

University of Nebraska - Lincoln  
**DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln**

---

Sociology Department, Faculty Publications

Sociology, Department of

---

2017

# Checking Privilege at the Door: Men's Reflections on Masculinity in Women's and Gender Studies Course

Rachel Schmitz

*University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley*, [rachel.schmitz@utrgv.edu](mailto:rachel.schmitz@utrgv.edu)

Emily Kazyak

*University of Nebraska-Lincoln*, [ekazyak2@unl.edu](mailto:ekazyak2@unl.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/sociologyfacpub>

 Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), and the [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#)

---

Schmitz, Rachel and Kazyak, Emily, "Checking Privilege at the Door: Men's Reflections on Masculinity in Women's and Gender Studies Course" (2017). *Sociology Department, Faculty Publications*. 516.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/sociologyfacpub/516>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Sociology, Department of at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology Department, Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Published in *Gender Issues* 34 (2017), pp 129–148.

doi 10.1007/s12147-016-9178-1

Copyright © 2016 Springer Science+Business Media New York. Used by permission.

Published online 4 October 2016.

---

# Checking Privilege at the Door: Men's Reflections on Masculinity in Women's and Gender Studies Courses

Rachel M. Schmitz<sup>1</sup> and Emily Kazyak<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, SBSC 344, Edinburg, TX 78539, USA

<sup>2</sup> Department of Sociology, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, USA

*Corresponding author* – Rachel M. Schmitz, rachel.schmitz@utrgv.edu

## Abstract

Certain types of masculinity undergird gender inequality, but different contexts may encourage individuals to conceptualize gender in new and unique ways. Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) university courses support this for women, but less is known about men's experiences. Through an analysis of interview data from 15 men who have taken WGS courses, we ask: What do men experience in the WGS classroom and how do men perceive that their experiences in WGS courses shape their conceptualizations of gender and gender relations? Men described developing their understandings of gender inequality after taking a WGS course and they applied this knowledge beyond the classroom. We address the different ways men negotiate gendered classroom dynamics, with some men articulating that their gender provided a unique position from which to participate and others reporting more discomfort. We discuss the findings' implications regarding men disrupting or perpetuating hegemonic understandings of masculinity within educational contexts.

**Keywords:** Women's and Gender Studies, College men, Masculinity, Gender relations

## Introduction

Idealized notions of masculinity underpin gender inequality and men's privilege in society [16]. As conceptualized by Connell, hegemonic masculinity refers to the privileged form of masculinity within

a distinctive historical and social context that serves to reify unequal gender relations [38]. Given that hegemonic masculinity legitimates and reproduces gender inequity, scholars have theorized how individuals may resist cultural expectations of masculinity. For instance, some men may redefine their masculine identities so as to move away from privileged stereotypes [27]. However, this practice could mask how they continue to reap the benefits of privileged forms of masculinity [9]. Such work underscores the idea that understandings of masculinity are contextually specific and dynamic [21, 32], even though gender inequality persists. Certain contexts may open up the possibility for individuals to reconceptualize the meaning of gender, while others may foreclose this possibility. Likewise, even within one context, nuances may exist and normative understandings of gender may simultaneously be resisted and reproduced.

Educational contexts, and particularly Women's Studies college classrooms in the United States, are one such site where people may develop new understandings of gender, given that the discipline of Women's Studies seeks to understand gender inequality and its intersections with other forms of oppression and difference (e.g. race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability). College campuses in the United States have witnessed a surge in activism around gender, sexuality, and race [42] and Women's Studies courses can serve as a site where such issues are foregrounded. Indeed, research indicates that women who enroll in Women's Studies courses gain a greater understanding of social inequality and report a stronger dedication to feminist social justice [26, 31]. Missing from this literature, however, is a distinctive focus on the experiences of men in Women's Studies classrooms [1, 22]. One study showed that men's commitment to feminism actually decreased after completing a Women's Studies course [61]. Given that the discipline of Women's Studies is an established presence across the globe [23] and in the United States [6], more work is needed to better understand men's experiences in these classes.

In this article, we explore the experiences of men enrolled in Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) courses at a public university in the Midwestern United States. We use the term Women's and Gender Studies to reflect the nomenclature at the university where this study was conducted, but we recognize that multiple names for such departments exist [51]. Drawing from 15 in-depth, qualitative interviews, we examine the following research question: What do men experience in

the WGS classroom and how do men perceive that their experiences in WGS courses shape their conceptualizations of gender and gender relations? This research contributes to understandings of masculinities within educational contexts. Specifically, extending beyond the focus in previous literature on assessing whether taking a WGS course makes men more or less committed to feminism, this study draws attention to the gendered dynamics within the WGS classroom from men's perspectives. Furthermore, this study is important in beginning to analyze how students experience college classrooms that foreground discussions of gender and inequality during a moment when there is increased activism surrounding these issues [42]. The findings presented here may be of particular interest to professors who teach WGS courses, as well as those committed to engaging with students on issues related to gender and feminism. Knowing students' perceptions about the impact and importance of WGS courses would also be useful for people facing budgetary cutbacks and extra scrutiny over offering such classes [4].

### **Theorizing Hegemonic Masculinity and WGS Courses**

In this analysis, we draw on theories of masculinity and the concept of hegemonic masculinity in particular [16, 17]. Scholars coined this term to address how gender inequality and men's dominance are reified throughout societal institutions and often go unquestioned [17]. Importantly, hegemonic masculinity entails both discourses (assumptions about what men or women should be like) and practices (what people do). The discourses and practices associated with hegemonic masculinity work to position femininity and nonconforming masculinities as subordinate [52]. Thus, men are expected to reject behaviors traditionally associated with women, such as nurturance and vulnerability, and display stereotypically masculine behaviors such as physical strength and emotional stoicism [16, 36]. Various practices associated with hegemonic masculinity include achieving economic success and displaying heterosexuality [34]. Scholars also note that hegemonic masculinity intersects with race, class, and sexuality insofar as White, middle/upper-class, heterosexual men are most aligned with privileged masculinity [33].

