The Differences between Boys and Girls

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Abstract

Through careful studies over time, authors began to notice significant differences between boys and girls. Not only do their readings include when boys and girls are young, but also when they become adults. The authors incorporate information on how boys and girls lives are while growing up. Their roles in society and in life change immensely throughout their lifetime. In general, males are expected to be seen as a dominance towards females. Females, however, should typically come off as weak and carry out to male’s needs. Emotions, an important factor for the two genders, are mentioned as well. For males, it is okay to show anger and anger only; whereas females are allowed to show any emotion but anger. Because of the power men seem to have over women, it is appropriate to say that among the two, males have more authority than females do in today’s society as well as throughout history.

*Keywords:* patriarchy, sexist

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One sunny afternoon in Parker, Colorado, there were authors by the name of bell hooks and Simone de Beauvoir at a not so popular coffee shop called “Fika.” It was a fairly small coffee shop but known as a good place for social interactions, considering it’s on Main Street. Outside, the shop looked small, surrounded by large, brick buildings and the business of people and their dogs. Inside the shop, the entrance consisted of where you would order your drinks. Further into the shop, you would see tables and chairs meant to set up as a spot to focus on school work, your job, or socializing with some friends. De Beauvoir and hooks walked into the shop fascinated by how welcoming the environment felt. After they ordered their drinks, the two found a table in a corner by a dusty window. As hooks and de Beauvoir started talking about the works they’ve written, the topic of how boys and girls are different sparked up.

“How fathers treat their children greatly affects how different their sons and daughters will grow up. If they treat their daughters as fragile and precious and treat their sons as muscular and demanding, that is how their children will end up. How their father treats their siblings will help determine what their children will look for in the other gender,” de Beauvoir explains to hooks. De Beauvoir continues to explain to hooks that when a woman finds a man that she feels safe around, she will feel, “subjected to his gentle authority, she will find the same security as in her father’s arms,” (de Beauvoir, pg. 395) supporting her theory on father figures.

“I’d have to agree on that,” hook says. “Some fathers can be too harsh on their sons. When parents don’t give enough attention and love to their sons, the boys can turn into something that you would never see them become.” Hook describes from her reading how, “many boys fear the wrath of the father.” (hooks, pg. 48) When teenage boys are “told” by society that they cannot show feelings other than anger and rage that can eventually lead into violence and other serious disruptions. Parents usually wave off behavior like that with the phrase, “boys will be boys”, (hooks, pg. 49) which can apply to girls as well.

Hooks continues to analyze the world of a teenage boy. In her work “Being a Boy”, she points out that boys are, “Trapped by a world that tells them boys should not express feelings, teenage males have nowhere to go where grief is accepted… most adults are more comfortable confronting a raging teenager than one who is overwhelmed by sorrow and cannot stop weeping.” (hooks, pg. 50) Furthermore, hooks explains to de Beauvoir that, “small boys and young men are daily inundated with a poisonous pedagogy that supports male violence and male domination… that teaches them to disrespect and hate women.” (hooks, pg. 51)

De Beauvoir agrees with hooks’ point on males becoming more dominant and very different over females. “Violence in particular is not permitted to her,” (de Beauvoir, pg. 397) de Beauvoir writes in her passage “The Girl.” Compared to hooks’ work, violence is okay for men and passed off as “boys will be boys” whereas girls are not even allowed to be violent. De Beauvoir illustrates to hooks that this violence from men makes, “some girls, far from shy, who get no enjoyment strolling through Paris alone because, incessantly bothered, they are incessantly on their guard: all their pleasure is ruined.” (de Beauvoir, pg. 401)

Connecting their arguments on how boys and girls can be raised differently, hooks and de Beauvoir came to a conclusion that with boys growing up emotionally unattached from their parents can cause boys to be harmful to others, especially themselves. They grow up having to hide all feelings but anger and since they let out so much anger, it causes serious problems. With girls growing up and letting them show all feelings but anger makes a girl weak and vulnerable. The combination is not a healthy one. Males could easily take powerful control over females that cannot be escaped. De Beauvoir and hooks agreed that in order for this to change, parents need to start treating both their male and female the children the same. Children and especially teenagers need to know that any emotions they are feeling are okay to be publicly shown. Teenagers shouldn’t feel degraded toward any emotion ever.

References

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