

Welcome to Male POV – Creating Better Heroes. I'll be your teacher for the duration of this course.

One of the biggest complaints I've heard in romance is that the heroes fall flat. Oh sure, they have some of the static traits that women love, but many just aren't memorable. This isn't only a trend for indie/e-publishers, but NY as well.

The romance genre is filled with a plethora of writers who write straight erotic romances, as well as an increasing number of writers who write male/male romances. Obviously, bringing our characters to life is key to keeping and gaining new readers; but are your male characters real? Or just what you think women want them to be?

For example, do you know why some men are jaded, yet they appear successful and happy? Or do you realize that a man who is more effeminate is not always gay? What are these guys thinking? Do you utilize the eight archetypes in your writing to create better heroes? Do you truly know the men in your writing?

In this workshop, we'll break down the eight archetypes a little, give a bit of background on the male mindset and psychology behind it, and delve

deeper into the wonderful yet confusing male mind.

We'll explore how his issues affect your plot, why *what* those issues are is important, and how we make them come across. We'll discuss cross gender writing and author bias, tearing bias down if necessary, so we can give you new insight into the male mind.

Hosting this workshop several times has allowed me to customize the depth of focus to include the gay male mindset, among other things relevant to creating the male hero in romance. "What do Men really care about?" is an ever expanding section, detailing the important factors in the lives of successful men. Without the picture of perfection, we'd struggle to get our hero to understand the change/growth difference, and how it applies to his life through the heroine, as a device for both.

One thing we'll also cover has to do with my editorial bias in gay romance, and why knowing your market is utterly important.

What you'll learn from this class

- Male Archetypes and how they affect our characters
- How (il)logical men think and why they act

the way they do

- How to take any male character from any movie/story and modify him to fit your story
- How to get your man to express his true “self”
- What men REALLY care about, and how to work with that for your characters
- A man’s self view
- The GAY MALE viewpoint
- The male cycle of emotions and how it compares to the female cycle of emotions
- A man’s journey in life
- What men *really* think

A few extras

Using character creation sheets (don’t groan!) that have all the relevant information you’ll need, you’ll be able to craft male characters that are just as deep as your female characters. Getting inside the heads of your male characters is the most important aspect of “how to write” them.

One of the important things to me as a writer is speed. I like to write fast, edit faster and get a book out even faster so as not to lose reader focus. It's not that I'm competitive, though I am; it's that readers are so demanding and trying to build back the reader base becomes difficult with slow writing. Morgan Hawke, who puts a lot of pre-work into the basics without wasting a lot of time, because the back work makes all the difference in the final product, heavily influences the methods I use.

Cross gender writing can make or break an author's career if they cannot portray the opposite sex clearly and accurately. With the growing popularity of M/M romances, it's becoming increasingly important for males to be portrayed in the proper light! We'll cover all of that here, and a lot more.

I'll make reference to JR Ward and Sherrilyn Kenyon's characters because of the depth of emotion those authors put into their heroes. Also, they're widely known authors with a dedicated following. I'll also reference my work.

If you're taking this class and are a woman, I'll be asking you to think about life in a different manner that may seem foreign to you in hopes that you can empathize with men and your male characters. Men

and women do think differently, as evidenced by any heterosexual relationship. I'll cover gay couples too, so don't worry. But the fact is, men seem to be more fact and logic driven, while women lean more towards being emotionally driven—i.e. being in touch with how they feel. Why is this? We'll explore that, but for now note the stereotype.

Men should listen, too. I cannot tell you how many times I heard the phrase, "I'm a man, so I don't need this course, but it could be interesting to see what you are presenting about us." I have studied plenty of workshops dedicated to how to create characters over the last few years and I must say, a lot of them have a huge bias. None of them explained that bias in a fair and balanced way.

It's annoying. Just because you have a penis doesn't mean you actually THINK about your actions! We'll cover that, too.

I believe, because of increasing pressure by society for **people** to perform, that nobody thinks enough about their actions anymore. With the increase for productivity, the advancement of technology that allows us to be more productive, our downtime is so filled with energy wasting things like TV (American Idol, anyone?) that even in our downtime, we're not

really given downtime.

Or as I say in business dealings, nobody actively exists.

This affects our characters as well. It makes them struggle with their concept of reality. As men, if they're not portrayed appropriately, our readers will not sympathize, understand or "get" our characters.

I would invite you to take an hour a day to yourself. Find time and just sit. Sit in public, sit in private, sit somewhere where many people tend to congregate and just observe them. Many authors use this simple exercise to construct characters but is only the first step in getting down the male.

In truth, men are more than just hard bodies, attitude and nice dicks.

Think deeper about the music you listen to, if you're a rocker (or metalhead!), and those lead singers you're so fond of. How do they look? How do they dress?

This information, these questions and thoughts apply to all forms of writing, not just romance. Remember, we're examining basic motives and thoughts behind actions of the opposite gender.

Some lessons have exercises at the end; others do not.

Please feel free to ask questions at every step of this journey.

So, let's get started!

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