

Dr. Y. E. Pelletier

Inquiry into Masculinity: Gentlemen, Outlaws, Warriors and Clerks

What makes a man? This inquiry investigates how the construction of manhood and masculine social roles have developed over time, as well as how modernity has affected, altered and shaped current ideas about manliness. The course also examines how conflicting models of masculinity are negotiated and resolved in different historical, social and cultural contexts. Issues to be addressed include: class, race and psychology; masculine spaces and geographies; boyhood socialization and education; competition and interaction with family and friends; power at work and play; domesticity, romance, sex and marriage; violence, crime, and war; and taste, fashion and celebrity.

Students are asked to interrogate larger cultural presuppositions about manliness and to develop a broader understanding of how individual and social identities are created in general.

The subject of masculinity will be examined in the popular media—advertising, magazines, internet, television, and film—as well as in short stories, novels, memoirs, essays and guidebooks.