

Not all men are sly
foxes essay sample



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In Armin A. Brott's Essay "Not All Men Are Sly Foxes," he asserts that men are not presented as good fathers. To back this up, he tells us that several books, including children's books, show it to us clearly. However, he fails to persuade us because of his use of hasty generalizations, oversimplifications, and unfair use of information. In fact, in other books men are presented as good fathers providing stability and discipline within the home.

Brott begins by acknowledging while men and women are not yet equal in childcare, children's books aren't helping. Fathers are still being portrayed with the same negative stereotypical lines, such as harsh, cold, and neglectful. The mothers, on the other hand, are primarily the warm, gentle, loving, caregivers and nurturers to their children. For examples he uses, Mother Goose and the Sly Fox and the Little Gorilla, which shows only the mother hugging the son, not the father.

Other negative stereotypes can be found among various literature aimed at the parents of small children. For example in, What to Expect the First Year, the author is always referring to "mother" or "mommy," leaving men and their feelings to a nine page chapter, not giving much detail into what it contains. To say that fathers are unnurturing and completely absent is "a reflection of reality," is unacceptable. Children are taught from the beginning and on, what they should and shouldn't read, holding a very high standard.

Although Brott's methodical and earnest approach conveys his dissatisfaction with how men are presented, he generally relies too heavily on hasty generalizations, oversimplifications, and unfair use of information. In the first paragraph, he says that books are being changed to "portray

more accurately the roles that women play in shaping our country. " Females are being pictured as doing the same type of job as males. He oversimplifies that by changing these books for women, it is discriminating against men.

As the books are stereotypical of men, he is stereotypical of the books.

Making a hasty generalization based on these books, he implies that mothers are shown as naturally the caregivers and nurturers, while men are just there to provide the income and discipline. A comparison between the two is shown clearly in one book called Mother Goose and the Sly Fox. Tying in with this hasty generalization, and oversimplification is his unfair use of information. He gathers all this information from just his local library, which only contains a certain amount of books.

There is not enough statistically valid information, therefore he can't come to a conclusion and hope to persuade us with this little evidence. Fathers are the patriarchs of the household. They provide stability, care, discipline, and emotional support, adding that " something" for us to imitate as we grow up. They are the ones who are there when we need them the most, not just for discipline, but for other things as well. Mothers are not the only ones who can provide that affection needed by the child, fathers can do the same. Just because there are several books that are stereotypical, doesn't mean all are.

Good fathers have that responsibility of teaching their children how men are supposed to be, not books. Books are for entertainment only. " If children's literature only reflected reality," Brott claims, " it would be like prime-time TV and we'd have books filled with child abusers, wife beaters, and criminals. " However, he also suggests that " reality" contains a lot of responsible

loving fathers as well. In his resolution to this contradiction, he states that young children like to believe what they hear, especially from the parent.

It is up to the parent to select the appropriate reading material for their child. Ignoring those men who share equally in raising the child, as the mother, will only create a generation of men who have been told that fathers play a secondary role in the home. In order to root out this discrimination towards fathers, Brott says we must also teach our kids that men are supposed to be caregivers and nurturers as well as women. The first step towards this is showing it to their children.