

The Portrayal of Toxic Masculinity on Nate Jacobs in *Euphoria* (2019)

Annisa Ayuretno ¹

Putri Rindu Kinasih ²

¹ Universitas Bunda Mulia, Indonesia

² Corresponding author, Universitas Bunda Mulia, Indonesia; putri.kinasih93@gmail.com

Received: 4 June 2024

Accepted: 21 July 2024

Published: 24 July 2024

Abstract

Despite some changes in how masculinity is portrayed over time, certain disturbing patterns and characteristics continue. Yet, popular media exposure may be the primary way that children and most adults learn about others as well as absorb and internalize social norms, values, and beliefs that are reflected in the way the media is presented and expressed. One disturbing characteristic that is shown in TV series is toxic masculinity. This study aims to study the portrayal of toxic masculinity in Nate Jacob in the critically acclaimed series *Euphoria* (2019). In this research, the writers used the qualitative method to gather an in-depth, detailed, and comprehensive portrayal of toxic masculinity based on the characteristics of toxic masculinity proposed by Kupers. This study showed that Nate Jacobs portrays Kupers' characteristics of toxic masculinity: misogyny, homophobia, greed, and violent domination. He performs toxic masculinity to prove to himself, symbolically, that he is not like his father. Nate exhibits dominance and violence because of his biggest fear of becoming like his homosexual father.

Keywords: Dominance, *Euphoria*, literature, toxic masculinity

To cite this article: Ayuretno, A., & Kinasih, P. R. (2024). The portrayal of toxic masculinity on Nate Jacobs in *Euphoria* (2019). *SALEE: Study of Applied Linguistics and English Education*, 5(2), 508-523. <https://doi.org/10.35961/salee.v5i2.1472>

DOI: 10.35961/salee.v5i2.1472



1. Introduction

The closest definition of masculinity proposed by scholars is the behaviours, languages, and customs that exist in particular cultural and organizational contexts and are typically associated with men and, thus, culturally defined as not feminine. Interestingly, cultural representations of gender exist in every society, but not all of them embrace the idea of *masculinity*. The phrase implies that a person's behaviour is a reflection of who they are as a person in its contemporary usage. To put it another way, a person who lacks masculinity would act differently, acting more pacifist rather than aggressive, conciliatory rather than dominant, barely able to kick a football, uninterested in sex, and so on (Itulua-Abumere, 2013, p. 1). Consequently, it can be said that masculinities are the combination of personal and cultural meanings associated with men and boys that are (a) assigned to the self and (b) to other people, concepts, and objects; (c) embedded in situational cues; (d) performed as social practices; and (e) distributed through ecological influences (Wong & Wang, 2022, p. 3).

In terms of both physical and psychological characteristics, the majority of society used to discriminate against this gender difference unintentionally. Social norms that promote male supremacy and discriminate against gender could harm teenagers, particularly boys (Sugeha & Nurlaily, 2023, p. 220). In addition, the rise of toxic masculinity can be linked to unfair social practices of the male gender, for example, men are not allowed to feel sad and even cry. In addition, a man is not allowed to express himself freely; he is only allowed to display his masculine traits, such as his strong, muscular body and his round, courageous voice. Men should be strong and restricted when expressing their emotions, particularly when they are depressed, as demonstrated by the pressure men face from society (Ramdani et al., 2022, p. 231). As a result, toxic masculinity results from the application of toxic practices (including physical violence) to maintain gender dominance in a specific context (DiGioia, 2021).

Considering this, the writers aim to study the portrayal of toxic masculinity in Nate Jacob in *Euphoria* (2019). *The Guardian* noted that the drama has become the most tweeted-about show of the decade, with 34 million tweets in the US alone (Horton, 2022). The brutality in the show also caught *The New Yorker's* attention as it stated that *Euphoria* successfully destroys the idea that drug use, sex, violence, and profanity—not to mention revenge porn—are not happening in high school life (St. Félix, 2019). One reason why the series is relevant to Gen Z is that the character Nate Jacobs shows an honest and unflinching look at the intersections between rich white male privilege white male rage and toxic masculinity. In short, the volatility and familiarity that the audience may have with a character like Nate

makes him one of the most terrifying antagonists on television right now. Many of us may know or have even come across a "Nate" in our lives (Kent, 2019).

