

Dan Abrams Says Men Will Not Be Able To Survive On The “Fumes Of Sexism” For Much Longer

Meredith Lepore | Wed, Sep 21 - 9:13 am ET

This was just one of the many things **Dan Abrams**, ABC News legal analyst and author of the book *Man Down*, said at the Intelligence Squared Debate held at New York University’s Skirball



Center that I attended. The debate was called “Men Are Finished” and the main question the panelists were posing was are men truly lagging in such areas as academia and the work force, or are women simply catching up in fields that were previously ruled by men?

Prior to the debate, 22% of the audience voted for the notion, 54% against and 26% said they were undecided. All panelists agreed that men and women were created inherently equal and that both sexes complemented each other. Neither side argued for the total domination of one sex, nor did they refute the existence of certain modern biases against men in education, politics and the workforce.

Arguing for the notion that women were rising in their ranks were Abrams and **Hanna Rosin**, a journalist for Slate and The Atlantic. On the opposing side, arguing that men are underperforming academically, were philosophy professor and feminist scholar **Christina Hoff Sommers** and **David Zinczenko**, editor-in-chief of *Men’s Health Magazine*.

Abrams, who said he didn’t only write his book, which just presents page after page of statistics showing that women are doing better than men in almost everything, to meet women (though he admitted it had helped in that department.) He listed fact after fact showing that women are making more progress than men in politics, finance, education, the environment, etc., “It is only so long men will be able to thrive much less survive off the fumes of sexism.” However, he said what does hold women back is that whether they are single or married or working or not working they are the primary childcare givers. They have a lack of confidence that also holds them back but once they figure out how to fix these things then “us men are in big trouble.”

Well Zinczenko didn’t take this very well and called the whole proposal of men being finished “preposterous.” “When men are finished, they roll over and go to sleep. That is not the case

here,” he said. He did agree that women are absolutely getting more graduate and undergraduate degrees. Of course, then he added that he didn’t think college drop-outs like **Steve Jobs** and **Mark Zuckerberg** were crying themselves to sleep at night as they counted their billions of dollars because they didn’t graduate. The accomplishments of women are “indicative of a trend that women are catching up to men, but the pace is slow.” ”It is men who flood the patent offices with their ideas, he said. And until a woman invents the next Google or Facebook, the economic gap between men and women isn’t going to change in this lifetime.

Sommers in the beginning said that was happening right now with this notion that men are finished was a result of living in the “WAW era” – Women Are Wonderful. Sommer said, who called out that many of Abrams’ facts were blatantly wrong said, “Men are not finished, they’re primary risk takers and there is zero evidence that is changing.” Of course, Abrams was able to counter this point by showing that in finance women’s risk averse behavior actually makes them get more returns and better portfolios. Female hedge fund managers outperform men by 3%.

Zinczenko made a strong case that men do have the upperhand in that they are physically stronger and will always be needed to do more physical and dangerous jobs like construction and being a fireman. But Abrams pointed out that female police officers are better at diffusing a violent situation than men which means they wouldn’t have to be as strong or fast to succeed.

On the other side of the debate, Rosin addressed the issue of college education. She posed a rhetorical question asking why women were attaining substantially more success in the workplace than before. ”The answer is college,” she said. “For every two men that get a college degree, three women will do the same.”

After hearing the arguments, the audience made its final decision. With 66% voting in favor of and 29% against the motion, and 5% remaining undecided, the majority of the audience agreed that men “really are finished.” Perhaps Dan was right. “Women are not catching up, they are surpassing men.”