

about the importance of pride in being a woman and a mother. She discusses the struggles in destructive marriages where women are treated as punching bags and end up broken. Davis-Thompson provides her readers with a fascinating look at the experience of depression and pain, and suggests that depression may be one way a woman can slow down to listen to her inner self. The author also addresses the unforgiving aspects of a culture where black women have children during adolescence without having the chance to finish high school. Their dreams and hopes become shattered and their growth becomes stunted by the guilt that overtakes them. Davis-Thompson encourages her readers to rise above guilt, to listen to their pain, and learn the lessons and strengths it brings.

The book is abound with words of wisdom. Davis-Thompson believes mothers should speak to their daughters so that their daughters can voice their feelings. She suggests that we can help our daughters develop into strong, self-loving women by taking an inner journey and acknowledging our own pain, values, limitations, and love.

*Raising Up Queens* focuses on mothers as the main driving force in our daughters, development. Even though mothers are ever-present in their girls' lives, there are many other factors that influence development. If "mothers are the garden we grew in" (121), it is important to note that gardens grow in a vast soil. We must avoid placing sole responsibility for a daughter's development on her mother.

## **Boys Will Be Men: Raising Our Sons for Courage, Caring, and Community**

Paul Kivel

Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers, 1999

### **Reviewed by Marybeth Holleman**

When I gave birth to my son nearly ten years ago, I began a search for books that would help me raise him to be emotionally, mentally, and physically whole—outside of the burdens and boundaries of stereotypic masculinity. I bristled at terms like "mama's boy," as I did at suggestions of well-meaning friends and relatives that I should stop breast-feeding, "especially since he's a boy." Instead, we took our son's name, James, and called him Jamie—both because of its gender-neutrality and because it suits him. I nursed him until he was five, still let him sleep with me when he wants, and cuddle him every morning.

Kivel's *Boys Will Be Men*, is one of the books for which I searched then, but in vain. It follows in a long-overdue line of books about raising boys to be compassionate and responsible human beings. Extending from and comple-

menting the excellent books, *The Courage to Raise Good Men* by Silverstein & Rashbaum and *Real Boys* by Pollack, Kivel takes the task of raising our sons out into the streets. First, Kivel challenges us to “see every boy as one of our sons.” Kivel says we must first learn to have empathy for all boys before we can successfully help any boy have empathy for himself and others. Second, he emphasizes community over the nuclear family. He urges us to teach our sons how to get ahead *and* get together.

Specific chapters provide hands-on suggestions for parents in nearly all aspects of a boy’s life, from family rules to sports to relationships with women to homophobia. Kivel shows us how to become allies with our sons and how to help them become allies with themselves and others. In keeping with the overall theme of reaching out beyond the nuclear family, the final chapters focus on community action. The connection between individual and community is central to Kivel’s message. In his words, “Personal awareness is only useful if it can be connected to social practice.”

The book is graced with beautiful black and white photographs by Kathy Sloane. Kivel makes appropriate use of questions throughout the book- some to ask ourselves, some to ask our sons- to help us consider our own situations and to help us communicate with our sons. Finally, Kivel has compiled an extensive, topically-arranged resource list of books and organizations.

This book would be more complete, however, with a chapter on the non-traditional family in all its evolving forms, including shared custody/two homes, single parenting, absent parents, and blended families. Kivel refers far too briefly to the real and important issue of divorce and its impact on pact.

## **Our Sons Were Labeled Behaviour Disordered: Here Are the Stories of Our Lives**

Joy-Ruth Mickelson  
Troy, NY: Educator’s International Press, 2000

### **Reviewed by Justyna Sempruch**

Their sons are diagnosed as hyperactive, severely depressed, and possibly suicidal. In school, administrators segregate them in Behaviour Disordered classrooms, and consult psychologists. Pharmacotherapy is strongly suggested and sophisticated vocabulary is used to make their mothers feel helpless.

In *Our Sons Were Labeled Behavior Disordered*, Ruth Mickelson intertwines her academic discourse with personal stories (letters) written directly to the interviewed mothers. She chooses narrative inquiry as her research method and includes the testimonials of mothers daunted by professional opinion. Moth-