Although the idealized version of masculinity is not one that many (or any) men can actually achieve, it is the cultural standard imposed on all men [16, 33]. Indeed, one of the consequences of the construction of privileged masculinity is that certain types of masculinities and men (and all femininities and women) are devalued. As the majority of men are unable to attain the demanding and narrow standards of hegemonic masculinity, it creates more adverse consequences for men than actual benefits [33]. This is especially true for men who occupy marginalized social locations stemming from sexuality, age, race/ethnicity and disabled status [18]. Yet even those men who may not be aligned with idealized notions of masculinity may nonetheless be complicit in upholding discourses and practices associated with privileged masculinity [16]. However, those who are outside the bounds of culturally normative standards of masculinity, such as gay men or men who identify as feminists, may have the potential to reshape masculinity and embrace a more expansive understanding of masculinity's multiple meanings [27].

In this vein, scholars have drawn attention to how understandings of masculinity change across time and social contexts [9, 15]. Studies have also addressed how men can actively resist masculine norms and work toward feminist goals and feminist social activism, such as being allies in addressing violence against women [39]. Following this line of inquiry, we conceptualize WGS courses as offering one such context within which men develop their understandings of gender and masculinity. Before turning to our findings, we outline previous empirical work that addresses the impact of WGS courses on students' lives that informs our analyses.

### **Women's and Gender Studies Courses on College Campuses**

WGS courses were first offered at American universities in the 1960s [50] and their scope has grown to include majors and interdisciplinary courses that address gendered issues [6]. Much research focuses on the influence and repercussions of WGS courses in students' lives, assessing the effect of WGS courses on the attitudes of college students [56, 57]. On an individual level, research indicates that college students taking WGS courses perceived an enhanced level of personal

agency and social awareness compared to a control group of non-WGS students [26]. Additionally, when compared to non-WGS courses, research has shown a stronger positive correlation between WGS classes and students' reports that the class benefited their lives [60]. These findings demonstrate that participation in a WGS course is a positive experience overall for students [58].

A large body of research has also focused on the effects of WGS courses on students' attitudes surrounding gender, which has primarily centered on men's and women's experiences in concurrent analyses, with men in the significant numerical minority. Much research has confirmed the effect of WGS courses in making students more aware of social inequality [31, 59]. For example, Case [12] found that by the end of the semester, students enrolled in WGS courses became more conscious of male privilege and also more closely identified with feminism compared to non-WGS students. Moreover, studies show that participation in WGS courses fosters greater egalitarian attitudes in students as well as an enhanced willingness to engage in social activism [59]. While this research highlights the outcomes experienced by students in general, much less is known about the influence that WGS courses may have on men [1, 22].

The work that has been done on men's experiences in WGS has generally focused on barriers men experience in enrolling in such courses and quantitative assessments of men's attitudinal shifts related to gender after taking a WGS course. Based on the name of the field itself, men may be deterred from enrolling in such courses if they perceive that the issues are of no concern to them [7]. Additionally, the negative connotations associated with the label of "feminism" [40] could act as another barrier to enrollment in WGS courses. Students may avoid self-identification with feminism because of unflattering associations with the term purported by anti-feminists, such as female dominance and man-hating attitudes [28, 47]. Furthermore, exposure to social justice-oriented courses could expose dominant groups to feelings of collective guilt that are undesirable and difficult to manage, that could lead men to avoid WGS classes altogether, or engage in them as a means of making reparations to the disadvantaged outgroup [29, 53]. Students' feelings of guilt in the classroom can also stifle conversation and impede engagement with issues of power, inequality, and oppression [20].

With regard to men's attitudinal shifts about gender, Thomsen and colleagues [62] found that men's subscription to feminist attitudes actually decreased upon completing a WGS course. Furthermore, some men in women's studies courses may develop a resistant stance towards feminism that upholds their personal sense of privilege [49]. Yet WGS courses can also provide a context wherein men can grapple with more expansive understandings of masculinity and resist hegemonic discourses and practices [24]. More work is needed to provide insight as to *how* men navigate WGS courses and their perceptions of their experiences while enrolled in the class. Our study contributes to current literature by extending the focus beyond quantitative outcomes to assess men's experiences within the WGS classroom and how these can potentially shape their understandings of gender.

## **Method**

### ***Sampling Procedure***

The present study adopts a qualitative approach, as there is a paucity of research that has explored men's experiences in the WGS classroom. We used purposive, criterion sampling to recruit men who had enrolled in and completed at least one WGS course at a public university in the Midwest. Snowball sampling was also utilized through referrals within participants' social networks. Recruitment flyers were posted across campus on bulletin boards in areas of high student traffic, such as the student union and the library. Emails advertising the study were forwarded to several campus listservs, including the Women's and Gender Studies department email list. Finally, the first author announced the study in-person in several lower and upper division course classrooms. For all of these outlets, the study was advertised as "A research study exploring men's experiences taking Women's and Gender Studies courses."

In total, 15 cisgender men participated in semi-structured, face-to-face interviews conducted by the authors, lasting from ½ to 1.5 h. Data were collected between March 2013 and May 2014. Men's ages ranged from 19 to 35 years old and all but one respondent self-identified as white. The sample was also homogeneous across gender identity, as no participant identified as transgender. There was however,

**Table 1.** Sample characteristics by age, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity and number of WGS classes taken

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sexual orientation</i>	<i>Race/ethnicity</i>	<i>Number of WGS classes taken</i>
Daniel	26	Heterosexual	White	2
Neil	30	Gay	White	6
Matthew	23	Gay	White	3
Brian	26	Heterosexual	White	2
Scott	25	Gay	White	7
Norman	25	Heterosexual	White	3
Steven	33	Heterosexual	White	3
Allen	22	Heterosexual	White	3
Bobby	25	Gay	White	7
Carl	25	Queer	White	3
Lance	23	Gay	White	7
John	19	Heterosexual	White	1
Eric	35	Gay	Latino/Hispanic	7
James	29	Heterosexual	White	2
Rich	20	Heterosexual	White	2

diversity with regard to sexual orientation. Eight respondents identified as heterosexual, six identified as gay and one as queer. Participants had completed an average of four WGS classes each, highlighting that the men in the sample were highly motivated to engage in these courses. WGS classes spanned interdisciplinary topics such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender studies, history and religious studies. Table 1 presents data from a short demographic survey the men completed prior to the semi-structured interviews, which includes sample characteristics of the men.

