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GENDER NEUTRALITY: AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE
CULTURAL STRUCTURING OF REALITY IN TERMS OF
FEMININITY, MASCULINITY AND ANDROGYNY.

CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, PH.D., 1979

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REALITY IN TERMS OF FEMININITY, MASCULINITY AND ANDROGYNY

by

Isabel Geiler

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate
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Abstract

GENDER NEUTRALITY

AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE CULTURAL STRUCTURING OF
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by

Isabel Geiler

Advisor: Professor George Fischer

Based on my study there is ample evidence that commands the questioning and reinterpretation of the constructs of femininity, masculinity and androgyny. The ways in which modern thoughts about gender differentiation have been formulated—by Comte, Durkheim, Parsons, Freud, Terman and Miles, Jung, Bem, Spence and Helmreich, Singer, and other social scientists—are inadequate to explain social inequality on the basis of biophysical criteria of sex.

In essence, the importance of the ideal typical concept of gender neutrality is the awareness that any explanation or interpretation of who people are or what they do can be formulated free of the binds and blinds of the bias of gender.

Under circumstances beyond gender valuations, our social nature can be realized in terms of gender neutrality—a patterning of human evolution encompassing the human factors common among the experiences and actions of females and males alike.

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Part I

Sociology of Gender

1. Gender differentiations and the cultural structuring of meanings

The ways in which meanings have been attributed to gender differentiation is problematic in a scientific sense. Sociology, along with other disciplines, has taken for granted that gender differentiation is a function of bio-physiology. Treating femininity and masculinity as cultural constructions of reality, my interest is to present an alternative to the much studied, but dubious assumption of differentiation implicit in the established scientific documentation of gender role stereotypes. With this in mind, this study entails a critical analysis of the thought systems and methodologies in psychology as well as sociology that serve to legitimate and promulgate the forms and structures of consciousness or the meanings customarily attributed to gender.

The legitimating ideas about gender differentiation in our culture are predominantly rooted in psychological understandings. Therefore, a focus here is upon products of psychological thought along with consideration of theoretical formulations of sociological thought that pertain to an understanding of gender.

For the most part, social science has studied gender by means of analysis of the circumstances and qualities and characteristics of individuals and groups in terms of a set

of preconceived structures or stereotypes of gender norms. In contrast, my focus concerns an analysis of the organized ideas or habits of thought and practice that have been accepted and utilized as appropriate modes of developing an understanding of expectations associated with gender role assignments. For this reason, neither the delineation of gender role differentiations nor a depiction of structural opportunities for social action or status achievement is directly germane.

Femininity and masculinity, treated here as complex cultural constructs, cannot be applied in a fair, equitable or judicious manner to depictions of human nature in the generic sense of how people carry on their lives. A significant reason underlying this claim is that, by definition, gender prescriptions posit a culture-wide standard of difference in the norms for females and for males. The overriding model of gender differentiation depicts instrumental role relationship expectations that follow a nonequipollent patterning.

As our thought systems reflect, our cultural context is not neutral to gender. In order to counter the androcentric bias of cultural codes associated with sex status differentiation it is necessary to formulate a rationalized structure that provides a conceptual frame with which to consider femininity and masculinity without prejudice. Within the context of

such a neutral frame of reference, the object of investigation ceases to be how males are masculine or ways in which females are considered to be feminine, or how females and males are assigned or assume differing roles in our society.

Just as our cultural heritage of gender roles perpetuates the power of traditional authority—tagged as the right, rational, moral, valued way of doing things and thinking about them—the old mold of masculinity pervades current status quo notions of the preferred way that things be done in order to sustain a proper path of social existence.

Yet, as structures of consciousness, gender norms are integrally encompassed amidst all the other institutionalized organizing frames of reference that provide meanings for the symbolic designs of culture. Viewed in this way, attributes associated with gender are subject to transformations concomitant with other cultural and social changes.

To illustrate, the needs created by war and the possibilities provided by assembly line production made it all right for "Rosie the Riveter" to work as she did. Not only were females exposed to nontraditional or extraordinary gender role expectations, but they were paid in legal tender and granted the opportunity to experience themselves and their inter-relationships with others in new ways. When males, relieved of the duties of war, resumed their position in

the labor force, females were forced to leave their jobs and occupy their energies in some other way. Despite this displacement, the war effort had entrenched the transition toward females participating in the industrial forces of labor for money and power and prestige. How long will flux in cultural and social structures be evidenced before we recognize new patternings of cultural reality?

Some have suggested that transitions among aspects of non-material culture have a tendency to lag behind those of material culture. Others have called attention to the reluctance of a society to change the forms and structures of law. As Maine's study of ancient law indicated, along with the change in the form of social organization from status to contract, people were afforded the right to engage in the decision making processes that effected their livelihoods in a new way. Maine noted a shift from individuals identified as family members to an individual identified as a unit of civil law and rights. According to Maine, along with this transformation of the cultural structures of social integration and dependence relationships, grounds emerged for the emancipation of women from men.

We are still witnessing gender stereotypes that reflect objectifications of the moral sentiment that corresponded to ancient law. Contrasting gender stereotypes, gender neutrality does not represent an anachronistic legitimation

of morality. Gender neutrality allows for the conception and recognition of a neutral non-androcentric depiction of cultural and social reality. As formulated, the concept of gender neutrality is not dependent upon the gender neutral actuality of social reality. Nonetheless, the concept of gender neutrality is designed to be applied to the question of how people can be understood without the distinctions of gender.