Since literary works are imitations, copies, reflections, and representations of human lives and reality, they should not be viewed as inferior sciences, as the mimetic perspective confirms. Literature can be a mirror for readers to understand what and how life is (Nuriadi, 2016, p. 26). In other words, the fact that Gen Z audiences identify with the *Euphoria* series and begin liking Nate Jacobs serves as proof of their preference for this kind of guy – which is concerning. What is more, there is a connection between our favorite movies and the actual manifestation of toxic masculinity (Fryett, 2023). Popular media exposure may be the primary way that children and most adults learn about others as well as absorb and internalize social norms, values, and beliefs that are reflected in the way the media is presented and expressed (Chung, 2007, p. 99). Despite some changes in how masculinity is portrayed over time, certain disturbing patterns and characteristics continue. Therefore, the time is right to give the typical portrayal of Hollywood men, in this case Nate Jacob, a critical examination (Fryett, 2023).

Due to its popularity, scholars have conducted research regarding the *Euphoria* series (Coles, 2023; Gierzynski et al., 2024; Kaufman et al., 2021; Qolbi et al., 2022). Coles (2023) found out that through the formal visual elements, *Euphoria* develops and articulates a teenage gaze that produces social implications beyond its function within the series by removing teenagers from competitive, academic, and peer-based environments into illicit, transgressive settings where everyone dresses well. It must be noted that teenagers now live in a far more depressing cultural environment than they did in the past, and the COVID-19 pandemic has made personal and political crises much more devastating for them. *Euphoria* invites adult viewers to a sense of gratification or people by looking at the teenage experience. In addition, discussions of the *Euphoria* series on Reddit revealed that viewers could identify with a lot of the show's themes and characters, and as a result, many of them opened up about their own substance abuse and mental health issues. Thus, *Redditors* thought the show did a realistic job of portraying SUDs, and they thought the main character was likable (Kaufman et al., 2021).

Next, Qolbi et al. (2022) addressed the issue of sexual behaviour and the portrayal of relationships in *Euphoria*. This series shows types of sexual behaviours and relationships that create expectations for teenage audiences. From the results, most types of relationships were “flirting” since many characters are teenagers. Then, all couples except one couple showed male-female relationships. And, the highest number of sexual encounters in all episodes was “one-night stand”. Yet, this series lacked discussion of the risks associated with STDs and failed to provide many examples of safe sex practices in relationships. Last, Gierzynski et al. (2024) found significant evidence that points to a *Euphoria* effect. Furthermore, the statistical analysis revealed direct and indirect support for the hypothesized relationship between

euphoria and the following perspectives on the drug issue: 1) attitudes toward drug users or addicts, 2) the reasons behind drug addiction, support for harm reduction techniques, and 3) convictions regarding the efficacy of drug education and treatment. These correlations emerged among participants who, according to the theory of narrative transportation, would probably be affected by the show.

All in all, the previous research above highlighted how real and significant the series is. However, the issue of toxic masculinity—as portrayed in the series, particularly by Nate Jacobs—has received little attention. Whereas, Nate Jacobs in *Euphoria* is a great example of a toxic and manipulative man. Unfortunately, young girls continue to idealize a guy like Nate Jacob because they are conventionally attractive (Kent, 2019; Khullar, 2020). By identifying Nate Jacobs' toxic masculinity in *Euphoria*, it is hoped that this study would stop toxic masculinity from becoming more prevalent among youth. Thus, this research aims to answer the research question:

1. How does Nate Jacobs in *Euphoria* portray toxic masculinity?

1.1. Theoretical framework

1.1.1. Masculinity

Traditionally ascribed to men, masculinity is a broad category of features associated with assertiveness, decisiveness, and physical strength. What was traditionally regarded to be a man's or woman's psychological trait, prescribed personality feature, or occupation varies throughout cultures and historical periods. Gender roles were described as opposing in certain cultural contexts, but they were presented and viewed as complementary in others (Shirayev, 2023). Today, the concept of masculinity implies that a person's behavior is a reflection of who they are as a person. In other words, a non-masculine person would act differently, such as by being peaceable rather than violent, conciliatory rather than dominating, barely able to kick a football, uninterested in sexual conquest, and so on (Itulua-Abumere, 2013, p. 42). Conell (as cited in Itulua-Abumere (2013)) argued that the only way that "masculinity" exists is in opposition to "femininity." Thus, a culture that does not, at least in theory, view men and women as carriers of distinct character types does not have a modern European/American concept of masculinity.

