The Bio-Social Origins of Gender Relations

It is obvious to most people that there are differences between the sexes. No matter how much we would like to have a homogenous world where everyone is the same gender, race, creed, etc., we still cannot discount the basic fact that life is about differences. There are many schools of thought that say we should concentrate on our likenesses rather than our differences. This is all well and fine but it is our differences that are the spice of life.

In the two articles *Heart to Heart: Sex Differences in Emotion* by Deborah Blum and *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman, the issue of emotional management by the sexes is taken up. Both articles present interesting data about how emotional identity is developed in boys in girls. For instance, both believe that girls are better equipped to respond to the emotional state of others, where as boys tend to be totally oblivious to the covert emotional stress of others. Goleman says, “If a boy who has gotten hurt gotten hurt gets upset, he is expected to get out of the way and stop crying so the game can go on. If the same happens among a group of girls who are playing, the game stops while everyone gathers around to help the girl who is crying.”

Blum takes a different route by saying, “Boys, more than girls, want competitive games with real winners.” This implies that boys have a tendency to be loners; in that they seek to remove all competition for territory (may it be physical or emotional). From her point of view this statement also gives the impression that girls are more likely to
play group games that don’t involve competition. That is because women are more empathetic than men.

Above all both articles speak to the issue that the sexes are different, but it seems that they differ in the opinion when it comes to the device(s) that influence these differences the most. Goleman believes that it is primarily a social thing that spawns the emotional gap between the sexes, while Blum believes it is more innate. Goleman says, "Girls are exposed to more information about emotions than are boys."

Blum indicates the level of physical sensitivity displayed by women over men. According to her article, there have been studies that show that women’s sense of touch, smell and hearing are quite acute. "Females, for so long the first line of care giving... have to be oriented to the needs of others. No wonder, then, that females possess such exquisitely tuned senses."

In a nutshell the fact still remains that the sexes are different. Whether that difference comes from nature or nurture is a question to be pondered. The information gathered from the study of such a rudimentary function of life could do wonders for the betterment of society at large. From my personal standpoint life is beautiful the way it is. It makes me feel better to know that women are women and "boys will be boys."