

For this essay I would like to talk about, compare and contrast the topics of Hegemonic Masculinity and Gender. I believe that there is a sizable overlap between the two topics. I think that your gender plays a massive role in your experience of hegemonic masculinity. I am of the idea that whatever you are born as, and who you are brought up around can and most likely will greatly impact

For starters, the human experience is very different for men and women. It has become more apparent to me the older that I get that men and women do not live the same type of lives. I have learned about hegemonic masculinity and I have even begun to see it in my daily life as a college student. I see a lot of hegemonic masculinity in person but it is especially prevalent on social media that I use such as Instagram, TikTok and even Snapchat on occasion. A good example of the hegemonic masculinity that I witness with my own eyes is a multitude of my male friends who act and behave in ways that are seen or “perceived” as overtly masculine and they refuse to do anything or be associated with anything that might or would be seen or “perceived” as feminine. I know a solid number of men personally who were raised in households where they were raised and almost forced to be masculine and ignore their “feminine side”. Of this group of men, a majority of these men are unable to express their emotions and just as many of those men are unable to cry and some even refuse to cry because they have been brought up to believe that crying and experiencing regular human emotions such as sadness, depression and even pain are feminine and that men should not be experiencing them or dealing with them in healthy ways.

A lot of these same men who are unable to express themselves and their emotions find themselves struggling in other areas where expression of self would be helpful and they tend to experience more negative long term effects especially when it comes to internal conflict and relationships. I also know way too many men who are not willing to do certain things such as self care, skin care, brushing their teeth and other just healthy self-care and grooming activities because they’re perceived to be overtly “feminine”. I

remember getting hurt and bleeding out when I was in approximately third grade or so, and I can recall my father telling me not to cry because “crying doesn’t make it any better” as I was actively bleeding out. There were other instances throughout my childhood where I can remember getting hurt while playing baseball or falling off of my bike where I wouldn’t be asked if I was okay, I was told that I was okay and I was reminded that once again, crying wouldn’t make it any better and that it’d just make me feel worse. It wasn’t until a few years ago when I had gotten older that I had started to notice how prevalent hegemonic masculinity was in me and my friends’ lives. I eventually learned that for a man to have emotions and to deal with and express them was not wrong, nor was it feminine. It started to become apparent to me how it was very important for men to express their thoughts and even more important to express their emotions.

I know a bunch of men who are still unaware of how important it is to talk about how they’re feeling, what they’re thinking and just life in general. In addition to those men, there’s also those who, even at the age of 18, 19 and even 20+, still refuse to talk or express their thoughts and emotions in any way whatsoever in fear of not being “macho”. They were raised in a way that praised masculinity and they were expected to be hyper-masculine and they were almost programmed like robots and to this day, they are either unable to break that way of thinking or they are completely aloof of the fact that that isn’t how they must act or behave.

This way of thinking and behaving is hegemonic because for a lot of families where the men are involved, it can sometimes get passed down from generation to generation. I have some friends whose grandfather raised their son, my friends dad in this idea of being super masculine and then later on down the line, once my friends father had grown up and had a kid of his own, he raised his son the same way that his father had raised him all because he wasn’t able to “break out” of this “programming” and now all three generations think and behave in similar ways.

I talked about hegemonic masculinity and gender and how one's gender being male and who they are brought up with/around can greatly impact them and their personalities. It also greatly impacts the chances that they do or do not experience this phenomenon known as hegemonic masculinity. It is a cycle that will continue until someone is able to recognize that it is in fact a cycle and puts forth the effort to break that cycle.