Recruitment continued until data saturation, or the point where no new information is obtained from additional data collection, was achieved [8]. We assessed the level of thematic saturation after collecting 10 interviews by first developing an initial codebook and coding all of these 10 interviews. Following this first round of coding, we then began actively recruiting again and coding each subsequent interview. We found that, with each additional interview, the number of new, unique codes diminished. By the 15th interview, we determined that we reached data saturation as no new codes emerged and participants' narratives shared similar themes [25]. Based on this strategy,



we determined that we attained a satisfactory level of thematic saturation of men's experiences taking WGS classes after reaching the final sample size of 15.

### ***Conceptualization and Measurement***

In the interviews, respondents were asked a series of open-ended questions that revolved around their motivations for enrolling in a WGS course(s), their classroom experiences, and how WGS courses have influenced their life trajectories. Men were encouraged to share the totality of their experiences with WGS classes, both in the classroom and in their personal lives. Particularly relevant to the current analysis, grand tour questions included the following: What was your experience like in the WGS classroom? How did WGS classes shape the way you think about gender?

### ***Compliance with Ethical Standards***

The Institutional Review Board at the authors' institution approved this project. Prior to all interviews, respondents reviewed an informed consent form and provided their signatures. All interviews took place in a mutually agreed upon location at the convenience and choice of the respondent and were conducted by the first and third authors, who both identify as women. Additionally, all interviews were tape-recorded, subsequently transcribed and securely stored on an encrypted server. To ensure confidentiality, all respondents were assigned pseudonyms matched with their demographic information. These pseudonyms are used to ensure continued respondent confidentiality. No conflicts of interest are present in this study.

### ***Data Analysis***

All interviews were transcribed verbatim to ensure the accuracy and meaning of the participants' words [44]. Microsoft Word documents of these transcriptions were uploaded into a qualitative data analysis program, QDA Miner, and the first author performed all data analyses. We first utilized the method of initial coding to determine emergent themes and categories that corresponded with concepts of interest, such as men's experiences in the classroom [13]. Next, we employed

focused coding to hone in on the men's interpretations of their experiences with WGS classes. Throughout this process of initial to focused coding, some codes became more nuanced and complex after further iterations of analysis, such as the code "self-actualization," or emotional and mental introspection, evolving into "recognition of male privilege." After coding all of the data, the authors met to combine codes into thematic configurations, which became the findings below. For example, the codes of "social consciousness" and "perceptions of stereotypes" combined to create the first theme of "understanding gender inequality." The combination of initial and focused coding allows for a constructivist perspective that emphasizes the participants' understandings of their experiences as men taking WGS courses [14].

Validity was assessed by building evidence for a code or theme (e.g., understanding gender inequality, gendered classroom dynamics, applying WGS beyond the classroom) from several respondents through the collection of demographic information as well as the interview data [19]. We also documented the chain of formulated interpretations [2] through the creation of an audit trail to illustrate how codes were constructed [46]. The audit trail consisted of the multiple rounds of coding undertaken by the first author as well as rough drafts of thematic configurations and their corresponding codes. Finally, we held numerous collaborative data meetings to assess the overall validity and presentation of the findings by discussing the accuracy and relevance of codes and ensuing themes. All of these strategies enhanced the rigor and trustworthiness of the findings [19, 46]. The audit trail and other study materials are available upon request to allow for study replication.

## Results

In this section we address three themes that illuminate how men perceived taking WGS courses shaped their understandings of gender and gender relations: *Understanding gender inequality*, *Negotiating gendered classroom dynamics*, and *Applying women's and gender studies beyond the classroom*. These themes revolve around the common thread of men engaging with understandings of gender within the educational context of WGS courses. Our findings are not meant to represent a monolithic depiction of all men who take WGS classes, but

rather they provide a nuanced snapshot of these men's lived experiences in a particular regional context.

### **Understanding Gender Inequality**

All of the men interviewed shared the sentiment that they further developed their awareness of social issues related to gender as a result of taking WGS courses. We use the phrase "understanding gender inequality" here to refer to the multiple ways that men subjectively refined their ability to critically examine gendered issues and enhanced their awareness of social problems. Men described their understandings of gender inequality in a variety of ways, with some men reporting a growth in empathic feelings towards marginalized groups. Other men discussed how the development of their gendered understandings enhanced their lives, while some men noted personal conflicts they experienced throughout this process. By introspectively examining inequality, such as their own sources of privilege, these men traversed complex pathways in comprehending gender issues through WGS courses.

Several men recounted a heightened sense of empathy to others in less privileged positions than their own. For example, after taking WGS courses, Brian recalled, "I think I'm more sensitive to the rights of women and the role of women in society." For Brian, being exposed to feminist ideologies helped open his eyes to broader social problems related to gender that he otherwise might not have considered had he not encountered it in WGS curricula. Similarly, some men, such as John, stressed the fact that they had never critically considered gendered societal issues prior to taking a WGS class: "It's the first time I've really been challenged in a course to actually think about gender and, in this case, how it intersects with the treatment of African history." John's realization that gender simultaneously transects multiple different identities points to the potential of WGS classes in exposing men to the complex, intersecting nature of gender inequality. Through taking a WGS course, these men began to analyze society in a more critical way that complicated their worldviews and understandings of gender.

Some men also described their enriched understanding of gendered issues in society through a focus on specific topics in WGS

courses. Scott, for example, felt that learning more about the WGS subfield of sexuality studies would enhance his life in a variety of ways. He shared the benefits he derived from WGS by reporting, "I've just kind of been using Women and Gender Studies as an opportunity to broaden my horizons because it was something I've never had much experience with and didn't know much about." Enriching previous research that highlights reasons why men may be resistant to enroll in WGS courses, Scott's quote suggests that some men may explicitly seek out the opportunity. In a related vein, Lance acknowledged that WGS classes allowed him to hone his knowledge of gender inequality: "I think it really allowed me to conceptualize and solidify the ideas...like this actually has a name and I can work with it instead of like it's a fleeting thought in my head." Both Scott and Lance believed that taking WGS courses had expanded their perspectives and supplemented gaps in their knowledge bases. As such, these men's experiences highlight the importance of the WGS classroom in both developing and complicating students' awareness of gender inequality and providing them with an educational context conducive to the critical examination of gender. This finding underscores previous research that finds women also report that WGS classrooms are sites where they became aware of gender inequities in new ways [31].

