



**Lockman, Darcy. (2019). All the Rage: Mothers, Fathers and the Myth of Equal Partnership. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.**

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Darcy Lockman's book "All the Rage: Mothers, Fathers and the Myth of Equal Partnership" is a testimony to women who struggle with the day in day out experiences of "equal partnership" in today's supposedly progressive age. Written from a feminist lens and intended for prospective sociologists, Lockman uses a fusion of interviews, participant observation, and personal experience to help the reader understand his or her preconceived notions on gender roles in the household, especially following the arrival of children. Those she interviews vary from women whose husbands are so deeply involved in fatherhood they refuse to sleep during the late-night feedings that accompany early infancy to women who are lucky if their husband gets up at the time she asks to have the kids ready for the day (which seldom ever happens). Lockman explores the biological differences that have become known as "mother's intuition" and a culture that reinforces the model "boys will be boys". Her straightforward text allows a seamless transition from chapter to chapter while maintaining the underlying theme: Nature versus Nurture.

Lockman explains the deep preconceived notions that men and women are inexplicably equal. She breaks down our idea of equality in the home by exploring the self-reported increase in child care from men. The report itself exemplifies our notions of egalitarianism and lack thereof. In 1980, fathers reported participating in thirty-eight percent of the overall care. In 2000, that

percentage jumped to forty-two percent. However, the women at the time contradicted these numbers. In 1980, mothers reported that their husbands performed approximately thirty-one percent of the child care. In 2000, that number jumped to a staggering thirty-two percent! The data explains the perception that women and men are equal in the home when in reality, women continue to spend twice as much time caring for their family as men. Lockman proves that despite an egalitarian couple's ideology, traditional roles are still heavily ingrained in our culture (p. 30).

The author interviews various experts in a variety of fields such as psychology, gender studies, and anthropology, and women she's met through new mothers' groups and female forums. Women from the mothers' groups explain their growing resentment towards their husbands as they gravitate to becoming the secondary parent. Often, partners required a reminder to help and lacked initiative in terms of what needed to be done around the house and what their child needed or wanted. A quick reminder from the spouse, in most cases, provided the motivation to help, but without such reminders, the men fell into a pattern of discretionary behaviour. While a reminder may seem harmless, women reported feeling their requests may be interpreted as nagging, and although they had the help, the reminder felt like a task in and of itself.

To explore the idea that men and women are biologically different, Lockman turned to experts such as Janet Shibley Hyde, (a Psychology and Women's Studies professor) and Neuroscientist, Lise Elliot to answer whether men and women genuinely are hardwired for specific tasks. Hyde examined forty-six meta-analyses of gender difference studies with varying domains, and concluded that there is as much difference within gender as there is between genders. (p. 61) The differences between men and women are more systemic than biological. Elliot notes that "very

little human behavior is innate”, and alludes to a patriarchal explanation, “Calling gender division of labor innate is a convenient way of maintaining the power structure, period.” (Lockman, 2019 p. 88) The simple explanation that women are more equipped to deal with the burdens of homemaking and child raising is not only incorrect but does injustice to the complex adaptability that is the human species. If infants depended solely on one parent, the demise of said parent would inevitably mean the infant’s demise. Yet men have been known to raise children without a female’s influence with no issue. Such opinions about men being secondary to a child are not only a detriment to the child but to the man himself. The belief that men are incapable of being altruistic is a grave underestimation of the male psyche. One study Lockman examines reports that boys raised in egalitarian homes showed the same interest in babies as girls; boys who were raised in traditional homes showed less. (p. 99) It is not simply biology that determines a good parent, but rather the symbiotic relationship between culture and biology.

By expressing her own experience with inequality in her household, Lockman connects the research and accounts to her own experience. She often agrees with the women she interviews and reflects that if she were interviewed, her responses would sound shockingly similar to the women included in her study. Although Lockman’s husband is a devoted father, she notes patterns in which he falls victim to a secondary parent mindset—asking if he’s good to play video games or grabbing a beer from the fridge instead of beginning the dinner preparations.

Today we often fall prey to the notion that we will not be susceptible to the patterns of a traditional home; unfortunately, many fall prey to such roles. As Lockman puts it, “idealism is well and good before one has to accommodate its burdens.” (p. 51)

Despite the many characters we are introduced to throughout each chapter, I was disappointed to find that they do not reappear later on. Rather than follow a set of women through their experience to create a thread that is easy to follow, we are introduced to a new woman with a similar story to the woman from the previous chapter. The introduction of new characters initially fills the reader with excitement as they imagine following their storyline. However, without a follow-up interview, their stories end abruptly - it's on to the next - and their presence is rendered unmemorable. Without any straightforward path, the womens' input becomes anecdotal regarding why they are unhappy or resentful. Initially, the women offer great insight into the inner-workings of the modern family, yet as the book goes on, it is hard to distinguish between the stories. The voices meld into one, and as the book progresses, their power diminishes. Had the author compiled a group of women, each with a different story from another country or city, and followed them as she continued her research, the impact would have been greater by the book's end. Seeing how their families grew, the different relationships, and what became of her subjects, would remove the line between research and real-life and make the two interconnect.

"All the Rage" is, however, a valuable tool in understanding the disproportionate responsibilities placed on the shoulders of working women today. Its presence would add important insights for gender study classes, and would also add an interesting perspective for future sociologists and child development workers. Rather than an optional read for such courses, it would be a helpful tool alongside textbooks and other articles. Insisting both female and male students read and take note of the experiences emphasized, its presence would add a greater understanding of how we must, as a society, move past the traditional home. Women exist and

excel in the workplace; they work alongside and often are in charge of their male counterparts. Yet we as a society have not paved the way for equality at home. From a sociological perspective, the text would help students and those currently practicing sociology understand the feminist lens and the genuine views of women who live and work in a patriarchal society. By insisting a male audience participate in its reading, we can begin to blend the line drawn between the male-female phenomenon and how it is the duties of both that pave the way for equality.

Regarding those entering the child developmental field, the book's research on egalitarianism between boys and girls would diminish the way we treat the two differently during play. Our language would change - girls would no longer be bossy but rather assertive, and boys would be free to show emotion without being deemed sensitive or a pushover. Early development is essential in paving the way for future generations and equipping them with the necessary skills to achieve healthy and equal relationships. It is not just at home where socialization occurs, but it is also within our peers and our mentors.

"All the Rage" was an informative, powerful and at times enraging book that calls on each of us to replace our commitment to our own gain and instead focus our intentions on a selfless approach to our children, our spouses, and all those within and outside our immediate circles. Instead of making the reader feel ashamed or guilty for their own experiences, Lockman hands them the information they need, reminds them that they are not alone, and provides studies on how we as a society can change. I would recommend this book to current or prospective parents, couples, teachers, sociologist, other professionals working with children and all those who wish to enact change or healthy relationships.