A New Psychology of Women

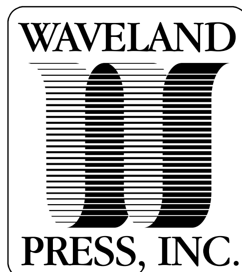
Fourth Edition

A New Psychology of Women

Gender, Culture, and Ethnicity

Fourth Edition

Hilary M. Lips
Radford University



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To Wayne,
Whose partnership, support, and enthusiasm have helped to make this and many other projects more engaging, intricate, and joyful

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Contents

About the Author xii
Preface xiii

1 Why a Global, Multicultural Psychology of Women 1

Femininity and Masculinity Are Socially Constructed 5
- How Many Genders Are There? 8

If Gender Is the Issue, Why Focus on Women? 11
- Should a Psychology of Women Be "Feminist"? 13

Why a Multicultural, Global Approach? 16

Stereotyping and Discrimination: Universal Barriers for Women? 19
- How Universal Are Gender Stereotypes? 20
- Where Are Gender Stereotypes Most Traditional? 23
- Components of Gender Stereotypes 23
- Gender Stereotypes and "Shifting Standards" 24
- The Impact of Stereotypes 24
- Prejudice: Negative Evaluation of Women and Their Work 25
- Sexism's Links with Other Forms of Prejudice 27
- Discrimination: Keeping Women Down and Out 32

■ Summary 37 ■ Key Terms 38 ■ Discussion Questions 38
■ For Additional Reading 39 ■ Web Resources 39

2 Female–Male Comparisons: The Meaning and Significance of Difference 40

A Brief History of the Research 42

Approaches to Knowledge: Issues of Method, Evidence, and Truth 46
- Feminist Issues and Influences in Psychological Research 46
- Quantitative or Qualitative Research: How Important Are Numbers? 48
- Doing Science: Logical Positivism, Essentialism, and Social Constructionism 49
- What Is Good Scientific Evidence? 52
- Alternative Approaches to Knowledge 58

Gender Differences and Similarities in Abilities or Styles 60
Research on Differences 61
Explanations for Gender Differences in Performance 71
Gender Differences and Similarities in Aggression 76
Explaining Differences and Similarities:
Can Biology and Environment Be Separated? 78
The Meaning of Difference 80
The Question of Differences: The Wrong Question? 81
■ Summary 82 ■ Key Terms 84 ■ Discussion Questions 84
■ For Additional Reading 84 ■ Web Resources 85

3 Growing Up Female: The Female Body and Its Meanings 86

Sexual Differentiation: How Bodies Become Female or Male 88
Step 1: The Chromosomes 89
Step 2: The Gonads 90
Step 3: Hormones 91
Step 4: The Internal Reproductive Tract 91
Step 5: The External Genitalia 91
The Language of Sexual Differentiation 92
Does the Brain Differentiate by Sex? 92
The Next Step: Rearing 95
Intersex and Behavioral Gender Differences 98
The Female Body 101
Menstruation 102
Pregnancy and Childbirth 112
Controlling the Female Body 115
Female Genital Mutilation 115
Virginity Testing 118
Abortion 118
Confining the Female Body: Seclusion, Covering, Binding 121
Displaying the Female Body 123
Body Shape and Weight 124
Face, Skin, and Hair 129
■ Summary 131 ■ Key Terms 132 ■ Discussion Questions 133
■ For Additional Reading 133 ■ Web Resources 134

4 Growing Up Female II: Expectations, Images, and Identities 135

Theories of How Gender Shapes Who We Are 137
Psychoanalytic/Identification Theories 137
Evolutionary Theories 144
Social Learning Theories 149
Developmental Theories 152
Beyond Childhood: Social Roles 153

Models and Media Messages around the World 154
What Does It Mean to Be "Feminine"? 161
Psychological Androgyny 161
Gender Schema Theory 163
Gender-Based Identity and Other Identities: Shaping the Pool of Possible Selves 165
Identity Flexibility and Change 171
The Self as a Cultural Construction 172
■ Summary 174 ■ Key Terms 175 ■ Discussion Questions 175
■ For Additional Reading 176 ■ Web Resource 176

5 **Getting the Message: Self-Confidence, Assertiveness, and Entitlement** 177
Self-Confidence, Courage, and Femininity 179
Girls' Self-Confidence 180
A Loss of Self-Esteem at Adolescence? 186
Confidence, Education, and Life Choices 195
Culture and the Construction of Entitlement 200
Girls and Women Using Power 202
Entitlement and the Use of Power 202
Reactions to Female Power 204
■ Summary 207 ■ Key Terms 208 ■ Discussion Questions 208
■ For Additional Reading 208 ■ Web Resources 209

6 **Connections: Communicating with and Relating to Others** 210
Communication 213
Verbal Communication 213
Nonverbal Communication 224
Why Should Gender Be Related to Communication Patterns? 228
Friendship 229
Friendships between Women 229
Women's Friendships with Men 238
How Friendship Patterns Reflect Social Context 239
■ Summary 240 ■ Key Terms 242 ■ Discussion Questions 242
■ For Additional Reading 242 ■ Web Resources 243

7 **Family and Intimate Relationships** 244
The Context of Intimate Relationships: Family Structure 245
The Couple Bond 248
Love 248
Power, Influence, and Equality in Couple Relationships 252
Must Everyone Be Part of a Couple? 260
Marriage: Legalizing the Couple Bond 261

Families and Parenthood 266
Mothers and Children 267
Mother–Daughter Relationships 275
Fathers and Children 277
Women Who Do Not Have Children 280
■ Summary 281 ■ Key Terms 282 ■ Discussion Questions 282
■ For Additional Reading 283 ■ Web Resources 283

8 **Women's Work** 284
Job, Family, and Household Tasks: All of It Is Work for Women 286
Women's Paid Work 289
Women's Unpaid Work 291
Equity and Discrimination 293
Discrimination in Hiring, Evaluating, and Paying Workers 295
In Search of Gender Equity in the Workplace: Some Remedies 308
Perceptions of Fairness and Reactions to Affirmative Action 317
Sexual Harassment in the Workplace 320
A Family-Friendly Workplace? Striving for Work–Family Balance 324
Child Care: A Thorny Issue 326
"Best Practices" by U.S. Companies in Aid of a Comfortable Work–Family Balance 327
Having It All? Stress and the Double Day 328
Staying Busy, Staying Healthy? 328
The Future of Women's Work 329
■ Summary 332 ■ Key Terms 334 ■ Discussion Questions 334
■ For Additional Reading 334 ■ Web Resources 335

9 **Physical Health, Illness, and Healing** 336
Women's Strength and Fitness 338
Women and Physical Illness around the World 343
Life Expectancy 343
Some Major Health Problems for Women 344
Factors Related to Women's Health 357
Health- and Illness-Related Behaviors 357
Poverty and Nutrition 360
Stress and Social Support 361
Women as Patients in Health Care Systems 365
Women as Healers 369
■ Summary 374 ■ Key Terms 375 ■ Discussion Questions 375
■ For Additional Reading 375 ■ Web Resources 376

10 **Mental Health, Illness, and Therapy** 377

Gender and Mental Health 378
A Double Standard of Mental Health? 379
Women and Mental Illness around the World 380
Depression 382
Eating Disorders 392
Anxiety Disorders 397
Alcohol and Drug Abuse 400
Diagnosis and Treatment 404
The Politics of Diagnosis 404
Psychotherapy 408
Drug Therapy 414
The Social Construction of Women's Mental Disorders 416
■ Summary 417 ■ Key Terms 418 ■ Discussion Questions 419
■ For Additional Reading 419 ■ Web Resources 420

11 **Myths and Scripts for Women Growing Older** 421

The Social Construction of Women's Aging 423
Images of Decline: Media Messages about Women's Aging 423
Missing Images: Invisible Older Women 426
Images of Power: Stronger, Older Women 427
Encountering Menopause: The Cultural Shaping of a Physiological Event 431
The Physical Change 432
The Experience of Menopause across Cultures 432
A Brief History of Medicine's Approach to Menopause 435
The Debate over Hormone Replacement Therapy 437
Menopause and the Politics of Aging across Cultures 439
New Roles and Relationships 441
The Empty Nest: Loss and/or Liberation? 441
Career Change and Retirement 443
Losing a Life Partner 444
Rejecting the Message of Decline 447
■ Summary 448 ■ Key Terms 449 ■ Discussion Questions 449
■ For Additional Reading 449 ■ Web Resources 450

12 **Sexualities** 451

Research on Sexuality: Where Do Our "Facts" Come From? 453
Sexual Desire and Sexual Response 458
The Medical Model of Sexuality and the Focus on Orgasm 462

Sexual Orientation 466
Defining Sexual Orientation 466
Is Women's Sexual Orientation Inborn? Discovered? Constructed? All of the Above? 469
The Social Context of Sexual Behavior 471
Culture and Sexual Scripts 471
Issues in Lesbian Sexualities 477
Sexualities and Disabilities 480
Managing the Consequences of Sex 482
Contraception 482
"Safe Sex" and Sexually Transmitted Infections 487
Motivations for Sex: Issues of Desire, Love, Power, and Money 489
■ Summary 494 ■ Key Terms 496 ■ Discussion Questions 496
■ For Additional Reading 496 ■ Web Resources 497

13 Violence against Women: A Worldwide Problem 498

Violence in Close Relationships 501
Dating Violence 502
Violence in Heterosexual Marital Relationships 505
Intimate Partner Violence among Lesbians, Bisexual Women, and Transgender Persons 513
Explaining Intimate Partner Abuse 514
Sex-Selective Abortion, Infanticide, and Systematic Neglect of Girls 517
Sexual Violence 518
Rape and Sexual Assault 519
Sexual Abuse of Children 528
Forced Prostitution and Sex Slavery 529
Sexual Harassment, Bullying, Intimidation, and Stalking 533
Pornography and Sexual Violence 535
Intimidation through the Media: Stalkers and Serial Killers as Entertainment 536
Torture and Ill-Treatment of Women in Custody 538
Protecting Women from Violence: Some Strategies 538
Freedom from Persecution on the Basis of Gender: A Human Right 542
■ Summary 543 ■ Key Terms 545 ■ Discussion Questions 545
■ For Additional Reading 545 ■ Web Resources 546

14 **Leadership, Power, and Social Change** 547

Images and Stereotypes of Powerful Women 549
Power and Femininity Don't Mix 549
Invisibility 556
Motivation, Skills, and Styles in the Use of Power 558
Do Women Want to Lead? 559
Claiming Leadership: Women and Men in Groups 560
Styles of Power and Influence 563
Inequality vs. Empowerment: Women around the World 567
"It's Not in Her Head": Barriers to Power for Women 570
Glass Ceiling or Labyrinth? 570
An Unwelcoming Environment 571
The Difficult Process of Change 575
Women in Power 577
Women as Political Leaders 577
Women, Resistance, and Collective Action: Wielding and Building Power from Below 582
Women Claiming Power 589
■ Summary 591 ■ Key Terms 592 ■ Discussion Questions 592
■ For Additional Reading 592 ■ Web Resources 593

Glossary 594
References 605
Author Index 681
Subject Index 696

About the Author

Hilary Lips was born in Canada and completed her undergraduate work at the University of Windsor. After earning her doctorate at Northwestern University, she taught at the University of Winnipeg for a number of years, where she developed a course on the psychology of gender and helped to initiate the Women's Studies program. She has been a visiting scholar at the University of Arizona's Southwest Institute for Research on Women, the University of South Florida, The University of Costa Rica, and the Institute for Psychology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. She is the author of a number of books and articles about the psychology of women and gender, including *Women, Men, and Power* (Mayfield, 1991), *Sex and Gender: An Introduction,* Sixth Edition (McGraw-Hill, 2008), and *Gender: The Basics* (Routledge, 2014). She spent time in New Zealand as a recipient of a Distinguished American Scholar award from the New Zealand–US Educational Foundation. She taught for many years in the Psychology Department at Radford University, Virginia, where she was also the Director of the Center for Gender Studies.

