

# Toxic Socialization



## Design Statement

This image points to ways toxic subjects—here, as binary masculinity—are produced at the intersection of mesosystems (e.g., schools) and macrosystems (e.g., societies). The image also suggests possible points of ethnographic and political intervention by moving across scale, drawing out different constructs and enactments of gender.

## Project Statement

In this photo essay, I examine how toxic masculinities structure Chinese and Taiwanese societies. The visual form of social toxicity engaged by this project demonstrates how national projects undercut possibilities for non-hegemonic gendered and sexed subjectivities. By laying bare the visual logic of toxic masculinity, this project spurs dialogue necessary for envisioning marginalized gendered and sexed life-worlds.

## Caption

This image illustrates how toxic masculinity is produced in Chinese educational contexts through public pronouncements of proper gender. The photo shows a group of middle-school students in Chengdu, China signing their names on a banner that reads: "Masculine Boys (Yang-Gang-Nan-Hai)." Their public pronouncement occurs as a response to a national call for "making boys like boys." Such socialization and valorization of masculinity and a gender binary at a national level undercuts and disciplines gendered possibility. This public form of promising to "do" gender the correct way enacts and legitimizes a toxic masculine ideology.

Shao, Jianmin. 2019. "Toxic Socialization"

In "Toxic Masculinity." In Visualizing Toxic Subjects, curated by James Adams and Kim Fortun. The Center for Ethnography. May.

<https://tinyurl.com/yykhuknq>



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*Toxic Masculinity*