

The Tenacity of the Couple Norm: The Strong Bond That Keeps Relationships Strong

When it comes to relationships, the couple norm plays a crucial role in maintaining a strong bond between partners. In this modern age, where various lifestyles and relationship types are gaining acceptance, the tenacity of the couple norm remains steadfast, offering stability and security to individuals in their romantic partnerships.

The couple norm refers to society's expectations and beliefs surrounding what a romantic relationship should look like. It includes traditional values such as monogamy, commitment, and a shared life together. Despite the evolving nature of relationships, this norm continues to impact individuals and their choices in sustaining long-term commitments.

The Evolution of the Couple Norm

The couple norm has evolved throughout history, adapting to societal changes and shifting cultural values. In previous centuries, arranged marriages were the norm, and the couple norm primarily revolved around duty and family expectations rather than individual fulfillment. However, as societies progressed and individualism became more prominent, the focus shifted towards personal choice and compatibility.

The Tenacity of the Couple-Norm: Intimate citizenship regimes in a changing Europe

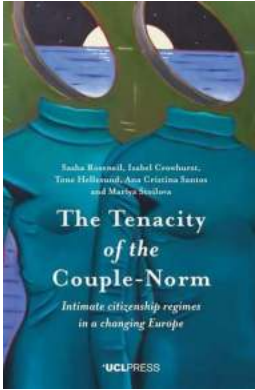
by Ana Cristina Santos (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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With the rise of feminism and the fight for gender equality, the couple norm underwent a significant transformation. Women gained more freedom and agency in choosing their partners, and relationships became more egalitarian. The traditional gender roles that once defined relationships started to loosen, allowing for a more balanced partnership.

In recent years, the couple norm has faced challenges from alternative relationship structures, such as open or polyamorous relationships. These relationships emphasize non-monogamy and a more fluid definition of partnership. While these alternative structures have gained attention, research suggests that a majority of individuals still adhere to the couple norm, finding comfort and stability in the traditional model.

The Strength of the Couple Norm

The tenacity of the couple norm lies in its ability to provide stability and security for individuals in their relationships. The predictability and shared commitment established within the norm create a strong foundation for intimacy and trust. This sense of security allows partners to navigate through challenges and conflicts more effectively.

The couple norm fosters emotional and practical support between partners. It provides a framework for shared responsibilities, such as financial stability, household management, and child-rearing. Research suggests that individuals in long-term relationships adhering to the couple norm report higher life satisfaction and overall well-being compared to those in more unconventional relationship structures.

Furthermore, the couple norm serves as a social anchor, providing a sense of belonging and acceptance within communities. Society still predominantly views couples as the ideal relationship structure, and societal norms often reinforce this perception. Partners who fit into this norm benefit from the support and validation offered by family, friends, and society at large.

Embracing Flexibility within the Couple Norm

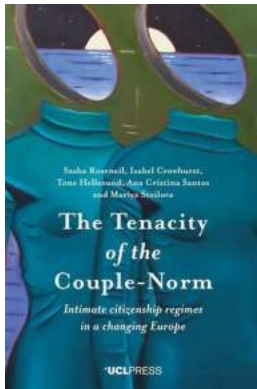
While the couple norm remains a strong force in maintaining relationships, it is important to acknowledge the need for flexibility within this construct. Recognizing individuality and personal growth is essential for a healthy and thriving partnership.

Couples today are encouraged to redefine the boundaries of the couple norm to fit their unique needs and desires. Open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making allow partners to evolve together, nurturing a relationship that supports personal growth and fulfillment.

Additionally, embracing diversity within the couple norm is crucial. Each couple's journey and preferences may differ, and it is essential to respect and support various relationship choices. Understanding that the couple norm is not a one-size-fits-all approach will foster a more inclusive and accepting society.

The couple norm continues to demonstrate its tenacity in maintaining strong and stable relationships. It provides a sense of security and belonging, while also offering a framework for shared responsibilities and support. While alternative relationship structures are gaining recognition, the majority continues to find comfort and fulfillment within the traditional norm.

However, it is important to recognize that relationships are diverse, and the couple norm should embrace flexibility and inclusivity. Allowing for individual growth and supporting different relationship choices will ensure that the tenacity of the couple norm remains relevant in an ever-changing world.



