

The future battle on campus: Men vs. Males

By **Tim Patten**,

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Education bewilderment begins in preschool, where boys are systematically devalued by institutionalized gender inequality. The gender bias against males continues through colleges where young men will be faced with two similarly named programs, young adults entering college can easily become confused. College level program choices might seem merely a matter of semantics; there is a distinct difference between *men's* and a newly evolving *male studies*. The former curriculum is framed by feminist theory and serves to advance conflict between the sexes. In contrast, the latter has been formulated by humanists, scientists, and doctors, and is premised on empirical science and genuine masculinity.

In theory, these programs are aimed at addressing needs that have often been ignored, but the feminist-inspired men's studies programs are having an unintended and harmful effect. One result is that colleges that have favored women's or feminist studies programs have seen the numbers of male attendees, already in the minority at around 40% nationwide, continue to fall as they transfer elsewhere or give up on attending altogether.

The same is not true at colleges that are expected to adopt the emergent male studies approach, or at the least, which offer students a choice between the two. These institutions will be helping to reverse a biased mindset and radical feminist-defined framework that has been heavily stacked against masculine ideals. Thankfully, by advocating for male studies we all contribute to propelling the culture of boys and men forward, like a pendulum that reverses

course after a long swing backward.

The Warring Organizations

To better understand the differences between men's and the evolving male studies programs, it helps to know who the key proponents are. In the case of the former, it has been the [American Men's Studies Association](#) (AMSA), founded by gender studies professors and defined by the catchphrase "advancing the critical study of men and masculinity." Overseen by President Ms. Daphne C. Watkins, Ph.D., AMSA's curriculum is an outgrowth of feminist and women's studies on men and masculinity; it is also intended as additional coursework for gender studies teachers seeking to broaden their purview. Broadly speaking, the focus is on how dominant social structures intersect with the oppressed classes, including women; people of color; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and queer (LGBTQ) individuals.

The primary force behind the latter initiatives has been the [Foundation for Male Studies](#) (FMS), founded by Edward M. Stephens, MD. The FMS curriculum explores the struggles and triumphs of men, though without contextualizing those ideas as one-half of the male-female binary. In other words, it is not an offshoot of feminist theory. The FMS efforts focus on the biological, scientific and behavioral differences between men and women that are not being addressed, as detailed in [an article at *Inside Higher Ed*](#), and the [New York Times article *The Study of Man \(or Males\)*](#).

Dueling Curriculum Outline

Beyond those broader missions, a more granular assessment reveals distinct differences between the two camps, regarding approaches, perspectives and the intellectual and organizational leadership engaging in research and setting the agenda. As illustrated in the table below, they have little in common

despite the fact that both are supposed to be addressing the same issue:

Dueling Curriculum Outline

AMSA

**American Men's Studies
Association**

Intended for Students:

All culture's, gender identities and orientations

**AMSA Board's Academic
Background:**

Humanities, Feminism, Women's and Gender Studies, Sociology, Psychology

Board's Geographic Latitude:

America, Latin America, Canada

Professors:

Most are professors with doctorates in women's and gender studies

Foundation of Theory:

Feminism and Women's and Social Studies

FMS

Foundation for Male Studies

Intended for Students:

All culture's, gender identities and orientations

FMS Board's Academic Background:

Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology, Biomedical, Child Development

Board's Geographic Latitude:

America, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Canada, Australia, Sweden, South Africa

Professors:

Most are professors with doctorates in biology, science and psychology

Foundation of Theory:

Biology, Psychology, Sociology, and Philosophy

Worldview:

Patriarchal, oppressive males dominate groups deemed as second- and third-class

Worldview:

Individuals are responsible for themselves and society

Philosophy:

Breakdown the societal and institutional sexism and racism

Philosophy:

Improve society for all through respectable practices

Approach to violence:

Tear down the patriarchy and teach men a lesson

Approach to violence:

Prefer personal transformation and accountability

Educational Approach:

Men Intersect with Society and Gender

Education Approach:

Science, Social, and Psychology of Men

Gender Approach:

Gender is a Social Construct

Gender Approach:

Gender is biologically-based, with social influences

Advocacy:

Equality and justice for women, people of color and LGBTQ individuals

Advocacy:

Authenticity, integrity, equality and justice for all

Political leaning:

Left

Political Leaning:

None

Social Critical Lens:

Women and LGBTQ individuals face oppression from heterosexual men

Social Critical Lens:

Everyone faces oppression and obstacles from society and individuals

Masculinity Ideology:

1. A social construct
2. Must comply with what women want from men
3. Must be oriented toward supporting equality
4. Heterosexual men are a dominant and unstable category of humans

Publications of Note:

Purchase at Amazon ([Click Here](#)).

Mairtin Mac an Ghaill, [Chris Haywood](#)

Students are empowered to become:

- A Students become social justice warriors, advocating equality

- Students become social workers, educator, therapists, and more

Musical Theme:

Beyoncé's: *Girls Run The World*

WEBSITE: ([AMSA's Web Site Click Here](#))

Donations Welcome

Masculinity Ideology:

1. Biological framework burdened by societal, social and family expectations
2. Must comply with what men request of themselves
3. Males of all orientations are resourceful and capable of contributing to society

Publications of Note:

Free online at ([Click Here](#)).

Dr. Miles Groth, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology

Musical Theme:

Survivor's: *Eye of the Tiger*

WEBSITE: ([FMS Web Site Click Here](#)) Donations Welcome

Conclusion

About five million college graduates will set out on their career journeys this year, hopefully living the sort of life that they truly desire. In some cases, they will find their way into research efforts and industries that are working to pull humanity back from the brink of looming social, climate, and natural resource disasters. Our survival demands that each of us is able to unleash our unique capabilities and make whatever contribution we can to sustain our civilization.

Because of this, our society hungers for males with clear minds and hearts. While men must be aware of the fear and inherent vulnerabilities, they must also be capable of discovering and nurturing their authentic selves, as well as the virile assets and the male virtues that will inspire and support our future. While all men, young or old, should be so lucky, it is likely that most of us probably knows someone, perhaps a young boy, who has looked up into our eyes in search of hope and the kind of guidance that male children, teenage boys and young men need. It is in our interests to open our hearts and hands to these individuals (and others) to help them follow the right path.

We must advocate for male studies and help to propel the culture of boys and men forward.

This means-especially now-the move toward equal treatment and respect for all people, whether male or female, is underway. In a sense, this is finally a home run for the boys. A beacon shines into [decades of blackness](#); there is renewed optimism for genuine equality.

The most critical reference for Dr. Edward M. Stephen's science of the male is presented by preeminent scholars talking to each other in an uninterrupted dialogue that goes to the heart of the matter. ([Click here to read.](#))