



Workshop: Masculinity in the Media

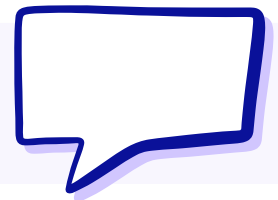
I SAMPLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES



LEARNERS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- ▶ Provide examples of how media influences ideas of masculinity.
- ▶ Recognize when media is promoting harmful or restrictive expectations for men.
- ▶ Identify alternative media sources and figures that model more positive, empathetic and caring ways to be men.

II SAMPLE INTRODUCTION



“In today’s workshop we’re going to be talking about how the ideas of what it means to be a man are influenced by media: movies, TV shows, advertisements ads, YouTubers, video games, and social media influencers on platforms like Tiktok, Twitch, and X. Think back to when you were a kid. Who were some of the prominent men in movies, TV, or video games? How might these compare with the prominent women you saw? Let’s talk today about what kind of messages the media we’re consuming sends and also how we might look more critically at how men and women are represented.”



III SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



- ▶ As a kid, who do you remember being your first male “hero” from movies, TV, or pop culture?
- ▶ Who do you listen to online now? Who do your male friends listen to? What do you connect with most?
- ▶ What traits or messages about masculinity do you think these people, shows, and characters emulate?
- ▶ Are there any messages or language used in these digital spaces that you feel uncomfortable with or you think is hurtful? Why?
- ▶ What are examples of positive male role models in media? Do you think there is a need for alternative masculinity role models in media?
- ▶ How can you talk to friends about the messages they’re getting about masculinity from media?
- ▶ What are the stereotypical ways that women are portrayed in media?



IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS



- Humans are social animals. We observe, we mimic, we perform, and most importantly, we need to connect.
- Every piece of media has an impact and communicates a message about what is normal and desirable, whether we believe it or not.
- Expectations for men change over time. Media is one big way that boys and men learn to equate “ideal” manhood with strength, control, objectifying women, and never showing emotion.
- Violence against women and girls is not innate to men and boys. It is a learned behavior and media is a key influence. Try to think about how others might feel about the messaging in the content you’re consuming.
- Just like our food diet, if we care about being healthy, caring, and equal as men, it’s important to look critically at our media intake. Ask:
 - With what motivations is someone making statements?
 - What messages are communicated about gender?
 - Try not to take things at face value, even though they might seem convincing.



IV SAMPLE TALKING POINTS (CONT.)



- Some key messages that media communicate about masculinity are:
 - Aggression, toughness, and strength. Consider sports: Fighting in hockey, big hits in football, and pushing through injury in mixed martial arts are all valorized.
 - Hypersexuality and Objectification. Consider music: Singers and rappers often brag about how much sex they have and in very sexualizing ways about women.
 - In the most popular TV for boys, “Male characters are less likely than female characters to show emotions, including empathy (22.5% compared with 30.6%), happiness (68.3% compared with 75.2%), and even anger (28.8% compared with 36.6%).” ([Equimundo](#))
 - In the most popular TV for boys, “The most prominent stereotype about masculinity depicted in children’s television is of boys and men as aggressors. In boys’ TV, male characters commit 62.5% of violent acts against another person.” ([Equimundo](#))
- Representations of men that are kind, compassionate and equitable have never been more important to incorporate into today’s media.
- If you aren’t following “manosphere” voices or spaces yourself, it’s likely that you’ve heard friends of peers talk about them. One study found that “40% of all men say they trust one or more “men’s rights,” anti-feminist, or pro-violence voices from the manosphere; nearly half of younger men say they trust such voices” ([Equimundo](#)).
- Bring it up in conversation when you see a stereotypical message about men or women that you disagree with.



V SAMPLE ACTIVITIES



FLASH BRAINSTORM: MEDIA VIOLENCE

Ask attendees to shout out examples of violent acts they have seen in media over the past week (movies, video games, television, news, sports, etc.) and compile a list. Discuss the lists as a group, and draw out any patterns that are revealed regarding gender.

Sample Discussion Questions:

- How do you feel about this violence?
- Are men or women the primary people who instigate violence?
- (Taking one answer) How do you think this instance of violence could have been prevented?

FOUR CORNERS : ANDREW TATE

Label four corners of a room “Strongly Agree,” “Agree,” “Disagree,” and “Strongly Disagree.” Prompt participants to pick a corner using quotes from Andrew Tate. Don’t reveal that these are Tate’s quotes. Ask why people chose their corner for each prompt. At the end, ask participants if they know whose quotes they are and if the identity of the person changes how they feel about their answers?

Sample Prompts:

- “Depression isn’t real. You feel sad, you move on. You will always be depressed if your life is depressing. Change it.”
- “Society’s expectations of men are much higher than the societal expectations of females.”
- “The masculine perspective is you have to understand that life is war... If you’re a man who doesn’t view life as a war, you’re going to lose.”
- For more prompts, see the original activity: [LESSON: Andrew Tate](#)



VI WORKSHOP RESOURCE LIBRARY



- **Toolkit:** *How to Talk to Young People About Andrew Tate - Bold Voices UK*
- **Curriculum:** *Sex Ed: Teaching Porn Literacy - National Sexual Violence Resource Center*
- **Film & Discussion Guide:** *Tough Guise by Jeremy Erpp & Jackson Katz - Media Education Foundation*
- **Film & Discussion Guide:** *Miss Representation*
- **Video:** *The Dangerous Rise of Andrew Tate - VICE News*
- **Video:** *Six packs, success and solitude: men in the media - The Guardian*
- **Article:** *Gender in the Media: The Myths & Facts - Geena Davis Institute on Gender Media*
- **Article:** *10 TIPS ON HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT RADICAL INFLUENCERS - Global Boyhood Initiative by Equimundo*
- **Research:** *Gender and Media Representations: A Review of the Literature on Gender Stereotypes, Objectification and Sexualization - Fabrizio Santoniccolo, Tommaso Trombetta,* Maria Noemi Paradiso, and Luca Rollè*
- **Research:** *“If He Can See It, Will He Be It? Representations of Masculinity in Boys’ Television” - Equimundo Organization: Critical Media Project*