Preface

It is becoming increasingly clear that the world is a small and interconnected place, and that those of us who live our lives in North America cannot afford to ignore the lives, experiences, and opinions of those whose lives are lived elsewhere. Psychology, like many other disciplines, is shifting its focus to include an awareness that our theories and research are not culture neutral—that what any one of us thinks we know about human beings in general is shaped and limited by our own culture and experience. This book is designed to place the study of the psychology of women in line with this shifting focus.

One of the scholars who reviewed the initial proposal for this book, after expressing the opinion that such a project was timely and important, went on to say, rather ominously, "She is trying to write the psychology of *all* women *everywhere*." Let me say at the outset that this impossible task is indeed *not* the one I would presume to set for myself. I cannot but write from my own perspective, my own cultural background, my own habits of thinking. In using a global, multicultural approach to writing about the psychology of women, I do not pretend to be neutral or "perspectiveless." My perspective is that of a feminist social psychologist, a middle-class White woman who grew up in Canada and has spent much of her career in the United States. I have tried to be sensitive to the limitations of this perspective, to seek out and include the voices and work of those whose backgrounds differ from mine, to provide some overview of the type and amount of the diversity that exists among women, and to illustrate some ways that the knowledge we create, learn, and transmit about women and gender is shaped by our culture.

Throughout the book, the primary aim is to provide some understanding of how gender-related expectations interact with other cultural assumptions and stereotypes, and with social and economic conditions, to affect women's experiences and behavior. A second goal is simply to provide information about the ways women's lives differ in different cultures.

An important focus of the book is research carried out by scholars outside the United States, or outside the mainstream within the United States. Each chapter includes discussions of issues, data, and findings by researchers in various countries, thus allowing readers to learn something about what issues are considered important

within other cultures. By using this approach, I have tried to avoid, to the extent that it is possible, the type of comparative method that uses the experience of middle-class Americans as a yardstick against which everyone else's experience is judged.

Women, in particular, have much to gain by learning about the ways their difficulties and opportunities as women transcend, or do not transcend, cultural and ethnic group boundaries. In most (some would argue all) cultures, women are disadvantaged in some ways in relation to men. Around the world, men control more of the resources, hold more of the leadership positions, are more likely to visit severe violence on their partners, and wield more formal power than women. Thus, women in different groups might well benefit from exchanging our perceptions of the obstacles we face and sharing strategies for gaining power, and women worldwide are likely to gain strength by working together as we try to move toward better conditions for women, followed at intervals by international meetings to take stock of women's progress, leading to a goal of "Planet 50-50" by 2030.

But there is another benefit when women from different groups listen carefully to one another's voices. If we understand something more about our similarities and differences, we as women may be less likely to share in or tolerate the assumptions and practices that oppress women of other groups. Those of us who are European American may, for instance, begin to understand why African American women might feel excluded and invisible in a college course that treats the notion of employment as a choice women have traditionally been able to make. We may, as temporarily able-bodied women, begin to see how women with disabilities are sometimes marginalized when issues of strength or sexuality are discussed. We may begin to see the connections between development aid and the literacy and reproductive control that give the women of rural India a chance to break out of and change patterns of dowry deaths, high infant and maternal mortality, and grinding poverty.

Women do not automatically understand one another or treat one another well just because they are women; barriers of race, class, and culture can, depending on the meaning they are given, prove insurmountable. Idella Parker, the African American woman that European American novelist Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (1896–1953) called her "perfect maid," wrote later of the difficulties of this relationship. The two women were together in their maid–mistress relationship for many years. Parker may have been Rawlings's best and most loyal friend. At any rate, she was very fond of Rawlings, rescued her from many disastrous situations involving alcohol, and protected her reputation for years. Rawlings, for her part, often treated Parker more as a friend and confidante than a servant, and provided her with resources that were unusually generous. Yet, under the influence of racist attitudes, the power relationship between the two women was such that Parker finally had to leave. She was never allowed to sleep in Rawlings's house. (Neither was any other Black woman. On one occasion, Parker was forced to share her own bed with the famous African American writer Zora Neale Hurston, who was visiting Rawlings.) She was expected to place Rawlings's needs first under all circumstances. The scenario, with its complex mix of affection and subordination, is reminiscent of what used to be thought of as the ideal marriage relationship between a man and a woman: the wife protecting and supporting the hus-

band at all costs, he controlling the agenda and rewarding her with extra privileges. We can learn something from this parallel: Where the subordination of women is concerned, men do not always stand alone as villains. Women, like men, have a lot to learn about other women.

Chapter 1 explores the reasons for taking a global, multicultural approach to the psychology of women. In Chapter 2 we apply this approach to the beliefs and findings about female–male differences around the world. Having examined the general framework, we turn in Chapters 3 and 4 to specific questions of how girls are socialized through childhood and adolescence: How are they taught to feel about their bodies, and what expectations are they led to develop about their identities, abilities, and accomplishments? Chapters 5, 6, and 7 focus on how these early messages are translated into later behavior in three areas: assertiveness and interpersonal power, communication, and the formation of close relationships. Chapter 8 connects these issues to the workplace and explores the research on equity and fairness with respect to women's employment. The social conditions and relationships that make up women's lives have an impact on their well-being; thus Chapters 9 and 10 examine physical and mental health. Chapter 11 looks at ways in which all of these issues develop and change for women as they make transitions from young adulthood to middle and old age. The last three chapters deal with particular topics that both strongly reflect and strongly affect women's experience in every culture: sexuality, violence against women, and power. Each chapter includes learning activities, suggestions for making social change, discussion questions, a list of key terms, suggestions for additional reading and Web resources. In addition, to show the diversity of perspectives that has constructed our understanding of women's psychology, each chapter includes a profile of a woman who helped shape psychology.

In this, the fourth edition, I have updated the statistics in many areas, from health care to divorce, from violence against women to women in political leadership, from poverty to occupational segregation. I have added coverage of new research on stereotyping and discrimination, theories of gender development, women's attitudes toward their bodies, their academic self-views and cognitive performance, use of social media, media portrayals of girls and women, father–daughter relationships, gender and expectations about career, earnings, and family, occupational gender segregation, workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender differences in coping with stress, pregnancy- and motherhood-based discrimination, women's health, attitudes toward contraception and abortion, violence within intimate partnerships, and the ways the tentacles of that violence can reach into the workplace.

There is a new material on the situation of women around the world: drops in labor-force participation by women in India, China, and Eastern Europe, women's unpaid work in many countries, occupational gender discrimination in Iran and in China, the evolving situation with respect to dowry deaths in India, discrimination against female faculty in U.S. business schools, changes in expectations about power within marriage in Singapore, discussion of veiling, information about female genital mutilation in some regions of the world, changes in the legal status of same-sex marriage in the United States and elsewhere, sexual harassment in schools in many coun-

tries, street harassment as a global problem, experiments with the use of restorative justice for sexual assault cases in the United States, women's leadership and political participation around the world, the use of paternity leave in Denmark and Finland, the progress of Korean women in the political arena, rising lung cancer rates among women in many countries, the effectiveness of special sexual assault courts in South Africa, the acceptance of women's rights as human rights in various countries under CEDAW.

Discussions of diversity within North America have been expanded as well: identity issues for cultural and sexual minorities, coming-of-age issues for Latina women, body image among women of different groups, issues of identity and the sense of self among Caribbean-Canadian women and young African American single mothers, the visibility and portrayal of women of different ethnic and cultural groups on television, the gap in breast cancer survival rates between African American and European American women, the experience of the "empty nest" among Canadian parents of different ethnic backgrounds, the stereotypic themes of femininity recognized by young African American women within Hip Hop culture. My ability to include such material has been enhanced by an increased focus on diversity among researchers and a growing sense among many writers and scholars that the world is an interdependent community—and that what happens anywhere is likely to be relevant to many of us.

I have many people to thank for help and support with this book. Radford University granted me a professional development leave many years ago when the first edition of this book was in its formative stages. During that precious year, Ellen Kimmel found me a home for one semester in the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations of Education at the University of Southern Florida. She and her colleagues supported and encouraged me as I shaped this project and others. I am grateful especially to Ellen and to Nancy Greenman at USF for their support, encouragement, and willingness to discuss ideas about gender and culture during the time I spent in Tampa. I am also grateful to Mirta González Suárez, who facilitated my stay as a Visiting Scholar at the University of Costa Rica. She and her colleagues did their best to expose me to a variety of international perspectives on women and feminism during my one-semester stay there. My year ended with a one-month stay in China, where Zhang Kan and Gu Hongbin of the Institute for Psychology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences went far out of their way to help me learn about China and to understand some of the issues facing women in that country.

Many thanks are due to the reviewers, who helped me see some of my own biases, made helpful suggestions about material to include, and generally encouraged me to make this the best book possible. My thanks go out to these reviewers, who provided feedback and suggestions for one or more editions of this book: Shawn Meghan Burn, Myra Heinrich, Paulette J. Leonard, Laura Madson, Shirley M. Ogletree, Joan S. Rabin, Vicki Ritts, Midge Wilson, Mary Wyly, Carolyn Zerbe Enns, Carla Golden, Veanne Anderson, Dorothy Bianco, Joanne Marrow, Carole R. Beal, Joan C. Chrisler, Betty J. Don, Sandra R. Fiske, and Carole A. Lawton.

The first edition of this book was developed under the guidance of sponsoring editor Franklin Graham at Mayfield Publishers, and I remain enormously grateful to him for his encouragement and support of this project over many years as it first took

shape. In subsequent editions, I benefited from assistance of many people, most especially Katherine Bates and Kristen Stoller at McGraw-Hill. For this fourth edition, I have appreciated the help and patience of Don Rosso and the editorial staff at Waveland Press. In particular, I thank Jeni Ogilvie, editor par excellence, who helped in so many ways to make this a better book. I extend my gratitude in a special way to Emily Keener, who put together a carefully thought-out, comprehensive, and meticulously correct Instructor's Manual for this edition. She has added numerous resources and suggestions that will help those who use the book.

Much of my energy and inspiration for writing about these topics comes from my students, particularly those who have taken my Psychology of Women class during my years at Radford University. I thank my students and colleagues at Radford for sharing ideas, for humor and friendship, for patience and support.

Finally, I thank Wayne Andrew, whose support has been unfailing and unflinching. I am grateful to him for drafting the graphs and tables included in this edition, for assistance in numerous concrete ways at every stage of every edition of this book, for many long days and late nights in support of this and other projects, and for a lifetime of help and encouragement.

1

Why a Global, Multicultural Psychology of Women

Chapter Outline

Femininity and Masculinity Are Socially Constructed
- How Many Genders Are There?

If Gender Is the Issue, Why Focus on Women?
- Should a Psychology of Women be "Feminist"?

Why a Multicultural, Global Approach?

