Today’s piece was prepared by Elena Griego, MD based on an article from Time Magazine, Masculinity Is More Than a Mask. <http://ideas.time.com/2014/01/13/masculinity-is-more-than-a-mask/>

Christina Hoff Sommers, a resident scholar of the American Enterprise Institute and author of “The War Against Boys: How Misguided Policies Are Harming Our Young Men” reviews the trailer of a soon to be released documentary, “The Mask You Live In”, which explores a cultural emphasis on masculinity in young boys and adolescents. She argues that while the film strives to advocate for adolescent males, it forgets to discuss the positive aspects of adolescent male behavior. She sites multiple studies that explore the inherent differences between the sexes, including a recent study that explored the perceived value of discussing problems between male and female adolescents. Ms. Sommers also brings forth the argument that suicide, which is much more common in males, it is still an uncommon occurrence in adolescent boys, and she expresses her fear that this film may unintentionally paint a different picture.

The author spends the majority of this article discussing the potential shortcomings of the film, without making it clear if she has viewed the film in its entirety, or just the trailer. Her critiques primarily target the negative gender stereotypes that she perceives to be the film’s focus. However, she presents many compelling arguments, citing a variety of scientific studies, including the development of a mental health system in Australia that attempts to address the negative associations that men may make with the term “mental health”. Overall, she provides a passionate, albeit one-sided, critique of the documentary trailer, while still leaving the reader feeling compelled to watch the film and increasing the awareness of cultural influences on the development of gender identity.

**RESOURCES FOR PARENTS OF BOYS & GIRLS**

[Raising Boys](http://www.pbs.org/parents/raisingboys/): *PBS Parents Guide offering insights and advice on raising boys in America*

Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys (2000) by Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson <http://www.pbs.org/opb/raisingcain/>

[Book List for Parents of Pre-Teens](http://www.seattlechildrens.org/pdf/ce059.pdf)

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!