1.1.2. Hegemonic masculinity

According to Whitehead (2021) hegemony is known as the ability to force a specific culture, set of values, or social structure on a group of people, an organization, or a society. Hegemonic masculinity refers to a way that men behave and express their identity that strives to maintain patriarchal values and men's dominance. based on traits like physical strength, aggression, ambition, self-reliance, competition, and homophobia. In addition, he added that hegemonic masculinity points out the fact that men of all races, ethnicities, religions, and cultures may aspire to control and dominate women and other men. Even if they are never

successful in doing so, there will always be a competitive element to their desire to outdo other men. Thus, Whitehead stated that hegemonic masculinity, which sociologists and psychoanalysts have been adopting since the late 1980s, is what is meant to be understood as toxic masculinity.

1.1.3. Toxic masculinity

In discussions about gender and masculinity, the term "toxic masculinity" is helpful because it distinguishes between the culturally accepted and valued aspects of hegemonic masculinity. A collection of socially detrimental male behaviors known as "toxic masculinity" is characterized by misogyny, homophobia, greed, and violent domination (Kupers, 2005). Misogyny is one aspect of toxic masculinity. The Ancient Greek word "mīsoḡunīā" which means hatred of women, is where the word "misogyny" originates. Misogyny is an act to denigrate the feminine. Additionally, it includes dominating and abusing men who appear to have feminine traits as well as stigmatizing feminine traits in other men (Kupers, 2010, p. 113). Misogyny can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including male privilege, patriarchy, gender discrimination, sexual harassment, belittling of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification.

In addition, homophobia is the term used to describe negative attitudes toward homosexuality. Kupers claimed that misogyny and homophobia are two sides of the same coin and that the connection between these two coexisting issues is male inadequacy (Kupers, 2010, p. 113). Males with self-consciousness interpret homosexuality as a sign of weakened masculinity. The man who is not "manly" is the one who has failed or fallen. An inadequate man's misogyny turns into homophobia; he despises the person he fears becoming like. He assures himself, symbolically, that he is not like gay men and is not such a "woman-like" man by demeaning and diminishing them. In any case, the dynamic is drawn; men's feelings of inadequacy are expressed as a desire to control women, feminine men, and gay men; it's as though the man thinks he is showing manliness by dominating the other (2010, p. 114).

Kupers (as cited in (Pramudiya et al., 2023) described greed as an intense and egotistical desire for something with various motives such as sex, money, material goods, attention, and adoration. Greed is one of the most common features of human nature, and it has recently attracted increasing research interest. The discussion on greed is as old as the discussion on wealth and power (Zhu et al., 2019). Also, Kupers linked masculinity with dominance. Dominance is a kind of power, usually social power, that is, power over other people (Lukes, 2021). Kupers went on to say that it seems as though the "real men" in prison, who are fighting for supremacy and degrading other men for being slightly feminine, are unable to accept any gender ambiguity at all. These "real men" are threatened by the ambiguity because it contradicts their binary belief that there are only two types of men: strong, feminized men at the bottom of the hierarchy and hypermasculine top dogs (Kupers, 2017, p. 440). Kupers added that a man is accused of being less than a man, like being a punk, a faggot, a loser, or

a weakling, he is also viewed as a "woman." The message is very clear: "You, the loser, have the right and the power to be used sexually by me, the dominant man as if you were a woman and my slave." Men feel compelled to exhibit extreme masculinity and dominance to prove they are not feminine; they are not anyone's "punk. In conclusion, this hyper-masculinity reinforces misogyny and toxic masculinity (Kupers, 2010, p. 112).

2. Method

In this research, the writers used the qualitative method to gather in-depth, detailed, and comprehensive data about the study that usually relates to the daily lives of people whether individuals comprehend a phenomenon. Additionally, a qualitative approach can be employed in a study that uses data such as documents, photos, videos, or other similar media (Gray, 2014, p. 204). In analyzing the literary work, the writers chose a series entitled *Euphoria*. The data was collected by the writers from the first season's episodes 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8, as they highlighted the issue of the toxic masculinity of Nate Jacobs.