Stereotyping and Discrimination: Universal Barriers for Women?
- How Universal Are Gender Stereotypes?
- Where Are Gender Stereotypes Most Traditional?
- Components of Gender Stereotypes
- The Impact of Stereotypes
- Prejudice: Negative Evaluation of Women and Their Work
- Sexism's Links with Other Forms of Prejudice
- Discrimination: Keeping Women Down and Out

In 1873, Amelia Edwards, a redoubtable Englishwoman, published an account of her travels through the Dolomites. The book, *Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys* (Edwards, 1987), documents her journey with another woman—on foot and on horseback—over terrain that was rough and uninviting to travelers, particularly women travelers. At a time when most English gentlewomen led sheltered, uneventful lives, Amelia Edwards craved and found adventure in her explorations. Not content with the vision of the world that she had inherited as a White Victorian woman of comfortable means, she traveled the globe with her women friends to gain and communicate new perspectives.

Edwards was an ardent advocate of women's rights. She correctly intuited that if women were to develop a sense of independence and strength, they needed to step out from the protective embrace of their families—even their country and culture—to undertake their own journeys and gather their own experiences. Amelia Edwards followed her own advice: She forged an exciting life as an adventurer, travel writer, and archaeologist. She journeyed to remote corners of the world, wrote well-received novels and travel books, and rose to prominence as a lecturer in Egyptology.

In 1921, Bessie Coleman, born not to privilege but to poverty, earned her pilot's license. She had spent the early years of her life picking cotton and living in a three-room shack in east Texas—an unlikely start, perhaps, for the world's first African American female aviator. It was while she was working as a manicurist in Chicago that she began to dream of flying. When no one in that city would teach her, she raised the money to travel to France. There she studied at one of the best flight schools. In defiance of the restrictions associated with her race, class, and gender, she became a glamorous and daring pilot, drawing large crowds when she performed in air shows. She used her fame to encourage other African Americans to fly, and pointedly refused to perform in places where Blacks would not be admitted. She died tragically at the age of 34 when she fell from her plane as it nose-dived toward the ground while preparing for a flying exhibition.

Bessie Coleman left few records of her exploits or of her thoughts and feelings about her flying career. Because she was African American, mainstream newspapers of the day gave her little coverage. Her funeral was attended by 10,000 mourners, but after her death, her accomplishments faded into obscurity for many years. However, she has always been remembered by African American flyers, and in 1977 a group of African American women pilots established the Bessie Coleman Aviators Club. Finally, in 1996, her accomplishments gained wider acknowledgement when she was featured on a U.S. postage stamp.

In 1992, at the age of 33, Rigoberta Menchú was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, praised by the Nobel Committee for standing "as a uniquely potent symbol of a just struggle." A Mayan Indian of the Quiche people, Menchú grew up in Guatemala. Her mother was a midwife and healer, her father a community leader and organizer. As a child Menchú picked cotton and coffee beans, and later worked as a maid in Guatemala City. Before the age of 20, she was traveling with her father around the country-

side, urging indigenous peoples to resist the appropriation of their land and villages. The struggle proved to be a tragic one for her family: Her younger brother, father, and mother were killed because of their political activities.

Menchú was literally forced into the international arena by these events. She became an organizer of peasants, students, and workers. Soon she was wanted for "subversive activities" and fled to Mexico. She told the world about the conditions in Guatemala through her published autobiography and joined international efforts to protest human rights abuses by the Guatemalan government.

In 1992, Mae Jemison blasted off on the shuttle *Endeavour,* becoming the first African American woman to travel into space. As a child growing up on the south side of Chicago, she had watched the stars in awe, dreaming that someday she would visit them. Her route to the stars took her through a host of high school science projects, university training as a chemical engineer, training in choreography and dance, a medical degree, and a stint in the Peace Corps in Thailand. Through it all, she learned to think of her life as a journey, and not to limit herself because of anyone else's limited imagination.

Jemison, a modern-day explorer who now spends a good deal of her energy encouraging young women to expand their horizons, sees the world as a small and interconnected place. Viewed from space, the earth presents a face that inexorably calls forth a global perspective.

In October 2012, 15-year-old Malala Yousafzai was on her way home from school in the Swat valley area of Pakistan when a gunman boarded her school bus and shot her in the head. Malala had been deliberately targeted for assassination by the Pakistani Taliban because of her staunch advocacy for the right of girls to go to school. Raised by her parents to believe that girls were as entitled as boys to an education, she was passionate about extending this basic right to all girls in the world; she had written an anonymous BBC blog about life under the Taliban and made appearances in Pakistani and international media to promote this viewpoint.

Fortunately, Malala Yousafzai survived the assassination attempt, received medical treatment, and settled in Britain, where she returned to school. With the help of donors inspired by her story, she launched the *Malala Fund*, to support the education of girls in the Swat valley—girls who might otherwise face a future circumscribed by poverty, illiteracy, and backbreaking domestic labor. Always willing to take risks to expand her own horizons and those of other girls in her region, she has now become a global campaigner for the education of women.

What if these five extraordinary women could meet? What would they say to one another? Would they feel a sense of kinship? How well would they understand one another? Could they be friends? They grew up in different times and places. One was relatively wealthy, two crushingly poor, one middle-class, one from a family with limited resources trying to use education to better the lives of their community. One was a product of the British Empire at its height, a privileged citizen of a country that viewed itself as the center of civilization. One grew up in a rural Black American community, under conditions of strict racial segregation. One was raised in a poor family in a country where the stirrings of a class struggle were beginning to change lives. One grew up in a large U.S. city where formal racial segregation was illegal—but where

informal segregation was rampant. One was raised in a rural region of Pakistan where Taliban forces had dictated that education had no place in the lives of girls and women. What all five would have in common is their gender and their sense of courage. Would that be enough?

What kind of a "psychology of women" would address the lives and experiences of these five women? Surely the description of the anxieties and aspirations, identity development, and family relationships that characterized Amelia Edwards would, for instance, be quite different from those that characterized Bessie Coleman. Is "woman" a useful category of analysis here?

An examination of the psychology of women looks at the ways women's shared experience is distinct from that of men. One of the things women may have in common is the barriers they face. Different groups of women may vary in the ways they experience and interpret those barriers, in the strategies they adopt for overcoming them, in how successful they are at transcending them. For instance, the five women described here share certain barriers, despite the dramatic differences in their lives. All faced cultures in which men were traditionally the travelers, the organizers, the decision makers, the great explorers and adventurers. Women, with fewer resources and surrounded by an ideology that expected them to be home centered and subordinate to men, were supposed to wait and worry, cook and clean, while men traveled the world, explored big ideas, and generally took charge. These obstacles are different in degree, but perhaps not in kind, from those facing women of various backgrounds as we try to enlarge our perspective on the world. We have less money and fewer opportunities to travel than our male counterparts do. We are imbued with the notion that we need protection and should not wander about on our own. We are expected, in many instances, to be subordinate to and more home centered than men.

Perhaps we should pay special attention to one obstacle that sometimes bedeviled Amelia Edwards: the blinders imposed by her membership in a privileged class in a nation that viewed itself as the center of civilization. Edwards was known for her friendliness to those she met during her travels, but that friendliness could not always escape a hint of condescension. She was moved, on one occasion, to write that it was easy for her to regard the hoteliers of southern Italy "almost as equals" (Edwards, 1987, p. 220) because they came from old, well-bred families.

Each of us sees the world from our own necessarily limited vantage point. And what we see of those we encounter in our travels is often colored by our assumption that *our way* is normal, whereas theirs is exotic. White, middle-class, North American women, of whom I am one and who include many of the readers of this book, may be especially hindered by the habit of seeing the world through the eyes of privilege. One of my European American students, baffled by the list of possibilities on a questionnaire that asked for ethnic background, asked me in genuine puzzlement, "What do we check if we're just *normal?*"

Yet, most of us do have one advantage over Amelia Edwards. We do not have to travel vast distances to encounter new perspectives or to meet people whose views of the world are quite different from our own. The world is a smaller place now than it was in the 19th century. Easier travel and immigration and the breakdown of legalized

racial, ethnic, and religious segregation in most countries have made the populations of many nations increasingly diverse. We have more opportunities to learn from one another now than ever in the past—and none of us can afford the assumption that our own group is the one that is "normal."

Femininity and Masculinity Are Socially Constructed

Among the Hima people of western Uganda, fat is beautiful—at least for women. Men measure a woman's attractiveness by her obesity, and a young woman is prepared for marriage in ways guaranteed to fatten her up: the least possible activity and the most possible food. By the time of her marriage, a young woman may be so fat that she cannot walk, only waddle. At the wedding, onlookers will comment on how beautiful she is, noting with approval the cracks in her skin caused by the fat and the difficulty she has walking. Once married, a woman is kept fat by consuming surplus milk from the herd—often coerced to do so by her husband when she has long passed the point of satiation. The wife leads a life of leisure. She is assigned no heavy physical work, rarely leaves home, and spends her days in sexual liaisons with a variety of men approved by her husband. These sexual relationships cement economic ones: The obese, conspicuously consuming wife is both a symbol and an instrument of her husband's economic prosperity (Tiffany, 1982).

A similar pattern is seen in other West African countries. One report from Niger describes fat as a beauty ideal so prevalent that women take steroids to gain weight or pills to increase their appetite (Onishi, 2001). At one festival in that country, women of the Djerma ethnic group compete in a beauty contest for which they train by gorging on food and by drinking as much water as they can on the morning before the contest: The heaviest woman wins. In some parts of neighboring Nigeria, women go to fatten-

BOX 1.1 MAKING CHANGE

Reaching across Boundaries

A first step in gaining a more multicultural, global perspective on the psychology of women is to listen to women whose backgrounds are different from one's own. One way to do this is to read what women from a variety of cultural or ethnic groups have written—and there are many suggestions for such reading at the end of each chapter. But what about conversation? Can you find ways to meet and talk with women who are located differently than you are with respect to ethnicity, race, nationality, social class, age, sexual orientation, physical ability? Try to get to know someone new who differs from you on one or more of these dimensions. Have some conversations in which you do most of the listening. If your campus has an international students' association, attend some of the events and talk with the women who are involved. What can you learn about the world and about women from such conversations? What can you learn about yourself? What social changes might occur if many people did this?

ing farms for a few weeks before their weddings, and there they are stuffed with food and massaged into a rounder shape. As is the case with the Hima women, in these countries a woman's corpulence is a status symbol for her husband. A fat wife is a sign that a man is wealthy and responsible—a good provider for his family.

In China, and in the Chinese American community in the United States, until the early part of the 20th century it was common to tightly bind the feet of young girls. Small feet, "golden lilies," were considered a sign of beauty and refinement. Not only did binding keep the feet from growing to full size, it deformed them and prevented them from developing the normal strength and flexibility needed for walking—making it difficult or impossible for a woman to walk unassisted. These women were not necessarily being prepared for a life of leisure, however. The average young Chinese woman looked forward to an arranged marriage in which she would be expected to serve her mother-in-law and submit to her husband. Her life revolved around the necessity for obedience—as a daughter, to her parents; after marriage, to her husband and to his mother; in widowhood, to her son (Pascoe, 1990).

In China, the traditional practice of foot binding left women with deformed, atrophied feet. Now discontinued, the procedure was meant to guarantee that a woman's feet would be small and dainty, but it also guaranteed that she would hobble and be in constant pain.

These very different cultures have something in common: They include strong ideas about what it means to be feminine. And the notions of femininity have overlapping themes: the cultivation of beauty, restrictions on movement and other freedoms, subservience to husband. Parallel themes may be found in the United States today: for example, the use of drastic methods such as liposuction and breast augmentation surgery to shape women's bodies to cultural standards of beauty, the popularity of high-heeled shoes and short skirts even though these garments make it impossible for women to move comfortably, the tradition that a woman takes her husband's name at marriage. Cultures differ greatly in their details, but some general themes that define femininity are very similar across many cultures: Women should be beautiful (however that is defined), not strong, and under the authority of men. If we were to expand our examination of femi-

ninity and culture, we would find at least one other common theme: Women should be interested in children.

