

TED TALK

CONTRERA

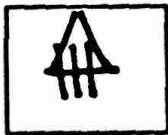
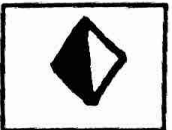
TOPIC
BENCHMARK PREP:
GENDER + TOYS

SD10

NAME:

PERIOD:

NIXON



Text 1: **CONTRERA**

What does the author say?

What do you think about the author's views?

What examples frame your opinion?

Text 2: **NIXON**

What does the author say?

What do you think about the author's views?

What examples frame your opinion?

Text 3: **TED TALK**

What does the author say?

What do you think about the author's views?

What examples frame your opinion?

Text 4: **OLDS**

What does the author say?

What do you think about the author's views?

What examples frame your opinion?

Target will stop separating toys, bedding by gender

By Jessica Contrera

Washington Post

August 10, 2015, 9:10 AM



Two months ago, an Ohio mom's tweet went viral when she called out Target for separating "building sets" and "girls' building sets." Now, the retailer is fixing the problem: for building sets and all toys, plus bedding, home decor, entertainment and more.

"We never want guests or their families to feel frustrated or limited by the way things are presented," Target's press release said. "Over the past year, guests have raised important questions about a handful of signs in our stores that offer product suggestions based on gender. In some cases, like apparel, where there are fit and sizing differences, it makes sense. In others, it may not."

The toy section will get the biggest makeover. Along with grouping all toys together, the aisles will no longer have colored backdrops to indicate gender, such as pink and yellow for girls or blue and green for boys.

Though the company's announcement makes no mention of the tweeted photo that gained so much attention, one line shows that they've been paying attention to the heightened awareness of gender issues: "We know that shopping preferences and needs change," it said.

In other words, people care about gender more than ever.

Last week, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers faced an onslaught of Internet hate for a "women's movement" campaign to engage female fans with game-day recipes, a Pinterest board of crafts and football manicures, and videos that explain complicated football insights like the job of the running back — to "run the ball and score touchdowns."

It was pretty much the opposite of the female-focused campaigns that have had success lately: Pantene's "Not Sorry," Always's "Like a Girl" and Under Armour's "I Will What I Want." All of these show women and girls confronting female stereotypes.

These campaigns also add to the rise in awareness of the transgender community, which is slowly showing the world that gender dysphoria (feeling your gender is different than the sex you were born with) is real, and not just for Caitlyn Jenner.

Here's where we would usually include a quote from a marketing expert on how all of this adds up to a changing tide in the retail mindset. But a 2011 video of a little girl name Riley ranting about the pink-ness of the store aisle is just as informative:

"Why do all the girls have to buy princesses?" she says, slamming down the hand that's not holding a Scooby Doo Fred doll. "Some girls like superheroes, some girls like princesses. Some boys like superheroes, some boys like princesses!"

Thank you, Riley.

Abi Bechtel, the mom who tweeted about the building sets aisle, has seen firsthand that this isn't just a problem for girls. Her three sons, ages 7, 9 and 12, used to have no problem picking out or playing with dolls. These days, they'll say "Eww, I'm not going in that aisle, that's girl stuff."

"And we just have to have those conversations, that you can play with anything you want to," Bechtel said Sunday. "And, there's nothing wrong with girl stuff."

Of course, getting rid of gender-based marketing is a marketing move, too. Target will surely be looking out for customers' reactions, and so far, many of them are major eye rolls at this show of political correctness.

"Why don't you paint your store white so you offend nobody at all," one Facebook commenter wrote.

"This is a pr stunt and a bad one. All they want is to save money on decorating the section," another said.

Next to watch: toy makers such as Lego or Disney and similar retailers, i.e. Walmart and Toys 'R' Us.

Toys 'R' Us in the U.K. has already addressed the issue, but its American counterpart is still dividing by "girls' toys" and "boys' toys." And it still has Building Sets For Girls on its website.

Rite of Passage

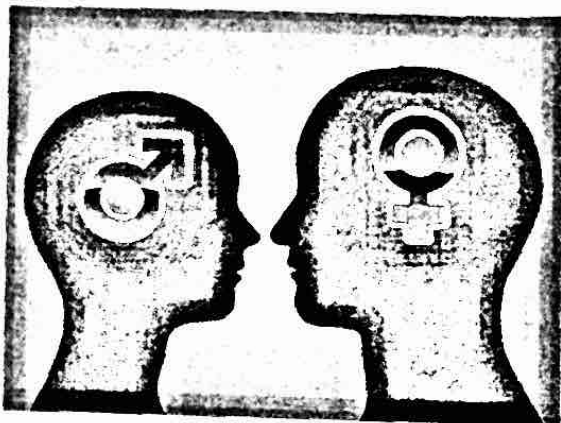
BY SHARON OLDS

As the guests arrive at our son's party
they gather in the living room—
short men, men in first grade
with smooth jaws and chins.
Hands in pockets, they stand around 5
jostling, jockeying for place, small fights
breaking out and calming. One says to another
How old are you? —Six. —I'm seven. —So?
They eye each other, seeing themselves 10
tiny in the other's pupils. They clear their
throats a lot, a room of small bankers,
they fold their arms and frown. *I could beat you*
up. a seven says to a six,
the midnight cake, round and heavy as a 15
turret behind them on the table. My son,
freckles like specks of nutmeg on his cheeks,
chest narrow as the balsa keel of a
model boat, long hands
cool and thin as the day they guided him
out of me, speaks up as a host 20
for the sake of the group.
We could easily kill a two-year-old,
he says in his clear voice. The other
men agree, they clear their throats
like Generals, they relax and get down to 25
playing war, celebrating my son's life.

