



The Art of Manliness: Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man

Brett McKay

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Man Up!

While it's definitely more than just monster trucks, grilling and six-pack abs, true manliness is hard to define. The words macho and manly are not synonymous.

Taking lessons from classic gentlemen such as Benjamin Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt, authors **Brett** and **Kate McKay** have created a collection of the most useful advice every man needs to know to live life to its full potential.

This book contains a wealth of information that ranges from survival skills to social skills to advice on how to improve your character. Whether you are braving the wilds with your friends, courting your girlfriend or raising a family, inside you'll find practical information and inspiration for every area of life. You'll learn the basics all modern men should know, including how to:

- Shave like your grandpa
- Be a perfect houseguest
- Fight like a gentleman using the art of bartitsu
- Help a friend with a problem
- Give a man hug
- Perform a fireman's carry
- Ask for a woman's hand in marriage
- Raise resilient kids
- Predict the weather like a frontiersman
- Start a fire without matches
- Give a dynamic speech
- Live a well-balanced life

So jump in today and gain the skills and knowledge you need to be a real man in the 21st century.

The Art of Manliness: Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man Details

Date : Published October 15th 2009 by HOW Books (first published September 17th 2009)

ISBN : 9781600614620

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Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Self Help, Personal Development

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From Reader Review The Art of Manliness: Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man for online ebook

Pvw says

A truly remarkable book! At first I feared it might contain a lot of drabble about etiquette rules, but that fortunately wasn't so. Although that subject is mentioned, there are many things more, one of which is sound advice on how to be likeable to other people. Many of the behavioral principles resemble those found in Dale Carnegie's How to Win Friends and Influence People, and justly so.

"The Art of Manliness" contains interesting tips on how to dress well, descriptions of different kinds of hats and ways to tie a tie. But those are just a few of the myriad of subjects appearing in the book. "The Art of Manliness" teaches you streetfighting, changing a flat tyre, landing a plane, rocking a crying baby to sleep, entertaining a lady, breaking up gently with a girlfriend and giving a manly handshake. All of that is contained in a stylish cover that perfectly fits the text and the illustrations. A great book to own yourself, and to give to a friend.

Eric Moote says

Overall: a great source of essential to random qualities every man should have or strive for.

I have been a fan of the website for years and I was excited when this book and the Manvotionals came out. The book, at times, felt like a summary of all of the website's articles, but for the not-so-fanatical, the book is a perfect balance of sage wisdom, inspirational advice and kick-in-the-pants motivation that every man needs from time to time.

I would and have recommended the books and the website to every man, boy, man-boy, and woman that I know. They are great sources of topics that will lead you down the path of discovering who you are as a man, husband, brother and friend.

Buy the book. Then read it. Then give it away as a bachelor party / groomsman / birthday / coming into manhood / "you are a sissy boy and need a swift kick in the shorts" present. Then follow the website.

Risa says

I am adding this to my read because i read it for free in Border's, which took 2.5 minutes and reviewing it because half of the motherfuckers who put this on their "to-read" list have faces that look like they shave with a lawn mower blade strapped to a broom handle and wielded by a blind monkey-- so I am telling you now that you do not need to put off reading this for long; you will need hardly forfeit an entire afternoon and you might actually take an interest in your appearance and its affect on others by 3pm that very same day. Really, why put it off? Don't you feel inspired to go read it and take it into your heart right this very minute? The worst thing that could happen is that you might learn to shave, actually tie a tie that doesn't look like a noose, and learn how to teach a kid to ride a bike. there are worse fates.

Geoffrey Morris says

There's a lot of bullshit in this book. For one, it denigrates individual therapy with a very broad brush, which is 1) crap because most of us emerge from our initial family life in an immature state, and no amount of walking in the woods will fix that and 2) it tells people like me, who have literally been saved from death by their own hand because of therapy, that they're wasting their time in therapy. So fuck you, Brett McKay. I'm sure that you would have given my mother a really convincing argument about how building a fire without a lighter would've kept me from jumping off of a bridge.

There are some good things in here. The main thing that's obvious is that men need the community of other men, in person, on a routine basis. If that's not group therapy, I don't know what it really is. He's advocating therapy while denigrating it and cloaking what he considers socially acceptable in a shroud of "manliness". What the fuck ever, dude.

Brett McKay's writing makes him seem like a complete dick.

J. ʘ(?)_/_ says

I loved this book. I wish I could force every single beibertard I pass to read it. Excellent advice throughout, I hope my daughters use this measurement of a "real man" to pick their future husbands.

