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# BOYS WILL BE BOYS EVEN AMONG MONKEYS

Posted by Astartois - 2008/04/08 12:25

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## INTERESTING READ (FROM DISCOVERY CHANNEL)

April 7, 2008 -- The notion that children's taste in toys might somehow be genetically determined has long been disparaged by psychologists -- pooh-poohed as unscientific, sexist or both. But a study by researchers in the United States suggests that when it comes to choosing between trucks and cuddly stuffed animals, chromosomes could make a difference. There have been hundreds of studies that sought to distinguish acquired from innate behavior patterns in small children. But by the time kids are old enough to choose and play with toys, they have also been socialized -- picking up cues from their parents, peers and television -- on how little girls and boys should behave, making it impossible to tease the two influences apart.

So a team of scientists led by Kim Wallen of the Yerkes National Primate Research Center in Atlanta, Georgia decided to offer typical "male" and "female" toys to rhesus monkeys to see if preferences aligned with sex.

Much to their surprise, they did. The 11 male monkeys headed straight for the wheeled toys, such as dump trucks, leaving the plush toys more-or-less unmolested. The 23 females were more curious, and played with both. "They are not subject to advertising. They are not subject to parental encouragement, they are not subject to peer chastisement," said Wallen. The results support an earlier study at Texas A&M University, with green vervet monkeys, which also showed a distinct preference among male monkeys for "masculine" playthings. Wallen's study was first published in the journal *Hormones and Behavior*.

Incidentally if we want our boys to grow up to be healthy men and to treat women -- and each other -- with respect and dignity, we need to stop saying that "boys will be boys" and demand a higher standard, don't you agree? Gals do I hear AYE.....?

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