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Illustration list:

Figure 7: Acropolis Museum (n.d.). *Youth statue. The 'Kritios Boy' | Acropolis Museum | Official website*. [online] www.theacropolismuseum.gr. Available at: <https://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en/youth-statue-kritios-boy>.

Figure 5: Foxe, Ken. “Pins Holding Molly Malone Statue in Place Destroyed “from the Abuse She Receives on a Daily Basis.”” *Irish Independent*, 5 May 2025, www.independent.ie/irish-news/pins-holding-molly-malone-statue-in-place-destroyed-from-the-abuse-she-receives-on-a-daily-basis/a209500086.html. Accessed 5 May 2025.

Figure 1: Instagram.com. (2021). *Andrew tate (@notatetopg) • Instagram photos and videos*. [online] Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/notatetopg/?hl=en> [Accessed 21 Mar. 2025].

Figure 3: Jeongmeeyoon.com. (2025). *JeongMee Yoon's official website*. [online] Available at: http://www.jeongmeeyoon.com/aw_pinkblue_blue022.htm [Accessed 23 Mar. 2025].

Figure 1: Jenner, K. (n.d.). *Kylie*. [online] Instagram.com. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/kyliejenner/?hl=en>.

Figure 2: *Netflix (2025) Adolescence* <https://www.netflix.com/watch/81763204?> (21/03/2025)

Figure 3: Victorian Era. (n.d.). *Georgian Era Men's Clothing | Components of Public Dressing*. [online] Available at: <https://victorian-era.org/georgian-era-facts/mens-clothing.html>.

Introduction:

The words 'masculinity' and 'femininity' are very loose terms within today's society, how we perceive what it is to be a man or a woman so within this essay I'm going to be researching into the subjects that have become an influence on the younger generation, this essay touches on the subject matters of social media, 'masculinity', 'femininity' and colours showing how each keyword impacts today's youth.

Social media:

When looking at social media you find that influencers use their platforms to promote healthy eating, workouts, gaming, dancing videos, and beauty videos, etc. Where there are many influencers that promote these kinds of things, there are some influencers that promote 'toxic masculinity' and 'incel'. *"Incels (involuntary celibates) have recently garnered media attention for seemingly random attacks of violence."* (Sparks, Zidenberg and Olver, 2022)

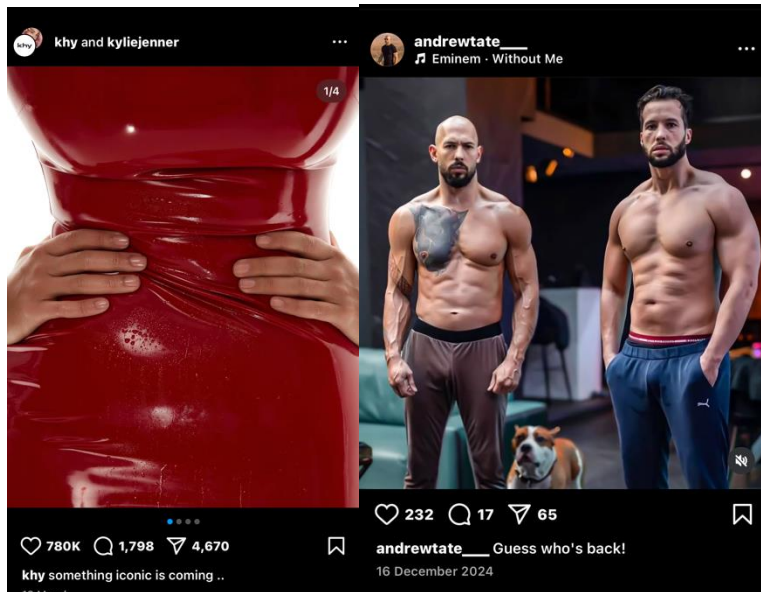


Figure 1

In today's generation young boys are shown these kinds of imagery and videos of how they should treat women is discussed on the television show 'Adolescence' on Netflix which shows a completely different outlook about 'toxic masculinity' and misogyny in young boys within society and how the impact of these things has driven young boys into murder of young girls because of the things they see on social media. Following the character 'Jamie' on why he killed one of his classmates, 'Katie' this series doesn't focus on who did it but 'why.' This show helps viewers have a better view of social media through the eyes of the younger generation seeing posts on social media to do with, incel culture, red pill and the use of emojis by the youth. In an article that explain what the 'red pill' means and who talks about it on the platform read it, it states:

The Red Pill a continuous, multi-voiced, up-to-the-minute male complaint nestled at the heart of the so-called [manosphere](#) – a network of websites preoccupied with both the men's rights movement and how to pick up women.

Talk about the show *Adolescence* has been discussed in parliament of how the subject matter that the show focuses on is being called a “matter of culture,” said by the premier on how social media is molding young boys. “Should adolescence be shown in school?” was discussed on the good morning, Britain recently. In my opinion, it should be shown in schools because it was made to raise questions and the youth to ask questions, but there is the side of the argument that people believe that it will give people ideas.

