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## Boys will be boys...and that's perfect.

“Boys will be boys,” the string of male Hollywoodians murmur on the currently airing PSA. Like a high school drama class exercising their emotive options, they drag on. “Boys will be boys.” “*Not us, though*” they make clear with their well-tuned facial irony. “*Those other Boys!*”

And then the punchline: “**ENOUGH!**”

...and so it goes. The war on boys continues its natural progression into open hostility. This commercial, and others like it, use our children as almost-literal whipping boys.

The activists will tell you that their intent is more subtle. They don't hate masculinity – just *toxic* masculinity. They don't hate boys, just *bad* boys. But their message is clear, pervasive, and accessible to every twelve year old boy: boys are evil, and we can't allow them to become themselves. If the activists really want to improve the way that young men interact with women, they should insist that all human beings, despite our flaws and tendencies, treat other human beings as worthy individuals, despite their flaws and tendencies. For instance, if you're angry at how you were treated in the past, don't take it out on innocent bystanders, and especially innocent children.

Boys will be boys. It's true, and it's fine. We want for our boys to progress and become men. We suffer when they don't, and communities fail when the men become mired in immature behavior. Ironically, the entertainment industry (along with professional sports) is one of the major forces in the decline of responsible manliness. One dismal role model after another pours out of the story-telling centers of our culture. Unless they personally know a responsible man, there is almost no path a boy can follow to become a man worth becoming.

Our culture practically forces our boys into premature mockeries of “adult” behavior, and then we complain when they don't have the maturity to handle the very real consequences. We flood their already difficult transition through puberty with bad advice and inflammatory imagery, then blame them for the completely predictable disasters that follow.

Boys will be boys. We shouldn't blame them for being who they are. We should help them to grow by providing better stories, better role models, and rewards for good behavior. We should love their imperfect, immature selves, and try to keep them safe as they work through the increasingly dangerous minefield of impending adulthood.

But we must not make them the villains of their own stories.

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*Phil Rink is a [Professional Engineer and Inventor](#), and he writes [Jimi & Isaac Books for Kids](#)*