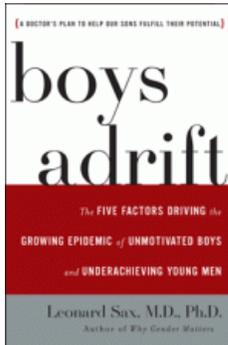


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## Boys Adrift

Thursday, January 17, 2008



“What’s troubling about so many of the boys I see in my practice, or the boys I hear about from parents and teachers, is that they don’t have much passion for any real-world activity,” writes Leonard Sax, a family physician and author. Sax is also a researcher who is very concerned about the way that boys are falling behind in school and in so many other arenas of life.

In *Boys Adrift*, Sax identifies five factors he believes are contributing to this problem. After offering a chilling description of the problem, he moves to argue that these factors include changes in the educational system (many almost appear to be calculated to cause a disinterest in learning among boys), video games (encouraging boys to disengage from the real world), medications for ADHD (blame a syndrome and give the boy a stimulant), endocrine disruptors (leading to a shortfall of testosterone in boys), and a lack of good male role models in the culture (leading to a devaluation of masculinity).

All this adds up to a “failure to launch” among many boys. Sax offers some hard words of analysis here. He argues that, in the past, boys eventually decided to grow up and become men because they wanted money and sex — and would have to earn their way to both through hard work and adult responsibility. Now, the larger culture (and many parents) allow boys access to both without the expense of growing up. So . . . why grow up?

Christian readers — especially parents and those who work with youth — will bring additional concerns and ideas to Dr. Sax’s proposals. Nevertheless, *Boys Adrift* is now essential reading for those concerned about our boys.

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