The data collection procedure of this research is started by watching *Euphoria* series three times to be able to grasp the essence of the story. Next, the writers found the transcript of the dialogue by downloading subtitles and finding samples (screenshots) that match the theory of toxic masculinity proposed by Kupers (2005, 2010, 2017). Lastly, the writers listed all data subtitles and screenshots from the series and classified them as proof in analyzing the problem of this research.

3. Finding and Discussion

3.1. Misogyny

Misogyny is the act of dehumanizing women. According to Kupers, misogyny is not projected on women only. Misogyny includes dominating and abusing men who appear to have feminine traits as well as stigmatizing feminine traits in other men (Kupers, 2010, p. 113). In settings where men are in positions of authority and women are under their control, Men in positions of authority who treat the women under their care in an insulting, degrading, and disrespectful way are doing actual harm (2010, p. 109). The examples of Nate Jacobs' acts of misogyny can be seen from the examples below.



Figure 1. Nate Insulting McKay's Girlfriend in Front of His Friends (EP 1, 24:00-24:09)

Nate Jacobs : Yo, so, Cassie's a whore. Fact.

Chris McKay : No, she's not. Fact. She's not even that type of girl.

Nate Jacobs : Oh. Have you seen her slut pages, though?

Chris McKay : No.

Nate Jacobs : They're wild, yo. (EP 1 at 24:00-24:09)

It is evident from the scene above how Nate Jacobs views women in the presence of his friends. He is making fun of his friend Chris McKay by using insulting expressions like "whore" and "slut" to describe McKay's girlfriend. Nate keeps making fun of McKay's girlfriend, demeaning her, despite McKay's defense that she is not who he believes her to be. He cracks jokes with his male friends, but they are directed towards women who are mocked. Kupers explained the act of misogyny committed by a male prison staff member who intended to sexually abuse a female prisoner. These men make inappropriate comments about her body parts while she is around, such as making vulgar jokes about her figure (2010, p. 111). The conversation between Nate and McKay demonstrates the act of misogyny. Nate mostly uses sexist language in his remarks to make fun of and insult women based solely on their physical appearance.



Figure 2. Nate Suggests McKay to Treat His Girlfriend Badly

Nate Jacobs : You want my advice? You fuck her like the whore she is, you kick her ass to the curb. (EP 1 at 26:50-27:01)

From Figure 2, Chris McKay is seen asking Nate Jacobs for advice on how to handle his girlfriend because he is not sure how to get closer to her. Kupers stated that men in positions of authority who treat the women under their care in an insulting, degrading, and disrespectful way are doing actual harm (2010, p. 109). Above, it can be seen how Nate's counsel exemplifies his views on the treatment of women. In his opinion, women are entitled to be viewed as nothing more than prostitutes who can be beaten to the curb.

3.2. Homophobia

Kupers (2005) believed that homophobia is one of the toxic masculinity traits that are harmful and dangerous to others. Males with self-consciousness interpret homosexuality as a sign of weakened masculinity. The man who is not "manly" is the one who has failed or fallen (Kupers, 2010, p. 114). In the series, Nate Jacobs' father is portrayed as a homosexual man. The series also demonstrates Nate Jacobs's projection of his hatred toward his father due to his homosexuality.



Figure 3. Nate Tries to Get Away from His Father (EP 8, 37:28-37:51)

Nate Jacobs : Get the fuck off me! Get the... Get your fucking hands off me, you fucking faggot! Get the fuck off! Get the fuck off!

Cal Jacobs : Stop fighting. Stop fighting!

Nate Jacobs : Fuck you! Fuck you! (EP 8 at 37:28 – 37:51)

In *Euphoria*, Cal Jacobs is portrayed as a demanding father leading a double life in the series. He is affectionate toward men in addition to being married to Marsha and fathering three children together. It is also revealed that when a young Nate came across his father Cal's extensive collection of personal sex tapes, he became aware of his father's extramarital affairs. Cal was engaging in aggressive sexual activity with a variety of people, mostly young men. From the scene above, it can be seen how Nate Jacobs is trying to stay away from his father. He tries to push back against his father because he wants to fight his father with degrading words such as "faggot".