Gender is the term used to encompass the social expectations associated with femininity and masculinity (Unger, 1979b). Finding that cultures also *differ* from one another in their rules and expectations for femininity (and for masculinity) is a good clue that gender is a **social construction.** In other words, each society, to some extent, makes up its own set of rules to define what it means to be a woman or a man, and people construct gender through their interactions by behaving in "appropriate" ways. Another clue that gender is socially constructed is the way the rules tend to change arbitrarily over time, even within a given culture. For example, in the United States, the current division of infant clothing into pink for girls and blue for boys is actually a reversal of an older rule. Before World War I, girls wore blue—a color that was supposedly delicate and dainty—and boys wore pink, the "stronger" color (Salmans, 1989, cited in Garber, 1992).

The rules for femininity and masculinity are grounded in the biological/anatomical distinctions between women and men (what we call **sex differences**), but go well beyond such distinctions. For example, one important sex difference is that women can become pregnant and men cannot. This biological distinction has been used in many cultures to create a set of "femininity" expectations for women that include being maternally inclined, nurturing, and close to the earth.

Being maternally inclined and nurturing are not obviously biological or anatomical qualities. Rather, they arise from social expectations that *build on* women's biological ability to bear children. But it is not at all clear that particular ways of acting or thinking necessarily go with being biologically female or male: Cultural notions of what behavioral, emotional, or even spiritual qualities are tied to biological femaleness or maleness vary widely across time and place. Qualities such as nurturance and inclination toward motherhood, then, appear to be aspects of gender, not of biological sex.

But just how easily can we separate biological sex from socially constructed gender? Biological differences between women and men are not absolute. As we will delve into in some detail in Chapter 3, the biological categories *female* and *male* overlap, and decisions about where to "draw the line" between them is often a social, not a biological, one. So even sex "is not a pure physical category" (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, p. 4). Also, even the physical, sexual body is, in some ways, shaped by the social environment: We "embody" gender as we develop within our social world. If we are female, for example, we are, in some circumstances, encouraged to become pregnant and may face disapproval or pity if we do not bear children. If we have an unplanned pregnancy, societal rules govern whether we will be able to decide for ourselves whether to carry it to term. The biological capacity to become pregnant is not independent of the social expectations surrounding femininity.

Thus, the distinction between sex and gender is at best a fuzzy one: The two overlap. Biology and environment work together so intimately that they are like two sides of the same coin, and it is virtually impossible to label a particular female–male difference as purely based in either biology or culture. In this book, *gender* is used as the more inclusive term when discussing female–male differences that may be caused by

any combination of environment and biology. *Gender* is also used as a label for the system of expectations societies hold with respect to feminine and masculine roles. *Sex* is reserved for discussions of anatomy and the classification of individuals based on their anatomical category.

How Many Genders Are There?

History is dotted with examples of women who refused to live within the bounds of behavior that was prescribed for them by social expectations of femininity. For example, in 1778 Deborah Samson of Plymouth, Massachusetts, disguised herself as a young man, Robert Shirtliffe, and enlisted for the term of the Revolutionary War. She served for three years and was wounded twice. However, her sexual identity went undetected until she contracted brain fever (Ellet, 1848). In the American Civil War, an estimated 400 women dressed as men, enlisted, and served as soldiers (Burgess, 1994). In England, as early as the 18th century, women acting as men in the military were common enough to raise the concerns of the courts. In cases such as this, the women were often fleeing poverty or severe restrictions on their lives and were seeking the privileges, opportunities, and economic security that could be obtained only by adopting male dress. Many of these women lived as men for their entire adult lives (Wheelwright, 1990).

These women transgressed the two-gender system by crossing over to the other gender. However, they had to be secretive about their choice. In some cultures, alternatives to the two-gender system are institutionalized, and individuals can make a relatively public choice to opt out of the female or male gender. Nothing puts the social construction of gender into such sharp relief as a look at societies in which gender is routinely discussed not in terms of two categories (feminine or masculine), but in terms of three or more categories. For those of us who have grown up thinking of gender as a binary concept, it may be difficult to imagine a **third gender** or a society in which an individual's gender is considered fluid or changeable (Nanda, 2014). However, in a number of cultures, gender "is understood in a psychological or psychospiritual sense much more than a physiological one" (Allen, 1986, p. 207). In such cultures, more than two genders are acknowledged.

When anthropologists encountered individuals in American Indian societies who apparently had an "intermediate" gender status, accomplished by combining or mixing the attributes and behaviors of females and males, they tried to fit these individuals into their own Western understanding of gender. Thus, they used terms such as *man-woman* and *halfman–halfwoman* to translate the American Indian terms for such individuals: *nadle, winkte, heemaneh.* Yet, it now appears that these translations were misleading. The American Indian terms describe a distinct third gender—one that is not simply a mixture of masculine and feminine, but defined separately from them (Callender & Kochems, 1983; Fulton & Anderson, 1992). Such a person is neither a man dressing and acting like a woman, nor a woman dressing and acting like a man, but a man or woman who has adopted a third role that is neither feminine nor masculine. The man-woman in preconquest American Indian societies did not fit neatly into the categories that academics from other societies felt comfortable with. These categories, such as homosex-

ual (someone who is sexually attracted to members of her/his own sex) and cross-dresser (someone who enjoys dressing in the clothing of the other gender), did not always adequately describe the behavior of a man-woman. For example, not every individual who engaged in same-sex sexual relations would be considered a man-woman by the American Indian community. Nor did every man-woman engage in same-sex sexual relations. These individuals were not simply cross-dressing (dressing in the clothing of the other gender) but were wearing clothing appropriate to their third-gender status: clothing that was a mixture of the items customarily worn by women and by men.

Some anthropologists now believe that by adopting a role that bridged the categories of female and male, individuals of the third gender became regarded as intermediaries for dangerous passages between categories. These third-gender individuals often presided over transformational events such as birth, marriage, and death and were highly valued by their communities as arbiters of continuity in a precarious world (Fulton & Anderson, 1992; Nanda, 2014).

The idea of more than two genders is not limited to indigenous North American societies. In Samoa, for example, there is a tradition of a third-gender category known as *fa'afafine,* meaning "the way of women." These are males who dress in women's clothing and are often included in female activities. These individuals do not "pass" for women, nor do they follow the rules that are understood to be in place for "proper" women; rather, they act as jesters who mock certain gender restrictions and can violate them with impunity. For instance, a Samoan girl may whisper some suggestive remark about a passing boy—perhaps a sexual comment about some feature of his anatomy—to a *fa'afafine.* The *fa'afafine,* not bound by the same restrictions of propriety as the girl, will then make a loud joke out of her comments, attracting the attention of the boy (Mageo, 1992).

In India, a group of men who adopt female dress and become a kind of third gender are called *hijras.* These individuals believe that their spiritual power stems from a renunciation of male sexuality, and they sometimes submit to castration to define their status. They count themselves as women in some situations; however, they do not follow the standards of modesty and restraint required of Indian women (Nanda, 1990, 2014).

In certain cultures, gender categories are viewed as somewhat fluid, rather than immutable. In the Samoan culture described above, *fa'afafine* can leave their role behind if they decide, as adults, that they want to be married men with families. Among the Zuni of the American Southwest, gender was thought to be established by specific ritual experiences. In Inuit mythology even sex was changeable; it was believed that a fetus could change its sex during the birth process (Saladin d'Anglure, 1988). Clearly, the notions of femininity and masculinity many of us are familiar with represent one way, not the only way, to think about gender.

The blurring of the binary, either-or notion of gender is not limited to small or preindustrial societies. Cross-dressing, although not exactly common, is a well-established institution in North America, Europe, and Asia. Besides such famous historical figures as George Sand and Dorothy Lawrence and celebrities such as RuPaul, Dennis Rodman, and Divine, there are many less well-known individuals who, occasionally or

consistently, dress in the clothing of the other gender: drag queens, drag kings, people who adopt the clothing of the other gender for comfort, disguise, or entertainment. A fascination with the theme of cross-dressing has been apparent in stage (Shakespeare's *As You Like it*, Thomas's classic *Charley's Aunt*), screen *(Tootsie, Victor/Victoria, Yentl, Some Like It Hot, The Ballad of Little Jo, Mrs. Doubtfire, The Crying Game, The Birdcage, Priscilla Queen of the Desert, Flawless)* and literature (Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* and David Henry Hwang's *M. Butterfly).* However, the act of dressing as a member of the other sex has usually been treated as an aberration, a trick, or a joke. Western industrial societies have traditionally refused to accept or institutionalize a third-gender category whose existence threatens the ability to categorize every person as female or male. That refusal, however, is beginning to change.

Transgender persons, whose gender identity or gender expression is different from the identity they were assigned at birth, are becoming less invisible in many cultures. In Nepal, a 2007 court decision established a third-gender category for people who do not identify themselves as female or male. That category is the one listed on their identity cards—and can be self-determined by any individual who does not feel she/he "fits" the female or male category. India began issuing passports under a third-gender category, denoted by E (for eunuch) in 2005 and now allows citizen identity cards listing gender as "transgender" to be issued. Both Australia and New Zealand allow individuals to use "X" rather than "M" or "F" on passport applications. In these and a few other countries, there is growing official acknowledgement that a two-gender system excludes many individuals (Knight, 2012). Such recognition has been pushed along, in some respects, by famous people who have publicly claimed a transgender identity (e.g., Caitlin Jenner, Laverne Cox) and by sympathetic media portrayals of either fictional transgender characters, as in the series *Transparent,* or actual people, in reality shows such as *I Am Jazz.*

Actually, it is not necessary to cite a formally identified third (or fourth, or fifth) gender to question the notion that gender is a neat dichotomy that places all of us into one of two groups who either "act like women" or "act like men." What does a woman act like? Look like? Think like? For most people, the answers to those questions would be: "It depends on what kind of woman she is." Indeed, American researchers have found that respondents differentiate among many different "types" of women, some of whom appear to have little or nothing in common except for their biological sex. For example, respondents in one U.S. study described several distinct clusters of "types" of women: a progressive or nontraditional cluster, which included such types as the feminist, the intellectual, the career woman; a traditional or conservative cluster, which included types such as the housewife, the secretary, the conformist, and the maternal woman; and a cluster characterized by sexuality, including the vamp, the sex bomb, and the tart (Six & Eckes, 1991). To each different type of woman, respondents attributed different personal and behavioral qualities. A later study showed that respondents clustered women into six subgroups: professional, feminist, homemaker, female athlete, beauty, and temptress—and that these groups were seen to be considerably different on dimensions of virtue (morality and sexual conservatism) and agency (competence and power) (DeWall, Altermatt, & Thompson, 2005).

BOX 1.2 LEARNING ACTIVITY

Gender Transgressions in the Movies

Movies have been a "safe" place for society to explore and transgress the boundaries of gender. The following movies feature persons who adopt aspects of gender that do not "match" their biological sex. Choose one of more of these movies to watch. Record your observations of how the characters learn and/or perform gender. Do these observations change your ideas about the flexibility or rigidity of gender categories?

Tootsie *Mrs. Doubtfire* *Victor/Victoria* *Flawless* *Yentl*
Switch *The Crying Game* *Boys Don't Cry* *The Birdcage* *Orlando*
To Wong Fu, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar
The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert

Before leaving the discussion of the many different ways in which gender can be conceptualized, we should note the possibility that, in certain cultures, gender may not be a particularly important category for organizing people into roles. Because we think of gender and its categories as important, we tend to assume that this emphasis is common to all cultures. Yet, as Nigerian anthropologist Oyeronke Oyewumi (1997; 1998) notes, this is not the case. She describes the Yoruba culture in her own country as being organized around relative age rather than gender. Yoruba pronouns do not indicate sex; instead, they indicate whether the person being spoken of is older or younger than the speaker. She argues that when societies have been studied through the gendered perspective of European-based cultures, gender in these societies has in some ways been constructed by the scholars who have studied them.

