

Public Abstract

First Name:Bradley

Middle Name:Wayne

Last Name:Wing

Adviser's First Name:Mary Jo

Adviser's Last Name:Neitz

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

Graduation Term:SS 2008

Department:Sociology

Degree:PhD

Title:Degendering and Regendering: Recomposing Masculinities Through Anti-Sexist Masculinity Projects

Despite the fact that many people are interested in the "man question," whether or not men can change to be more supporting of gender inequality and what makes it possible and likely for them to do so, there are relatively few actual studies of anti-sexist and feminist men. This interview study contributes to a growing body of knowledge about how it is that these men work out in their everyday lives what it means to be anti-sexist men by looking at their practices, the stories they tell about their experiences, and the cultural influences that both facilitate and constrain their efforts to be do anti-sexism. I found that there are a number of ways of engaging in what I call a dissident masculinity politics, though a renunciation of conventional expectations for masculinities is central. I also found that, while the anti-sexist men with whom I talked conceive of their projects of change as moral projects, they drew inspiration for those moral projects from different sources: therapeutic culture and movements for social justice. The kind of change they attempted to produce depended on the vocabulary of motives, or typical set of justifications for their actions, that they drew upon. The therapeutic vocabulary encouraged a search for mutual personal growth within relationships, while the social justice vocabulary encouraged men to work toward equity/equality. This research is significant, because it helps us to better understand what makes anti-sexist change among men possible and how it is carried out in their everyday lives.