German-speaking scholars of men and masculinity studies across the disciplines will welcome the publication of this new handbook enthusiastically. For a fairly long time, introductions, reference works, and handbooks in this broad and diversified field of research have concentrated on sociological approaches, as far as theories and methods were concerned, and the geographical focus has predominantly been on the U.S. The handbook *Männlichkeit*, edited by Stefan Horlacher, Bettina Jansen and Wieland Schwanebeck (of Dresden Technical University) provides overviews of the theories and practices of masculinity studies as well as of the history of representations of men and masculinity in the media and the arts, with a focus on Europe, but including Latin America. It is impossible to do justice to each of the 27 fine chapters here, written by renowned experts in the field and densely packed with information as they are, and it would also be unfair to single out some and be silent about others. I will therefore attempt to convey an overall impression of the handbook’s structure and conception, adding a comment on its usefulness.

The editors’ introduction traces the development of men-and-masculinity studies over the past decades as well as the potentially problematic public discourses on masculinities, caught between nostalgia and the diagnosis of crisis on the one hand, and the manifestation of allegedly “true” masculinity on the other. The aim of the handbook, as formulated by the editors, is “to bring together perspectives from the sciences, the social sciences and the humanities in a non-hierarchical context, and to link the specific knowledge concerning masculinities produced by the disciplines and the arts” (p. 4, my translation). To the present reviewer, it seems that this goal has been reached.

The first section (Part II, “Männlichkeitsforschung” [Masculinity Research]) features five chapters on the study of men and masculinities in the geographical areas covered, that is, a survey article on masculinity studies in German-speaking countries; in English-speaking countries; in Russia and Mid-Eastern Europe; in France, Italy and Spain; and in Latin America, respectively. There is much to discover for researchers interested in the state of the art, the foci of research and the theories and methods used within the neighbouring disciplines. And while some aspects of masculinity studies appear to be fairly widespread, such as the performative turn and the fundamentally interdisciplinary nature of the field, a highly differentiated and complex overall picture of the field emerges from this section. It is necessary to keep in mind that the traditions of gender studies and masculinity research have different birth dates and have seen different developments in the countries surveyed, and whereas a move towards queer theory and the questioning of the very category of masculinity can be observed in some countries, topics such as male violence and homophobia dominate current discussions in others.

Authors of contributions to Part III (“Disziplinen und Ansätze” [Disciplines and Approaches]) look at the study of masculinities in disciplines as diverse as archaeology, medicine, ethnology, history, linguistics, pedagogy, philosophy, psychoanalysis, psychology, law, religion and theology, and, of course, sociology. This
section provides a good impression of the overwhelming richness of studies that have been concerned with masculinities, but it also signals that much more research still needs to be done—to explicitly address issues of men and masculinities in research is not yet a matter of course. Also, it appears that only interdisciplinary endeavours will ever be able to do justice to the complexity of the phenomena, the present handbook being precisely one such effort.

Part IV (“Künstlerisch-mediale Repräsentationen und theoretische Ansätze”) is concerned with representations of masculinities in the arts and the media, as well as with the theoretical approaches on which analysis is based. This section can be read as a due acknowledgement of the performative turn in gender studies. If masculinities are continuously negotiated, re-interpreted and modified by practices and representations, then the arts and the media must be understood as platforms for the shaping of social conceptions of masculinities. This section of the handbook has chapters on film, photography, art and art history, music, and dance. The longest section in this part is on literature, which is subdivided into chapters on German literature, English literature, Russian and Eastern European literatures, French, Spanish and Italian literatures, and Latin American literature. Each of the contributions to this section offers a rich historical survey of textual or otherwise mediated representations and performances of masculinity and is a veritable treasure chest for all students and scholars whether they are looking for individual examples of such instances or the broader historical developments.

The handbook provides a fascinating view of the historical development and the state of the art in the field of men and masculinity studies in Europe and Latin America, and it reveals the wealth of material concerned with masculinity that the arts have produced over time. It provides background reading and concise information, and offers itself for both systematic study and browsing. Of course, not all of the entries can cover all approaches from all countries, or all texts and media products that could have been mentioned, but the volume manages to shed new light on the complexity and richness of the vibrant field of masculinity studies outside the U.S., and it reminds scholars of the multiplicity of questions that need to be raised when one approaches such basic concepts as gender. The one disadvantage to remain is that, for all its counter-balancing of U.S.-American masculinity research, the choice of the German language for this handbook will regrettably limit its readership. A work like this deserves to be read, browsed, and used by scholars and students in the English-speaking world, too.

RALF SCHNEIDER
Bielefeld University, Germany
ralf.schneider@uni-bielefeld.de