Why, in our study of female psychology, should we even try to make a distinction between "gender" and "sex"—a distinction that may be fuzzy at best and misleading at worst? The main reason is to remind ourselves that much of the behavior we associate with women does not stem in any simple, predetermined way from simply being female. Femaleness is relevant, of course, in the sense that an individual's body provides possibilities and limits to such attributes as strength, size, voice quality, and reproductive capacity. Yet, the behavior of each woman and girl is sharply influenced by her own society's notions of femininity—of what a woman is supposed to be like.

If Gender Is the Issue, Why Focus on Women?

Psychologists have discovered that in Western cultures, individuals explaining the actions of others tend to assume that those actions stem from internal dispositions—from the way the other person *is*. In contrast, one's explanations of one's own actions focus more strongly on *external* forces—outside pressures, extenuating circumstances, fear of punishment, hope of reward (Jones & Davis, 1965).

The same may be said of the way the members of one group tend to judge or explain the actions of members of another group. People attribute more homogeneity,

or sameness, to members of another group than they do to their own. We expect the members of the other group to be more alike than members of our own group (Taylor, 1981). In effect, when we judge members of another group, we are assuming that "these people are the way they are," and thus we make fewer allowances for the effects of outside forces on them than we do for ourselves.

Even though all groups tend to make judgments in this way (for example, men may say "Women! They are so complicated, so emotional!"; women may say "Men are so insensitive; they are all only after one thing!"), the impact of these judgments is not the same for every group. The more powerful groups' judgments are given the most media time, prevail most often, receive a great deal of attention, and become accepted as the truth. This is true of women and men. Men are more visible as experts, hold more high-status positions, and generally are accorded more credibility, authority, and power than women. Thus, men's judgments about most matters, including women, often have more impact than women's judgments.

A colleague described, with a mixture of irritation and humor, a formal debate she had witnessed in which two male scientists argued about the true nature of female orgasm. Each man had his own notion of the female sexual experience and elaborated it at length, while a respectful audience listened and took notes.

"Why wouldn't they include a woman—or two women—in an event like this?" she asked in disbelief. "Who would expect two men to be able to provide a complete picture of female sexuality?"

Men have a long history of making pronouncements about women. Many of those pronouncements have as a theme that women are, by nature, a certain way. Here are some of the more sweeping ones that have survived the years and are still quoted:

> "Frailty, thy name is woman!"—William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*
>
> "Woman is the lesser man."—Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Locksley Hall* (1842)
>
> "In revenge and in love woman is more barbarous than man."—Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883)
>
> "Girls are injured more than boys by school life; they take it more seriously, and at certain times and at a certain age are far more subject to harm. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that to the average cost of each girl's education through high school must be added one unborn child."—psychologist James Mckeen Cattell (1909, p. 91), explaining that higher education is bad for girls because intellectual work impairs their fertility
>
> "The immediate outcome of [the] feminine mental type is woman's tact and aesthetic feeling, her instinctive insight, her enthusiasms, her sympathy, her natural wisdom and morality; but, on the other side, also her lack of clearness and logical consistency, her tendency to hasty generalization, her mixing of principles, her undervaluation of the abstract and of the absent, her lack of deliberation, her readiness to follow her feelings and emotions."—psychologist Hugo Munsterberg (1901, p. 159)

Women's pronouncements about men, or indeed, about women, have been less publicized. In fact, Elaine Partnow (2010) was moved to compile a set of quotations by

women after finding that among the standard quotation collections such as Bartlett's and Oxford, women made up a small percentage of the sources.

Because men have had more power than women to define gender expectations, their tendency to judge the "other group" (women) as being more alike and less influenced by external forces than their own group (men) has had a big impact. Women, as the group whose opinions have received less attention, have been particularly affected by the tendency to view gender-related expectations as natural, rather than as socially constructed. Concepts such as feminine frailty, maternal instinct, female irrationality, all once considered to be built in to female biology, abound and have traditionally been used to explain restrictions on women's roles. Parallel or similar concepts for men have had less impact. Masculine-stereotyped qualities such as sexual insatiability and irresponsibility, aggressiveness, and reluctance to commit to a relationship are sometimes ascribed to male biology, but such attributes generally have not been used to justify the disqualification of men from positions of high status and responsibility. If anything, they have been used to excuse antisocial male behavior.

In essence, the study of gender has been shaped, like the study of anything else, by power relations. Because, as a group, men have held more power than women, they have had the luxury of a privileged viewpoint: being able to ignore things that seem irrelevant to themselves and defining the truth in terms of their own experience. And the assumptions made by groups with the most power tend to carry the most weight. For example, the first psychologists to study achievement motivation focused on men—presumably because they assumed that male achievement was most important and that women were not interested in achievement. Thus John Atkinson's classic work on achievement motivation, *Motives in Fantasy, Action, and Society* (1958), mentions women in only a single footnote, and David McClelland's book *The Achieving Society* (1961) omits any mention of women. A study of the psychology of women reexamines such assumptions. It tries to redress the balance and provide a more complete picture by looking at women from women's perspective.

Should a Psychology of Women Be "Feminist"?

In at least one university I know, the *Psychology of Women* course came into being long before there were calls on campus to question the status quo with respect to women and gender. In the context of a women's college, the course was developed as a way to teach women their role, their proper place, in society. Women students who took this course could expect to learn the reasons why marriage worked best when husbands were in charge, why women were naturally suited to motherhood, why a woman's place was in the home. It was an approach that did not question traditional gender expectations and was not concerned with gender equality. Is this the kind of approach you hoped to encounter when you signed up for this course? If not, you may be relieved to know that most psychology of women courses no longer follow this model. Rather, they take a perspective that has been termed **feminist psychology.**

What exactly does this mean? Feminist psychology is characterized by a focus on understanding women's own experience, rather than on fitting women into traditional, often male-centered, views of human behavior and social relations. A feminist

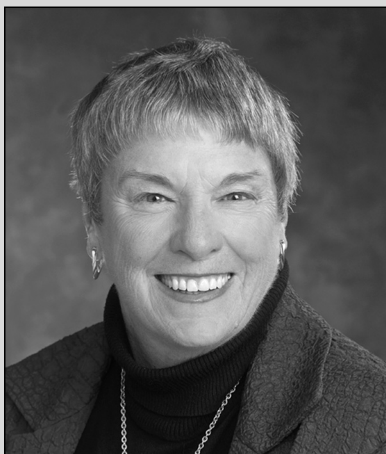
psychology of women is oriented toward questioning traditional assumptions about gender and toward empowering women. Feminist psychologists often try to understand gender-related behavior by looking at power inequalities between women and men. In addition, they are alert to cultural differences that affect women's psychology, acknowledging that there are many differences among women and that these differences too are often linked to power inequalities among groups.

Film and television star Sarah Jessica Parker once proclaimed, "I love referring to myself as a feminist. 'Feminist' is an exquisite word" (Stave, 2001, p. 40). Yet many people are uncomfortable with the term **feminist.** In one study, more than 77 percent of a sample of female college students did not label themselves as feminist even though many of them did support some or all of the goals of the feminist movement (Liss, O'Connor, Morosky, & Crawford, 2001).

Do people refuse the label *feminist* because they disagree with the ideas espoused by feminists? Actually, it appears that a reluctance to label oneself as feminist can often mask an agreement with such core aspects of feminist consciousness as a pro-woman stance and a rejection of traditional gender roles. Women and men who were young adults during the early 1970s—a time when feminism was experiencing a strong and visible resurgence as a social movement—are more likely than their younger or older counterparts to identify themselves as feminists (Schnittker, Freese, & Powell, 2003). Among the non-70s groups, there was no difference between self-identified feminists and nonfeminists in their agreement with specific feminist positions. Similarly, a study of students in the United States and Russia revealed that there was little correlation, in either country, between feminist identification and beliefs about such issues as abortion, the sharing of household work between women and men, and providing women with time off work to care for families (Henderson-King & Zhermer, 2003).

BOX 1.3 WOMEN SHAPING PSYCHOLOGY

Sandra W. Pyke



Sandra Pyke's doctoral studies in psychology at McGill University prepared her to be an academic psychologist and earned her a PhD in 1964. However, they did not prepare her specifically for what was to be her most important role in psychology: leadership in the efforts to make psychology as a discipline responsive to and reflective of women's experiences and concerns.

Pyke's early career as a faculty member at York University in Canada included a focus on research and applied training. However, in 1972 she was a participant in an "underground symposium" titled *On Women, by*

Women at the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) convention. The symposium (and the reaction it caused) proved to be a catalyst for the formation of a new organization: the CPA's Interest Group on Women in Psychology—and Pyke became its first coordinator. Hoping to represent women's interests within the governance of the larger organization, Pyke soon sought and won election to the CPA board of directors. Eventually, in 1981–82, she served as president of CPA, only the fourth woman to do so.

Sandra Pyke's university career was also focused on advancing the status of women. She served as coordinator of York University's undergraduate program in Women's Studies, where she provided mentorship and support for many students who were just starting to think about the role of gender in shaping their lives. She established a feminist counseling program. Later, as Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies (the first woman to hold this position at York), she presided over the establishment of the first Canadian doctoral program in Women's Studies.

In her research and writing, Sandra Pyke has consistently put feminist issues in the foreground, particularly with respect to education. She has studied and written about sexual harassment and discrimination in educational environments, the ways that gender affects the time it takes students to complete doctoral degrees, and other issues relevant to understanding the role played by gender in structuring the educational experiences of students. She has also written about how psychology as a discipline has responded to the increasing presence of women.

Pyke has been honored in various ways for her contributions to psychology, but perhaps the most notable distinction bestowed on her is the 1996 *CPA Award for Distinguished Contribution to Psychology as a Profession.* The citation for that award notes that, throughout her career, she has "contribute[d] concentrically from the core of her convictions, to her sense of sisterhood among women, and ultimately to the collegial network of the professional world in which she has had such a notable impact" (Robinson, 1996).

Learn More about Sandra Pyke

Profile of Sandra Pyke (including interview) on *Psychology's Feminist Voices*, accessible at http://www.feministvoices.com/sandra-pyke/

Robinson, B. (1996, Fall). CPA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology as a Profession. *Psynopsis.* http://www.cpa.ca/Psynopsis/awards.html

Read What She Has Written

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Feminism comes in many different versions, but all of them share certain premises: the notion that inequalities between women and men should be challenged; that women's experiences and concerns are important; that women's ideas, behaviors, and feelings are worthy of study in their own right. These ideas seem eminently reasonable, so why do so many women feel uncomfortable calling themselves feminists? Perhaps because, through the efforts of some opinion leaders, the label has been distorted and discredited. Feminists are sometimes described as man-haters, bitches, shrews, even "femiNazis"—unlovely, irritating women (Condon, 1999). Who would happily accept a label with such a meaning? Indeed, one of the barriers to self-identifying as a feminist appears to be that people hold negative stereotypes of feminists (Robnett, Anderson, & Hunter, 2012). And, in the international community, the negative stereotypes applied specifically to *American* feminists are sometimes linked to the resistance by young women of other cultures to proclaim a feminist identity for themselves (Crossley, 2012). But before turning her back on the label *feminist,* every woman should remember that such negative characterizations are likely to be applied to people who challenge existing power relations. British writer Dame Rebecca West is quoted as saying, "People call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat" (quoted in Warner, 1992, p. 316).