It is important to note that the focus of my thesis is upon gender—not sex. Sex is a biophysical classification of people as females and males. The existence of biophysical differences that distinguish females and males and variations in sexual orientation are not questioned here. What the thesis does question is the social significance attributed to the biophysical bases of being female or male.

Gender denotes a socio-cultural and psychological identification of people as feminine and masculine. Such identifications of females and males have had pervasive significance throughout the conceptual models of humankind. In this way, the qualities and characteristics attributed to females as feminine and to males as masculine influence social notions about how females and males are supposed to coordinate their lives. Such ideas about femininity and masculinity, to a great extent, are merely traditional descriptions delineating particularized patterns of behavior. Therefore, we cannot

equate valued modes of livelihood to a social nature of females and males that is continuous or lasting through all time.

The adage, what's in the mind's eye will be seen, asserts as well the converse: what's not in the mind's eye will not be seen. We lack a conceptual frame to adequately observe how people manifest similarities in their day to day experiences and activities. It is the contention of this thesis that such a frame requires a new viewing of how we perceive human nature. In order to accomplish this a new conceptualization is needed—one free of gender-typed characteristics.

To help meet this need, this dissertation views the nature of human beings in the light of the concept of gender neutrality. By gender neutrality I mean nothing less, and nothing more, than human nature understood as free of gender differentiation.

The idea that we earthlings were created at the beginning of time in our present form lost favor with the advancement of notions of natural selection. In like manner, as the progression of explanatory thought has led from the supernatural to the natural, it is reasonable to move thinking forward in the social sphere as well.

Adherence to the belief that females and males denote naturally or necessarily distinct types of human beings has

us bound to the conceptual dichotomization of gender distinguishing people as feminine or as masculine. Additionally, adherence to gender dichotomization based on biophysical distinctions has limited our perceiving the common condition of humankind. Also, as manifested in traditional modes of thought, linguistically and analytically, distinctions by sex and gender as biophysical and as social categorizations have been confused and obscured. In the absence of an egalitarian currency of consciousness, in sum, we are constricted by the biasing effects of existence on a planet typified by gender differentiation derived directly and unquestioningly from biophysical dichotomization.

It is apparent that neonates are not born with a social sexual identity. Yet, new members of humankind are identified and they are taught to identify themselves and others as both sex and gender typed. In this way, the initial biophysical differentiation leads us to take for granted a presumed naturalness of gender differentiation in the cultural, social and psychological realms. Fundamentally, in the psychological sphere, there is the basic differentiation of females and males as feminine and masculine. Similarly, in the social realm, sex is further categorized as stereotyped female and male gender-roles. In personal existence, sex-identity influences our awareness, intentions, aspirations, adjustment to life as we live it: our familial, religious, educational, economic and political ideals,

beliefs and preferences.

The formulation of gender neutrality is presented here in place of the omnipresent dichotomy of people as feminine or masculine. I believe that the concept of gender neutrality is a step toward developing a sociological theory of human nature beyond the sphere of gender dichotomization. In order for sociological analysis of human nature—conceptualized in terms of shared traits common to all human beings irrespective of their biophysical criteria of sex—a new theory such as gender neutral androgyny is needed.

The label of gender neutral androgyny might be employed to augment a gender neutral conception of human nature. Gender neutral androgyny, as I utilize it here, denotes the cultural and social variability and mutability of human beings—female and male alike. A theory based upon gender neutrality would reject the assumption that an essential quality of personality is identifiable as either feminine or masculine. It would reject as well the notion that females and males "naturally" and "normally" develop in accordance with the norms of feminine and masculine stereotyping which characterize their culture.

Sociologically, femininity and masculinity, as social genders, denote a particularized set of relationships described as general dispositions. They do not pertain to

individual states of being or qualities or characteristics of being that are independent of other social variables. Furthermore, the concepts of femininity and masculinity are not valid descriptors for all females and males trans-historically and cross-culturally. On the contrary, they are no more than historically specific referents utilized in attributing meaning to experiences and interactional effects. Nevertheless, sociologists, along with other social scientists, treat these time and place bound referents as if they indicate generalizable variables of roles or role orientations.

A significant proportion of theory development and research concerning differences between females and males has been scientifically legitimated by professionals trained in the psychological and medical disciplines. These professionals, for the most part, have ignored questioning the validity of the presumed distinctions between femininity and masculinity, and have codified individuals like objects and studied them as if they were separable from their everyday life circumstances. Anthropologists and sociologists, although focusing upon ways in which people manifest styles of living, have maintained use of the distinctions of femininity and masculinity, treating them not as scientific hypotheses about human nature, but as self-evident facts.

As Thomas observed, if a situation is defined as real,

irrespective of the actuality of any bases upon which it is constructed, it is real in its consequences. Thomas indicated further that understandings of social nature derive from definitions of the situation:

actually not only concrete acts are dependent upon the definition of the situation, but gradually a whole life-policy and the personality of the individual himself (sic) follow from a series of such definitions.¹

Along with valued definitions of the situation, a moral code arises. In turn, the ways in which people behave bear moral implications. Serving as morality definers and regulators of normative expression, the concepts of femininity and masculinity relate to behavior as manifested in association with all types of role performances.

Like femininity and masculinity, a variety of descriptions, interpretations and explanations have been attributed to androgyny. But, until now, each conceptualization of androgyny has been employed to evoke the idea that an individual is comprised of coexistent female and male qualities. As such, humans are still understood in terms of both femininity and masculinity. Hence it is important to note that thus far the interpretations of androgyny have been rooted in the prevailing dichotomies—and linkages—of sex and gender. In order to get beyond the biases of conceptualizations of femininity and masculinity and

¹William I. Thomas, The Unadjusted Girl. Boston: Little, Brown, 1931, p. 42.

androgyny, I propose consideration of the concept of gender neutrality.