Men noted both benefits and drawbacks to developing their understandings of gender inequality. Steven, for example, related his journey of understanding gender inequality in the following way: "I've gained a lot more understanding about how things are constructed and how things are glossed over for the sake of maintaining power relations...after having the enlightenment from those (WGS) classes, it would be like a face palm whenever I would hear someone talk about how God wants men to be on top." For Steven, the gender perspectives he gained in WGS courses contrasted with those he encountered in other areas, including religion. Steven described this as a positive thing, noting his "enlightenment." Additionally, Neil believed that learning about gendered issues in WGS classes helped him on an individual and interpersonal level: "It's definitely increased the knowledge base I have and it's taught me how to talk more about these issues where I'm not calling people out." These positive examples demonstrate how men viewed WGS course content as beneficial to their lives across a variety of domains.

Other men, however, acknowledged that their heightened awareness of social injustice had its drawbacks, as in the words of Carl: “I wanna say that it’s a benefit being able to think about these things better, but it’s also not a benefit, because it’s like, now that I’m aware of this stuff, I can’t stop noticing it, and it’s so pervasive that it hurts.” As Carl’s quote suggests, having a more developed awareness of gender inequality as a result of taking a WGS course “hurt” because it made him conscious of how gender inequality is so prevalent. Similarly, Scott shared how his upbringing conflicted with WGS teachings: “With my whole Catholic school background, I didn’t know a whole lot about these issues, but with these classes it’s been really eye-opening that it’s been really shitty for women. So it’s been tough figuring this out when I was raised in such a conservative household, but I’m getting there.” Both Scott’s and Carl’s narratives exemplify that for some young men, WGS courses can be the first environment where they are exposed to gender inequality. Additionally, their quotes highlight that gaining this critical awareness can be both “eye-opening” and “tough” new experiences.

Along with developing their awareness of social problems, men oftentimes came to recognize and examine their own sources of privilege as a result of a WGS course, which also relates to some men’s depictions of the WGS classroom as the first environment in which they intricately examined gender inequality (a privileged position in itself). This recognition of gender privilege also corresponded with broader conceptions of their other social locations, such as race and class. One such example is Norman, who described his introspective revelation in the following way: “I’ve always identified as being a working-class male who has working-class parents who aren’t college educated so I’ve always seen myself as kind of not having power and privilege. But then after taking that [WGS] course, I started analyzing gender and the privilege that I have for being a male in society.” Similar to Norman, Daniel attributed his self-actualization to his WGS class and how it “really opened my eyes up to the aspect of privilege...as a white male I think society kind of lays itself down in front of you and there’s so many aspects of privilege that like I’m able-bodied, I have a high school education, I have very supportive parents.” As Norman’s and Daniel’s quotes illustrate, the context of the WGS classroom helped them to assess their own privilege that stems from gender and how it intersects with their other identities. Their quotes also reflect an understanding that certain men and masculinities (i.e. men who are

white or educated) are more privileged than others. Men's heightened awareness of their own gender privilege also impacted WGS classroom dynamics, as we explore in the next section.

### **Negotiating Gendered Classroom Dynamics**

As a result of honing their sense of social inequality and of their own privilege, men also negotiated how to interact and engage with classmates within the WGS classroom in light of this awareness. Men shared a variety of strategies and experiences in how they navigated gendered classroom dynamics, such as being an active participant in class discussions. Other men, however, were more wary of contributing in the WGS classroom when they perceived their sources of privilege to be problematic and points of tension in how they interacted with peers. Finally, it was common for gay men to describe acute awareness of how their sexual orientation complicated their role in the WGS classroom and interacted with their status as men.

Some men reported feeling comfortable with contributing to the class dialogue, both by listening and by talking. For instance, Brian articulated an understanding that, as a man in a WGS class, he felt he was in a unique position to offer what he referred to as a "male perspective." He explained: "For me it was really beneficial listening to all the women share their experiences...I think it's important to juxtapose that with the male perspective so for that I think I was called on for that reason." In this way, Brian found it useful to listen, but also thought he could offer a "male perspective," though he did not elaborate on what such a perspective entailed. Others also thought they were perhaps uniquely positioned to engage in dialogue in the WGS classroom, and explicitly linked their status as white men to this ability to engage in dialogue about inequality. Neil provides an illustration of this, as he expressed that he felt it was easier to discuss inequality and privilege in the classroom given his own position as a white man. He explained: "It's easier to critique privilege if you have the same privilege. I'm a white man so I can talk about the benefits of being a white man and not come off like I'm crying cause I feel like I'm being cheated in some way." Neil's quote reflects his willingness to talk about and criticize the privileging of white masculinity, a willingness that he links to being a white man.

Yet others reported more difficulty and discomfort in participating in dialogue about inequality and privilege in WGS courses given their identities as white men, which underscores men's complex pathways in navigating their WGS experiences. Carl, for example, remembered his growing sense of exposure in recognizing his own privilege and grappling with the meaning of this in the WGS classroom: "I think it's natural to be, as a male, uncomfortable with becoming more aware of what privilege is...you feel a little more visible and vulnerable." Carl's quote illustrates some of the complicated emotions he experienced when taking a WGS course, including discomfort with his heightened awareness of his own privileged social status. Interestingly, he assumes his experience is universal (i.e. "natural") and would be shared by any man who gains an awareness of gender inequality. Another example comes from Allen, who explained, "I just kept my mouth shut... trying to listen to everything they [women] were saying." Allen also noted discomfort engaging in the classroom given that he thought his women classmates might question his presence: "I always wondered if they thought it was like weird that I was taking the class or wondered why I was taking it." Carl and Allen's viewpoints highlight men's wariness to participate in a women-dominated classroom if they believe that their perspectives will be challenged or viewed as illegitimate by their women classmates.

Finally, John, too, was more hesitant about the way that his gender and racial privilege mattered in the classroom: "What is my place in this discussion of white men oppressing everyone else? How can I participate in this kind of counterculture thing, when I'm already the top culture?" As John's quote implies, he was often unsure of his "place in the discussion" in his WGS class. Furthering elaborating on classroom dynamics, John stated, "In some of my other classes, I'm one of the leaders of discussion 'cause I'm usually pretty opinionated, but here [in WGS], I rein it in a bit because I don't really feel I should be doing all the talking, you know, as a man." Thus, whereas some men, like Neil quotes above, found it easier to participate in dialogue in WGS classes, others, like John and Allen, expressed confusion or less willingness to engage with their classmates in conversations about inequality and oppression. Men's narratives about discomfort participating in the classroom could stem from feelings of guilt as a result of enriching their awareness of their gender and racial privilege, akin

to processes that occur for other privileged groups when confronted with issues of power and oppression in the college environment [30]. These examples demonstrate how the WGS classroom can prime men for examining their own privilege, but that the ways in which men respond are complex.

