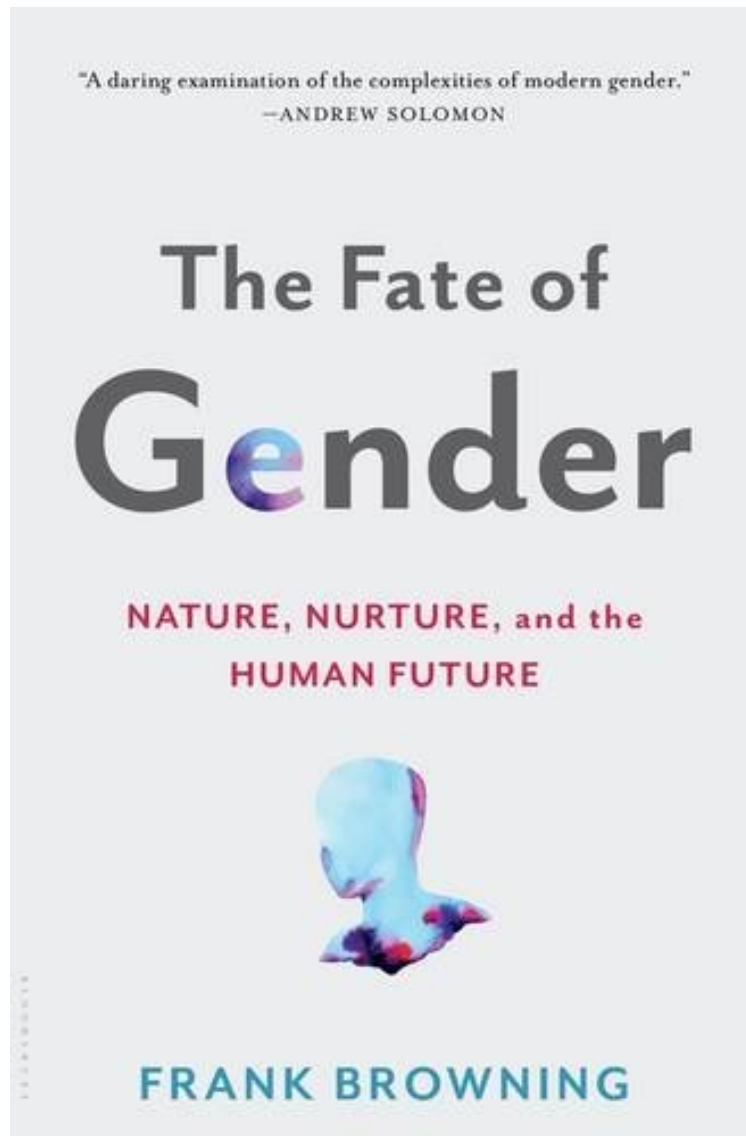


(Ebook free) The Fate of Gender: Nature, Nurture, and the Human Future

The Fate of Gender: Nature, Nurture, and the Human Future

Frank Browning

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Frank Browning : The Fate of Gender: Nature, Nurture, and the Human Future before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Fate of Gender: Nature, Nurture, and the Human Future:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Book on a Timely TopicBy Foster CorbinAs I read Frank Brownings dense THE FATE OF GENDER, I kept thinking of Francis Bacons statement about books: Some books are to be tasted; others to be swallowed; and a few to be chewed and digested. There were times that I just wanted to taste

this book, but I soldiered on. It was worth it. The author has a lot to say about sex and gender. Even though transgender persons are the subject of much of the present media frenzy, that topic is only a small part of what Mr. Browning writes about. (Let me say up front that I smiled at his description of Caitlyn Jenner as a transsexual publicity hound. I couldn't agree more.) The author also covers same-sex marriages and the children of these couples, whether it be through adoption or a surrogate mother, the disparity of the kinds of positions and salaries between men and women in the workplace, female genital mutilation, the differences in attitudes of elderly men and women and a lot more. San Francisco's outrageous The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence and the Red Hat Society even make appearances. Mr. Browning attempts to unravel the mystery of the differences between men and women: whether we get the wiring at birth or before birth or whether the way we are treated in the beginning years of our lives makes a difference, that is, nature versus nurture. He goes to great lengths to expound on this subject and has traveled to many lands and interviewed many people. (One of the pluses of this book is the anecdotal evidence he brings to his study. We all like to hear the stories of real people with real names and descriptions.) Many of the authorities Mr. Browning draws on would say that gender is fluid and changes with each of us at different times in our lives. He also presents the position of religious fundamentalists and others who would argue that men and women are one or the other and nothing in between. I particularly liked that the author includes comments about his own life: growing up in rural Kentucky, working in raising tobacco, going to a two-room school with no indoor restrooms, that he threw a ball like a girl, that he painted with watercolors. (Having grown up at roughly the same time in East Tennessee, I can relate to all of that although the first school I attended was larger.) I also like his asides that are often statements about himself and his own biases: Transsexuality is a troublesome reality for almost everyone who has not lived inside it, myself included. He says he is also uncomfortable bringing up the subject of women pleasuring themselves with a Chinese sex and gender specialist. And he certainly struck a chord with me with this quote: Although it has been fashionable since the 1990s to lump lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people under the same LGBT umbrella, the alliance has nearly always been an uneasy one for those gays who increasingly insist on their uber-masculinity, for feminist lesbians suspicious of a false femininity, or for bisexuals who cringe at the thought of altering their bodies. (Mr. Browning's book is already out of date since I see that the powers that be have now added Q and I and A to the mix, just as I had finally gotten LGBT through my head.) My chief criticism of this most-informative of books is that the author has a tendency to repeat himself. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well-argued and well-needed. By TR This demonstrates how fixed gender roles and conventions have been fabricated by the most arrogant, ignorant, and destructive creature to date—the human—revealing how these baseless roles and conventions pass costs onto the natural world, as well. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Read the lengthy introduction, and you will be hooked. By Vanessa Very well researched and written. Great tool and resource to understanding the depth and breadth of gender and sex.