The sociological formulation of gender neutrality is not an attempt to characterize the way in which people are currently able to express themselves or experience their social existence or theorize about it. However, there are indications that in our time and cultural context, some individuals do reflect gender neutrality or understandings of how people live in a gender neutral androgynous way. In practice, if not yet in theory, such persons are manifesting their relationships and ways of living without presupposing limitations of gender-status distinctions.

Those who may be gender neutral, we should note, need not be understood as neuter or considered to represent a trend of desexualization in American life. Such a trend, or "the way of the neuter," was depicted by Winick as a potentially pathological source of stress and tension. Unlike neuter, however, gender neutrality does not connote ambivalent or ambiguous sex roles or suggest any pathology or incapacity or unwillingness to conduct ones living in ways now identifiable as feminine or masculine.

Gender neutrality represents possibilities of egalitarian relationships among personally responsible and socially aware individuals. Perhaps this is akin to Winick's idea that:

One potentially desirable effect of sexual depolarization is the possibility of its summoning forth new resources of personality and character as people are forced to reexamine the bases of their feelings of identity. Some may achieve an authentic individuality as persons more easily, as traditional roles become almost anachronistic. The future may witness new kinds of sensibility and role expression—if we survive this tumultuous period of accelerated social change.²

I believe that now we can bear witness to gender neutrality as one type of such new sensibility.

In further contrast to the idea that people suffer stressful consequences of living beyond the bounds of the polarized patternings of femininity and masculinity, Heilbrun regards a condition under which sex characteristics are not rigidly assigned—androgyny—as ideal. Further, in Heilbrun's interpretation, androgyny or androgynous existence is liberating and she claims that:

our future salvation lies in a movement away from sexual polarization and the prison of gender toward a world in which individual roles and the modes of personal behavior can be freely chosen.³

Heilbrun, having searched through mythological accounts, literature, and historical periods and the ways in which particular individuals lived their lives, concluded that people cannot be fully actualized while subscribing only to

²Charles Winick, The New People: Desexualization in American Life, New York: Pegasus, 1968, p. 281.

³Carolyn G. Heilbrun, Towards Androgyny: Aspects of Male and Female in Literature, London: Victor Gollancz, 1973, p. 9.

either feminine or masculine norms.

The signs of re-emerging androgyny grow daily, promising an unlimited range of personal destiny available to either sex.⁴

According to Heilbrun, with freedom from ritualized attitudes of gender roles, androgyny and a spirit of reconciliation between women and men ensue. As illustrative of an androgynous way of life Heilbrun observed the Bloomsbury group.

For the first time a group existed in which masculinity and femininity were marvelously mixed in its members.⁵

Although Heilbrun suggested that androgyny represents liberation from the confines of gender dichotomizations, she maintained use of the concepts of femininity and masculinity. As Heilbrun explained:

Yet so wedded are we to the conventional definitions of 'masculine' and 'feminine' that it is impossible to write about androgyny without using these terms in their accepted, received sense.⁶

Going beyond any such limitation, my thesis considers the androgynous ideal that Heilbrun anticipated without the conventional conceptions of masculinity and femininity.

It is true that females and males are different in that our respective biophysiology are different. In other ways I believe that we are much more similar than has been customarily presumed. My concept of gender neutrality will

⁴Heilbrun, Towards Androgyny, *ibid.*, p. 45.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 15.

hopefully amount to a step toward a theory of human nature free of gender differentiation and in this way contribute to the science of society. For now a patterning of evolution in terms of the human factors common to the experiences and actions of females and males alike is not recognized in the discipline of sociology and elsewhere.

This dissertation is presented in four parts. Part I aligns my concept of gender neutrality with Weber's idea of ideal type, and establishes that traditional sociological understanding about gender is based upon the presumption that females and males differ in their social natures. Part II explores prevalent ideas about femininity and masculinity. Part III treats conceptualizations of gender differentiated androgyny as an alternative to traditional gender dichotomizations. The concluding Part IV focuses upon sociological conceptualizations of a gender-free reality, and upon my concept of gender neutrality as an alternative to all past or current treatments of human nature in terms of femininity, masculinity, or androgyny.

Chapter 2. Weber's concept of ideal type and interpreting gender

Weber stressed the importance of the responsibility of social scientists to clarify the distinction between their value judgments and objective knowledge. According to Weber, the selection and structuring of a scientific problem entails value judgments. But, Weber claimed that once a problem has been defined for scientific study, the rigor of scientific method necessitates that a value neutral approach be employed.

Apparently, therefore, in order to engage in the scientific study of gender differentiation a value neutral approach is needed. To satisfy this need, I propose the concept of gender neutrality.

Gender neutrality provides a unified conceptual framework with which to explicate grounds for interpreting gender. In the language of modern sociology, such a unified analytic construct can be formulated as an ideal type. As Weber indicated:

A ideal type is formed by one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discreet, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized view-points into a unified analytical construct.¹

¹Max Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, New York: Free Press, 1949, p. 110.

As an ideal type, gender neutrality enables the study of social phenomena without reliance upon notions of gender dichotomization. Further, the concept of gender neutrality serves as a basis for the critical evaluation of the constructs of femininity, masculinity, and androgyny.