Here lies the elaboration of the poetic aspect of *Euphoria* as a literary works. Nuriadi stated that literary work should be seen as poetic aspect that can be seen from the peculiar language use (2016, p. 26). Bianchi (2014) stated that certain language expressions carry a heavy emotional burden, sometimes to an extremely negative value. Slurs are expressed in all utterance contexts because, from a semantic perspective, their insulting content is a part of their literal meaning. To put it simply, 'faggot' may be expressed as 'homosexual and despicable because of it'.

The mentioning of the word 'faggot' also caught Kupers' attention. Kupers added that a man is accused of being less than a man, like being a punk, a faggot, a loser, or a weakling, he is also viewed as a "woman." The message is very clear: "You, the loser, have the right and the power to be used sexually by me, the dominant man as if you were a woman and my slave" (2017, p. 440). Thus, Nate Jacobs expresses his repulsion for his father by referring to him as a "faggot."

3.3. Greed

Kupers (as cited in Pramudiya et al., 2023) described greed as an intense and egotistical desire for something with various motives such as sex, money, material goods, attention, and adoration. The discussion on greed is as old as the discussion on wealth and power (Zhu et al., 2019). In *Euphoria*, Nate Jacobs has a strong, greedy need for reputation. The scene below shows one example of how he would do anything to keep things under control.



Figure 4. Nate is Threatening Jules (EP 4, 48:15:50.07)

Nate Jacobs : You sent them to an account of a person that doesn't fucking exist. I mean, anyone can anonymously report child pornography, right?

Jules Vaughn : Then I'd tell them everything.

Nate Jacobs : Okay. You could do that but, here's what would definitely happen. You'd end up on a sex offenders list. It means no more college. It's gonna be very fucking difficult to find a job. And everywhere you go, for the rest of your life, you'll be harassed, and spat at, and treated like a fucking animal. You deserve better than that. 'Cause I know you. You're kind. You're smart. You're generous. You got a big heart. You deserve whatever the fuck it is in this world that you want. So, keep your head down. Keep your mouth shut. Don't try to ruin my life, and I won't have to ruin yours. (EP 4, 48:15-50:07)

In the series, Nate Jacobs uses a dating app to catfish Jules, and he intentionally gathers a collection of vulgar pictures of her. He intends to turn over the file to the police regarding Jules's offense of using child pornography. As we can see from the dialogue and scene above, Nate is attempting to frighten Jules by threatening her and visualizing her being imprisoned

for the crime of child pornography. In addition, he explains to her what would happen if the law found her guilty of whatever crime she may have done. If she tries to hurt his family, he threatens to confess to the police. By saying “Don't try to ruin my life, and I won't have to ruin yours”, Nate Jacobs purposefully treats Jules for sexually abusing a minor to preserve his family reputation.

3.4. Violent domination

Kupers linked masculinity with dominance. Dominance is a kind of power, usually social power, that is, power over other people (Lukes, 2021). Kupers added that a man is accused of being less than a man, like being a punk, a faggot, a loser, or a weakling, he is also viewed as a "woman." The message is very clear: the dominant group has the authority and right to take advantage of the underdog. Men feel that to prove that they are not feminine and that they are not anyone's "punk," they must display extreme masculinity and dominance (Kupers, 2010, p. 112).



Figure 5. Nate Strangles Maddy's Neck (EP 2, 30:34- 30:46)

Nate Jacobs : Calling my mom a cunt. What the fuck is actually wrong with your fucking brain?

Maddy Perez : I think you're overreacting

Nate Jacobs : You're fucking dead to me. Fuck you (EP 4, 30:34 – 30:46)

Align with the previous finding, Nate has an obsession with reputation. From the scene above, it can be seen that Nate and Maddy are fighting because he is upset that she called his mother an insulting word. Nate's aggressive action toward his girlfriend is proven as he strangles her. Nate decides to use violence to solve the issue by strangling Maddy, even though there are other, more civilized ways to solve it. What is more, Nate is depicted as being violent towards Maddy not only in the early episode but he continues to do so.



Figure 6. Nate Tries to Hurt Maddy's Neck (EP 8, 18:32-18:53)

From the scene above, it can be seen that Nate and Maddy are arguing over the rumours that Maddy spreads at school. Maddy has spread false rumours about Nate, which has disappointed him. Nate abruptly reaches for Maddy's neck, intending to strangle her, out of frustration with her careless actions and reaction.