There is the side of social media and imagery that the younger generation is seeing, imagery of pornography, that is about 88% of violence towards women that can give the wrong impression of what a man and a woman should be like when it comes to sex. It creates an unhealthy impression on the younger generation.

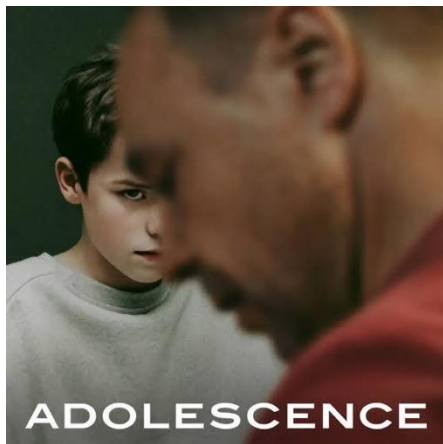


Figure 2

The way that some female influencers sometimes show themselves on social media can give young girls and young boys an unrealistic idea of what women are supposed to look like, giving them almost a fantasy view of women. Part of me believes that what young girls see on social media can make them think that what they look like isn't what they were meant to look like, and they must look like somebody else, almost like they must be something they aren't.

Colours:

The colours pink and blue are mostly associated with being male or female, even when you first come into this world where the hospital would give you a pink hat if you were a girl and a blue hat if you were a boy. But there's also, even before you come into this world, assigned gender with the colours pink and blue at baby showers. In some ways the colour pink is seen as a feminine colour, but if you look back at paintings in the Georgia era, men wore colourful outfits of pink and purple. In the painting '*dressing routine for a gentleman*' (Victorian Era, n.d.) it shows that men took just the same amount of time to get ready maybe more.



Figure 3

“For children, clothing becomes a way of letting in and expressing identity, especially related to gender or class.” (Jackson, 2012) The use of colour in children's clothing and designs to show if there, male or female seeing a baby in pink clothing they are automatically assume they are female, but the question is, why does society still believe in colours being decanted to each gender in the 21st century, when it was normal for men or women to wear these colours?. If colours are used to show one's identity, it shouldn't matter about the colour of the clothing because the colours blue and pink don't define you as masculine or feminine; it's just the way society wants to see people. Having people wear a certain colour creates a stigma in the younger generation, thinking that they can't wear certain colours because it makes them look too masculine or too feminine.



Figure 4

JeongMee Yoon is an artist that focuses her practice around colour by taking images of children with their clothes and toys in her ‘pink and blue’ project that tackles other issues as well.

This project explores the trends in cultural preferences and the differences in the tastes of children (and their parents) from diverse cultures, ethnic groups as well as gender

socialization and identity. 1) The work also raises other issues, such as the relationship between gender and consumerism.

When looking through these works, when we are children, we don't choose what we wear; it's selected by our parents or guardians so the colours pink or blue were a preference to them until we got older, but there would always be a thought of if our outfits would be perceived as too masculine or too feminine.

Masculinity and femininity:

The way people perceive what is to be masculine is that men is working, build things, go to the pub, etc. But there are some people who believe being a man and being masculine means you must be the man of the house and make your partner do everything around the house to do with cleaning, cooking, and looking after children, which is what society was like during 1950. Going back to what I've touched on in my social media section about the 'incel culture' and influencers promoting toxic masculinity like 'Andrew Tate' before he had his social media platforms taken away because of legal reason, but while he still had his social media platforms, he called himself a "self-proclaimed misogynist influencer." (Radford, 2024) within an interview with the BBC he talks about telling young boys to get up and do something with their lives instead of sitting doing nothing but also teaching young boys that it is okay to hit women because you are a man, and women are the lesser sex. In countless videos, 'Andrew Tate' has called women "intrinsically lazy," which has had a huge impact on young boys thinking that what you must be to be a man is

terrifying. In an article by the BBC between 2023 and 2024, there have been “53 of 64 homicide victims aged between 13 and 19 - or 83% were killed with a sharp instrument.” (Seddon, 2025)



Figure 5

I found when looking into bronze statues of women, there is always erosion on the chest where people have been touching the statue's breasts, where some people believe that touching the statues of women's breasts, like the statue of Juliet in Verona, will be good luck. When women are sexualized most of the time, people think about the women's breasts and their bodies in general. Finding that most of bronze women statues have erosion marks on the breast area, including the statue of Molly Malone in Dublin, Ireland in an article it states the reasoning of why she is shown in the way she is, "*as women breastfed publicly in Molly's time, breasts were popped out all over the place*" As it states in this quote it is normal for women back then to wear clothes so that it was easier to breastfeed their children but in today's society it's seen as unsightly for women to breast feed in public but it completely natural thing to do breast feeding

your child even if it is in public but some people chose to objectify women because of this. On another side of this argument men can walk around a public place with no t-shirt on and it's seen as completely normal because there a man.