Specifically, our findings suggest that sexual orientation is one factor that may impact how men feel peers in WGS classrooms perceive them and how men negotiate these dynamics in the WGS classroom. Many men reported how they believed their peers often looked to them to offer their perspective as a man, especially when they were in the numerical minority within the classroom. Thus, men were commonly expected to represent a monolithic male perspective in the WGS classroom. The 7 non-heterosexual men in the sample (6 who identified as gay and 1 who identified as queer), however, reported being held to different expectations. For instance, Matthew remembered feeling pressured to represent a monolithic male perspective (which was assumed to be “traditional”) until it became known that he identified as gay: “I kind of had that impression until I disclosed my sexual orientation to the class, and then at that point there was kind of this freedom to not be thought of as holding the traditional masculine view of things.” His quote underscores that he thought that his peers assumed he was heterosexual and thus assumed he held a “traditional masculine view of things.” It was not until he came out as gay that he felt he had more “freedom” in terms of what he could say in classroom conversations. Similarly, Bobby felt like an outsider as the only man in some of his WGS classes, and his experience was made more complex by his sexual orientation: “Most of them [classmates] were looking at everything from a woman’s point of view...but then I felt a little apart from that, because I’m gay and I don’t feel like I necessarily identify well with either feminine or masculine, stereotypical impressions. I kinda felt like I was in this weird little middle of no man’s land.” Based on these gendered assumptions in the WGS classroom, a number of men became aware of stereotypical perceptions directed towards their gender during classroom discussions that prompted them to scrutinize their own gender and sexual identities. These findings highlight that gay and queer men perceive that they are understood as potentially holding different views and experiences compared to their heterosexual peers.



## **Applying Women's and Gender Studies Beyond the Classroom**

Although men's accounts of broadening their conceptions of gender and negotiating classroom dynamics were more varied, overall men articulated that they were able to apply the knowledge they gained in WGS classrooms beyond that bounded context. Some men stressed how they learned skills in WGS courses that allowed them to be more effective communicators in a number of different settings. Several men believed that their experience in the classroom opened their eyes to opportunities for enacting WGS teachings through community activities, campus-based activism or research endeavors. Through taking WGS courses, men can potentially pursue activist avenues and become involved in interactions and events that could challenge stereotypical norms of masculinity on a societal scale.

Addressing interpersonal dynamics, Daniel believed that WGS courses helped him communicate with others about social inequality and the importance of inclusive language: "I would say I'm better at approaching people about things. Like saying, that was ableist language, that was transphobic language, that was sexist language. I'm able to call people out more confidently...I've tried to work within the privilege." As a man, Daniel believed that WGS teachings provided him with tools to address discrimination beyond the classroom in his everyday social interactions. Expanding on this idea, Brian believed that his WGS experiences could benefit his career goal by helping him to practice social inclusivity: "If I were able to be a doctor, it could help in terms of interacting with people, just being more accepting. I think the more I learn about other cultures or genders or sexual orientations, the more accepting I am of those different groups of people." For these men, WGS can potentially improve both their personal and professional interactions by enhancing their dedication to social inclusivity.

Stemming from their exposure to feminist teachings in their WGS classes, several men in this study underscored how they sought to incorporate gender issues into their research agendas and educational trajectories. Matthew believed that his experiences with WGS courses and working as a student researcher in a gender studies psychology laboratory led him to acknowledge new avenues of research that he had not previously considered. For example, Matthew shared how learning about gender identities shaped his future research trajectories in the following way: "I actually take a much more nuanced

perspective in looking at gender and gender expression when I do my research. For example, it led into some of my current research projects...where I was able to get a couple of researchers to include questions about being bullied based on gender expression.” Through taking a WGS course, Matthew developed a more gender-conscious research trajectory that he utilized in his own research collaborations within his field. Similarly, James shared how he believed his WGS coursework would complement his degree in history when he learned more about intersectionality and how gender interacts with race and ethnicity: “I do want to pursue graduate education and I would like to look more at the gender and racial dynamics of genocide, so I think that this background in gender studies is really going to help.” As shown by these men’s accounts, WGS classes helped them develop interdisciplinary research interests that fostered more intricate understandings of social issues by applying a gendered lens to their analyses.

A number of men also attributed their involvement with women’s and gender-related campus activist groups to their experiences with WGS classes. Rich, for example, became actively involved in gender groups on campus after learning about the important role of activism in enacting social change in a WGS class: “Pretty much every connection that I have through the Women’s Center is a result of Women’s and Gender Studies because that’s how I got involved.” In describing how WGS courses shaped his awareness of sexual assault and violence on college campuses and led him to gender-based activism, Neil recounted, “When I was in college, I was also part of Students for Sexual Consent, which was through the Women’s Center, so that’s something I would never have been a part of because I never thought it was for me.” For several men, WGS courses enhanced their belief that collaboration and cooperation, and specifically men’s involvement in feminist activism, are key components of achieving true social equality. They noted that had they not taken WGS courses, they would not have become involved in such activism.

## **Discussion**

The narratives of the men in this study show how the unique context of Women’s and Gender Studies classes facilitates men’s engagement with issues of gender, inequality and privilege. As WGS courses and

curriculum addressing gender and other social inequalities are an influential presence on college campuses around the world, it is important to continue exploring how students respond to such coursework and curriculum. The findings are consistent with other studies highlighting the positive outcomes and experiences that students of all genders typically associate with WGS [12, 57, 60]. This study, however, is unique in that it provides a picture of how men can experience the WGS classroom and the multifaceted ways that they navigate and grapple with their own gendered perspectives. For the men in this study, benefits of taking WGS classes included developing understandings of social inequality and cultivating a commitment to applying WGS teachings outside of the classroom.