Figure 7. Tyler Begging on Nate to Not Hurt Him (EP 6, 43:29-44:24)

Tyler Clarkson: Please, dude. I-I was in the hospital for like, seven days. My retina detached, and I can't... I can't see and I get migraines constantly, and I can barely breathe through my nose...

Nate Jacobs : Tyler. Tyler. I don't care. I need you to take a breath. Relax. I need you to go in your room and put some clothes on. Then I need you to get in your car and drive down to the East Highland police station. You're gonna walk up to the receptionist, and you're gonna tell her that you'd like to confess to a crime.

Tyler Clarkson: What crime?

Nate Jacobs : The second night of the carnival, you ran into Madeline Perez, who's a junior at East Highland High. You'd been stalking her since she turned down your sexual advances. You confronted her and asked her why she'd been ignoring you. She

said it was because she had a boyfriend. You became enraged, and you choked her.
(EP 6, 43:29-44:24)

From the scene and dialogue above (Figure 7), it is seen that Nate shows an act of domination and violence. He sees Tyler pleading with him to stop hurting him because he fears getting battered again. After all, the last time Nate broke into his home, he was beaten until he was hospitalized for a week. This time, Nate Jacobs visits Tyler intending to get him to cooperate in reporting a fictitious crime that Nate has committed. Nate Jacobs forces Tyler into telling the police that he is the one who committed the crime. According to Kupers, some men feel inadequate and used to dominating or diminishing the other (whether the other is a woman, a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or weaker man) to convince themselves and their friends that they are still many (2010, p. 114).

3.5. Discussion

From the findings above, it is seen how Nate Jacobs portrays the characteristics of toxic masculinity proposed by Kupers. The comments that Nate Jacobs made regarding Chris McKay's girlfriend reveal his misogyny. He believes that women should be treated like prostitutes who can be beaten. Additionally, Nate Jacobs shows resentment toward his father Cal, who has an aggressive sexual relationship with a number of people, primarily young men. He makes every effort to stay away from him and calls him with degrading words such as “faggot”.

He also shows domination over women and weak men. He manipulates and threatens Jules Vaughn and Tyler Clarkson. He also physically abuses his girlfriend, Maddy Perez by strangling her. Relating to these findings, Kupers argued that misogyny and homophobia are two sides of the same coin and that the connection between these two coexisting issues is male inadequacy. Men who experience insecurity interpret it as a sign of weakened masculinity (Kupers, 2010, p. 114). This study believes that Nate Jacobs's insecurity stems from his will to keep the secret of his father's sexuality. Cal Jacobs' sexual orientation is the specific context for Nate Jacobs to perform toxic practices (including physical violence) as he maintains gender dominance (DiGioia, 2021). First, Nate thinks that Jules would be a liability when he sees the video of Jules, who is transgender, in his father's collection. Second, Nate has a strong resentment for his father due to his sexual orientation. This issue aligns with Kupers theory which stated that the inadequate men prove to himself, symbolically, that he is not like gay men and is not a man who is particularly woman-like by demeaning and diminishing them (2010, p. 114). Thus, to avoid being perceived as weak and unmanly, Nate Jacobs demonstrates misogyny, homophobia, greed, and violent dominance over those who are powerless.

As mentioned previously, literary works serve both the mimetic perspective and the poetic aspect (Nuriadi, 2016). Here, it can be seen how the character Nate Jacobs serves the mimetic

perspective as he shows examples of behaviors that portray toxic masculinity. The elaboration of Nate's toxic masculinity strengthens the notion from *The New Yorker* which stated that *Euphoria* does show misogyny, homophobia, greed, and violent dominance in high school life (St. Félix, 2019). Second, from the poetic aspect of the literary works, the writers draw attention to the word "faggot," which Kupers also discusses. The word 'faggot' may be expressed as 'homosexual and despicable because of it' – which carries an extremely negative value. What is more, Kupers explained that when a man is accused of being less than a man, like being a punk, a faggot, a loser, or a weakling, he is also viewed as a "woman." The usage of 'faggots' sends a clear message: "You, the loser, have the right and the power to be used sexually by me, the dominant man as if you were a woman and my slave." When Nate Jacobs uses the word 'faggot' to his father shows that Nate Jacobs expresses his repulsion for his father.