Books that interest me in a topic enough to cause me to look that topic up always get bonus points and I found myself jotting more that one "look this up" reminder.

The narrator did an excellent job.

If I have any problem with the book it's in the chapter suggesting civic duty and encouraging men to give back to their community. I agree with those ideas whole heartedly, but the chapter is kicked off with a statement about how some people are born with a disadvantage. The only people that are born with a disadvantage are people who believe they've been born with a disadvantage.

Teo says

From the founders of the popular website of the same name, comes a book about the (lost) art of manliness. I was a casual reader of the said site, and I found some of the advices there useful, but to say it'll really bring you from a wuss to a manly man would be an overstatement. And, just like the site, this book is a mixed bag.

First of all, I thought it would focus on the notion, or ideal of manliness. As it turns out, it's more of a how-to guide for doing things the authors deems as manly. That alone lowers the worth of this work - because it won't change your mind framework and your way of thinking, just give you a few tips n' tricks without really telling you what a man should be. In other words, it's superficial, and does not change a man from within. And also, the authors' vision of what is manly is, to say the least, debatable.

The book is divided in 8 chapters focusing on different aspects of manliness:

1. The Gentleman
2. The Friend
3. The Hero
4. The Lover
5. The Father
6. The Outdoorsman
7. The Leader
8. The Virtuous Man

In these chapters, "TAoM" will tell you, among others:

- How to shave like your grandpa
- How to help a friend with a problem
- How to perform a fireman's carry
- How to deliver a baby in a pinch
- How to land a plane without the pilot
- How to be a perfect houseguest

... and so on. While these are surely manly skills, they won't exactly transform you into a manly man. One can still be a basement dweller who knows how to shave like his grandpa. However, there are also things like:

- How to give a man hug
- How to tip properly
- How to rock a pocket square
- How to ask for a woman's hand in marriage
- How to ask your fiancé's father for her hand
- How to give your woman flowers like a Victorian gentleman
- How to braid your daughter's hair (which the author assures us is as manly as tying a sailor's knot)

One cannot help but awkwardly raise an eyebrow at many of these "manly" tips. First of all, the author assumes you will be indeed going out dressing like a Victorian gentlemen, and builds from that. In this day and age, this is simply absurd. But Bret McKay claims that is the way men should be garbed today. I am supposed, for example, to hang out with my friends somewhere, dressed in a full, custom-tailored suit and shined shoes, with a derby on my head, a handkerchief in my breast pocket, and a cane in my hand. Yeah, sure. I'd do that, if it's Halloween and I'm going trick-or-treating. Furthermore, a following chapter even teaches you how to fight with your cane against another cane-wielding time traveler from the Victorian past.

Bottom line is, some of the advices are extremely outdated and just not applicable in the modern society. I mean, before the Victorian dandies, people were walking around naked but for loincloths. Others wore bearskins and the skulls of their enemies dangling from their waists. That was manly once, but I doubt you'll be walking outside dressed like that.

When not only outdated, some advices are the diametric opposite of manly. I'm mainly referring to The Lover chapter. If you don't want to behave like a complete pussy and beta man, I suggest you don't use these "tips" in practice. The chapter (and the one about marriage) is steeped in feminist propaganda which puts a woman on a raised dais and lowers the man to the status of a slave who has to dance on her every whim. You're even provided with a chart detailing the subtle meaning of every flower, so you can combine them

accordingly with your apology while you're kneeling in front of her begging for forgiveness or expressing your unwavering adoration for this most noble and precious creature of all in the Universe. To top it off, one of the most absurd statements advises you to walk on the outside of the sidewalk, so that, I quote, "your lady [is] farther from the traffic. This way, if someone is going to be splashed, it will be you, not her."

Yes, really manly, no doubt, not to mention that it goes against pretty much everything affirmed in studies dealing with behavioral psychology of women. They do not want you to act like that. They search for alpha males (the definition of the term being far too complicated to discuss here), not whipped dogs that cower in front of them.

All the bullshit aside, there are indeed some valuable advices to be found within these pages (like the ones about raising resilient kids), while other are simply meh. When all is said and done, I felt that much of this book was filler to reach a page quota, and certainly far from being some invaluable manly wisdom. Much of it are general tips and how-to's that you knew one way or the other. To conclude, "The Art of Manliness" is a very mediocre read.