However, men expressed more complex accounts of their actual experiences in the classroom. As such, this study is important insofar as it provides a picture of dynamics *within* the WGS classroom and goes beyond only assessing the impact of such courses in quantitative form. Namely, our findings suggest that although men are enthusiastic about the potential to expand their understanding of gender inequality, some men may also experience some discomfort or confusion talking about inequality in light of a developed awareness of how men, like themselves, are privileged in society. Interestingly, the gay and queer men in the sample reported feeling that they felt more freedom in classroom discussions because of their sexual orientation. Though beyond the scope of this study, queer men in particular may have unique perspectives in the WGS classroom as the adoption of a queer identity among young people is often tied to their political activism and desire for social change [50]. Expressions of masculine guilt also emerged from many men's narratives, which is important to consider as a way that men conceptualize their own privileged positions in relation to women and how they come to terms with this guilt [53], specifically in a feminist academic context. These findings suggest that students' participation and engagement in WGS courses may vary depending on their social backgrounds and personal conceptions of masculinity.

The findings from this study have several important implications regarding broader social issues. First, this study highlights the importance of men's involvement in addressing gender inequality and how men can further develop their gender consciousness in educational environments that are women-dominated, such as WGS classrooms [39]. Findings from this study emphasize the fluid nature of masculinities

across social contexts [43] and the importance of encouraging inclusive gender dialogues in the WGS classroom [7], despite critiques that frame men's presence in WGS classes as problematic [22]. This study elaborates on the unique processes that many men experience when they attempt to come to grips with the highly stigmatized concept of feminism, or the "F-word," in educational contexts [40].

The findings presented here suggest that the process of dominant groups learning about inequality and privilege can elicit multiple reactions (e.g. excitement, guilt, uncertainty) and ultimately can have varying results. For instance, although men in WGS classes possess unique potential to disrupt hegemonic understandings of masculinity in their lives through broadened social consciousness, there is also the chance that these men may directly or indirectly perpetuate essentialist understandings of gender [9, 49]. For example, several men in this study reported that they were content to listen to women's perspectives and did not feel compelled to contribute to class discussions. Others articulated an understanding that men had male perspectives (that presumably were distinct from women's female perspective). Thus, the degree to which their narratives suggest an essentialist gendered dichotomy between masculinity and femininity may reify an understanding of men and women as oppositional. Also, their lack of active engagement could be a form of complicit masculinity that serves to uphold hegemonic masculinity by reaffirming the notion that gendered issues only apply to women [16]. Further exploring how men experience the WGS classroom can elucidate strategies for effectively promoting men's involvement in gender dialogue in the campus context and beyond. Overall, these men's stories illustrate how men in WGS courses can potentially utilize their class experiences to deconstruct the widely held belief that men do not have a valid stake in feminism [24, 35].

In a related vein, this study also demonstrates how WGS courses foster an environment in which students can grapple with difficult social issues possibly for the first time [60]. The role of WGS courses is particularly important to continue studying in light of recent activism on US college campuses around issues of inequality, especially gender and race [10]. Likewise, given that WGS courses are also facing increased scrutiny, and WGS programs and departments must manage growing institutional barriers such as funding and lack of administrative support [4], it is important to address the role these courses

play in students' development and the contribution of WGS courses. Another implication of our findings is that certain student populations may perceive a greater benefit to WGS courses in comparison with their peers. Namely, given that the gay men in our sample were much more likely than their heterosexual peers to have taken a high number of WGS courses, it may be that these courses are an important resource for sexual minority populations on college campuses. Being gay for men could indeed be a source of empowerment in the WGS classroom in that "women's studies may be one of the few social spaces where gay males are privileged relative to their straight male counterparts" [41, p. 178]. In our study, gay men perceived that they were held to different standards than heterosexual men; specifically that their peers did not expect them to necessarily hold views aligned with traditional masculinity. It is important, however, to avoid conflating sexual identity and gender ideology, as gay men can also be misogynist and not necessarily supportive of feminism. Future research, both quantitative and qualitative, is needed on how gay men negotiate their presence in WGS courses and how they conceptualize their unique experiences compared to heterosexual men. Similarly, additional work should be undertaken to explore how men's classmates (i.e. women) perceive them in WGS classes, such as if gay men are viewed as more feminist.

Finally, this study points to the potential of WGS classes in the dissemination of gender equitable ideals across social groups. The college experience has been well documented as fostering students' critical reasoning skills [5], and WGS courses hone this power by focusing on gender inequality. Men's involvement in WGS classes places them in unique positions to advocate for gender equality, especially when they hold other dominant social positions (i.e. sexual orientation, race, class). In this way, men can leverage their power and prestige to unite with other men [33] and educate them on WGS teachings. Though non-WGS men's resistance to feminism may act as formidable obstacles, WGS experiences provide men with a toolkit of resources to draw from in communicating with peers [24]. In a related vein, although we found evidence of men incorporating feminist principles into their lives after having taken a WGS course, future work should continue to probe if and how such activism remains a central part of men's lives beyond campus and in gendered contexts outside the classroom. Studies could explore how men apply material from WGS classes beyond

their college careers, such as in their attitudes regarding gender roles and their behavior related to gender activism [59, 61]. Understanding how students, including men, utilize knowledge from their WGS courses in their future careers can help address such concerns.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

While this study fills a significant gap in present knowledge of men's experiences in WGS courses, it is not without limitations. First, the data is retrospective as we only interviewed men after they had completed a WGS course. Future research that compares men's perspectives at multiple different times throughout a WGS course would enrich our understandings about the impact of such courses. Also, as men represent the numerical minority in WGS classes, it was difficult to find and recruit men who have taken at least one WGS class. Further, the Midwestern context (predominantly White and cisgender) of this study posed barriers to sampling men of color and non-cisgender men. This resulted in a small sample size that was homogenous across race and gender identity, so further work is needed to explore the experiences of transmen, gender queer men and men of color who take WGS classes. Selection biases also limit the scope of these findings, as students with more egalitarian attitudes at the outset may be more likely to enroll in WGS classes and prior beliefs can largely shape their openness to feminist ideals [55]. The men in this study had also taken an average of four WGS classes, making this a unique sample compared to men who may have only taken one WGS course, which could impact their generally positive views of feminism. This is particularly important to note given that our findings differ from the results from previous studies, which demonstrated anti-feminist attitudes among men in these courses [49, 62]. Future work should continue to explore how WGS classes shape men's understandings of gender. Mixed-method studies that quantitatively survey men about their subscription to feminism before and after taking a WGS course as well as qualitatively interview men both those with increased and decreased support for feminism about their experiences within the course would be especially useful to address why disparate outcomes regarding commitment to feminism exist for men who take WGS courses.

