

# Letters

YES, BOYS ARE IN CRISIS, AND AMERICAN parents are justifiably worried about the men their sons will become. But I wonder what mothers like Lance Armstrong's make of such statements as "An adolescent boy without a father figure is like an explorer without a map." The assumption that "masculine" qualities can be imparted only by men undermines the success of millions of mothers who are fully capable of raising thriving, emotionally healthy, masculine sons without a man around. Linda Armstrong raised Lance on her own and did quite well, as did the women who singlehandedly raised such successful men as Alan Greenspan, Bill Clinton, Rickey Henderson, Ed Bradley and Jamie Foxx. Armstrong calls his mother his main role model, saying she gave him determination, strength to overcome adversity and the capacity to succeed. These qualities are not exclusively masculine. They are human qualities that mothers can and do engender in their sons.

PEGGY DREXLER, PH.D.

*Assistant Professor of Psychology in Psychiatry*

*Weill Medical College of Cornell University*

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