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Commentary on "The Mask of Masculinity"

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In our modern postfeminist era, the importance of continuing to emphasize intersectionality has only increased. In order to truly break down unfair gender norms (and expectations) that comes with them, we need to emphasize more equality amongst genders. Every person should feel free enough to abide by their own standards as an individual in society. Sydney has come to recognize the impossible expectations women are expected to achieve/abide by. However, whichever decision women make, it seems they are “damned if they do, and damned if they don’t.” While it is discouraging to be rejected by some part/aspect of society all the time, eventually empowered women realize that they should stop trying to attain these unfair expectations, and instead live their lives the way they want to. While men on the other hand, might appear to have it easier as there is an ideal of masculinity that is “attainable,” there might be less resistance to defy the gender norms. Everyone, no matter what gender, wants to be accepted and loved as they are. This essay aims to praise authenticity of both genders, but highlights men and masculinity specifically because the male gender is the gender of privilege and the only way to create equality is to break down unfair expectations across the board. Many gender norms are based on what the opposite sex finds attractive, which is why this essay is from a female’s (Sydney) point of view, addressing how much she believes women love sensitive men. She wanted to convey this important message in a fun way, so she started off describing Titanic, a classic romantic film that has won over generations of women’s hearts. She wants her essay to be relatable to both sexes, and encourage people to be their authentic selves and laugh about silly gender norms that shouldn’t be enforced.

-Tasha DeYoung, *Writing Center Consultant*