In an interview with *The Hollywood Reporter*, Jacob Elordi, the actor who portrays Nate Jacobs, went into further detail regarding Nate Jacobs' sexuality, relationship with his Cal Jacobs, and the recurring nightmares and trauma. Cal Jacobs is expected to be his son's leader, protector, and role model. Yet, Nate Jacobs has witnessed the wear and tear caused by his father. Therefore, it is rather logical to see that Cal Jacobs' lifestyle influences Nate Jacobs. In short, Nate's greatest fear is to be like his father (Piña, 2022). Related to this, a study shows that the reaction of children upon figuring out that they are raised by homosexual fathers is complex. Some considerations impact the decision to keep the information a secret; for instance, homonegative attitudes. The stigma by association contributes to the secrecy as the children did not want to be associated with that fact (Tasker et al., 2010). This research supports the idea that Nate Jacobs exhibits toxic masculinity to demonstrate his differences from homosexual men. Nate exhibits extreme masculinity and dominance to prove that he is not feminine (Kupers, 2010, p. 112). Finally, Nate Jacobs' actions reveal an important message. Nate Jacobs is a young child in need of a father figure, but he finds everything about his dad frightening, and he craves to be the complete opposite (Shanfeld, 2022) – in this case, being gay like Cal Jacobs.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlighted both the mimetic perspective and poetic aspect of *Euphoria*; especially from the character of Nate Jacobs. First, this study found out that Nate Jacobs portrays Kupers' characteristics of toxic masculinity: misogyny, homophobia, greed, and violent domination. This research highlighted the relationship between male inadequacy and the coexistence of misogyny and homophobia that they are two sides of the same coin.

Nate Jacobs is misogynistic toward women and hateful of his father Cal, who engages in violent sexual relations with young men. As he manipulates and threatens Tyler Clarkson and Julie Vaughn, he exhibits dominance and violence towards women and weak men. In

addition, Nate Jacobs's violent domination is seen as he strangles his girlfriend, Maddy Perez.

Also, this study concentrated on Nate Jacobs's linguistic usage, particularly how he employed the word "faggot." Kupers said that a man is also viewed as a "woman" when he is accused of being anything other than a man, such as a punk, a faggot, a loser, or a weakling. The fact that Nate Jacobs calls his father a "faggot" indicates that he detests him. Nate Jacobs shows toxic masculinity to prove to himself, symbolically, that he is not like his father. Nate's greatest fear is to be like his gay father; hence he shows his dominance and violence.

Finally, the writers realize that this research is not perfect. For future research, it is suggested to analyse the *Euphoria* series by using different theories, such as the issue of class representation or basic human needs in psychoanalysis.

References

- Bianchi, C. (2014). Slurs and appropriation: An echoic account. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 66, 35–44. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2014.02.009>
- Chung, S. K. (2007). Media Literacy Art Education: Deconstructing Lesbian and Gay Stereotypes in the Media. *JADE: Journal of Art & Design Education*, 26(1), 98–107. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-8070.2007.00514.x>
- Coles, L. (2023). The contemporary aesthetics of adolescence: How Euphoria euses style to spectacularize representation of modern youth in the articulation of a teenage gaze. *The Motley Undergraduate Journal*, 1(1), 58–82. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.55016/ojs/muj.v1i1.76165>
- DiGioia, A. (2021). *Duelling, the Russian Cultural Imagination, and Masculinity in Crisis*. Routledge.
- Fryett, S. E. (2023). Honing hegemonic masculinity: A look at I love you, Man and Get Hard. In R. A. Lind (Ed.), *Race/Gender/Class/Media: Considering diversity across audiences, content, and producers* (Fifth).
- Gierzynski, A., Blaber, M., Brown, M., Feldman, S., Gottschalk, H., Hodin, P., & Hoechner, E. (2024). The 'Euphoria' effect: A popular HBO show, Gen Z, and drug policy beliefs. *Social Science Quarterly*, 105, 193–210. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.13351>
- Gray, D. E. (2014). *Doing Research in the Real World* (Third). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Horton, A. (2022, March 2). How did Euphoria become the most loved and hated show on TV? *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2022/mar/02/euphoria-most-loved-hated-tv-show>
- Itulua-Abumere, F. (2013). Understanding Men and Masculinity in Modern Society. *Open*

Journal of Social Science Research, 1(2), 42–45.

