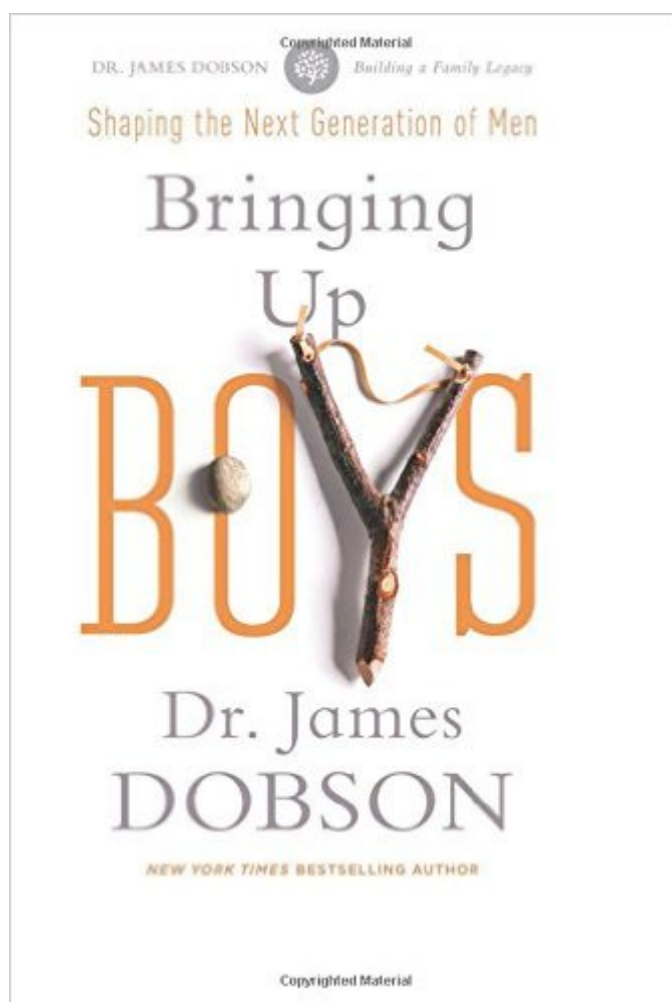


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Bringing Up Boys



Synopsis

Sensible advice and caring encouragement on raising boys from the nation's most trusted parenting authority, Dr. James Dobson. With so much confusion about the role of men in our society, it's no wonder so many parents and teachers are asking questions about how to bring up boys. Why are so many boys in crisis? What qualities should we be trying to instill in young males? Our culture has vilified masculinity and, as a result, an entire generation of boys is growing up without a clear idea of what it means to be a man. In the runaway bestseller *Bringing Up Boys*, Dr. Dobson draws from his experience as a child psychologist and family counselor, as well as extensive research, to offer advice and encouragement based on a firm foundation of biblical principles. (This new edition is part of Dr. James Dobson's Building A Family Legacy initiative.)

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Customer Reviews

Let me start off by saying I am no conservative Christian. My husband bought this book for me as a sort of last-minute Christmas gift and he had no idea who James Dobson was. But hey, I'll read anything so I gave it a try. I found myself agreeing with quite a few of his points, mainly about how our culture has become frantic, overscheduled, overworked, and how our children are the losers when parents become less involved in their lives and more involved in their own. He points out how kids who eat dinner with their parents on a regular basis seem to have fewer problems with the law, drugs, etc. He also talks about how popular culture has become ever more toxic, something we must struggle to help our children cope with or protect them from it. I agree with all of these things, even though I'm considerably more on the liberal end of the spectrum. At the core of the book

