

## Book Review Introduction

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[See table of contents](#)

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## **Men and Boys in Education**

This Special Topics Edition came about as part of a graduate course I was teaching entitled ***Current Issues in the Teaching of Boys and Men***. The course description reads as follows:

Students explore intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, geographical location, and language and culture regarding males in Canadian education and internationally. Analyzing the trajectories of diverse boys throughout schooling, and that of male adults, students ascertain which identities are validated and marginalized. Students explore how certain media, programs, and approaches affect the engagement and success of males educationally and socially.

While there were assigned readings for this course, these were presented flexibly; students were responsible for reading a minimum of two of the provided articles per week, to inform our weekly live discussions. Students were also asked to read and review any book related to the course topic that held a particular interest for them, either personally/academically or professionally, without prescription.

The resulting collection of books is an interesting sample of the literature on this topic: From memoirs by politician Wab Kinew and television and media celebrity RuPaul Charles; to discussions of the challenges faced by boys in schools by Mark Roberts & Matt Pinkett, and by Christina Hoff Sommers; to books seeking to improve boys' mental health, also by Matt Pinkett, as well as by Charlotte Markey, Daniel Hart, and Douglas Zacher; and finally to books by Liz Plank, and Richard Reeves, about the challenges

faced by men in the wider society as they wrestle with multiple masculinities and social constructs and ascriptions of male identity.

Recognizing that the existence and importance of girls' and women's issues does not negate those experienced by boys' and men, and that recognizing the latter does not deny the former (it's not a pie!), the authors, as well as the books' reviewers, seek to initiate a dialogue to draw the pendulum back to a more balanced view of the unique challenges experienced by each gender, each identity, in each life lived.