**New York City College of Technology**

**The City University of New York**

**Course Name: Introduction to Studies in Maleness and Manhood (ENG 2170)**

**Credit Hours: 3**

**Prerequisite: English 1101**

**Catalog Description:**

This course identifies expected and redefined understandings and representations of Maleness and Manhood through physical, psychological, sociological, and philosophical approaches as seen in literature, scholarly writing, and film. Subject matter includes sex, sexuality, sexual orientation, perception, identity, power, politics of manhood, violence, and the use or expectation of male dominance.

**EXAMPLE SYLLABUS**

**Might, Myth, and the Disappearing World of Man**

**Required Texts:** David Gilmore’s *Manhood in the Making: Cultural Concepts of Masculinity*, Ferrell and Williams’ *Looking for the Enemy: The Eternal Internal Wars of Our Sister,* Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner,* Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s *Purple Hibiscus*, Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Interpreter of Maladies*

This class will examine the world’s history of male dominance and how, over time, man’s position of power has been diminished when interpreted through the expressive mediums of literature and film. To prove this, we will look at the portrayals of man in various arenas where they have always excelled—from socialized brutality to organized warfare, the home structure to Wall Street—in an attempt to determine how males came to power around the globe and where they have lost their footing. We will also discuss how the suffrage movement, feminism, the sexual revolution, harassment laws, and advancements in education have led to women becoming more independent; as such, we will juxtapose the extent these movements have had on the universal concept of male superiority and how that is portrayed in modern day literature and films. Together we will ask and answer, “As women rise, must men fall?” Moreover, we will investigate what various cultures are doing to ensure that patriarchy continues to flourish, and, in turn, see if writers and filmmakers are promoting this as a positive message or, rather, if they are using their artistic voices to devalue the gender.

The ultimate goal of this literature class is to determine—using novels, essays, analyzing images on social media and magazines, music and videos, films, and guest lecturers from different disciplines—what constructive role men have in various settings, if any, and why men should continue to receive THE seat at the head of the table. Using these different artistic lenses to analyze manhood will allow us to scrutinize the literary and visual representations of men in today’s world.

With the assistance of the primary literary texts, we will also review the fundamentals of defined manhood and learn to condense our thoughts regarding the authors’ subject matter. Keep in mind, this course will address issues such as religion, sexuality, culture, Class, violence, sexual assault, and racism; as such, be aware that we will discuss topics that are often sensitive and controversial.

There will be several research-based response papers assigned that will provide further insight into our discussions. We will also take several exams that address our readings and class lessons. Additionally, there will be an assigned and formatted research paper due at the end of the semester.

**NOTE:** Paper development, including all primary and secondary sources, must follow **MLA** guidelines.

**Our Room:**

In our classroom, there are several rules that must be agreed upon:

* All assignments done outside of the classroom must be typed. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SUBMIT HANDWRITTEN MATERIALS.**
* If you are absent, please contact me. Each of us will be allowed two unexcused absence. More than two will result in the automatic lowering of an entire letter grade.
* Respect: there will be no laughing or snide comments directed at peer participation. All comments must be insightful and respectful.
* **Do not eat cooked food during class. EVER**
* **Cell phones are not allowed “on” in any shape, form, or fashion in our classroom. EVER**
* Tablets are allowed.
* No tape recording devices are allowed in our room.
* Do not wear headphones in our room.
* Laptops are not allowed in our room.

ANYONE ENTERING OUR ROOM 20 MINUTES AFTER ROLL HAS BEEN TAKEN WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL EXCUSE WILL NOT BE COUNTED FOR ATTENDANCE.

# THESE RULES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE

**Grading:**

* Participation: **10%**  Discussion, in-class reading, insight, peer response, Open Lab.
* RESEARCH Paper: **20%**
* Paper will be formatted and explained in-depth by the professor. It will be 8-12pages, double spaced, MLA style. Works Cited page is separate. The paper will require a minimum of six outside sources**. Note:** on top of the six required sources, information from guest lecturers should also be used as secondary sources and must be cited appropriately.
* Tests: **50%**Primarily based on our discussions about the readings, films, presentations, and guest lecturers—both primary sources and assigned supplemental materials (see assignments).
* Assignments: **20%** Response Papers and photography will focus on the researched information that will include history, social relevance, variations, and how the assigned topic speaks to the reading. There is an abstract that must be submitted and approved before Research paper submissions.

**Schedule:**

Week 1: Welcome, course design. **Reading**: Emerson’s “Self-Reliance”

Week 2: Discussion on man as non-conformist. **Reading**: Gilmore’s “The Manhood Puzzle” and Lahiri’s “The Third and Final Continent”

Week 3: **Film:** *Fight Club*

* **Reactions to film on OpenLab due no later than tomorrow, 11pm**

Week 4: Discuss manhood—socially, theoretically, and philosophically. **Reading**: Gilmore’s “Other Men, Other Manhoods ” and Lahiri’s “The Interpreter of Maladies.” **Guest Lecturer:** Dr. Jean Hillstrom, Chair, Social Science (being “macho” and how culture shapes male identity).