Additionally, the gender makeup of the interviewers (women) and respondents (men) created unique interview dynamics. These cross-gender dynamics could influence how the men in this study responded to questions that primed them for thinking about their gender [3, 45]. Additionally, cross-gendered interviewing could elicit more socially desirable answers compared to matched gender interviews, thus creating potential for biased responding. They may have, for instance, highlighted their commitment to feminist ideals and downplayed more negative perspectives. Indeed, research examining gendered interviewer effects has shown that men actively perform distinct types of masculinity during qualitative interviews, which are largely determined by the gender of the interviewer [48, 54]. However, the gendered dynamics of qualitative interviewing have been conceptualized as a potential “resource” as well as a “delimiting factor” to the process of data collection [11]. For example, women interviewers may encourage the men to consider the role of their own gender in the WGS classroom at the same time that the presence of women could lead them to censor more negative experiences and feelings for fear of being offensive. Future research should explore these gendered dynamics by also employing men to interview men in WGS courses, as well as implementing all-men focus groups to examine their experiences in the WGS classroom. It would also be interesting for future research to compare whether men report different experiences in interviews compared to surveys, especially given that survey research findings are mixed in showing how men’s commitment to feminism changes after taking a WGS course.

Despite these limitations, this study informs identifies important areas for further inquiry. For example, little is known about men’s specific rationale for avoiding WGS courses or specific reasons for not enrolling. A complementary exploration of experiences of men with WGS backgrounds and men who have never taken a WGS course could reveal more about the barriers preventing men’s exposure to feminism. Such work could also help identify how to attract more students, particularly men, to WGS classes, especially considering the prevalence of negative stereotypes surrounding WGS as a legitimate field of study [37]. Also, scholars should examine what motivates men to enroll in WGS and if different types of motivation shape how men experience these courses, such as intrinsic motivations (i.e., desire for social justice) compared to extrinsic motivations (i.e., program requirement).

Further, future work could explore how WGS professors address issues of feminism, gender inequality, and hegemonic masculinity in their syllabi and classes. It could be that certain material or practices in the classroom are more effective in helping students understand inequality and empowering them to enact change. Future studies also need to address how men may unwittingly reproduce gender inequality, even as they incorporate more expansive understandings of masculinity into their lives [9].

The impact of WGS courses in men's lives is especially important to consider because men are often in unique positions to discuss gendered social problems with other men. This study showed how the context of the WGS classroom could present opportunities for men to engage with their own understandings of gender identities and broader gender inequality. Through their exposure to feminist pedagogy in the classroom, men who have taken WGS classes could potentially influence others' attitudes and beliefs in productive, meaningful ways by deconstructing stereotypical norms of masculinity. Therefore, this study illustrates the importance of WGS courses in working to spread knowledge of feminist issues related to gender, sexuality and social inequality.

**Funding** – No funding was received to support this research.

**Conflict of interest** – Rachel M. Schmitz and Emily Kazyak have no conflict of interest.

**Ethical Standards** – All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institution.

**Informed Consent** – Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

## References

1. Alilunas, P. (2011). The (in)visible people in the room: Men in women's studies. *Men and Masculinities*, 14, 210–229.
2. Angen, M. J. (2000). Evaluating interpretive inquiry: Reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10, 378–395.
3. Arendell, T. (1997). Reflections on the researcher-researched relationship: A woman interviewing men. *Qualitative Sociology*, 20, 341–368.
4. Armstrong, A. H., & Huber, J. (2015). Where are we headed? What's in our way? How can we get there? Thoughts from directors of women's and gender studies programs. *Afillia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 30, 216–231.



5. Astin, A. W. (1993). *What matters in college? Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
6. Berger, M. T., & Radeloff, C. L. (2014). *Transforming scholarship: Why women's and gender studies' students are changing themselves and the world*. New York: Routledge.
7. Berila, B., Keller, J., Krone, C., Laker, J., & Mayers, O. (2005). His story/her story: A dialogue about including men and masculinities in the women's studies curriculum. *Feminist Teacher*, 16, 34-52.
8. Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: A research note. *Qualitative Research*, 8, 137-152.
9. Bridges, T. (2014). A very "gay" straight? Hybrid masculinities, sexual aesthetics, and the changing relationship between masculinity and homophobia. *Gender & Society*, 28, 58-82.
10. Broadhurst, C. J. (2014). Campus activism in the 21st century: A historical framing. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 2014, 3-15.
11. Broom, A., Hand, K., & Tovey, P. (2009). The role of gender, environment and individual biography in shaping qualitative interview data. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12, 51-65.
12. Case, K. A. (2007). Raising male privilege awareness and reducing sexism: An evaluation of diversity courses. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 31, 426-435.
13. Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
14. Charmaz, K., & Belgrave, L. L. (2002). Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. In J. F. Gubrium, J. A. Holstein, A. B. Marvasti, & K. D. McKinney (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The complexity of the craft* (pp. 347-365). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
15. Connell, R. W. (2014). Change among the gatekeepers: Men, masculinities and gender equality in the global arena. *Signs*, 40, 1801-1825.
16. Connell, R. W. (1995). *Masculinities*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
17. Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic masculinity: Rethinking the concept. *Gender & Society*, 19, 829-859.
18. Coston, B. M., & Kimmel, M. (2012). Seeing privilege where it isn't: Marginalized masculinities and the intersectionality of privilege. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68, 97-111.
19. Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
20. DiAngelo, R., & Sensoy, O. (2014). Leaning in: A student's guide to engaging constructively with social justice content. *Radical Pedagogy*, 11, 1-10.
21. Doull, M., Oliffe, J., Knight, R., & Shoveller, J. A. (2013). Sex and straight young men: Challenging and endorsing hegemonic masculinities and gender regimes. *Men and Masculinities*, 16, 329-346.
22. Flood, M. (2011). Men as students and teachers of feminist scholarship. *Men and Masculinities*, 14, 135-154.
23. Griffin, G. (2002). Co-option or transformation? Women's and Gender Studies worldwide. In H. Fleber & L. Potts (Eds.), *Societies in transition: Challenges to women's and gender studies* (pp. 13-31). Germany: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.