The early suffragists, the women who fought for and eventually won for women the right to vote, were also characterized as unlovely, irritating women. Looking back at their struggles, we may wonder what all the fuss was about—why was there so much resistance to something that now seems so reasonable, so normal? But if we had been there at the time, would we have been distancing ourselves from them, saying things like, "I'm not one of those suffragists, but I do support women's right to vote," just as many people now say, "I'm not a feminist, but I do believe that women and men should be equal"?

A psychology of women that does not shrink from the label *feminist* is positioned to question gender stereotypes and traditional power relations between women and men. This book, like most of the current scholarship in the psychology of women, takes a feminist perspective.

Why a Multicultural, Global Approach?

Just as men's views on gender, and on women, have tended to overshadow women's views, so the voices of some groups of women have come through more strongly than those of others in the debates about women's psychology.

Because of the economic dominance of the United States in the world and the sheer power of the American media, the voices of U.S. women often drown out those of their sisters in other countries. And in the United States and elsewhere, most of the women who are in a position to make their voices heard in public discussions about the status of women, what women are like, and the barriers faced by women are professionals: professors, lawyers, writers, politicians. In the United States, most of the women in these categories are of European American ancestry, were raised in middle-class families, and have lived a relatively privileged life. Even among ethnic minority women, those earning

doctoral and professional degrees are most likely to have come from homes in which their parents are college-educated (National Science Foundation, 2012).

The study of women's psychology has been shaped by these realities. Even though women's psychology is no longer considered the exclusive province of male experts, as an academic discipline it often focuses narrowly on the experiences of particular groups of women. Just as the power relations between men and women have tended to privilege men's viewpoints about human experience, so too the power relations among cultural and ethnic groups have tended to privilege White and middle-class American women's viewpoints about women's experience. In our attempt to analyze and understand gender relations, women in this group often have inadvertently echoed the behavior of privileged men: We have tended to define the "truth" about women in terms of our own experience and to ignore or treat as "exceptions" the experiences of other groups of women. We have tended to speak of the experience of gender as if all women, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, or culture, experience it the same way. Distinctions among groups of women and among their social contexts have often been ignored. And public discussions about women's issues often focus narrowly on White, middle-class, Western women—as if such women were prototypical of women in general.

Sojourner Truth worked to abolish slavery, promote equal rights for women, and disputed the vision of femininity that portrayed women as weak and helpless.

This is not a new insight. As long ago as 1851, Sojourner Truth, a Black woman who had been raised in slavery, is said to have publicly challenged the definition of *woman* that was being used in American debates about female suffrage. At a women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio, she rose to address the audience after a parade of male speakers had argued that women were too weak, too fragile, too inferior intellectually to be granted political equality with men. This is part of the speech that has been attributed to her:

> That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm. I have plowed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most of them sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman? (quoted in Phillips & Bostian, 2015, p. 324)

Some scholars now dispute the text of this famous speech (Nordquist, 2004). However, the words handed down to us go to the heart of the issue of what womanhood is and who gets to define it. The questions now echo in the debates about women's psychology. For several decades, complaints have been raised that in the research literature on the psychology of women, the perspectives of women of color have been overlooked by White American women (Espín, 1995; Reid, 1988), that the perspectives of poor women have been neglected by middle-class women (Reid, 1993; Saris & Johnston-Robledo, 2000), that the perspectives of women with disabilities have been ignored by able-bodied women (Fine, 1991) and that the perspectives of older women have been absent or distorted (Lips & Hastings, 2012). It appears that in the research literature as well as in public debates, not only have we studied, written about, and spoken about women as if they all fit a particular mold, the mold has been a White, middle-class, young, "mainstream" American one. Whereas this focus has begun to shift somewhat in recent years (Reid, 2011), there remains a tendency for the discourse about women to center on more privileged women.

With such a focus, how can we separate what goes with being female from what goes with being White, middle-class, and American? We cannot. As Oliva Espín (1995) argued:

> There will not be valid theories of the psychology of women as long as . . . these theories are based on a very limited sector of the population. . . . This whole issue of inclusion is not about "affirmative action" but rather about the nature of knowledge, both in the psychology of women and in the discipline of psychology as a whole. The theories and the research we now have are, for the most part, incomplete and faulty pieces of knowledge, no matter how elegant they may seem. (p. 73)

And even if we try for the more limited goal of developing theories that apply only to particular categories of women (young women, immigrant women, Black women, middle-class women), our vision is likely to be incomplete. For example, Pamela Reid (2004) articulated the problems of trying to define Black women as a single category:

> Women who may be considered Black are more heterogeneous than ever before. Anecdotally, I recently recruited a group of undergraduate students for a project involving a visit to southern India. The recruitment specified that African American women were sought. The resulting group comprised five young women: one was from a relatively affluent African American suburban family, another had an immigrant mother from a Caribbean country who had taught her she was "not Black," two were from single-parent homes (only one of these was very poor), and the last was biracial with a Jewish mother and African American father; her

> appearance was ambiguously White. This diverse group traveled to a part of the world where, ironically, four fifths of the women had much darker skin than anyone in the group . . . so I suggest that researchers must ask, "Who are the Black women?" (p. 444–445).

If we really want to understand gender, if we really want to understand the psychology of women, we must continue to explore the experiences of a variety of groups. As psychologists Beverly Greene and Janis Sanchez-Hucles (1997) have argued, "all women share gender oppression but . . . they experience this oppression through their individual historical, social, political, economic, ecological and psychological realities. To understand any woman, therefore, one must incorporate an understanding of many different aspects of her, not merely gender" (p. 183). There is no single "woman's experience" but a complex set of similar issues and problems, faced differently and under different circumstances. Australian theorist Sneja Gunew (1991) notes that in trying to grasp the differing experiences of women from a variety of cultures,

> we should perhaps use the image of a kaleidoscope, where each turn produces different patterns and no single element dominates. Maybe a better image needs to be more prickly because these interactions need not always be harmonious. We need to recognize tensions and contradictions and learn from them. To facilitate this we need to undo our ignorance concerning the foreign, to learn these histories, languages, traditions, geographies. It is a way of discovering the world rather than forever rediscovering our place in the West. (pp. 34–35)

Stereotyping and Discrimination: Universal Barriers for Women?

In Japan, girls were traditionally taught from an early age that femininity involved modesty in speech. The appropriate and natural speaking style for females, they learned, involves softness of voice, reticence, extreme politeness, and covering the mouth when talking or laughing. So well did they absorb these lessons that as adult women, their speech was often characterized as deferent and accommodative. For example, when one researcher studied the speaking style of popular television cooking show hosts in Japan, she found striking gender differences. The male host tended to give authoritative directives to his underlings, telling them "Add this to the bowl," or "Stir this now." The female host, on the other hand, was likely to phrase her directive in a more deferential way, such as "If you would now do me the favor of stirring this" (Smith, 1992). As more Japanese women have moved into positions of public leadership, these expectations about women's speech have begun to dissolve, and researchers now find both men and women in professional positions may use either dominant or accommodative ways of speaking, depending on the context and on what they are trying to accomplish (Dubuc, 2012).

Every cultural group has its own version of **gender stereotypes:** socially shared beliefs that certain qualities can be attributed to individuals based on their membership in the categories *female* or *male*—or occasionally, as discussed above, in some third or intermediate category. To an individual in a given culture, at a particular time, the stereotypes may seem natural and normal, or they may seem prisonlike in their

rigidity. In either case, an individual who is immersed in them will find it difficult to imagine that the stereotypes are constructed and maintained largely by implicit social agreement, are fairly specific to time and place, and may be quite different elsewhere.

How Universal Are Gender Stereotypes?

Using the adjective checklist approach to measuring stereotypes that is standard in psychological studies, it appears at first glance that only minor variations in gender stereotypes exist among cultural groups. About four decades ago, researchers found that American university students asked to categorize 300 adjectives as being typically associated with women or men agreed strongly on a cluster of 30 adjectives for women and 33 for men (Williams & Bennett, 1975). For instance, women were described as dependent, dreamy, emotional, excitable, fickle, gentle, sentimental, and weak; men were thought to be adventurous, aggressive, ambitious, boastful, confident, logical, loud, rational, and tough.

Researchers in Canada (Edwards & Williams, 1980) and Britain (Burns, 1977) found similar patterns, and a study of gender stereotyping in 30 countries showed considerable cross-cultural uniformity in the patterns of adjectives associated with women and men (Williams & Best, 1982). Studies of adults in 25 countries showed that six (out of a possible 300) items were associated with men in every country: adventurous, dominant, forceful, independent, masculine, and strong (Williams & Best, 1990). Only three were associated with women in every country: sentimental, submissive, and superstitious.

When Williams and Best (1990) scaled the items for affective meaning along the dimensions of *favorability, strength,* and *activity,* they found no cross-cultural consistency in how favorably the female- and male-associated traits were viewed. In some countries, such as Japan, South Africa, Nigeria, Malaysia, and Israel, the male stereotype was viewed more favorably than the female stereotype. However, in other countries, such as Italy, Peru, Australia, Scotland, and India, the female stereotype was more favorable. They did, however, find consistency across cultures on the other two dimensions: strength and activity. In all countries, the male stereotype items were stronger and more active, and the female stereotype items were weaker and more passive. These strength and activity differences were greater in countries that were socioeconomically less developed, where literacy was low, and where a low percentage of women attended university.

How can we make sense of the similarities and differences in gender stereotypes and ideologies across cultures? Some of the apparent similarity across cultures may be due to the fact that it was college students—a privileged group, in many cases not particularly representative of cultural attitudes and more influenced by Western thought than others in their culture—who completed the questionnaires in each culture. It may also be useful to remember that university students are more representative of their age group in some cultures than others, as countries vary widely in the percentage of the population that has the opportunity to attend university. Another factor contributing to the similarity across cultures may be the status difference between women and men that is common to most of them. In most cultures, men are accorded

somewhat higher status than women—and researchers have shown that high-status people are usually judged to be more agentic, or self-oriented, whereas low-status people are judged to be more communal, or relationship oriented (Conway, Pizzamiglio, & Mount, 1996). This difference parallels stereotypical gender differences.

Judith Gibbons, Beverly Hamby, and Wanda Dennis (1997) pointed out that cultures vary in the domains in which women's and men's roles differ or in the settings in which such roles are relevant (e.g., marriage, family, employment, education, politics). If we ask about certain domains when we ask about gender stereotypes, we may find cultural differences but not if we ask about others. And in some cultures we may not know enough about these domains to ask the right questions. For example, in some cultures, the most important domain for gender differences may be agricultural work: who does the planting, harvesting, and so on. If a questionnaire about gender stereotypes fails to includes any questions about this domain, the researchers might find no evidence for gender stereotypes in that culture. Furthermore, some settings are simply irrelevant in some cultures. For example, as Gibbons and her colleagues (1997) noted, it is no use asking whether "On a date, the boy should be expected to pay all expenses" in a cultural setting where Western-style dating does not exist.

Another problem in comparing gender stereotypes across cultures is the way people in different groups interpret items on the questionnaire. Setting aside the problem of translation, which is a major one in cross-cultural research, even within a language the same terms may have different meanings for different ethnic groups. For example, Hope Landrine, Elizabeth Klonoff, and Alice Brown-Collins (1995) asked White women and women of color to rate themselves on a series of adjectives. The two groups did not differ on their self-ratings on these items. However, they apparently meant different things by at least some of the items. For instance, by "passive" the largest percentage of European American women said they meant "am laid-back/easy-going," while the largest percentage of women of color said they meant "don't say what I really think." And by "assertive" White women were more likely to mean "stand up for myself" while women of color were more likely to mean "say whatever's on my mind."

