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**Review: PAPERBACKS: Non-fiction: Delusions of Gender: The Real Science Behind Sex Differences by Cordelia Fine (Icon, £8.99)****BYLINE:** Judith Rice**SECTION:** GUARDIAN REVIEW PAGES; Pg. 19**LENGTH:** 172 words

Finding her son's kindergarten teacher reading a book which "claimed that his brain was incapable of forging the connection between emotion and language", Fine, a neuroscientist, decided to write this analysis of such assertions. We are all in her debt. She has the expertise to check the research references cited by academic as well as popular books on the subject, and she has the clarity and wit to impart her findings to the lay reader. She exposes shockingly lightweight research that is taken seriously, and nuanced research that is misreported. She finds that tests for innate differences in empathy actually test for its desirability, that studies which claimed to show feminine superiority in mind reading investigated only women, that an experiment which seemed to show that newborn girls were more attuned to facial expressions proved no such thing. She concludes that there seems to be no evidence for "hard-wired" gender differences, but that that "wiring" can be changed by attitudes, behaviour and social conditioning.

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