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SEEMS VIVE LA DIFFERENCE

Laurie waved an expressive hand and her brow was furrowed as she sought to clarify her thoughts and her speech. "Well," she said slowly, "some girls like dolls. The boys don't like dolls and sometimes boys hit and girls don't like to hit. So that's the difference between boys and girls." The concept of two sexes is not at all clear but in the minds of small children. The perspicacious parents of today don't make sharp distinctions between tasks for girls and tasks for boys and privileges for either. These children consider themselves people first and foremost. Girls strive scholastically, athletically, and socially and boys expect them to...with no constraints on either side.

It was on traditional "Girls' Day" that the subject of "boys" and "girls" came up.

"Boys have mustaches and girls don't." Scott was triumphant.

"Girls wear necklaces." Andrew paused and relected. "Boys wear necklaces too. Girls have their hair in pony tails sometimes. Boys wear their hair like George Washington sometimes. Boys have ladies' purses. I've seen 'em." Andrew paused helplessly. His face plainly revealed the fact that he believed there probably was a difference but he couldn't see it!

~~Ms~~ Meaghan grew loquacious. "Some boys like different things than girls like. Maybe boys like cars and girls don't and everybody likes different things because they're different and maybe-everybody- if everybody liked the same things it'd be hard to tell anybody apart. They'd look alike and you couldn't tell the boys from the girls."

Michael was vehement. "I hate girls." It was pointed out that his mother was a girl. Mike was aghast. Then he saw the way out. "My mother isn't a girl...she's a LADY!"

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John held up his hand for silence. Everyone was quiet and expectant. John was a BRAIN and knew EVERYTHING. "I think," he said cautiously, "we're called boys and girls so our mothers can tell us apart."

"Girls have long eyelashes," offered Rachel. "Scott has longer eyelashes than ANYBODY," was the chorus. Rachel retreated. The children were quiet, mulling over this odd situation. Boys and girls wore their hair long or short, wore jewelry, played with "dolls" (G.I. Joe etc.), carried purses. The only difference they'd established was the mustache. Then Stacey had an inspiration: "Boys don't wear dresses!" "Girls wear pants," began Julie. "Yes," chortled Stacey in triumph, "but, BOYS DON'T WEAR DRESSES!"

That seemed to stimulate Jess. "Girls," he said judiciously, "have different bottoms 'cause boys have penises and girls don't and (his argument weakening) they both go bathroom through their bottoms."

The group was unimpressed and quiet disinterested. Why boys wouldn't wear dresses puzzled and intrigued them. The girls admitted they liked wearing pants. "My mom sometimes ~~she~~ wears my dad's shirts," offered Brandon. "She likes to." No boy, however, could remember his dad's wearing his mother's skirt. That certainly wasn't fair! They went home still puzzled.

The next day Jimmy sidled up to me. "You know that boy and girl stuff yesterday? I said to my mom...if moms wore the dad's stuff why couldn't the dads wear the moms' dresses." "And what did she say, Jimmy," I asked.

"She said if the dads wanted to wear the moms' dresses it was all right with her...if they had the guts!" He wandered off shaking his head.