Only through ideal-typical concept-construction do the viewpoints with which we are concerned in individual cases become explicit. Their peculiar character is brought out by the confrontation of empirical reality with the ideal-type.²

Additionally, as an ideal type, gender neutrality makes possible the conceptual and analytical transcendence beyond the categorizations of femininity and masculinity. In order to view characteristics common to all, we need an ideal type with which we can consider how we may be different as human beings than we have customarily understood ourselves to be. Further, a scientific understanding that is free of an androcentric or masculine orientation toward social existence cannot be derived in terms of masculinity and femininity.

Every conscientious examination of historical exposition shows however that the historian as soon as he (sic) attempts to go beyond the bare establishment of concrete relationships and to determine the cultural significance of even the simplest individual event in order to 'characterize' it, must use concepts which are precisely and unambiguously definable only in the form of ideal types.³

²Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, *ibid.*, p. 110.

³Weber, *ibid.*, p. 92.

Gender neutrality need not be considered as a description of cultural reality. Gender neutrality is conceived as an abstraction of the shared characteristics of human beings to be utilized as an ideal typification of ways in which the social nature of females and males is free of gender stereotyping. As Weber stated of an ideal type:

It is not a description of reality but it aims to give unambiguous means of expression to such a description.⁴

Additionally, Weber indicated that the normative "correctness" of an ideal type does not affect its utility as an hypothesized typification of social reality. In this light, gender neutrality serves as a meaningful concept for encompassing divergent views about the social nature of humans that have traditionally been associated with gender dichotomization. As Weber pointed out:

Whatever the content of an ideal-type, be it an ethical, a legal, an aesthetic, or a religious norm, or a technical, economic, or a cultural maxim or any other type of valuation in the most rational form possible, it has only one function in an empirical investigation. Its function is the comparison with empirical reality in order to establish its divergences or similarities⁵

According to Weber, an ideal type is not a historical reality.

It is a conceptual construct...which is neither historical reality nor even the 'true' reality.⁶

⁴Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, *ibid.*, p.90.

⁵Weber, *ibid.*, p. 43.

⁶Weber, *ibid.*, p. 93.

Nevertheless, Weber indicated that an ideal type could be abstracted from ideals and aspirations for socially desirable living.

An ideal type of certain situations, which can be abstracted from certain characteristic social phenomena of an epoch, might—an this is indeed quite often the case—have also been present in the minds of the persons living in that epoch as an ideal to be striven for in practical life or as a maxim for the regulation of certain social relationships.⁷

In this light, I consider the concept of gender neutrality to be directly relevant to particular societal interests. For example, the concept of gender neutrality can be applied toward the understanding and realization of the objectives of affirmative action; and gender neutrality can be directly applied toward an evaluation and realization of the ERA—Equal Rights Amendment. However, regardless of the degree to which the concept of gender neutrality represents an expression of ideas or ideals of people in our society at this time, as an ideal type gender neutrality is logically ideal. As Weber indicated,

we should emphasize that the idea of an ethical imperative, of a 'model' of what 'ought' to exist is to be carefully distinguished from the analytical construct, which is 'ideal' in the strictly logical sense of the term.⁸

⁷Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, *ibid.*, p. 95.

⁸Weber, *ibid.*, pps. 91-92.

According to Weber's formulation, an ideal typical construct is associated with "utopia" or "perfection" only in a purely logical sense. However, Weber also indicated that an ideal type can be representative of a composite of ideas held or goals sought by particular members of society.

the practical idea which should be valid or is believed to be valid and the heuristically intended, theoretically ideal type approach each other very closely and constantly tend to merge with each other.⁹

Additionally, as an ideal type, the concept of gender neutrality may serve as a framework with which we can derive a new viewing of cultural realities. We may find, as Weber claimed, that:

The greatest advances in the sphere of the social sciences are substantively tied up with the shifts in practical cultural problems and take the guise of a critique of concept-construction.¹⁰

As Weber understood of ideal types in general, it is possible that the construction of an ideal type may merely serve as the basis of some sort of conceptual game. On the other hand, Weber suggested that the formulation of an ideal type is a potentially fruitful method of providing grounds for new conceptualizations and theory construction. Whether we will regard the concept of gender neutrality as an ideal

⁹Weber, The Methodology of the Social Sciences, *ibid.*, p. 99.
¹⁰Weber, *ibid.*, p. 106.

typical construct or as a conceptual frame with which to perceive a new patterning of human nature remains to be evaluated. In either sense, with gender neutrality the contemplation of human nature free of gender differentiation becomes subject to scientific scrutiny.

Chapter 3. Sociologists' beliefs about gender differentiation

Sociologists have not treated the concepts of femininity and masculinity as problematic in ways that have rendered the presupposition of gender differentiation subject to scientific evaluation. Nonetheless, comprised within the literature of the discipline of sociology there are allusions to gender differentiation. Therefore, the beliefs that sociologists have harbored about gender can be gleaned from their descriptions of ways in which they identified females as different from males.

By no means are the sociological perspectives of the sociologists cited in this chapter—Comte, Durkeim and Parsons—or the scope of any of their works covered here. Rather, the passages cited here are intended only to illustrate that these influential key formulators of sociological theory presumed that the social nature of females and the social nature of males were not alike.

Auguste Comte

Comte, self identified as "The Founder of Universal Religion, Great Priest of Humanity," regarded the family, or the relationship of female and male as couple, as the basic unit of social life.

As every system must be composed of elements of the same nature with itself, the scientific spirit forbids us to regard society as composed of individuals. The

true social unit is certainly the family, reduced, if necessary, to the elementary couple which forms its basis.¹

It appears that gender dichotomization was an intrinsic aspect that underlied Comte's classification of fundamental roles and status differentiations.

