Introduction

• Emotion and rationality. Is it an existential crisis?
• The current discourses of masculinity (simplistic)
• New Man, New Lad, Home, Work
• Magazines, television, Clothing
• Learning outcome 2: Critically analyse the ways in which gender are constituted/challenged in and through particular forms of culture
• Learning outcome 3: Apply with tutor support. appropriate philosophical theory to popular cultural texts
Assignment Q1: Analyse one form of popular culture in relation to gender theory (theories) studied on the module.

Q 2: Analyse one form of popular culture in relation to philosophical theory (theories) studied on the module.

Q5: Explore/explain specific gender theory and show how it relates to popular culture

Q 6: Explore Philosophical theory and show how it relates to popular culture.
Rational Men

- Hard to analyse men’s own experiences
- Absences of emotional needs
  (https://youtu.be/_KUDcafR9PU) (2.39 mins)
- Reason (Kant/Descartes)
  - Independent faculty
  - Masculinity and reason
- Need to reflect on own masculinities
- Masculinity as power/relational to women
Existential Crisis?

- Exerting will
- Inauthentic/authentic
- What one does is important
- Men are confused and anxious of how to be
Discourses of Masculinity

• Several
  ◦ Changes since the 60s

• Three main discourses
  ◦ Old man/new man/new lad

• Traditional – typical male values and behaviours
  ◦ Fashion and consumption still present
  ◦ heterosexual
  ◦ Logical thinking
New Man and Metrosexual

- Beynon (2002) two strands
  - New man as nurturer e.g. more caring, father, new man as narcissistic

- New lad
  - Backlash against feminism
  - Football, drinking, sex
Contemporary discourses

• Simplistic to have three discourses (for example 0.47 mins)

• Masculinity – revolves around issues, themes and behaviours (bricolage)

• Representations of males/men in popular culture are often partial

• Sex and sexuality are important for masculinity
  ◦ Sexual conquests/women as sex objects (men’s magazines)
Men at work and home

- Work in men’s magazines tends to be absent
  - Less stable, more fragmented
  - Source of masculinity is now the body
  - Boundaries of work/home are more blurred
Television

- Hospital dramas
  - Men as doctors - infallible to more vulnerable characters (doctor hero) *(such as Casualty)* (3.13)

- Crime dramas
  - Male dominated – less moral certainty and more flawed characters

- Soap operas (e.g. *EastEnders*) (1.06)
  - Private/public blurred but men still unable to communicate true feelings
  - Fatherhood is central

- Rise of the trendy Geek in popular culture *Mad Men*

- Rationality and masculinity? Reinforced or challenged?
Television

- Make over style programmes
- *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* (first few minutes)
- Beauty and style presented as consumption
- Detective films
  - Male centred action heroes use force, violence and detective skills
- Where do superheroes fit? E.g. Batman (Dark Knight)?
Character: **House** (1.06 mins)

- House – based on Sherlock Holes
- Cases are factual and mathematical
- Embodies new man and new lad
- Contains self-awareness of shortcomings but still follows the stereotypes
- Challenges contemporary masculinities
Dexter Morgan is a serial killer who kills criminals.

Dexter tries to fit in so that he won’t be discovered.

Applying Existentialism
- Feelings of alienation/life as absurd
- Develops his reasons for actions
- He strives for authenticity
- Confined by a code of ethics

Nietzsche: one should never go against one’s true nature.

At the end he is totally alone – completely free of attachments.
I DON'T GET BIRTHDAYS;
THE PARTY,
THE SONG.
CELEBRATING
ANOTHER YEAR
JUST BEING
ALIVE FEELS...
FORCED.

-DEXTER MORGAN
Toxic Masculinity

- Toxic masculinity
- **Toxic Geek masculinity** (20.21 mins)— The Big Bang Theory
- Masculinity defined in relation to femininity
- Hypermasculinity
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<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of the changing masculinity of James Bond focusing on Casino Royale</td>
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<td>Gender Representation of Little Mix</td>
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<td>David Bowie – challenging or reinforcing hegemonic masculinity</td>
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<td>Masculinity in SpongeBob SquarePants</td>
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<td>Analysis of Overwatch in relation to gender theory</td>
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<td>Analysis of Body image on Social Media, focusing on Instagram</td>
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<td>Analysis of male make up artists on YouTube, focusing on James Charles</td>
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Summary

• Representations are diverse
• But there are continuities as well as change
• The rational man is still evident
• Men in popular culture are nearly always working men
• An existential crisis of masculinity perhaps?
• Focus in relation to masculinity/masculinities:
  ◦ The popular culture (e.g. I focused on Television)
  ◦ Or the characters themselves — e.g. House
Transferable skills

• Communication
  ◦ Through answering questions, discussing ideas with someone next to you
  ◦ Communication in group work and also in feeding back to the whole group

• Creative thinking
  ◦ You have to think for yourself and come up with your own opinions in relation to masculinity/masculinities
Bibliography


