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# Epic Glory: Nerd Identity, Manhood Acts, & Dagorhir at a Northeastern College Campus

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STUDENT HAS RESTRICTED ACCESS TO FULL TEXT OF THE DISSERTATION.

ONLY COVER PAGES AND ABSTRACT ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

EPIC GLORY:  
NERD IDENTITY, MANHOOD ACTS, & DAGORHIR  
AT A NORTHEASTERN COLLEGE CAMPUS

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts

James Steven Martin

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

December 2013

Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of Sociology

We hereby approve the thesis of

James Steven Martin

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Title: Epic Glory: Nerd Identity, Manhood Acts, & Dagorhir At a Northeastern College Campus

Author: James Steven Martin

Thesis Chair: Dr. Christian Vaccaro

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The purpose of this study is to understand if and how dominant notions of masculinity are constructed within social groups stigmatized for their interests and typically consisting of low status, subordinate men (nerds). The focus of this particular study is on a nearly all male campus group of “Live Action Role Players” called “Dagorhir.” I explore how sub-cultural processes in the construction of group identity are gendered through their relation to the manhood acts perspective (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). I focus on how the meanings of actions by (mostly male) participants referred to as “epic glory” relate to the elicitation of deference, resistance of exploitation, and assertion of control key in signifying manhood. I then relate these group processes to the unintended consequences of perpetuating gender inequality within the group and elsewhere.