

Journal of Black Masculinity



Special Issue

Philosophical Underpinnings of Gendered Identity

Guest Editor: Preston McKeever-Floyd, PhD

Vol. 1, No. 3 Summer 2011

ISSN 2158-9623



The Journal of Black Masculinity is a peer-reviewed international publication providing multiple discourses and multiple-discipline-based analyses of issues and/or perspectives with regard to black masculinities. The journal invites empirical, theoretical, and literary scholarship as well as essays, poetry, and art. Submissions from multiple disciplines beyond the humanities and social sciences are encouraged. The Journal of Black Masculinity is published three times a year and has a ten percent (10%) acceptance rate. The Journal of Black Masculinity also publishes special issues on a periodic basis with guest editors focusing on themed issues.

Journal of Black Masculinity

Order the complete book from

Booklocker.com

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/5932.html?s=pdf>

or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.

Your Free excerpt appears below. Enjoy!

The Journal of Black Masculinity

C. P. Gause, Founder and Editor

The Journal of Black Masculinity is a peer-reviewed international publication providing multiple discourses and multiple-discipline-based analyses of issues and/or perspectives with regard to black masculinities. The journal invites the following submissions for consideration: empirical, theoretical, and literary scholarship as well as essays, poetry, and art. Manuscripts from multiple disciplines beyond the humanities and social sciences are encouraged. *The Journal of Black Masculinity* is published three times a year and has a ten percent (10%) acceptance rate. *The Journal of Black Masculinity* also publishes special issues on a periodic basis with guest editors focusing on themed issues.

Manuscript submissions, books for review, and correspondence concerning all editorial matters should be sent to: C. P. Gause, Editor, *Journal of Black Masculinity*, using the contact information below. Manuscripts submitted for publication will be peer-reviewed.

Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic form and should not exceed 35 pages in length (including endnotes and references). Authors should follow the *APA Publication Manual*, 6th edition (APA Press, 2010). A style guide for preparing manuscripts is located on the *JBM* website at <http://www.blackmasculinity.com>.

Journal of Black Masculinity ©GES Publishing Group
GES LLC
2309 W. Cone Blvd. Suite 142
Greensboro, NC 27408
www.blackmasculinity.com
drcpgause@gmail.com
336.420.6362

The Journal of Black Masculinity

Copyright © 2011 GES Publishing Group/GES LLC.

ISBN 978-1-61434-867-2

ISSN 2158-9623

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Printed in the United States of America.

Volume 1, No. 3

Summer 2011

“Never into the Same River Twice”: Gendered Identity in a Landscape of Change

Preston L. McKeever-Floyd, Ph.D.
Guest Editor, *The Journal of Black Masculinity*

You can never step into the same river twice; for other waters are constantly flowing on said the Pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus. The implication is that *reality* is a process marked by *flux* or change as the identifiable constant. Heraclitus’ observation in the fifth century BCE introduced the notion of change as a category of analysis in Western philosophy and thought, generally. Interestingly, as Heraclitus was saying this in the West, around the same time, Siddhartha Gautama, The Supreme Buddha, introduced to the East the idea that one of the three marks of reality is *anicca*—impermanence, agreeing with Heraclitus that all things, including the *self*, are in flux.

Clearly change—*swift and constant*—is a pervasive motif in the twenty-first century landscape. The twenty-first century is characterized by exponential growth of innovations and exchange of information—lending itself to the interpretation of binary codes into computer languages, wireless audio communication and video imaging from virtually any corner of the globe, thus dubbed the Information Age.

Know Thyself is the perennial philosophical imperative that transcends time and cultures. The *self* to be found from antiquity to the modern era, in Western culture especially, was the *rational self*. This was the *self* that created the master narratives and is associated with the intellectually elite; all else is “other.” Many feminist thinkers argue that the *rational self* maps white, elite, heterosexual male. The postmodern era fostered the deconstruction of master narratives and the elevation and validation of the previously marginalized narratives of the “Other.”

Philosophically, the issue of personal identity, generally, and gendered identity, specifically, raises a number of questions: *If change is the primary characteristic of existence, does any “self” truly endure*

over time? Is the idea of gendered identity an illusion? Is gendered identity total identification with a body? Is there anything metaphysically “real” about gendered identity? Or, most significantly, how do we create a gendered self in light of the deconstruction of the master narrative, decolonization of the contemporary psyche, and disruption of a paradigm of permanence?

This special issue explores these questions from a number of philosophical, cultural, social and historical perspectives. The authors included in this volume bring generously, textured insights to this discourse. Each author contributes a significant facet to this prism of socio-cultural analysis.

Bertram Wyatt-Brown’s perceptive essay provides an excellent introduction to this issue as he gives a historical analysis of the ethic of honor in the antebellum south. He reveals how this most ancient means of creating society became the milieu for the construction of the male identity of slave and master, recognizing that both brought a sense of honor that was transformed in the crucible of slavery.

Ogunyemi Christopher Babatunde examines the notion of *genderization* in Nigerian male autobiographical narratives, conceptualizing a theory of narratology that addresses the power of literature as a purveyor of sexual and cultural relegation of women with the goal of accomplishing the socio-politico-economic and cultural integration for African expansion in literature and globalization.

Lena Delgado de Torres investigates current shifts in gender in Jamaican society. These shifts are understood as class- and gender-based divergence with regard to the traditional bourgeois classes’ norms, values and aesthetics. Interestingly, she explores the shifts through the prism of Jamaican Dancehall culture, i.e. gendered dancing styles and adornment, in the context of the African Diaspora, with the idea of linking the Dancehall phenomenon to discursive modes of the continent and Americas resulting in a discourse on Pan-African gender, dress and dance.

The last two essayists analyze hip hop culture and the culture of hipness, both using intersectionality as the entrée into their discussion. Ronald Neal uses the intersections of religion, masculinity, and popular culture to engage and problematize the way black masculinity is

expressed in rap music, with the aim of effecting a re-examination of the discourse on gender and masculinity in the American context. Robin James extends the idea of intersectionality (i.e. gender and race) to the notion of “cultural appropriation” and uses this to introduce her ideas on “Postcolonial Black Hipness,” which she suggests inverts traditional racial logic while preserving heteromascularity as normative.

This issue concludes with Sharon Lee White’s review of Lance McCready’s recent text, *Making Space for Diverse Masculinities: Difference, Intersectionality, and Engagement in an Urban High School*, which explores how the experiences of black gay or gender nonconforming youths are neglected in studies of academic disengagement and failure among black boys in K-12 schools.

Never into the same river twice . . . this volume provides the reader with a window into the dynamic flow of the philosophical issue of personal identity, generally and gendered identity, specifically, initiating a multi-layered dialogue, via the selected essays, around these concerns from the cultural perspectives of the Americas, Caribbean, and Africa. Clearly, the landscape is exquisitely textured and ever-changing. The aim of this volume is to introduce questions, provoke thought, and promote continued dialogue that is inclusive of the disparate voices of world culture.



The Journal of Black Masculinity is a peer-reviewed international publication providing multiple discourses and multiple-discipline-based analyses of issues and/or perspectives with regard to black masculinities. The journal invites empirical, theoretical, and literary scholarship as well as essays, poetry, and art. Submissions from multiple disciplines beyond the humanities and social sciences are encouraged. **The Journal of Black Masculinity** is published three times a year and has a ten percent (10%) acceptance rate. **The Journal of Black Masculinity** also publishes special issues on a periodic basis with guest editors focusing on themed issues.

Journal of Black Masculinity

Order the complete book from

Booklocker.com

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/5932.html?s=pdf>

or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.