24. Guckenheimer, D., & Schmidt, J. K. (2013). Contradictions within the classroom: Masculinities in feminist studies. *Women's Studies*, 42, 486-508.
25. Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18, 59-82.
26. Harris, K. L., Melaas, K., & Rodacker, E. (1999). The impact of women's studies courses on college students of the 1990s. *Sex Roles*, 40, 969-977.
27. Heasley, R. (2005). Queer masculinities of straight men: A typology. *Men and Masculinities*, 7, 310-320.
28. Houvouras, S., & Carter, J. S. (2008). The F word: College students' definitions of a feminist. *Sociological Forum*, 23, 234-256.
29. Iyer, A., Leach, C. W., & Crosby, F. J. (2003). White guilt and racial compensation: The benefits and limits of self-focus. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29, 117-129.
30. Jones, S. R., & Abes, E. S. (2004). Enduring influences of service-learning on college students' identity development. *Journal of College Student Development*, 45, 149-166.
31. Katz, J., Swindell, S., & Farrow, S. (2004). Effects of participation in a first women's studies course on collective self-esteem, gender-related attitudes, and emotional well-being. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 34, 2179-2199.
32. Kazyak, E. (2012). Midwest or lesbian? Gender, rurality, and sexuality. *Gender & Society*, 26, 825-848.
33. Kaufman, M. (1999). Men, feminism, and men's contradictory experiences of power. In J. A. Kuypers (Ed.), *Men and power* (pp. 59-83). Halifax: Fernwood Books.
34. Kimmel, M. S. (2004). Masculinity as homophobia: Fear, shame, and silence in the construction of gender identity. In P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, class, and gender in the United States: An integrated study* (pp. 81-93). New York: Worth.
35. Kimmel, M. S. (1998). Who's afraid of men doing feminism? In T. Digby (Ed.), *Men doing feminism* (pp. 57-68). New York: Routledge.
36. Kivel, P. (2013). The act-like-a-man box. In M. S. Kimmel & M. A. Messner (Eds.), *Men's lives* (pp. 14-16). New York: Pearson.
37. Marchbank, J., & Letherby, G. (2006). Views and perspectives of women's studies: A survey of women and men students. *Gender and Education*, 18, 157-182.
38. Messerschmidt, J. W. (2012). Engendering gendered knowledge: Assessing the academic appropriation of hegemonic masculinity. *Men and Masculinities*, 15, 56-76.
39. Messner, M. A., Greenberg, M. A., & Peretz, T. (2015). *Some men: Feminist allies and the movement to end violence against women*. New York: Oxford University Press.
40. Moi, T. (2006). "I am not a feminist, but...": How feminism became the f-word. *The Modern Language Association of America*, 121, 1735-1741.
41. Murphy, M. J. (2011). "You'll never be more of a man": Gay male masculinities in academic Women's Studies. *Men and Masculinities*, 14, 173-189.
42. Nash, R. J., Johnson, R. G., III, & Murray, M. C. (2012). *Teaching college students communication strategies for effective social justice advocacy*. New York: Peter Lang.

43. Nilan, P. (2000). "You're hopeless I swear to god": Shifting masculinities in classroom talk. *Gender and Education*, 12, 53-68.
44. Oliver, D. G., Serovich, J. M., & Mason, T. L. (2005). Constraints and opportunities with interview transcription: towards reflection in qualitative research. *Social Forces*, 84, 1273-1289.
45. Padfield, M., & Procter, I. (1996). The effect of interviewer's gender on the interviewing process: A comparative enquiry. *Sociology*, 30, 355-366.
46. Padgett, D. K. (2008). *Qualitative methods in social work research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
47. Patai, D. (2001). Rhetoric and reality in women's studies. *Gender Issues*, 19, 21-60.
48. Pini, B. (2005). Interviewing men: Gender and the collection and interpretation of qualitative data. *Journal of Sociology*, 41, 201-216.
49. Pleasants, R. K. (2011). Men learning feminism: Protecting privileges through discourses of resistance. *Men and Masculinities*, 14, 230-250.
50. Renn, K. A. (2007). LGBT student leaders and queer activists: Identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer identified college student leaders and activists. *Journal of College Student Development*, 48, 311-330.
51. Reynolds, M. J., Shagle, S., & Venkataraman, L. (2007). *A national census of women's and gender studies programs in US institutions of higher education*. University of Chicago: National Opinion Research Center.
52. Schippers, M. (2007). Recovering the feminine other: Masculinity, femininity, and gender hegemony. *Theory and Society*, 36(1), 85-102.
53. Schmitt, M. T., Branscombe, N. R., & Brehm, J. W. (2004). Gender inequality and the intensity of men's collective guilt. In N. R. Branscombe & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Collective guilt: International perspectives* (pp. 75-92). New York: Cambridge University Press.
54. Schwalbe, M., & Wolkomir, M. (2001). The masculine self as problem and resource in interview studies of men. *Men and Masculinities*, 4, 90-103.
55. Sevelius, J. M., & Stake, J. E. (2003). The effects of prior attitudes and attitude importance on attitude change and class impact in women's and gender studies. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 33, 2341-2353.
56. Stake, J. E. (2007). Predictors of change in feminist activism through women's and gender studies. *Sex Roles*, 57, 43-54.
57. Stake, J. E. (2006). Pedagogy and student change in the women's and gender studies classroom. *Gender and Education*, 18, 199-212.
58. Stake, J. E., & Malkin, C. (2003). Students' quality of experience and perceptions of intolerance and bias in the women's and gender studies classroom. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 27, 174-185.
59. Stake, J. E., & Hoffman, F. L. (2001). Changes in student social attitudes, activism, and personal confidence in higher education: The role of women's studies. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38, 411-436.
60. Stake, J. E., & Hoffmann, F. L. (2000). Putting feminist pedagogy to the test: The experience of women's studies from student and teacher perspectives. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 24, 30-38.

61. Stake, J. E., & Rose, S. (1994). The long-term impact of women's studies on students' personal lives and political activism. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 18, 403-412.
62. Thomsen, C. J., Basu, A. M., & Reinitz, M. T. (1995). Effects of women's studies courses on gender-related attitudes of women and men. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 19, 419-426.