<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.12966/ojsr.05.05.2013>

Kaufman, M. R., Bazell, A. T., Collaco, A., & Sedoc, J. (2021). “This show hits really close to home on so many levels”: An analysis of Reddit comments about HBO’s *Euphoria* to understand viewers’ experiences of and reactions to substance use and mental illness. *Drug Alcohol Depend*, 220, 1–17.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2020.108468>

Kent, C. (2019, July 24). *Euphoria*’s Nate is the most terrifying—and realistic—villain on TV right now. *Entertainment Weekly*. <https://ew.com/tv/2019/07/24/why-euphorias-nate-is-terrifying/>

Khullar, S. (2020, September 28). Dear Teen TV Shows: Can We Please Stop Glorifying Toxic Men? *Washington Square News*. <https://nyunews.com/arts/tv/2020/09/28/toxic-masculinity-euphoria/>

Kupers, T. A. (2005). Toxic Masculinity as a Barrier to Mental Health Treatment in Prison. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 61(6), 713–724. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20105>

Kupers, T. A. (2010). Role of Misogyny and Homophobia in Prison Sexual Abuse. *UCLA Women’s Law Journal*, 18(1), 107–130. <https://doi.org/10.5070/L3181017818>

Kupers, T. A. (2017). Gender And Domination in Prison. *Western New England Law Review*, 39(39), 427–447.

Lukes, S. (2021). Power and domination. *JOURNAL OF POLITICAL POWER*, 14(1), 97–108. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/2158379X.2021.1878408>

Nuriadi. (2016). *Theory of literature: An introduction*. Agra Puji Press Mataram Lombok.

Piña, C. (2022, February 28). Jacob Elordi on Why the ‘*Euphoria*’ Season Two Finale Is Not a Freeing Moment for Nate Jacobs. *The Hollywood Reporter*. <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/tv/tv-features/jacob-elordi-euphoria-season-two-finale-1235101200/>

Pramudiya, A., Oktoma, E., & Yuniarti. (2023). The Representation of Toxic Masculinity in the “Do Revenge” Movie. *JOURNEY: Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*, 6(3), 721–732. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.33503/journey.v6i3.3210>

Qolbi, P. P. N., Wibowo, S. K. A., & Fuady, I. (2022). Content Analysis: Relationships and Sexual Behavior in *Euphoria* Series Season One. *Communicare: Journal of Communication Studies*, 9(2), 115–124.

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37535/101009220224>

Ramdani, M. F. F., Putri, A. V. I. C., & Wisesa, P. A. D. (2022). Realitas toxic masculinity di masyarakat. *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Ilmu Ilmu Sosial (SNIIS)*, 230–235.

Shanfeld, E. (2022, February 28). Jacob Elordi Spills About ‘*Euphoria*’ Season 2 Finale and Set Rumors: ‘We’re Making Movies, You Know?’ *Https://Variety.Com/*.

<https://variety.com/2022/tv/news/jacob-elordi-euphoria-season-2-finale-rumors-1235191863/>

-
- Shiraeve, E. (2023). *Personality: Theories and Applications*. SAGE Publications.
- St. Félix, D. (2019, June 16). “Euphoria” and the Flawed Art of Gen Z Prophesying. *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/on-television/euphoria-and-the-flawed-art-of-gen-z-prophesying>
- Sugeha, A. Z., & Nurlaily, A. S. (2023). Toxic Masculinity Practice Portrayed in Children’s Growth at Senior High School in Malang. *Humanitatis: Journal of Language and Literature*, 9(2), 219–232.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.30812/humanitatis.v9i2.1659>
- Tasker, F., Barrett, H., & De Simone, F. (2010). ‘Coming Out Tales’: Adult Sons and Daughters’ Feelings About Their Gay Father’s Sexual Identity. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy (ANZJFT)*, 31(4), 326–337.
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1375/anft.31.4.326>
- Whitehead, S. M. (2021). *Toxic Masculinity*. AG Books.
- Wong, Y. J., & Wang, S.-Y. (2022). Toward an Integrative Psychology of Masculinities. *Psychology of Men & Masculinities*, 23(3), 285–298.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/men0000387>
- Zhu, Y., Sun, X., Liu, S., & Xue, G. (2019). Is Greed a Double-Edged Sword? The Roles of the Need for Social Status and Perceived Distributive Justice in the Relationship Between Greed and Job Performance. *Front Psychol*, 10, 1–9.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02021>