Judith Gibbons and her colleagues (1993) reported another example of different meanings assigned to the same concept. In their research, adolescents from Guatemala, the Philippines, and the United States depicted the ideal woman as working in an office. However, further analysis revealed that "in the Philippines office work was associated with glamour, in the United States with routine and boredom, and in Guatemala with the betterment of the family."

Knowing how to interpret cross-cultural findings on gender stereotypes is also hindered by the lack of context provided for the responses on questionnaires. When a respondent declares that the adjective *sensitive* is more descriptive of females than of males, she is assumed to be making an abstract judgment. She is not supposed to be describing any *particular* female but rather a prototypical or average female. Nor is she describing particular behaviors or beliefs—just a vague, general tendency. If we examine gender stereotypes in a different way, by looking at the real-world expectations for women and men in important areas of behavior, a picture emerges of stronger cultural differences. Let us look, for example, at gender-related expectations in the realm of work.

BOX 1.4 LEARNING ACTIVITY

Psychology's Feminist Voices

As you go through this book you may become more curious about the contributions of women to the discipline of psychology. A good place to find more information about this is a comprehensive website: http://www.feministvoices.com/. Here you will find a searchable database of feminist psychologists past and present, including biographies, interview transcripts, photos, and video excerpts of interviews. The site concentrates on feminist psychology in North America; the stories and first-person accounts included here provide an important window into how psychology in this part of the world has been transformed over the years by an influx of women and an infusion of feminist thought. Search some feminist psychologists to explore their contributions.

Sometimes reading or listening to first-person accounts provides insights that are hard to obtain in any other way. Does your own region or locality have any place where oral histories of women are recorded and kept? If so, visit this collection and listen to some of the recordings. What can psychologists learn from this type of data?

In the United States, where women and men are often thought to be equal, the notion of a woman as head of state—as president, or even vice president—has traditionally been problematic for so many people that for years the major parties seldom considered the possibility. A crack in this attitude finally appeared during the 2008 election, when Sarah Palin was selected as the Republican vice-presidential candidate and Hillary Clinton made a serious run for the Democratic presidential nomination. However, a host of other countries, some of which have strong traditions of female subservience, have shown fewer qualms and have already, at some point, installed a woman as a head of state. Some examples include Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Burundi, Canada, Dominica, Germany, the Philippines, Ireland, Finland, Pakistan, Haiti, India, Israel, Nicaragua, Britain, Poland, Iceland, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Bangladesh, and Norway.

In a similar vein, the people of the United States have shown more reluctance than certain other populations (for example, those of Canada, Norway, and the Netherlands) to allow the involvement of military women in combat. Testimony to a number of government commissions often stressed the notion that it is wrong and unnatural for women to engage in combat, that women are not *supposed* to be tough. Although most restrictions on women in combat have been or are being lifted, this process took far longer in the United States than in some other countries.

By contrast, certain cultures view women as the only ones strong enough to carry out particular jobs. The South Korean divers who go into the sea off the island of Cheju in search of pearls are all women—and the accepted cultural wisdom has been that men are not tough enough for this highly skilled, dangerous job (Schoenberger, 1989).

Where Are Gender Stereotypes Most Traditional?

Across a wide range of cultures, researchers typically find that girls hold fewer traditional gender attitudes than boys do (Gibbons & Stiles, 2004). Furthermore, countries in which women and men have more equal opportunities—where they do not differ very much in life expectancy, literacy rates, and earned income—also tend to be countries in which young women and men endorse more egalitarian gender role attitudes. Thus, for example, Gibbons and Stiles report that adolescents in Norway, where both girls and boys are given opportunities to be well educated, hold more egalitarian gender ideologies than do adolescents in Ghana, where girls are less likely than boys to go to school and literacy rates are lower among adult women than adult men.

Economic development and individualism are also associated with gender role attitudes. In wealthier nations, gender role ideologies are more egalitarian and the female–male difference in such ideologies tends to be smaller (Gibbons & Stiles, 2004). Gibbons, Stiles, and Shkodriani (1991) showed that adolescents from wealthier, more individualistic cultures reported less traditional gender role attitudes than adolescents from poorer, more collectivist countries. Similarly, John Williams and Deborah Best showed, in their 14-country study of gender ideology, that idealized gender roles are less differentiated in societies in which a higher percentage of women work outside the home and are university educated (Williams & Best, 1990). It appears, then, that flexibility in gender attitudes is linked in some ways to the perception of individual choice. Young women who see their mothers employed or well educated are more able to imagine a wide variety of roles for themselves; young people growing up in cultures that value individuality and that have many resources are more likely to be flexible about gender expectations.

Components of Gender Stereotypes

The preceding examples give us some clues that stereotypes cannot be assessed simply by lists of traits; different components of gender stereotypes exist. An individual may be judged more or less feminine or masculine because of information about these various components: her personality traits, her occupation, her behaviors, her appearance. American research shows that people see these components as varying independently to some extent. For example, a person could have a very feminine appearance but not necessarily be in a feminine occupation or show a lot of feminine personality traits.

Information about one of the components can influence people's assumptions about the others, however. For a hypothetical person, Deaux and Lewis (1984) gave respondents a sex label (female or male) and information about specific role behaviors (feminine, masculine, mixed) and asked the respondents to estimate the likelihood that the person possessed particular feminine or masculine traits, pursued particular female- or male-associated occupations, and was heterosexual or homosexual. For example, respondents were given the following description: "A woman has been described in terms of the following characteristics and behaviors: source of emotional support, manages the house, takes care of children, responsible for decorating the house. Consider these characteristics carefully and think about what type of woman

this would be." Respondents concluded that this woman was more likely to show feminine traits such as emotionality, gentleness, and understanding of others and to be in a feminine occupation such as occupational therapist or elementary school teacher than to show masculine traits or be in a masculine occupation. They also indicated a high probability that the woman was heterosexual. Obviously, a little bit of information can go a long way when people are constructing stereotype-based judgments of others.

And such judgments can have important consequences. For example, undergraduate students in the United States seem to hold stereotypes of computer scientists that include being technology-oriented, focused on computers to the exclusion of other interests, lacking interpersonal skills, and intelligent (Cheryan, Plaut, Handron, & Hudson, 2013). These qualities, associated with a particular occupation, are incompatible with feminine stereotypes—and women who think of computer scientists in these stereotypic ways are unlikely to express interest in computer science as a college major.

Gender Stereotypes and "Shifting Standards"

Stereotypes may not always affect judgments about particular women and men in the way we expect. For example, a woman who is seen to do well in a "masculine" job may be given particularly high ratings—because her good performance is unexpected. On the other hand, because she is in a masculine field, she may be the target of dislike and mistrust. What is happening in such cases reflects a process called **shifting standards.** Once a person is categorized by onlookers as male or female, that person is judged by the standards thought to be appropriate *for that gender group* (Biernat & Kobrynowicz, 1999). So, for example, a woman applicant for a leadership position may be thought to be "pretty good, for a woman," (a positive judgment) but still not be hired because the person making the judgment thinks that men, in general, are better at leadership than women.

The Impact of Stereotypes

Why should we worry about gender stereotypes—or any other kind of stereotypes? Do people's judgments of others really matter? It turns out that such judgments do matter. First, they may help shape the prescriptive beliefs about what women and men should be allowed to do, thus supporting gender inequality. They have an impact on the people being judged, often pressuring them to fulfill the stereotypes in order to make social interactions run smoothly. For example, women present themselves in a more or less stereotypically feminine manner, depending on how gender-traditional they think a male job interviewer's attitudes may be (von Baeyer, Sherk, & Zanna, 1981). Perhaps most importantly, through a process called **stereotype threat,** stereotypes create conditions that can affect people's performance (Steele, 1997).

Suppose a person is in a situation where she/he has to perform well, but where stereotypes about gender or racial group imply that the person will perform poorly. Research now suggests that, in such a situation, the person's performance will suffer. In a series of studies, researchers have shown that stereotype threat, an individual's awareness that he/she may be judged by or may self-fulfill negative stereotypes about gender or ethnic group, can have a dramatic negative effect on performance. In one

study, women and men who had demonstrated high math ability were brought to the lab to complete a difficult math test. In one experimental condition, participants were told that the test was one on which gender differences in performance usually appeared. In a second condition, the test was described as not showing gender differences. When the test was described as likely to reveal gender differences—that is, when the stereotype threat was high—the women performed substantially worse than the men did. However, when the participants had been led to expect no gender differences, women performed at the same level as men. This occurred even though both conditions used the same math test (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). Across different countries, many years of research on stereotype threat have now shown that women perform less well on math tests under conditions where they are aware of gender stereotypes about math but that the performance decrement tends to be smaller in countries where there is greater gender equality—and thus, presumably, less emphasis on gender stereotypes of all kinds (Picho, Rodriguez, & Finnie, 2013). Researchers have also found that it does not seem to do any good simply to make women aware of the impact of stereotypes; in fact, women who were made aware that gender stereotypes could affect their performance actually performed worse than women who were not exposed to this information (Tomasetto & Appoloni, 2013).

Stereotypes, then, have real consequences with respect to performance. They may also have consequences for life choices. People may tire of doing battle with negative stereotypes, of having to prove themselves continually in the face of negative expectations. Under such conditions, people show a tendency to "leave the field" psychologically: They disengage or "disidentify" with the domain in which the stereotype occurs and move away from that domain as a source of self-esteem or positive identity (Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, & Crocker, 1998).

Prejudice: Negative Evaluation of Women and Their Work

Is there **prejudice** against women—are women evaluated negatively just because they are women? The answer is complicated. Some American research suggests that women are stereotypically viewed as having more positive qualities than men and that people like women more than men—a finding dubbed the "women are wonderful" effect (Eagly & Mladinic, 1994). In keeping with stereotypes of femininity, the ascribed positive qualities are communal ones: *helpful, gentle, kind, understanding.* Yet, when it comes to the instrumental, competence-related qualities that people consider necessary for the accomplishment of leadership roles and high-quality work, women are often judged wanting—at least among the mainly White, middle-class respondents most of the studies use. One group of researchers summarized gender stereotypes across a 16-country sample succinctly as "Men are bad, but bold, and women are wonderful but weaker" (Glick, et al., 2004, p. 714).

People, especially, but not only, men, often express dubiousness about women as leaders (Boyce & Herd, 2003; Katila & Eriksson, 2013; Rudman & Kilianskii, 2000; Ryan & Haslam, 2005; Sczesny, 2003), frequently impose higher standards on women and give higher ratings to work produced by men than to work produced by women (Bowen, Swim & Jacobs, 2000; Gorman & Kmec, 2007; Perales, 2013; Top, 1991), and

show preference for men over women in hiring, promotion, and pay (Harvie, Marshal-McCaskey, & Johnston, 1998; Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham, & Handelsman, 2012; Rudman, 1998). In many work environments, women are viewed with less respect than their male coworkers (e.g., Reskin, 1998; Zafarullah, 2000). All of these reactions are evidence of **sexism:** prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviors toward women simply because they are women.

When women *do* exercise authority or behave in competent or directive ways, they may receive negative evaluations because they have violated the feminine stereotype. This happens because stereotypes can be not just descriptive but prescriptive. Whereas **descriptive gender stereotypes** simply entail expectations about what typical women and men are like, **prescriptive gender stereotypes** are more like unwritten rules about what women and men should be like. Thus, competent, assertive women may be viewed as unfeminine (Lips, 2000; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Women who have a no-nonsense, autocratic, directive leadership style are judged more harshly than men with a similar style (Budworth & Mann, 2010; Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992), and women who appear ambitious or who promote their own competence are judged less likable than men who do the same (Moss-Racusin & Rudman, 2010; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010; Rudman, 1998). Moreover, women who act in such highly assertive, confident, or competent ways sometimes find that their ability to influence others, particularly males, is reduced (Carli, 2001). People respond with dislike, hostility, and rejection to such assertive women, presumably because these women are violating prescriptive norms for gender-appropriate behavior.