Comte avowedly desired to enhance the potentialities of human nature and to elevate the state of human existence. For the purpose of ameliorating social ills Comte advocated a shift away from the dominance of masculine characteristics toward a fostering of the healing qualities that characterize feminine ways of being. As Coser put it, Comte favored

the primacy of emotion over intellect, of feeling over mind; he proclaimed over and over again the healing powers of warm femininity for a humanity too long dominated by the harshness of masculine intellect²

Interpreting Comte's emphasis on the social import of femininity, Coser depicted Comte as empassioned to display tribute for his beloved Clothilde de Vaux. Whatever reasons there may have been for Comte, the pertinent point here is that Comte promulgated beliefs about gender differentiation; and Comte did not derive them from an application of scientific methodology.

¹Auguste Comte, The Positive Philosophy, Harriet Martineau, translator, London: George Bell & Sons, 1896, 280-281.

²Lewis Coser, Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas In Historical and Social Context, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1971, p.19.

In Comte's creation of sociology, he believed that there would be the scientific evolution of human relations to a time when personal and domestic moralities would give way to a "social morality." As Comte indicated:

The individual life, ruled by personal instincts; the domestic by sympathetic instincts; and the social, by the special development of intellectual influences, prepare for the states of human existence which are to follow: and that which ensues is first, personal morality... next, domestic morality...and lastly, social morality, which directs all individual tendencies by enlightened reason...so as to bring into occurrence all the faculties of human nature³

By conceptualizing the potentiation of human nature by means of enlightened reason Comte may have laid ground for the consideration of the evolution of the basic units of social life beyond the confines of traditional personal and domestic moralities that are an inherent aspect of gender differentiation.

Emile Durkheim

In explaining differential suicide rates for females and males Durkheim focused upon the social unit of couple. Durkheim found that divorce was more detrimental to men than to women. In what way? Durkheim claimed that the weakening of matrimonial discipline along with a deregulation of sexual relations aggravates the tendency of men to suicide and diminishes that of women. On what grounds did Durkheim interpret the pairing of a female and a male as couple to

³Comte, The Positive Philosophy, op.cit., p. 298.

have different social meaning for women and men? According to Durkheim's interpretation, the differential effects of marriage or divorce were attributable to the differences of females and males in biophysical endowment and social custom.

Comparing the sexual needs of females and males, Durkheim indicated:

Women's sexual needs have less of a mental character because, generally speaking, her mental life is less developed.⁴

Describing differences between females and males in terms of instinct, Durkheim went on to point out that:

Being a more instinctive creature than man, woman has only to follow her instincts to find calmness and peace. She thus does not require so strict a social regulation as marriage, and particularly as monogamic marriage.⁵

Durkheim's further differentiation of females and males explained his belief that marriage is less advantageous to a woman than to a man. Durkheim argued that custom afforded males with more privileges and compensations, whereas by nature females have limited "desires" and marriage is more restraining for females than for males.

Custom, moreover, grants him certain privileges which allow him in some measure to lessen the strictness of the regime. There is no compensation or relief for the woman. Monogamy is strictly obligatory for her, with no qualification of any sort, and, on the other hand, marriage is not in the same degree useful to her for limiting her desires, which are naturally limited, and

⁴Emile Durkheim, Suicide: A Study of Sociology, George Simpson, editor, New York: The Free Press, 1951, p. 272.

⁵Durkheim, Suicide., *ibid.*, p. 272.

for teaching her to be contented with her lot; but it prevents her from changing it if it becomes intolerable. The regulation is a restraint to her without any great advantages.⁶

Descriptions of ways in which the role of marriage differed for members of each sex further reflect beliefs about gender differentiation. Relating to the monogamous form of marriage, Durkheim indicated that:

It is supposed to have been originated for the wife, to protect her weakening against masculine caprice. Monogamy...is often represented as a sacrifice made by man (of his polygamous instincts), to raise and improve woman's condition.⁷

However, despite the notion that monogamy represented a sacrifice on the part of the male, Durkheim believed that the matrimonial regulation was more beneficial to the male and overall was a sacrifice on the part of the female. As Durkheim stated:

Actually, whatever historical causes may have made him accept this restriction (of his polygamous instincts), he benefits more by it...we may say that by submitting to the same rule, it was she who made the sacrifice.⁸

In addition to the consideration of instinctual differences between the sexes, Durkheim interpreted the interests of the female and the male in marriage to be opposed. According to Durkheim, the opposition was due to the unequal participation

⁶Durkheim, Suicide, op.cit., p. 272.

⁷Durkheim, ibid., p. 275.

⁸Durkheim, ibid., p. 276.

of the female and the male in social life.

Man is actively involved in it (social life), while woman does little more than look on from a distance. Consequently man is much more highly socialized than woman. His tastes, aspirations and humor have in large part a collective origin, while his companion's are more directly influenced by her organism.⁹

Further, in contrast to his view of males as predominantly a product of society, Durkheim viewed females as predominantly a product of nature. For this reason, too, he claimed that matrimony was not of equal benefit to females and males. As Durkheim indicated:

His needs...are quite different from hers, and so an institution intended to regulate their common life cannot be equitable and simultaneously satisfying to such opposite needs. It cannot simultaneously be agreeable to two persons, one of whom is almost entirely the product of society while the other has remained to a far greater extent the product of nature.¹⁰

Durkheim acknowledged that in time females would expand their role in society. Nevertheless, Durkheim asserted that females would not be able to play the same part in society as males.