(because it is about boys) is that this lack of parental involvement is harder on boys because they naturally need more supervision and guidance than girls to make good decisions. I really enjoyed reading his descriptions of how boys are more active and physical than girls because it gave me some insight into why my three year old loves running in circles roaring, then falling to the ground waving his legs in the air. The book gave me a lot of insight into how boys "work" and I think it will make me worry a lot less that my kid has something wrong with him if he finds it hard to sit still during Mass. I skimmed over some of the chapter on homosexuality, enough to know I was going to have to agree to disagree with him on that one. However, I was surprised that his tone in that chapter was full of sympathy for the kid who thinks he's gay, although his opinion of what to do about it differs from mine. His opinions of feminism I both agreed and disagreed with. To say the early feminists only had great ideas and no loony ones is to simplify a movement that was important but also very complex, and which has had good and bad lasting changes on our society. I will probably check his notes and read some of the writings he refers to to see if he put his own spin and opinion on these quotes or if he is reporting these womens' opinions accurately. I also skipped through the last chapter, which basically says that Christianity is the only religion that satisfactorily answers all the questions about why are we here and what are we supposed to do. And finally, to address a couple of criticisms I read in the bad reviews. While he does believe in a stricter brand of discipline than is politically correct right now and probably has more faith in spanking than I personally do, I never got the impression that he thought you should be whacking your kids around all day, in fact much the opposite. He advocates keeping your cool, your patience, punishing when you need to but avoid constantly punishing and criticizing your child. I agree when he says we're the parents and we do need to assert our authority. And as for having a parent at home, well, I made the decision to be a stay at home mom because I saw value in having a parent at home and fighting against the hectic lifestyles that are becoming the norm in our society. So I basically agree with him on this one. But he DOES say that he knows some women need to work for financial reasons or EMOTIONAL ones, and he hopes that if you do work that you make the effort to stay connected with your kids and find stable child care for them. So...I enjoyed the book, learned a lot about boys, and kept my anger at differing opinions in check by skipping over those parts and knowing that I wasn't going to agree lockstep with all that Mr. Dobson had to say. But overall I think it's a good insight into our sons especially for those of us moms who were calm girly girls.

Having read a dozen or more negative reviews my conclusion is that they generally just come down to a disagreement on Dobson's view of certain issues, and not the meat of the book per say. These

issues could be summarized in, the breakdown of the traditional family, misunderstanding of gender roles, and the effeminizing of males in our society. The majority of people who will negatively review this book are those who already disagree with it ideologically from the get-go. The thing about "Bringing up Boys" is that it does not hit solely on the problem of radical feminism and homosexuality as it's main premise (despite what you may be led to believe by reading 1 and/or 2 star reviews), although it does highlight them in some areas as the main instigators of a deeper societal problem. The book actually focuses more on the importance of self-esteem, protecting your children from psychological abuse (i.e. teasing), self-control, the effects of violent media, the importance of positive role models, and highlighting the positive strengths of being male. What you will get in this book is a world-view for raising boys. Despite what you may have been told, it is not about legalism, sexism, intolerance, "papal" obeisance, or whatever else you equate to religion, but instead a greater awareness of who your son is, through a Christian understanding of love, acceptance, and self-worth. My advice is: 1. If you detest Christian worldview, then don't buy this book - it will rankle your skin. 2. If you think you might disagree with something but can be an honest ideologist then eat the meat and spit out the "bones" - there's plenty of meat. 3. If you've read other Dobson material and/or believe in what Focus on the Family is doing then you will probably like this book - if nothing else, it will push you towards praying for your children and your country. Lastly, I read several other posts by single parents who felt alienated by the book's focus on the "nuclear family" (mom and dad). It's too bad the book felt so condemning for you. I would advise that you go to the Dobson's website and do a search on single parenting, where you will find several articles/books/CD's with help for what you are looking for.

I am a Pediatrician, and a patient's mother left this book following a visit. I took it home and began to look through it - I see such "How to raise kids" books frequently, as you can imagine. Most of it was good, solid, practical advice. Most parenting books are reminders of what we tend to forget in the hustle and bustle of daily life. That's a compliment, not a criticism. We physicians welcome any counsel to parents to relax about their little darlings, not fret about their child being slower or faster than another in their development, wondering if each challenge is evidence of some dire malady or another. What I really liked about the book is the refreshing reminders about the nature of boys. Their physicality, their noise-level, their energy, their love of competition, weapons made from bread or play-dough, their dirty pants and laughter at funny sounds. That "the experts" believe that these are socialized or learned behaviors, and that "boys and girls are the same" has been a terrible disservice to our nation's little guys - and their parents. Along with this calming counsel are chapters

on the responsibility that comes with being a male. Finally, I dare to hope, boys may start to be raised to be men! Hats off to the good doctor - I returned my patient's book and bought several copies for myself and colleagues. Enjoy your boys!

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