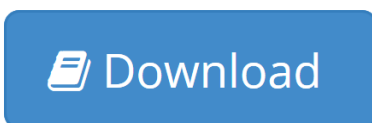


## Styling Masculinity: Gender, Class, and Inequality in the Men's Grooming Industry

By Kristen Barber



### Styling Masculinity: Gender, Class, and Inequality in the Men's Grooming Industry By Kristen Barber

The twenty-first century has seen the emergence of a new style of man: the metrosexual. Overwhelmingly straight, white, and wealthy, these impeccably coiffed urban professionals spend big money on everything from facials to pedicures, all part of a multi-billion-dollar male grooming industry. Yet as this innovative study reveals, even as the industry encourages men to invest more in their appearance, it still relies on women to do much of the work.

*Styling Masculinity* investigates how men's beauty salons have persuaded their clientele to regard them as masculine spaces. To answer this question, sociologist Kristen Barber goes inside Adonis and The Executive, two upscale men's salons in Southern California. Conducting detailed observations and extensive interviews with both customers and employees, she shows how female salon workers not only perform the physical labor of snipping, tweezing, waxing, and exfoliating, but also perform the emotional labor of pampering their clients and pumping up their masculine egos.

Letting salon employees tell their own stories, Barber not only documents occasions when these workers are objectified and demeaned, but also explores how their jobs allow for creativity and confer a degree of professional dignity. In the process, she traces the vast network of economic and social relations that undergird the burgeoning male beauty industry.

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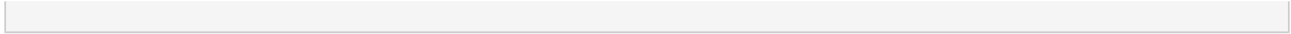
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#### Review

"Barber provides excellent insight into how women groom men while upholding their gender and class identities, and how masculinity and beauty are not at odds with each other. Truly a pleasure."  
(Jamie Mullaney *author of Paid to Party: Working Time and Emotion in Direct Home Sales*)

"What does it mean that contemporary men are going to salons, getting their nails done, or dyeing their hair? Kristen Barber examines how these practices are intimately related to shifting definitions of masculinity, and actually buttress gender, race, and class inequalities. A compelling and colorful read."  
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"A deep examination of the rise of male beauty culture."  
(*The New York Times*)

"A well-researched contribution to the sociology of work, gender studies, and consumer culture ... Highly recommended."  
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How it became OK for guys to take care of themselves: an interview with Kristen Barber  
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"Barber's book innovatively combines theories of work, gender, and culture. It makes a significant contribution to masculinities research. Anyone teaching or conducting research on gender, social class, qualitative methods, work, inequalities, and culture will find this book to be compelling. It is nuanced and rich in detail."  
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The End of the Barbershop?: An Interview with Kristen Barber [[goo.gl/CgX0Zv](http://goo.gl/CgX0Zv)]  
(Word of Mouth *New Hampshire Public Radio*)

"Barber's book innovatively combines theories of work, gender, and culture. It makes a significant contribution to masculinities research. Anyone teaching or conducting research on gender, social class, qualitative methods, work, inequalities, and culture will find this book to be compelling. It is nuanced and rich in detail"

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About the Author

KRISTEN BARBER is an assistant professor of sociology and a faculty affiliate in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program at Southern Illinois University–Carbondale.

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