To be sure, we have no reason to suppose that woman may ever be able to fulfill the same functions in society as man¹¹

Durkheim explained that females would be limited by their aptitudes and would naturally select like occupations—

⁹Durkheim, Suicide, op.cit., p. 385.

¹⁰Durkheim, ibid., p. 385.

¹¹Durkheim, ibid., p. 385.

different from those that males would select. Therefore, even with social evolution, Durkheim believed that occupations would be uniform for each sex by free choice. In this way, Durkheim believed not only that differences in gender would be perpetuated, but that the sexes would become "socially equalized."

The female sex will not again become more similar to the male; on the contrary, we may foresee that it will become more different... Both sexes would thus approximate each other by their very differences. They would be socially equalized but in different ways...¹²

Along with becoming "socially equalized," Durkheim believed that differences between husbands and wives and the differential effects of marriage and divorce for members of each sex could be lessened. In order to achieve such a change, Durkheim pointed out the necessity of reducing the psychological inequality of women and men. He asserted that only then might equal rights be approached, and the conjugal bond cease to favor males to the detriment of females.

As for the champions today of equal rights for woman with those of man, they forget that the work of centuries cannot be instantly abolished; this juridical equality cannot be legitimate so long as psychological inequality is so flagrant.... Our efforts must be bent to reduce the latter. For man and woman to be equally protected by the same institution, they must first of all be creatures of the same nature. Only then will the indissolubility

¹²Durkheim, Suicide, op.cit., p. 385.

of the conjugal bond no longer be accused of serving only one of the two parties pleading.¹³

It appears, then, that according to Durkheim, along with changes in our ways of perceiving equality it is possible to conceive of men and women as "creatures of the same nature."

Talcott Parsons

Parsons considered sex to be a universal ground for role differentiation. Therefore, Parsons treated the complementarity of the feminine and masculine roles as a crucial dimension of personality systems, social systems, and the ways in which social interaction proceeds. For the purposes of this chapter some of the suppositions underlying Parsons treatment of gender differentiation will be considered. My interpretation here of ideas fundamental to Parsons work indicates that his sociological theories are linked to beliefs about gender differentiation cast in a psychoanalytic mode. Relying upon the notion that personality development necessary for social interaction required the resolution of the Oedipus complex, Parsons claimed that sex-role identification is a primary factor influencing all dimensions of social existence.

Parsons treated gender differentiation as an inherent quality linked with what he considered to be the major reference points for all "theoretical preoccupations of sociological

¹³Durkheim, Suicide, op.cit., p. 386.

theory." Parsons identified these referents as follows:

One concerns the relations of social systems and culture and focuses on the problem of values and norms in the social system. The second concerns the individual as organism and personality and focuses on the individual's participation in social interaction.¹⁴

Parsons considered these concerns to be of equal importance and both are interrelated in Parsons conception of role. Writing about social interaction and roles, Parsons indicated that:

For sociology, the essential concept here is that of role... The essential starting point is the conception of two (or more) individuals interacting in such a way as to constitute an interdependent system. As personalities each individual may be considered a system with its own values, goals, etc., facing the others as part of an 'environment' that provides certain opportunities for goal-attainment as well as certain limitations and sources of frustration.¹⁵

As represented here, Parsons treated the personality system as integral with his conception of roles.

It appears further, that role pertains to an individual personality system in terms of particular involvement in the social system. Parsons described the personality system as

a system of control over the behavioral organism¹⁶

Parsons described role in the following way:

¹⁴Talcott Parsons, "An Outline of the Social System," in Theories of Society: Foundations of Modern Sociological Theory, Parsons, Shils, Naegele, and Pitts, eds., New York: The Free Press, 1967, p. 41.

¹⁵Parsons, *ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁶Parsons, *ibid.*, p. 38.

the normatively regulated complex of behavior of one of the participants is a role¹⁷

According to Parsons, the essential properties of a social system, or at least two people in interaction, are shared patterns of normative culture or values and the differentiation of roles. As Parsons indicated:

In most social systems, participants do not do the same things; their performances may be conceived as complementary contributions to the 'functioning' of the interaction system.¹⁸

In this context, the impact of gender role differentiation on the nature of social existence can be seen as extensive. Both at the level of the individual personality system and at the societal level Parsons differentiated people in terms of complementary role participation; and Parsons considered biophysical sex status as a basic classification of role complementarity.

The fact that all human populations are classifiable by sex into two and only two categories (with negligible exceptions) forms a crucial focus of orientation to human individuals.¹⁹

Parsons not only claimed that sex is a universal classificatory attribute of people. According to Parsons, an individual's assumption of roles and participation in a social system concerns where a person "starts off." As Parsons stated, a universal start off criteria for each new

¹⁷Parsons, "An Outline of the Social System," *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁸Parsons, *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁹Talcott Parsons, The Social System, New York: The Free Press, 1964, p. 89.

member of society is

in all known societies determined by the fact that he (sic) is an infant of a given sex²⁰

According to Parsons, gender differentiation determines the configuration of the need-dispositions or motivational subsystems that comprise the personality system. As well, Parsons indicated that the implications of the structural patterns of gender are universal. The main idea here pertinent to considering Parsons' views of gender is that Parsons' understanding of personality system and its interconnection with the societal level hinges on psychoanalytic theory. Parsons acknowledged that his following views on "the socialization of motivational capacity" were derived from Freud:

At the societal level, motivation originates as an input from the personality system. The major phase of generation may be divided into three principal subphases. The first is the one known in psychoanalytic theory as the oral phase.²¹

The oral phase of development was linked with the traditionally feminine role of mothering. As Parsons indicated about this phase:

Through identification with the primary agent of care (usually the mother), the individual builds up a system of 'socialized' motivation wherever his (sic) maintaining the attachment to this agent becomes the paramount goal of the emerging personality system.²²

²⁰Parsons, The Social System, *ibid.*, p. 117.

