

## For Immediate Release

### BOYS WILL BE MEN: Growing Up Male in America

Aired on PBS stations in Spring/Summer 2001

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*Boys Will Be Men*, a unique one-hour documentary was broadcast on 120 PBS stations in the spring and summer of 2001. The video has received rave reviews from critics and library journals nationwide. Written, produced, and directed by award-winning independent filmmaker

Tom Weidlinger (past works include programs for the *American Experience* and the four-hour PBS series *Making Peace*), *Boys Will Be Men* explores the terrors and triumphs of growing up male in America and suggests ways in which we can help them on their journey.

After 15 years of focus on the development of the girls' movement, perhaps best represented in Mary Pipher's best-selling book *Reviving Ophelia*, clinical psychologists and educators have been turning their attention toward boys. The school shootings in 1998 and 1999 focused media on the work of two psychologists who give testimony in this program. They are William Pollack, director of the Center for Men at McLean Hospital and Harvard and author of the best-selling book *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons From the Myths of Manhood* and Michael Thompson, co-author of *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys*. Their point of view is complemented by the commentary of Dorothy Espelage, a researcher at the University of Illinois who focuses on the phenomenon of bullying, and Michael Meade, author of *Men and the Water of Life: Initiation and Tempering of Men*, who looks at male adolescence in the context of rites of passage and cultural and societal mores. In the film, the voices of Pollack, Thompson, Espelage, and Meade are balanced with interviews with parents, teachers and boys themselves.

How do boys become men? How do they learn courage, the difference between right and wrong, and the meaning of love? What hurts them, makes them violent, and sometimes kills them? In search of answers to these questions, *Boys Will Be Men* follows 20 boys on the south Side of Chicago who undergo a rite of passage led by Meade and use poetry to express their hopes and fears of the "big impossible," manhood. The film also follows the trials, tribulations and successes of five out-of-control boys who have been sent to an Outward Bound type wilderness intervention program in Southern Idaho.

*Boys Will Be Men* goes beyond the headlines and proclamations of talk show pundits. In the program, we get to know and care about individual boys in their struggle towards manhood and we get pragmatic, no-nonsense advice from the teachers and mentors who guide them in their journey. Additional information, including specific broadcast dates and viewer resources, can be found at [www.boyswillbemen.com](http://www.boyswillbemen.com).