Tom Metge says

Being married for 10 years to the most wonderful woman I have ever met has taught me something that we all tend to admit only intellectually: men and women are different, even radically different at times. The American society tends to devalue that difference in the name of seeking equality. This goal is admirable, but the approach is wrong-footed. This is why I love this book: it asserts that there is value to this difference, that there is worth to being a man. What is wonderful about this admission is that, unlike our society's current approach to establishing gender equality, it assigns value to one gender without stripping it from the other.

Others have said it and I will repeat it here: I wish I had read this book earlier in my life. The skills it teaches can be quaint but the message it sends is one I will share with my sons: being male is part of who we are and that is a good thing. Just as good, in fact, as being a woman.

Jim says

I'm always moaning over the generally boorish behaviour of your average North American male, so every once in a while I like to read a little something to refresh those parts of my memory that deal with culture and etiquette. This book seemed ideal as it promised to deal with classic skills and manners for the modern man.

The book lives up to its promise, sort of, as it does touch lightly on manners, dress and propriety, but most of the book is nonsense. Well, not nonsense, exactly, but a bunch of malarkey that will never be encountered by one man in a million. How to land an aircraft, for instance. Or treat a snakebite. Predict the weather. Tie knots. Fight a man with your overcoat. In other words, a bunch of filler. This is a book I could have written: just give me a book of etiquette, a copy each of the Boy Scout and Toastmasters manuals, any book by Dale Carnegie, and a first aid workbook, and I could have cobbled this together in a couple of weeks. If I had any instinct for success or profit, I could have been making money from a book like this instead of spending money on it. Full points to the McKays for outsmarting me on this one.

The book does have some parts that adolescent males and I will find amusing, such as this delightful excerpt from page 73: "*the home, transformed by the period's so-called "cult of domesticity", had become an effeminate, doily-laden foo-foo abode...*". Come on, that's funny right there, as Larry the Cable Guy would say.

Another thing that got my goat was the fact that the book is poorly illustrated. There are rather crude drawings to illustrate teaching points, but the points the authors chose to illustrate puzzled hell out of me. As an example, they go on a laborious explanation detailing how to tie a Windsor knot in a tie with never a diagram to shed some light on the mystery (other than a drawing depicting the end result). Later in the chapter on chivalry they have a captioned drawing of a gentleman holding open a door for a lady. I would have preferred if they had permitted me to trust my imagination for the mental image of opening the door but given me a diagram of the steps of tying the knot.

Ultimately, I believe any male of my advanced years should be in possession of most of the information found herein. The book has a lot of good information in it, and does have a niche in the reading world. If we could get every male to read it at puberty, maybe it would do some good, but most adult men should have already been taught this behaviour by their fathers.

Keenan Johnston says

Obvious and Banal. Only good as a coffee table book

Josiah says

"Manliness" has found itself sequestered to either the macho realm of false bravado or the neutered face of too many sitcom dads. This book finds a more measured approach to the topic. General etiquette need not be lost with the rise of Facebook, there's nothing wrong with upholding basic etiquette towards women while simultaneously championing gender equality and there's nothing "gay" about having close male friends that--only in recent generations--have been frowned upon if the connection goes further than "drinking buddies" or guys to vent your womanly troubles with. The book mentions men it perceives to be of great virtue (some of which I questioned, but not wholly) such as Theodore Roosevelt, Benjamin Franklin and others who felt it okay to be a good man through virtuous acts and honest attempts at improvement...regardless of the push from any religious entanglement or guilt. It harkens to a more "romantic" age where men could be exalted as "manly" without being arrogant, sarcastic, sexist and homophobic. It was difficult for me to find much to disagree with, although I always shy away from looking at any period of time as the ideal age of anything. It's a proper etiquette book for the post-enlightenment and post sexual-revolution generations and an interesting read for any guy looking for some inspiration and tips for improvement. It's witty, straight-forward and full of amusing anecdotes and "how-to" guides. I was entertained by it but--more importantly--found myself in some serious introspection that has lingered since reading it which seems to have been the author's ultimate goal.

Khanh Cao says

All in all, quite a book on how to practice the Art of Manliness.

I should have given it a 3, but for the enjoyable last chapters, I give it a 4.

Most of the book involves in doing a set of particular things, to meet "a man's standard", but it does not answer the question "how do those things trigger a man's masculinity?", "what is the underlying psychology mechanism?", etc.. Just like when you give someone great examples to follow but you forgot to tell them what are the underlying meanings of those, why the bad guys act like the bad guys and if in any other circumstances, would they act differently, etc...