²¹Parsons, "An Outline of the Social System," *op.cit.*, p. 63.

²²Parsons, *ibid.*, p. 63.

Parsons additionally presumed that an Oedipal stage followed the oral stage. As Parsons continued:

The next phase extends from the resolution of the oral attachment to that of the Oedipus complex.²³

Relating to the phase following this developmental phase, Parsons pointed out that:

the differentiation of the original internalized oral-maternal object occurs, yielding a personality system consisting of four primary motivational subsystems or need-dispositions—adequacy, security, conformity, and nurturance.²⁴

In Parsons framework the motivational subsystems are treated as the basic variables which depict differentiations in personality systems as well as bases for distinguishing the complementary nature of gender roles. Parsons stated:

The balance among these (primary motivational subsystems) differs in different personalities; in particular, one major factor of differential balance is established through sex-role identification, whose foundations are laid in this period.²⁵

Further, Parsons believed that gender differentiation was a concomitant of psychological maturation; and personality structure was instrumental in determining the nature of social life.

Viewing Parsons as a sociological theorist whose work on sex-role differentiation has been widely influential, it is most important here to note that Parsons did not derive his

²³Parsons, "An Outline of the Social System," *ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁴Parsons, *ibid.*, p. 63.

²⁵Parsons, *ibid.*, p. 63.

beliefs of gender differentiation directly from sociological grounds of inquiry. Rather, Parsons accepted the premise that biophysical sex differences determine differences in psychological development and personality systems. In this way Parsons developed his own theoretical positions upon the foundations of psychoanalytic theory. In the scope of Parsons' sociology, therefore, there is a great investment in observations of female-male, wife-husband, and mother-father role relationships. Parsons understood social order in terms of roles played according to traditional expectations of gender differentiations.

The possibility of understanding social order in terms of normative expectations of gender neutral being was not posited by any of the key sociologists viewed here.

Part II

Femininity & Masculinity

Chapter 4. Freud's model of human nature in terms of gender

Currently social science and social thought in general are wed to an excessively psychological model of feminine and masculine natures. Principally, Freudian influence underlies understandings of personality as differentiated by gender. However, as demonstrated by Freud's work, interpretations of gender—treated in this thesis as socio-cultural phenomena—have been closely linked with biophysically based criteria of sex.

Freud's focus upon the relationship of people to society and the structuring of personality shows a systematically different treatment of the female and male species. Limiting this discussion to a few striking hypotheses basic to Freud's understanding of human nature, an overview of his basic premises will be presented. The major idea to be addressed first is that behavior is instinctually determined. Following this, I will consider Freud's assertion that biophysical sex differentiations determine personality differences.

According to Freud, presocial homo sapiens behaved in response to instinctual drives alone. He hypothesized further that, based upon guilt and anxiety which resulted from the supposed killing by males of their primal father, social structure and moral order emerged. Freud believed

that a form of the Oedipus drama thereafter became genetically fixed. Further, in Freud's view this basic repression was a necessity of group survival, and he asserted that unconscious memories serve as innate sources of guilt and anxiety.

Freud regarded genetically determined instincts as more basic than rationality, but recognized that human beings functioned in ways to control psychobiological drives and achieve rational goals while keeping themselves from activating irrational impulses. However, he regarded basic drives as constitutionally fixed and unalterable through interpersonal experience.

As is well known and central to this study, Freud assumed a sex differentiated model of human nature and asserted the belief that biophysical sex differentiations determine personality differences. His explanations of sex differentiation in personality concerned intrapsychic phenomena associated with supposed childhood trauma corresponding to conflictual instinctual drives. These notions are problematic in that they do not lend themselves to scientific scrutiny.

First, intrapsychic structures or experiences are not directly observable. They were merely indirectly available to Freud as an observer through the practice of psycho-

analysis. Second, the instinctual drives attributed to human beings derive from Freud's conjectures about presocial beings.

In Freud's theoretical formulation homo sapiens became psychobiologically altered when males of the so-called primal horde banded together and killed their primal father. According to Freud, the Oedipus drama became genetically transmitted and innate drives of male children to compete with their father for sexual mastery of their mother were repressed. Along with this repression of the Oedipus complex, guilt and anxiety became somatically fixed.

Freud believed that female homo sapiens blame their mother for their own "lack" of a penis. In Freud's view this blame resulted in the transfer of the female child's love from the mother to the father. Further, Freud hypothesized a castration complex for females. Freud believed that this complex, along with envy of males and resignation to subordinate status, resulted in a defective superego. Throughout his work Freud utilized the male as the standard referent for humankind. He did not address issues such as: male vulnerability; menstruation, gestation and lactation envy; nor a comparative assessment of female and male capabilities for libidinal gratification as a function of frequency, duration and intensity of orgasm. In other words, Freud understood females in terms of their being not male.

Freud assumed that 1) desire for a penis is natural, 2) enviousness, receptivity, passivity and masochism are normal manifestations of femininity, and 3) females suffer from a defective superego. Freud believed that the female superego, like that of the male, developed along with the repression of the Oedipal complex. However, he regarded females as less capable than males of resolving their Oedipal attachment to their father. A female's love toward her father and other men was viewed as necessarily envious.