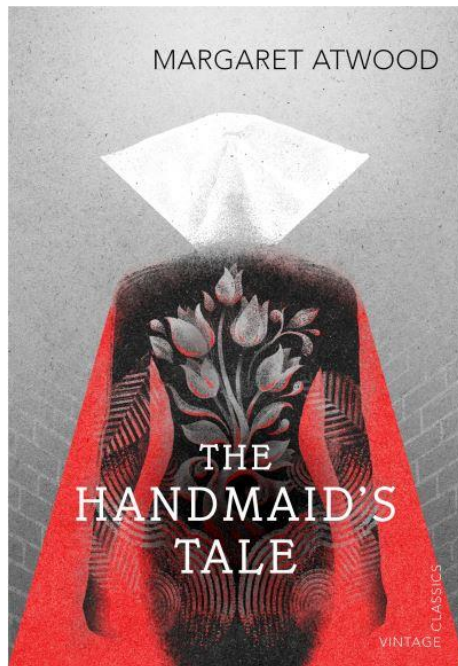


Figure 6

Within the dystopian novel *the handmaids tale* by Margret Atwood is based on what could happen if a religiose or any kind of dictation came to power in America. In this novel it shows women are seen and not heard they aren't allowed to read, write, work, speak out as it seen as illegal by the government in power and if they break any of these laws they will be punished. The government in the novel created handmaids because of the decrease in births but the women that are handmaids are seen as *unwomen* because of what they did before America became the country of Gilead, "*blessed be the fruit*" (Atwood, 1985) a term that is used in the novel towards handmaid's in passing and towards each other the meaning is that the handmaids will be blessed with a child and is seen to encourage fertility.

Within the contrast of the today and to *the handmaid's tale* future of America to now with that they've stripped women's rights in some states not all but some with the overturn of Roe V Wade which eliminated the right to have an abortion in some states in the America until the supreme court completely overturned the rights to have an abortion in the USA in early stages of pregnancy. By taking away a woman's right to choose if she keeps the baby or not is just reducing the women's back to just being vessels to have children so what makes women feminine can only be seen as something to be controlled as is seen in *the handmaid's tale*.

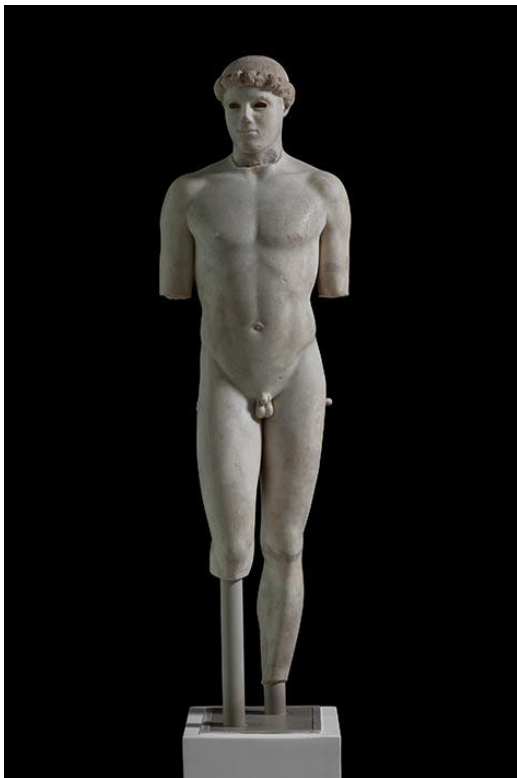


Figure 7

Looking into Greek culture, they presented men in statues and sculptures and how they present men as athletes and warriors, which in those times was quite common, but when people look at the status of Grease, they don't see the same as what they would back then. A man is now seen

as the provider of the family, but it's the 21st century, and some men still believe that men are the better sex. Within the article by Scientific America on *Our narrow views of masculinity is hurting boys*, the writer of the article asked their psychology students to “imagine how people grow up, think and act in a world without societal rules and expectations.” (Stanaland, 2025)

Which I found quite interesting because it's not a question we ask ourselves or the younger generations we would like to think that we don't live in a world that we're judged based on being male, female, masculine or feminine. The article shows the response of the students as it states here:

“What norms?” they ask. This is especially the case for the young men who, like me, had never explicitly questioned messages like, “Boys don't cry” and “Be a man” before going to college. Amid a resurgence of rigid masculinity—and as a psychologist who studies these issues—I've grown increasingly concerned with these unacknowledged pressures that can thwart the healthy development of boys and young men.

With the students responding in this way makes you think how boys are raised to be masculine and aren't allowed to show their emotions and are raised to believe that emotions show weakness. Where girls are raised to show their emotions and act feminine but show too much emotion you're seen as dramatic the contrast between how young girls and young boys are raised can be seen as completely different but somewhat the same we are raised to believe that we must act the way we were raised and not differ from it. Linking this article back to the TV show *Adolescence* where the impact of social media can have on young people can also be linked to this article where young boys shouldn't show their emotions and act like a man from a young age.

Conclusion:

With this essay it touches on the way that masculinity and femineity is pushed onto the younger generation through social media, colours and the words masculinely and femineity. The way these words are pushed onto the young girls and boys of today's society and how we're shaped by too simple words that are based on gender. The way that everything that young people see on the internet and colours can make people think that there not masculine or feminine enough for society which can create toxic outlooks on how people see people if there not masculine enough or if you're not feminine enough for society's 'norm'.

Question: How do the words femineity and masculinity impact today's youth?

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