My opinion is, if one hasn't got a good foundation on manliness theories already (such as the answers to these questions: what should be the core beliefs of a man, what should the viewpoints of "me" in another man's eyes be, etc..), reading this book may make you feel a little bit off track, and even if any progress is made, it will most likely have short-term impact.

However, one should still read it if he is unclear of the actions he should take, but has already been sure of what his values and beliefs should be.

AJ says

Pros: If you always wanted to be a boy scout and have a strong male role model and never got the chance, this will help fill some of that gap. Except that role model will take the form of a well-meaning but out-of-touch grandfather. That said, I learned some great life skills, and it motivated me to want to try some new things I haven't done before. It also made Victorian-esque Gentlemen seem really cool. I appreciated the effort in putting this book together and the careful consideration of what was of value to include, there was just enough in each section without it being overwhelming. The narrator on the audiobook was excellent.

Cons: A heterocentrist, heterosexist viewpoint that is critical and dismissive of femininity in men. At times the language was cringeworthy and it was tough to overlook. This book was also pretty out of touch when it came to discussion of relationships.

Seamus says

This review is a supplement to the excellent review which V_Shift has posted.

This book, like Brett and Kate McKay's blog, is useful for what you choose to take from it. No, this book will not magically transform you into manly man or a Victorian gentleman or whatever kind of man you aspire to be. The title of the book is **The Art of Manliness**, not **The Philosophy of Manliness**. The subtitle is **Classic Skills and Manners for the Modern Man**. But for the guy who wants to learn some classical skills of male etiquette, this book is very useful.

In the section **Dress Like A Gentleman**, the McKays skip casual wear. Most men today know how to do casual. Instead, they focus on how to look sharp when the occasion calls for it. BTW, a pocket square doesn't look old-fashioned; it makes a guy look well-dressed and wealthy---and this book can tell you how to fold one, three different ways.

In the section **Fight Like A Gentleman**, instruction is given for the most basic moves in Bartitsu, one of the

precursors to modern mixed martial arts. It is still taught in martial arts schools today. While the chances of being attacked carrying a cloak and cane are exceedingly slim, the odds of being attacked when a sturdy stick (a tree limb, a tire iron, a baseball bat) and a large piece of fabric (a jacket, a blanket) are involved are pretty good.

Among the many sections of the book are sections giving tips on how to woo and marry a woman. Contrary to much feminist advice today, many women still enjoy being courted by strong, decisive, and romantic alpha men. Thirty years after women's lib, romance novels still sell like your Grandma's hot-cakes. This book gives you the know-how. If you like romance, don't act like a jerk because you think it attracts women--you'll end up driving off the women you really want. On the other hand, if you really are a jerk, by all means, act like it. You will likely get a woman who is a b*tch herself.

To sum up, this book won't give you the theory, but it will give you the practicum if you feel like some of the refined skills of adulthood are alluding you.

Adil says

The Art of Manliness is a guide to becoming a better man by focusing on one's mannerisms, dress, and intelligence. The book posits that modern men have become stuck in 'permanent adolescence' and are not up to task on the necessary virtues and strengths which belonged to the men of the past.

Leaning upon past paragons like Theodore Roosevelt and Benjamin Franklin, this book covers different aspects of becoming a better man in today's society by eliminating time-wasters, maintaining cleanliness, and upholding fidelity. Different sections include: The Gentleman (improve your manners and physical being), The Friend (become a sturdy and reliable acquaintance), The Lover (become a faithful and committed husband or significant-other), and The Leader (project confidence and learn to shoulder some responsibility).

This book, while highly idealistic, is an essential read for what the authors call 'The Lost Generation' of current men.

Ayushi Nayak says

The art of manliness

I came across this book while randomly surfing a question on Quora when a list of 10 books to be read was laid down by a guy who looked really sorted out. This is the second one I am reading from that list &, boy, did I enjoy the couple of them.

While the worst in the book was only reflected by phrases like Man Up and treating women not like an object when the author was continuously pressing for the same, I had a thing or two to take back from the book too.

Firstly, the many quips and jests. I hearted them.

Secondly, the research work put into the book. I respect it so much so that if I was to write a book, I'd adhere to exactly this much amount of research if not more.

Thirdly, the introduction to world leaders especially, Theodore Roosevelt. He was a real badass. I am going read a lot about him from now on.

And, lastly(only because I am not much adept at summary writing at the moment but I would love to write better insights later on), because of the detailed guidelines of things provided which happen to be the basic requisites of our lives and yet we skip learning them somehow. ./

Also, this pair of authors are kickass!
