

Critical analysis of girl toys, boy toys and parenting: the science (of) toy pref...



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Critical Analysis and Response Essay “ Girl Toys, Boy Toys and Parenting: The Science (of) Toy Preferences in children” by Gwen Dewar examines factors that influence the toy preferences of boys and girls. Dewar’s argument focuses on how genetic factors affect sex-biased toy preferences for children by citing studies and experiments. However, studies and experiments given as examples detracted from the main argument, that “ gender-typical” toys are partly a result of genetic factors, resulting in a less convincing overall argument.

Firstly, there is too much focus on boys and “ boy toys” in the article. Dewar cites results from an experiment indicating boys at every age show a preference for “ boy toys” (2009), supporting her argument that preference of boys for “ boy toys” is inborn. The same experiment shows that girls do not show a preference for “ girl toys” until the age of five, from here it is apparent that the preference of girls for girl toys is not genetic, resulting in a loop hole in Dewar’s argument that for both boys and girls, their choice of toys is intrinsic.

She also discusses more boy toys than girl toys, as paragraphs nine to fifteen analyze why toys with wheels appeal to boys. This results in an imbalanced argument that neglects to convince readers that “ girl toys” are a result of genetic levels in girls, with little information with regards to girls and “ girl toys”. Secondly, Dewar assumes that monkeys and children are comparable as she uses the results of studies, with monkeys as the subject of the experiment, to account for sex-biased toy preferences.

She applies the findings of an experiment conducted with rhesus monkeys that showed a consistent preference for wheeled toys, and another experiment on vervet monkeys that were more likely to pick up toy cars (2009), to conclude that boys are attracted to toys with wheels. Man should not be compared to monkeys, as they are very different both physically and mentally. Dewar would make a more solid conclusion if she cites experiments where the subjects of the experiment are children. Finally, Dewar analyzes why males are drawn to toy trucks in the last five paragraphs, yet there is no solid conclusion as to why this is so.

Dewar might be trying to convince her readers that the preferences of males to toy cars are due to genetic factors, but this will not support her argument strongly as toy trucks only account for a portion of “ boy toys”. Boy toys such as guns are not mechanically-oriented unlike toy trucks, while balls and bow sets do not fulfill the “ ruckus” factor of toy trucks. Therefore these paragraphs fail to prove that the choice of toys of children is a genetic factor. Overall, Dewar succeeds in bringing across her point that genetic factors affect sex-biased toy preferences for children.

She draws her conclusions from studies and experiments, leading to reliable arguments that are scientifically proven. However, Dewar’s argument could have been more convincing if she applied an equal proportion of studies on both boys and girls, and used examples and experiments that are more applicable. References: Dewar, G. (2009). Girl Toys, Boy Toys, and Parenting: The Science (of) toy preferences in children. Parenting Science Retrieved on 7 July 2011. from [http://www. parentingscience. com/girl-toys-and-parenting.](http://www.parentingscience.com/girl-toys-and-parenting.html)

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