Brotopia Summary

1-Sentence-Summary: _Brotopia_ motivates you to be fairer in the workplace as an employee or employer by revealing the sad sexist state of Silicon Valley.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:

In the last three decades, the tech industry has shot to the head of the global economy. The center of this advancement, Silicon Valley, is home to the biggest and most successful and innovative companies.

Places like Facebook, Apple, Amazon, and others in the area come out on top as the best places to work. And a big part of this is their progressive, inclusive work environments. Or so we think.

While we'd like to keep these companies in high regard, the truth is that they've got some work to do. They employ an overwhelmingly larger number of men than women. And the workplace isn't the best place for the few females that do have jobs there.

This is what Emily Chang dives into with her book _Brotopia: Breaking Up the Boys' Club of Silicon Valley_. She exposes the sexism of the tech giants and also reveals the benefits that equality has in business and life.

Here are the 3 most surprising and empowering lessons from this one:

1. The first coders were women and it would have stayed that way if it weren't for a false report saying men were better at it.

2. Companies and people in the tech industry undervalue women and make it difficult for them to balance work and family.
3. If you want your profits to rise, hire more women and treat them fairly.

Are you ready for an eye-opening experience? Let's get right to it!

Lesson 1: **Women were computer programmers before men took it over by releasing false reports.**

If I asked you to think of the typical software engineer, what would say they look like? You probably think of a geeky guy that doesn't have great people skills but is a wiz when it comes to numbers, right? Interestingly, this stereotype only exists because of some misinformation back in the early days of the tech industry.

At the beginning of the 20th century, typing and operating a switchboard were clerical duties done by women. When it came to all computer needs, including programming, females were the ones to do it. After all, this was "women's work."

But there's a lot to be said for their contributions to society because of these duties. Women programmed the US Army's first computer in WWII. Some helped with the coding that contributed to the creation of the atomic bombs that the US dropped on Japan in 1945.

And of course, there is the story of the three *Hidden Figures* without whom John Glenn's first orbit around the Earth wouldn't have been possible.

But this all began to come crashing down in the late 1960s. A software company hired a couple of psychologists to try and identify the traits of the best computer programmers.

Their sample size of only 1,378 interviewees contained only 186 women. This resulted in them identifying good programmers having traits like antisocial behavior. Because men were more likely to have this disorder, it quickly became common for companies to hire men as programmers instead of women.

Lesson 2: **It's hard to be a woman who works for a tech giant.**

This book dives into the disgusting practice that some Silicon Valley companies have of using strip clubs as meeting rooms. It's pretty obvious that women executives wouldn't feel welcome in these circumstances, right? Some have even reported having interviews in these lewd places!

I won't go into more detail on that but I just wanted to mention it because it made me sick. Women deserve more respect than that. But the sad truth is, this unfairness is only the tip of the iceberg of mistreatment in the tech industry.

Usually, when a woman is successful in this business, people consider it chance.

But when a man does something great it's "because of his abilities." Women are often thought to be less qualified than men, too.

One example of this is that women get quality control checked for their work more often than men. **Ironically, <u>one study</u> found that if the quality assurance checker doesn't know the coder's gender they'll approve women's work more often than men's!**

Oh, and if you're a startup with only men leaders then you're more likely to get funding from venture capitalists than if you have a woman at the head.

Lesson 3: **Hiring more women and treating them fairly will improve your profits.**

So women who want to be in the tech industry have a tough time getting jobs. Even then their treatment when they do get hired often isn't acceptable. But why should businesses hire more women in the first place?

Well, for one, it's got good chances of making the company more money. Customer bases grow for companies that work toward eliminating sexism. In the case of the online game League of Legends, the number of users grew from 67 million to 100 million after the maker of it implemented a crackdown on abuse.

Additionally, 70-80% of <u>consumer purchases</u> come from women. It only makes sense that equality would help companies make better decisions to cater to the majority of their customer's needs.

And you don't need to just guess whether this works or not. Businesses with better equality of men and women in leadership report making more money. **Those who have women making up 40-60% of leadership positions have better financial returns according to <u>one study</u>.**

The research also indicates that these companies have better critical thinking skills and are more creative. This is because of the new perspectives that women bring to the workplace.

It also found that companies with a better balance of women and men have better odds of staying in business because women are better with risk than men.

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Brotopia Review

It's embarrassing that some men would treat women in the ways that *Brotopia* describes. This "bro culture" is obnoxious, damaging, and anyone who tries to hold it up is immature. I think we need more people calling out bad behavior like this, which is why I highly recommend this book!

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Who would I recommend the Brotopia summary to?

The 28-year-old woman who wants to get into the tech industry and wants to know what to be prepared for, the 47-year-old manager with only a few women on his team that wants to know how to be fairer, and everyone who works in Silicon Valley or any male-dominated workplace.