* **Reactions to Dr. Hillstrom’s presentation and the *Raising Cain* video on OpenLab no later than tomorrow, 11pm**

Week 5: Discussion, **Response Paper 1**: Victorian Morality, Feminism, and the Sexual Revolution. **Reading**: *LFTE:* Gloria Steinem’s “A lot of learning is a Dangerous Thing” and Gilmore’s “Action and Ambiguity”

* **Analyze** scenes from *The Maltese Falcon*

Week 6: **Exam 1**. **Reading:** Hosseini 1-50 and *LFTE*: Clark-Flory’s “The War on Female Sexuality: Is Globalization to Blame?” **Guest Lecturer:** Dr. Stephanie Boyle, Social Science (being male and “man” in the Middle East)

Week 7: Discussion, **Response Paper 2**: Global Sodomy Laws. **Reading:** Hosseini 51-124. **Guest Lecturer:** Dr. Kyle Cuordileone, Social Science (patriarchy: history and politics; father and son conflict)

* **Post at least one image you encounter—magazine, billboard, social media, subway, photograph taken in travels—that either empowers or devalues your personal concept of manhood on OpenLab no later than tomorrow, 11pm**

Week 8: Discussion, **Response Paper 3**: Women and Rape in the 21st Century, Technology and Sex. **Reading:** conclude Hosseini. **Reading**: *LFTE*, Williams’ “The Gift that Keeps on Giving: Rape, Social Outrage, and the Rise of Sexual Assault as Entertainment”

* **View** scenes from *The Kite Runner* **film**

Week 9: Discussion. **View/analyze** music videos. **Response Paper 4**: misogyny in music and social media. **Guest Lecturer:** Hip Hop Scholar Dr. Todd Craig, African American Studies, Medgar Evers College (stereotypes and misogynistic images in music)

* **Reactions to videos and Dr. Craig on OpenLab due no later than tomorrow, 11pm**

Week 10: **Exam 2/MIDTERMS**. **Reading**: Adichie, pgs.1-50, **Response Paper 5:** Emasculation of males in Adichie’s *Purple…* discussed alongside Apartheid, Jim Crow, America’s 13th and 14th Amendments

Week 11: Discussion. **Reading**, Aidchie 51-200. *LFTE*: Kyle’s “The Contest”

* **Research Paper Assigned**

Week 12: Holiday

Week 13: Discussion. **Reading:** Adichie, conclude book. **Guest Lecturer:** Dr. Sean Macdonald, Social Science (economic disparity, identity, and questioning tradition)

* **Abstract Due on OpenLab no later than tomorrow, 11pm**

Week 14: **Film**: *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee Film*

* **Reactions to film on OpenLab no later than tomorrow, 11pm**

Week 15: **Final Exam**, **Research Paper due**

**Note:** Depending on the pace of our discussions, this schedule of assignments may change. As such, attendance is essential to staying on track.

**Plagiarism:**

The college has a strict policy regarding plagiarism. If you are caught cheating, in any way, you will fail this class and be required to meet with the Division Dean.

**Plagiarism is intentionally and knowingly presenting the ideas or works of another as one’s own original idea or works in any academic exercise without proper acknowledgment of the source. The purchase and submission of a dissertation, thesis, term paper, essay, report, or other written assignment to fulfill the requirements of this course is plagiarism and violates section 213-b of the State Education Law. Any student caught plagiarizing will fail this course, be presented to the Division Dean for expulsion, and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.**

**Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.**

## Objectives, Activities, Assessment

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| **Instructional Objectives**: *For the successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:* | **Instructional Activities** | **Assessment**: *Evaluation methods and criteria* |
| Define and discuss “manhood”—historically, traditionally, and currently. Investigate the sameness of men around the world. Discern the impact of artists on the larger society. | Class, group  Discussion of readings, films.  Researched response papers.  Guest Lecturers | Exams, response papers, and topic included in final research paper  Participation in group work.  OpenLab |
| Understand the assumptions regarding male dominance as a global phenomenon and privilege. Examine the failure of men to maintain the historical hold of patriarchy. Look at men through various lenses and determine if literature and films are purposefully distorting masculinity. | Class, group  Discussion of literature, films  Researched response papers.  Guest Lecturers | Exams, response papers, and topic included in final research paper    Participation in group work. |
| Analyze, define, and contextualize homosexuality. Discuss global laws and warfare that have led to continuing oppression. | Class, group  Discussion of literature, news articles, social media  Researched response papers. | Exams, response papers, and topic included in final research paper    Participation in group work. |
| Look closely at emasculation, racial oppression, and voice. Discuss the notion of being a coward. Rape. Class. | Discussion of literature, current events, film  Individual and group analysis of texts  Researched response papers. | Exams, response papers, and topic included in final research paper  Participation in group work.  OpenLab |
| Discuss empowering women’s movements. Women in society. Physical dominance over women. The body as a weapon, as weakness. Perceptions of women in music/videos. The portrayal of strong women in literature and films. | Discussion of literature, current events , news, music and videos, magazine ads | Exams, response papers, and topic included in final research paper  OpenLab |
| Gather, interpret, and evaluate research from a variety of sources for the completion of response papers and a final research paper. | Writing and research-based lectures and assignments  Independent research | Response papers  Research paper  Online and library investigation  OpenLab |
| Develop critical thinking, reading skills, research, and effective writing strategies that analyze and respond to course texts and topics in both written and oral forms. Navigating online sources. | Individual and group analysis of texts  Researched response papers.  Assignments in reading, writing.  Assigned topics for online and library research  Guest Lecturers | Response papers  Research paper  Assess participation  OpenLab |
| Draft and revise for content, organization, MLA style, clarity, and argument. | Abstract for final Research paper  Grammar direction | Written feedback  OpenLab |

**Example RESEARCH PAPER**

**Choose One:**

Looking at *Fight Club,* we see that the film is a complex narrative on manhood. Based on the movie, what does it mean to be a man? What does maleness have to do with fighting? And why must men, according to the film, fight? With a larger scope, when you look at these questions next to Emerson’s “Self-Reliance,” what explanations regarding the quest for manhood become apparent? And, in that same regard, how does the Emersonian notion of being “whole” play into this? Furthermore, based on the conflicted male characters Lahiri develops, should we view her merely as a writer and social critic, or is she a woman using her art to twist our image of Indian manhood? Moreover, what are the advantages of being “man?” What, if any, are the disadvantages?

**Or**

In Hossein’s *Kite Runner*, Hassan is killed. What has he done—what reasons have we reviewed—that inevitably result in his death? One might argue that he has violated several of the social standards that define his culture’s sense of manhood and what Gilmore calls “acceptable space.” If so, what are they and why do they result in the demise of the book’s most valiant character? Additionally, talk about the experience of the indigenous people in *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee.* In what way(s) did the conquering of these people have to do with the emasculation of their men? What commentary is being made on man as “warrior”?

**For both, make sure to include:**

Throughout your argument, look at how the female characters are portrayed in the films and literature. What roles do they perform in how the males view manhood? Do they aid them or distract? Are they friend or foe?

Throughout your argument, determine what commentary these books and films make on manhood and in what ways do these artistic lenses define, alter, or shape the lives of the characters who are portrayed as irrevocably damaged.

* **A 100-250 word abstract (paper proposal), which details the larger research paper, must be posted on our OpenLab page by 12/5.**
* **The Final paper MUST be posted to our OpenLab page AND submitted as a HARD COPY in class on 12/18.**
* **Paper should weave source discussions that we have uncovered while researching these texts, including any laws, cultural considerations, statistics, and sociological/philosophical principles discussed by guest lecturers.**

* **Throughout the work, feel free to introduce any supporting films or literature we have examined this semester that will support your argument.**
* **Secondary sources—sources not listed in the above assignment—are required (at least six). Guest lecturers must be cited.**
* **Paper must have quotes throughout that support the writer’s argument.**
* **Do not forget that the paper must conform to MLA’s documentation style.**
* **This paper cannot be less than eight FULL pages or more than eleven (this does not include Works Cited page).**

**NOTE:**

**The design and development, the order and weight of the argument, is up to you, the literary critic. Keep in mind that everything listed above must be included, but the development and presentation of the material is up to you.**

**Any paper suspected of** plagiarism **will result in an automatic F and be forwarded to the Division Dean.**

**ALTERNATING LITERATURE for course consideration:** Rohinton Mistry’s *Such a Long Journey*, James Baldwin’s *Giovanni’s Room*, Carl P. Eby’s *Fetishism:* *Psychoanalysis and the Mirror of Manhood,* Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, Carlos Andres Gomez’s *Man Up: Cracking the Code of Modern* *Manhood,* Henry James’s *The American,* David Sedaris’ *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, Joseph Conrad *Heart of Darkness*, Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita,* Ernest Gaines’ *A Lesson Before Dying,* Khaled Hosseini’s *And the Mountains Echoed,* Mahmoud Dowlatabadi’s *The Colonel,* Umberto Eco’s *Foucault’s Pendulum*

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