Suspicion or disapproval of competence or authority in women is not simply a North American phenomenon. Despite some progress in recent decades, women still make up less than 20 percent of members of parliaments in the countries throughout the world (QuotaProject, 2013), and women leaders in the public eye often face ridicule and hostility. For example, during her term as Prime Minister of Australia, Julia Gillard was forced to fight back publicly against repeated comments by then opposition leader Tony Abbot that women did not make good leaders (Little, 2012).

Although many people would not endorse such overtly sexist statements as "Men should be the decision makers," research in the United States and Canada shows that subtle sexism lingers on. **"Modern" sexism** is manifested in underlying negative attitudes about women and in resentment of and lack of support for social policies aimed at reducing gender inequalities. Scales measuring such subtle forms of sexism ask respondents to indicate their level of agreement with items such as "Women shouldn't push themselves where they are not wanted" (Neosexism Scale, Tougas, Brown, Beaton, & Joly, 1995) and "It is rare to see women treated in a sexist manner on television" (Modern Sexism Scale, Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995). In general, North American studies using these scales show that men hold more of these attitudes than women do and that modern sexism is associated with negative attitudes toward women, feminists, and affirmative action and a lower tendency to define a situation as discriminatory or as sexual harassment. Similar patterns of results has been found in Sweden (Ekehammar, Akrami, & Araya, 2000), Britain, and Switzerland (Sarrasin, Gabriel, & Gygax, 2012).

Does sexism have to mean a dislike for women? Not necessarily. Researchers have found that there are two kinds of sexism: **hostile sexism** and **benevolent sexism** (Glick & Fiske, 2001). These complementary ideologies, which have been found to exist cross-culturally, are both correlated with gender inequality. Hostile sexism is the kind that people are most likely to recognize as sexism: "an antipathy toward women who are viewed as usurping men's power" (Glick & Fiske, 2001, p. 109). An example of such an attitude is the following item from the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996): "Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash." Benevolent sexism, on the other hand, may seem, at first blush, to be a benign, positive attitude toward women. It is defined as "a subjectively favorable, chivalrous ideology that offers protection and affection to women who embrace conventional roles" (p. 109). An example from the same inventory is "Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess." Women often do not recognize this attitude as sexism, not realizing the condescension that it implies or the rejection that will follow if they step outside conventional roles. Yet, benevolent sexism, by rewarding women only if they stay within traditional prescribed roles, is a barrier to gender equality. Glick and Fiske note that research with over 15,000 women and men in 19 countries shows that national averages on both benevolent and hostile sexism are correlated with gender inequality.

Sexism's Links with Other Forms of Prejudice

The exclusive golf course that hosted the British Open in 2013 has a male-only membership policy, although the exclusive club is being pressured to allow females to become members. This male-only membership practice fits seamlessly with other exclusionary practices that permeate the history of certain private clubs in many countries: banning individuals from membership because of their race, ethnicity, or religion. For institutions that are in the habit of excluding people because they belong to a certain group, gender is simply one more category by which individuals can be ruled out.

Except for instances of categorical exclusions, however, it is rare to react to another person only on the basis of membership in one obvious category, such as gender. Rather, our initial reactions to others are affected by many discernible characteristics: race, ethnicity, age, physical attractiveness, height, weight, apparent social class, and occupation.

All of these characteristics are associated with stereotyping. A host of "isms," such as racism, ageism, classism, and beautyism, can interact with sexism. The interactions can be thought of as a "matrix of oppressions" (Kirk & Okazawa-Rey, 2013). For example, in the United States, the forms of racism directed at African American women may differ from those directed at African American men, and sexism may be expressed toward and experienced by a woman differently as a function of her race. The interactions among different forms of oppression such as racism and sexism may be even more complex when comparisons are made across countries.

Professor and writer bell hooks describes how the racism and sexism expressed by her professors often combined to make graduate school in the United States a bitter experience for her. Professors would "forget" to call her name when reading the roll,

avoid looking at her, and pretend they did not hear her when she spoke. In one class, "I, as well as other students, was subject to racist and sexist jokes. Any of us that he considered should not be in graduate school were the objects of particular scorn and ridicule. When we gave oral presentations, we were told our work was stupid, pathetic, and were not allowed to finish. If we resisted in any way, the situation worsened" (hooks, 1989, p. 57).

She notes that White students of both sexes and Black male students were also subjected to humiliation, insults, and condescension, but these other groups had some defenses that Black female students did not have. The White students were more likely to be from privileged backgrounds. For them, the humiliations of graduate school were something they could compartmentalize and treat as temporary. But

> those of us who were coming from underprivileged class backgrounds, who were black, often were able to attend college only because we had consistently defied those who had attempted to make us believe we were smart but not "smart enough"; guidance counselors who refused to tell us about certain colleges because they already knew we would not be accepted; parents who were not necessarily supportive of graduate work, etc. White students were not living daily in a world outside campus life where they also had to resist degradation, humiliation. To them, tolerating forms of exploitation and domination in graduate school did not evoke images of a lifetime spent tolerating abuse. (hooks, 1989, pp. 58–59)

Black male students, hooks suggests, are subjected to racial biases, but for a Black man in graduate school "his maleness may serve to mediate the extent to which he will be attacked, dominated, etc. . . . While many white scholars may be aware of a black male intellectual tradition, they rarely know about black female intellectuals. African-American intellectual traditions, like those of white people, have been male-dominated" (hooks, 1989, p. 60).

Psychotherapist and performing artist Nancy Wang (1995) describes the interaction of racism and sexism she experienced as a Chinese American woman. She notes that Chinese culture has traditionally prescribed that authority be granted to those older or more powerful than oneself, and that the dominant Anglo culture is thus seen to hold great authority. But what does it mean to accept such authority? She says:

> to give America's dominant culture this respect and obedience is also to accept the way in which the dominant culture perceives my value or lack of it. As a woman, too, I cannot be more than a second-class citizen, and in traditional Chinese families, daughters are considered far less valuable than sons. To act in accordance with Chinese traditions regarding obedience, I am to accept, to yield to the treatment rendered me. As a less-worthy family member, a less-worthy citizen, it means yielding to an onslaught of behaviors that attack my self-esteem, my assertiveness, my ability to act positively on my own behalf. (p. 103)

Wang notes that she learned at a young age that, in the United States, it was better to be White: "So I, and thousands of other Chinese American women, tried real hard to convince ourselves that we were white: we tried to paint our eyes big and round, we learned to be embarrassed by our parents" (p. 98).

Racism interacts with sexism in every culture. For example, in India, a pervasive and long-standing caste system has organized ethnic groups into a hierarchy, with the Dalit people, originally referred to as "Untouchables," at the bottom. For Dalit women, who are often uneducated and paid even less than their male counterparts, the intersection of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, and class is devastating. These women make up the majority of landless laborers and scavengers in India, and they are often subjected to violence such as organized rape and forced into dehumanizing jobs such as garbage-picking and prostitution (National Federation of Dalit Women, 2009). Ruth Manorama (2006), head of the National Federation for Dalit Women, notes that "Dalit women have to grapple with the discrimination due to caste hierarchy and untouchability on the one hand and extreme economic deprivation and poverty on the other coupled with political, legal and religious-cultural discrimination. They are thrice alienated, by caste, being lower than others; by class, being the most poor and by gender, due to patriarchy."

In Eastern Europe, the Roma people (traditionally known as "Gypsies") have been victims of discrimination for many years. Roma women, however, have, as activist Sabin Xhemajli notes, "drawn the losing card. Their lifestyle is comparable to what it was five hundred years ago" (*Roma Rights,* 2000). In 2011, a declaration from the World Congress of Roma Women noted:

> We express our deep concern regarding the various forms of anti-Gypsyism with a trend of growing and spreading across Europe over the past few years. Romani women tend to be more vulnerable to various forms of violence, forced evictions and economic deprivation. They are more and more pushed to the margins of society, scape-goated, inflicted in their dignity as persons. Basic rights such as the recognition of Romani women's legal status and citizenship are being denied or inadequately addressed. . . . Harmful practices such as early/arranged/forced marriages, bride kidnapping, virginity testing and harmful gender identities are prevalent in certain Roma communities across Europe. (Third International Roma Women's Conference, 2011)

In Australia, where Blacks are the indigenous, Aboriginal people, their culture has frequently been described and "officially" defined by White anthropologists. Blacks are a smaller minority in Australia than in the United States, making it even more difficult for them to gather power. For Aboriginal women, in particular, the dominance of White society has meant invisibility and a loss of power. Colonization and the confinement to settlements undermined women's power, which, in Aboriginal religion and ritual, was intimately bound up with the land. For many years, anthropologists ignored women's roles in these societies, assuming that males dominated all important aspects of social life. When the Australian anthropologist Diane Bell (2002) focused on the women of one Aboriginal community, she saw something quite different:

> Because my teachers were patient and dedicated to teaching me "straight," I learnt to see much through the eyes of Aboriginal women. What I saw was a strong, articulate and knowledgeable group of women who were substantially independent of their menfolk, in economic and ritual terms. Their lives were not ones of drudgery, deprivation, humiliation and exploitation because of their lack of penis and atten-

> dant phallic culture, nor was their self-image and identity bound up solely with their child-bearing and child-rearing functions. Instead I found the women to be extremely serious in the upholding, observance and transmission of their religious heritage. Religion permeated every aspect of their lives—lives which were nonetheless full of good humour and a sense of fun. Why then have Aboriginal women so often been cast as second-class citizens? (p. 231)

Although racism and sexism always interact, they do not always interact in exactly the same ways. For example, in Australia, Black women have been viewed stereotypically as subservient to Black men; in the United States, the stereotype of Black women includes attributes such as aggressiveness, strength, and resilience—which sound like the opposite of subservience. Social scientists in the United States traditionally cited strength, self-reliance, and a strong achievement orientation as characterizing Black women (Epstein, 1973; Fleming, 1983); a "Black matriarchy" theory described African

BOX 1.5 WOMEN SHAPING PSYCHOLOGY

Carolyn Robertson Payton (1925–2001)

When Carolyn Roberston Payton enrolled at the University of Wisconsin in 1945 to pursue a master's degree in psychology, her tuition and expenses were paid by her home state of Virginia. Why? Because Virginia held to a "separate but equal" educational policy, under which, rather than allowing the racial integration of its universities, the state covered the expenses of Black students who went elsewhere to obtain degrees that were not available to them at the Black state schools. Thus, Payton began her psychology career in a context in which racial issues loomed large. She soon found that, within psychology as well, race was a contentious issue. In her classes—where there were no other Black students—she encountered stereotypes about White intellectual superiority, and she confronted these stereotypes head-on by doing a thesis project in which she used the newly developed Wechsler-Bellevue Test of Intelligence to compare the performance of Blacks and Whites. This research convinced her that the test was a poor measure of Blacks' ability. Many years later, she revisited this issue while serving as a field supervisor for the standardization program of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale. At that time, she ensured that Black participants, selected for age, gender, and socioeconomic status, were included in the development of norms for this test—one of the first times that this had been done for a well-known test.

Payton drew her fighting spirit from the support of her family and from her experience as an undergraduate student at Bennett College, a small historically Black