal of masculinity. It's interesting to learn that depression in men can be different than in women, it could manifest as anger and aggression. The coolest moment of the movie was the high school experiment about the mask that we all wear and all that we don't reveal is mostly pain, fear, and anger, almost all the students in the exercise had the same feelings hidden. If they felt safe to discuss, things could have been easier. Not only for men but no one wants to be seen as weak or be judged.

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the perspective/content/message? Explain your reasoning.

Men are discouraged from expressing their emotions which I find incredibly harmful. It gets to a point that they don't know what they are feeling or how to express it and it just turns into anger or depression. Which I have seen turn into real sickness. Men refuse to get help because they don't allow themselves to feel, to be vulnerable, and work on their deepest fears. We all need that release that's the whole point to why we are here. There is so much prejudice to going to a therapy session. I agree with the movie that men and women don't need to be extremely masculine or feminine. Everyone just wants to be loved and accepted by who they are. The need for intimacy is real, and the connection with alcohol and drugs to let go of invisible barriers to be able to connect is evident, it's used to treat loneliness.