

Essay Questions: Due October 18th

You can write an essay on any of the three readings on e-reserve at the library (under SpCm 323). The questions for the Tannen article (*Community and Contest*), *Men and Depression: Facing the Darkness* and *The Black Beauty Myth* are listed below.

Remember, you just need to read and write a 2-3 page typed, double spaced essay on ONE of these readings. Please proof read before handing it in to Dr. LaWare

“Community and Contest: Styles in Conflict” From *You Just Don’t Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* by Deborah Tannen. Read pp. 149-165 (or more if you’d like to!)

Tannen explains that conflict is part of any relationship, but in U.S. culture, men and women handle conflict very differently and this is related to the idea of community and contest. Explain what she means. In your discussion consider the following quote on p. 155, “The very moves that women make to avoid confrontation have the effect of sparking it in conversation with some men.”

Reflect on your own experiences growing up and playing games in groups of children of the same sex – did your experiences seem similar to those depicted in the chapter? Explain. Did this chapter help you to understand a conflict you had with a person of the opposite sex? Explain.

Men and Depression: Facing the Darkness

According to the article, how do cultural assumptions about masculinity and male speech inhibit men from recognizing and getting help for depression and other emotional problems? Further how do these assumptions even inhibit medical practitioners from recognizing and treating depression? Did anything about the profiles of the different men suffering from depression strike you as particularly interesting or disturbing or surprising? Explain.

The article suggests that the cultural climate is changing and men who do come forward about their struggles are supported rather than ridiculed. Do you think that at the college campus, at ISU, men have an easier time talking about emotional problems and issues and seeking help? Why or why not? What is your experience or the experience of friends on campus?

The Black Beauty Myth

The author of this article shows that black women are not immune from being affected by the images of beauty in the media, and in fact, these messages affect black women in particular ways. Explain how these messages affect black women and how this differs from what white women experience. Who reinforced messages about appropriate weight in the author's life? How did this affect the author and how has she been able to be true to herself?

How does this compare to your experiences, or the experiences of people you know and struggles with weight and body image?