

Description

Lactation for the Rest of Us (A Guide for Queer and Trans Parents and Helpers) by Jacob Engelsman IBCLC

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Reviewed by Karen Henry, Lecturer in Midwifery



I chose to review this book as I was curious about the content and wanted to further my knowledge to share with my students.

The idea of the book is to provide a non-gendered approach to lactation for those who do not identify as ‘mothers or women’ which would benefit those who may find gendered language difficult to read.

The book is set out in a Q & A format so people reading the book could find answers to questions quite easily. Overall, advice focused on issues directly relevant to people of diverse gender.

In relation to chest binding, the information offered around blocked ducts, massage and lymphatic drainage was useful. The advice for those who have had top surgery was useful especially in relation to when feeding may or may not be possible.

There was useful information for those who have had breast removal or reduction surgery, and the case studies offered were very honest, giving a clear picture of some of the challenges which may present themselves.

Some of the language used felt inappropriate to me as a midwife with words such as ‘junk’ being used for genitalia, and some of the advice and discussions needed more evidence to support the assertions in the book.

I feel the lack of identifying language (having non-gendered language) means that some of the information could be lost in translation. Discussions of the use of birth control and hormones for example needed greater clarification. However, the difficulties of writing such a text in non-gendered language must be acknowledged.

The book had some interesting points however, as a professional, I would have liked to see more evidence supporting the information. I also feel that the book could have covered lactation advise for trans-women or cis men in more depth with more precision and direction. The book attempted to cover lactation for all without the required depth needed for the target audience ie: everyone who does not identify as a cis-gendered woman. If the book were to be revised, removing generic lactation advice for all would allow more room for a deeper exploration of support specifically for an underrepresented group of people which, is missing from most contemporary lactation resources.

Category

1. Book reviews

Tags

1. lactation
2. LGBTQIA+

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