Sharon Olds, "Rite of Passage" from *Strike Sparks: Selected Poems 1980-2002*. Copyright © 2004 by Sharon Olds. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.
Source: *Strike Sparks: Selected Poems, 1980-2002* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2004)

Matters of the Brain: Why Men and Women Are So Different

by Robin Nixon | May 01, 2012 08:40am ET



LONDON – A prevalent understanding, particularly in the 1980s, was that boys and girls are born cognitively the same. It was the way parents and society treated them that made them different.

Since then, a preponderance of research has called this belief into question. The majority of today's psychologists agree that some of the differences exhibited by male and female brains are innate.

"We do socialize our boys and girls differently, but the contribution of biology is not zero," said Diane Halpern, a professor of psychology at Claremont McKenna College in California, who has been studying cognitive gender differences for 25 years. Halpern was a keynote speaker at the British Psychological Society Annual Conference here last Thursday (April 19).

How much, rather than whether, biology contributes is where the unusually heated debate is now focused, she said.

Differences confirmed (so far)

Some of the many gender differences that float in popular consciousness have more support than others.

The ones that have been consistently found across cultures, life spans and even across species are the most likely — but by no means guaranteed — to have some biological underpinning.

Across age groups, species and nations, males tend to be better at various spatial skills. For example, male dominance in rotating an object in their minds, a quite large difference that has been reliably found for the last 35 years, has recently been documented in infants as young as 3 months old. Similarly, on average, males across cultures and species are better at judging angle orientation and navigating by cardinal direction.

Females, on the other hand, tend to have more verbal fluency and greater memory for objects — that is, "they are better at remembering where things are," Halpern said during her talk. Women and females from other species are more likely to navigate by using landmarks than cardinal direction.

"But you can get there using both," Halpern told LiveScience, pointing out that having different skills does not mean that men and women have different levels of intelligence. "There is not a smarter sex," she said.

In general, across a variety of tests, differences seem to fall particularly at the tails of distribution curves, with more males doing very poorly *and* more males doing exceedingly well.

Differences that vary

It has been over reported that boys tend to do better at math while girls often excel at reading and writing. In truth, the degree of difference is context-dependent.

In school, girls tend to do better in *all* subjects, albeit by only about a quarter grade on a four-point scale, Halpern said, citing U.S.-focused research. Boys, on the other hand, tend to excel at tests that focus on areas outside their school's curriculum, she said.

Whether these findings mean schools are biased against boys, standardized tests are biased against girls, or nothing of the sort are among the unanswered questions that rage through psychology, education systems and parenting circles today.

And society does play a big role — just not always with the expected results.

In more gender-equal societies, "the male advantage in math virtually disappears," Halpern said, but other differences grow. When given more equal encouragement and access to education, on average, girls become even better at reading than boys and boys further outstrip girls in visual-spatial tasks.

Economics also matter. "Being poor is not good for anyone's cognitive development," Halpern said.

While the disadvantage may be staggering in the poorest nations, it is true in developed countries as well. Halpern explained that while women outnumber men in college, it is primarily men from lower socioeconomic brackets that are not getting degrees.

Losing talent

So, if neither sex is more intelligent, why are we so stratified by adulthood? Why, for example, are more than 90 percent of CEOs male and more than 90 percent of secretaries female?

As long as women are doing most of the caretaking jobs in society, Halpern told LiveScience, such as taking care of young and elderly loved ones, they are going to occupy wage-earning jobs that require less time. (In

addition to being a research psychologist, Halpern was the founding director of the Berger Institute for Work, Family and Children.)

There is also an issue of interest, she said, in that many young women may not realize that being, say, an engineer can also be a "helping" job.

As a society, we are not only losing talented women from the workplace, she added, we are also losing talented men in the domestic front. Men can be excellent caregivers, and numerous studies have shown the importance of fathering for children.

"We can't have equality in work, if we don't have equality in the home," she said.

Directions

View the T.E.D. Talk and complete the following grid. If you run out of space on the grid for any of your answers, feel free to continue writing on the back of this sheet.

1 Title of T.E.D. Talk:

2 Name of Speaker:

3 Date of T.E.D. Talk and Number of Views:

4 What was the speaker's thesis (main point) of this speech?

6 Ethos is a speaker's ability to build credibility, establish himself/herself as an expert, and/or convince the audience members that the speaker has their best interests at heart. How does this speaker build ethos? Feel free to also refer to the speaker's profile information from the ted.com webpage as you build your answer.

5 Circle any of the following adjectives that describe this T.E.D. talk:

- Humorous
- Inspiring
- Dull
- Persuasive
- Intellectual
- Repetitive
- Confusing

7 Pathos is an appeal to emotions (everything from humor to horror) in order to sway an audience, while logos is the use of data/evidence to prove one's case. Did this speaker rely more on pathos or logos in his/her presentation? What argument/point in this presentation did you find the most compelling? Why?

8 T.E.D. Talk presenters are known as effective public speakers. Describe two things this speaker does well in terms of engaging the audience. Be sure to include the minute:second mark (ex: 8:49) to denote the two specific moments you discuss here.

- 1.
- 2.

9 Write two specific things you learned from this presentation.

- 1.
- 2.

10 If you could ask this speaker a question about his/her information or presentation, what would you ask?

11 Give one piece of constructive criticism that would improve the presentation.

12 What group of people would benefit the most from hearing this lecture?