Frank Browning takes us into human gender geographies around the world, from gender-neutral kindergartens in Chicago and Oslo to women's masturbation classes in Shanghai, from conservative Catholics in Paris fearful of God and Nature to transsexual Mormon parents in Utah. As he shares specific and engaging human stories, he also elucidates the neuroscience that distinguishes male and female biology, shows us how all parents' brains change during the first weeks of parenthood, and finally how men's and women's responses to age differ worldwide based not on biology but on their earlier life habits. Starting with Simone de Beauvoir's world-famous observation that one is not born a woman but instead becomes a woman, Browning goes on to show equally that no one is born a man but learns how to perform as a man, and that there is no fixed way of being masculine or feminine. Increasingly, the categories of "male" and "female" and even "gay" and "straight" seem old-fashioned and reductive. Just visible on the horizon is a world of gender and sexual fluidity that will remake our world in fundamental ways. Linking science to culture and behavior, and delving into the lives of individuals challenging historic notions, Browning questions the traditional division of Nature vs. Nurture in everything from plant science to sexual expression, arguing in the end that life consists of an endless waltz between these two ancient notions.

"A probing, wide-ranging, and illuminating look at society's current gender conundrum. . . . To research sex and gender, the author draws on interviews with and published research by biologists, neurologists, psychologists, physicians, parents, teachers, counselors, therapists, and many individuals who define themselves as gender variant. . . . A timely, thoughtful contribution to a much-debated issue." Kirkus s "Browning has a talent for relating complex topics accessibly . . . This account provides a solid overview of the shifting landscape of gender issues today." Library Journal "The Fate of Gender is a fascinating read . . . overall the book will make readers think hard about how, as a society, we have shaped gender identity and are reshaping what it means to be male and female, either and both." - Scientific American MIND "In this daring examination of the complexities of modern gender, Frank Browning gives the scientific evidence that gender is a construct rather than a biological reality. Our notions of masculinity and femininity are becoming more fluid and not less, as science defers to social reality instead of the other way around. Scholarly, wide-ranging, and deeply imagined, this unsettling book limns the triumph of nuance over a binary that was

never based in authenticity." Andrew Solomon, author of *FAR FROM THE TREE*"The Fate of Gender is a valuable addition to the debate on whether genders are multiplying, morphing, mutating, or disappearing entirely. Frank Browning presents a wide-ranging review of the current complexities of gender and sexuality. Engagingly written, this book is an excellent catch-up on what gender is all about today." Judith Lorber, Professor Emerita, Graduate School and Brooklyn College, CUNY, author of *BREAKING THE BOWLS: DEGENDERING AND FEMINIST CHANGE*"Does sex have a future? Well, yes. But everything else is up for grabs. An insightful, important book." Rita Mae Brown, author of *RUBYFRUIT JUNGLE*"Frank Browning is a voracious social, cultural and political observer. He ranges across continents and venues, stopping to inspect circumstances and examples, in this instance relentlessly moving toward an understanding of what gender is coming to mean. Browning makes it perfectly clear that gender these days is not a settled thing, if it ever really was. A persuasive evidence of intellect is the ability to take disparate examples and fashion them into an entirely unexpected but coherent whole. *The Fate of Gender* is a stunning example." David Hawpe, former editor, *THE COURIER-JOURNAL* (Louisville)"This is an extraordinary book. From the moment of our conception, sex and gender rule our lives. Browning, with incisiveness, insight, and wit, takes us on this journey, combining the latest relevant research with personal stories and his own explorations. He uses the research to highlight the personal, and acknowledges what is rarely said; that sex and gender are a muddle and mystery and we bravely soldier on til the end." Lynn Meyer, Founder, Women's Emergency Network"An important book . . . that never sidesteps troubling questions." *The New York Times Book on THE CULTURE OF DESIRE*"Absolutely cutting edge--a portrait of modern sexual politics [that] should be required reading." Armistead Maupin on *THE CULTURE OF DESIRE*"Browning challenges us to consider what each of us is willing to risk to live life more fully." *San Francisco Examiner on THE CULTURE OF DESIRE*"[Browning] presents an international and historical overview of homosexuality that is refreshingly broad-minded." *The Washington Post Book World on A QUEER GEOGRAPHY*"Hidden history revealed." Studs Terkel on *THE AMERICAN WAY OF CRIME*About the AuthorFormer NPR science reporter Frank Browning grew up on an apple farm in Kentucky and now lives in Paris. His books include *The American Way of Crime* (with John Gerassi), *The Culture of Desire*, *A Queer Geography*, *Apples: The Story of the Fruit of Temptation*, and *The Monk the Skeptic*. He writes on art and culture for the *Huffington Post* and has contributed to the *Washington Post Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, *Playboy*, *Salon*, and other publications.