

Women are, according to stereotyped belief, more peaceful than men. At first glance someone might say that difference is genetic, hence nature (genetics and evolution) instead of nurture (how we're raised). But how, then, do you describe the men who stray from this norm and are just as peaceful, if not more so, than the women they are around? It is because of this group of deviating men (as well as the relatively few violent women) that we need to explore the nurture aspect.

Nurture largely begins right after birth (though one can argue that the mother's habits during pregnancy are some nurture) when children are still quite young, and so we start our exploration where nurturing begins. Deep within our society rests the tradition that girls like pink and boys blue. This in itself has no significance towards one gender being more peaceful than the other, but when you recognize that we generalize the same way about toys it does have significance. We buy cars, trucks, balls, and guns for our sons, so that is what they come to prefer and dolls for our daughters, so those are what they come to prefer (*The mismeasure of woman*). Men are, at a young age, predisposed to violence, while women are predisposed to what can only be described as nurturing behavior. By simply defying these patterns as parents we would be changing how we nurture our children and quite possibly end up with grown sons that are equal with their sisters in the care they give life and their attitudes towards violence.

These predispositions are what lead to the mother in families, or short of them then many times daughters, being the one who nurtures the children. It is from these predispositions as well that we get males as the majority of employees in what Barash calls the "killing establishment" (soldiers, executioners, hunters, and

slaughterhouse workers). From childhood these men were inundated with messages of violence, while their sisters got messages of nurturing peace. Both messages were considered comfortable and the proper messages for their respective genders, but as much as that may be correct, they could have as easily gotten the opposite messages and turned out differently as a result. Women in the military and men helping more with parenting may be examples of both messages working on both genders.

We also need to keep in mind that how we treat our children, or what tangible items we give them, are not the only things that differ between our sons and daughters. Both through us (not to mention friends, school, etc.) they are constantly getting messages about what it means to be male and female. These messages, as Ian Harris talks about, are embedded deep in our society and among other things say that men are practically supposed to be more violent than women. All our children are already getting all these messages, but we need to encourage them to follow whichever ones they feel connected to. That way more boys may naturally fall into the social position that currently only girls end up in now.

Johan Galtung asks if woman is to man as peace is to violence? If the practices of nurturing our sons and those of nurturing our daughters can be mixed, and are indeed interchangeable, then that expression isn't accurate. It is a measured fact that men are the majority of those who commit crimes, and stereotypically when we think of violence, males come to mind before females do. There are high correlations between gender and violence, yet we can diminish that correlation by just raising children equally instead of looking at one gender as blue and the other pink. Galtung

proposes a few hypotheses for how to give boys similar predispositions as their sisters, but really the only surest method is to actually raise the two genders with similar, if not identical, types and amounts of nurturing.

Beyond the nurture we give our children we can examine if the very act of nurturing children (of either gender) predisposes mothers to a peaceful lifestyle. The notion is a simple one; because mothers are the physical incubators of new life they have a special emotional connection to pacifism and the opposition of violence of any kind. In reality, Johnston and Sapiro found that being mothers only affect these women's attention to wars, and that it didn't affect men at all to have children in their lives.

Ultimately we find that though some nature is involved with women being more peaceful than men much of how we actually act is heavily dependent on how we've been brought up. If you think about it, nature affects us most during puberty, otherwise it only has an effect on our environment, and so it tends to make sense that nurture would have the lasting, deeper, effects. The messages of what it means to be male and female we decide to heed, the toys we may have been given as a child, and the ways our parents and teachers taught us what it means to be human are all just as important as any genetic or evolutionary predisposition, if not more important. Most women are more peaceful than most men, but this is a learned trait of women that they get largely from the nurturing care given to them by family and society more broadly. That being said, we have no excuses not to try and change this so that both women and men of future generations can be equally peaceful and we can potentially avoid some of the conflicts we're in today.