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The Tenacity of the Couple-Norm explores the ongoing strength and insidious grip of couple-normativity across changing landscapes of law, policy and everyday life in four contrasting national contexts: the UK, Bulgaria, Norway and Portugal.

By investigating how the couple-norm is lived and experienced, how it has changed over time, and how it varies between places and social groups, this book provides a detailed analysis of changing intimate citizenship regimes in Europe, and makes a major intervention in understandings of the contemporary condition of personal life. The authors develop the feminist concept of 'intimate citizenship' and propose the new concept of 'intimate citizenship regime', offering a study of intimate citizenship regimes as normative systems that have been undergoing profound change in recent decades. Against the backdrop of processes of de-patriarchalization, liberalization, pluralization and homonormalization, the ongoing potency of the couple-norm becomes ever clearer.

The authors provide an analysis of how the couple-form is institutionalized, supported and mandated by legal regulations, social policies and everyday practices, and how this serves to shape the intimate life choices and trajectories of those who seem to be living aslant to the conventional heterosexual cohabiting couple-form. Attending also to practices and moments that challenge couple-normativity, both consciously chosen and explicit, as well as circumstantial, subconscious and implicit, *The Tenacity of the Couple-Norm* makes an important contribution to literatures on citizenship, intimacy, family life, and social change in sociology, social policy, socio-legal studies, gender/sexuality/queer studies and psychosocial studies.

Praise for *The Tenacity of the Couple-Norm*

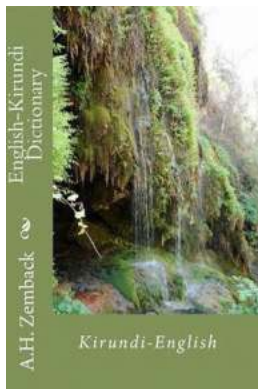
'The originality of *The Tenacity of the Couple-Norm* rests on its multifaceted historical observation and analysis of the recent developments of policies, social movements and cultures dominant in four different European countries and their effects on the intimate lives and relationships of individuals living outside the

couple-norm. This book may serve as an invaluable work for academics and students who study intimate citizenship regimes, intimate and couple relationships and the ways such relationships accept or resist the norms of intimate citizenship.'

LSE Review of Books

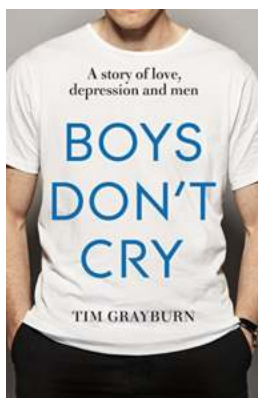
'The book is innovative in topic, accessible in style, and promising in its potential to inform policy-making. Moreover, it will undoubtedly contribute to future scholarship in gender studies, sociology, anthropology and European studies.'

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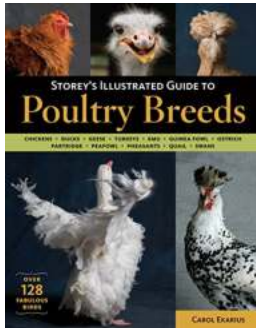
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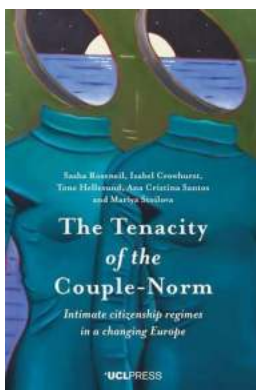
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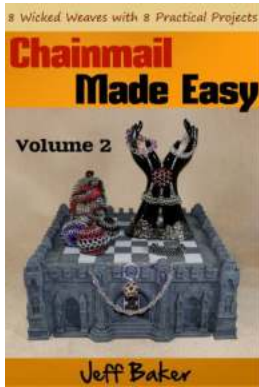
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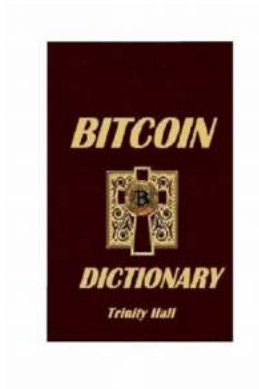
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