We should probably not be wrong in saying that it is this difference in the reciprocal relation between the Oedipus and the castration complex which gives its special stamp to the character of females as social beings.¹

The effect, in Freud's view, was that the personalities of females were not as fully developed as those of males.

Freud held, that for the female species,

the formation of the super-ego must suffer; it cannot attain the strength and independence which give it its cultural significance, and feminists are not pleased when we point out to them the effects of the factor upon the average feminine character.²

Further, based upon his notion that the female superego compared unfavorably to the male superego, Freud did not

¹Sigmund Freud, "Female Sexuality," (1931) in Jean Strouse ed., Women & Analysis, New York: Grossman, 1974, p. 43.

²Freud, "Femininity," (1933) in Jean Strouse ed., Women & Analysis, *ibid.*, p. 88.

consider females to be as able as males to incorporate within their personalities the moral dictates of society.

I cannot evade the notion (though I hesitate to give it expression) that for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in man.³

In response to Freud, feminists denied that there was any basis upon which an inferior status could be attributed to women. In response to feminists, Freud admonitioned:

We must not allow ourselves to be deflected from such conclusions by the denials of the feminists, who are anxious to force us to regard the two sexes as completely equal in position and worth.⁴

Another way in which Freud responded to feminist repudiation of his theoretical notions was to concede that in some respects women might be more masculine than feminine. Freud indicated that research findings unfavorable to females engendered the criticism—from his "excellent women colleagues in analysis"—that the male analysts had merely demonstrated their prejudices against what was considered to be feminine. Responding on behalf of the men, Freud stated:

We...standing on the ground of

³Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," (1925) in Jean Strouse ed., Women & Analysis, op.cit., p. 25.

⁴Freud, "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," *ibid.*, p. 25.

bisexuality, had no difficulty in avoiding impoliteness. We had only to say: 'This doesn't apply to you. You're the exception; on this point you're more masculine than feminine.'⁵

It seems that "bisexuality" was employed by Freud as a catch-all explanation for conduct that did not fit his normative portrayal, as in the cited instance in which Freud simply dismissed the understandings advanced by women colleagues.

Along with this view Freud maintained that the possibilities of personal development through psychoanalysis are greater for men than women. According to Freud, females manifest a psychical rigidity and resistance to change; he found of women about 30 years of age

there are no paths open to further development; it is as though the whole process had already run its course and remains thence forward insusceptible to influence—as though, indeed, the difficult development to femininity had exhausted the possibilities of the person concerned⁶

Other ways in which Freud typified women as different from men concerned notions of female sexual inferiority, shamefulness, physical vanity, and narcissism as a stronger need to be loved than to love.

Overall, Freud held that females: are not as well endowed

⁵Freud, "Femininity," op.cit., p. 77.

⁶Freud, "Femininity," ibid., p. 92.

as males to constrain their instinctual drives; are less capable than males of acquiring the skills necessary for societal endeavors; and are less competent than males to function in civilization.

Freud exemplified his position in commenting about the control of fire as the "extraordinary and unexampled achievement" among the first acts of civilization. Freud attributed this achievement to the male species, for he supposed that only one of them had the biophysical equipment to liquidate a fire. Also, Freud believed that only men could constrain their instinctual habit of putting out fire with a stream of urine:

the first person to renounce this desire and spare the fire was able to carry it off with him and subdue it to his own use...this great cultural conquest was thus the reward for his renunciation of instinct.⁷

Freud went on to conjecture that members of the female species had been "appointed guardian" of fire. According to Freud a female could not urinate on fires:

because her anatomy made it impossible for her to yield to the temptation of this desire.⁸

Whether these understandings that Freud expressed were derived from personal revelations or interpersonal

⁷Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, New York: W. N. Norton & Company, Inc., 1962, p. 37.

⁸Freud, *ibid.*, p. 37.

observations, they are rooted not in social or cultural explanations but in biophysical justifications. Additionally, the female is depicted as naturally subordinate to the male who has the power to assign tasks to her.

Consistently Freud assumed male dominance and in this way perpetuated the traditional prejudice of his social heritage. For example, Freud regarded males as responsible for the founding of families. According to Freud, due to a constant need for genital satisfaction, males exercised their strength over females to found families and keep females in the service of their libido. As Freud put it:

the male acquired a motive for keeping the female, or, speaking more generally, his sexual objects, near him; while the female, who did not want to be separated from her helpless young, was obliged, in their interest, to remain with the stronger male.⁹

Clearly reflected is Freud's perpetuation of the notions of female dependency and male supremacy.

Freud further depicted the female as exerting a "retarding and restraining" influence on the development of civilization. Why? Freud reported that due to her subordinate status the female is hostile toward civilization. How does Freud explain such hostility? Relying on the pre-Einsteinian theory that he had learned about physical organisms manifesting fixed energy systems, Freud explained

⁹Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, *ibid.*, p. 46.

it as follows:

Since a man does not have unlimited quantities of psychical energy at his disposal, he has to accomplish his tasks by making an expedient distribution of his libido.¹⁰

The restraining influence of the female is seemingly a result of her appeal as an object with which males could wastefully expend energy. Freud continues:

What he employs for cultural aims he to a great extent withdraws from women and sexual life. This constant association with men, and his dependence on his relations with them, estrange him from his duties as a husband and father. Thus the woman finds herself forced into the background by the claims of civilization and she adopts a hostile attitude toward it.¹¹

Freud's theoretical formulations of sex differentiations in personality seem created in a form that would support his view that males are better endowed than females to function in civilization. Enumerating main points of Freud's view: women represent the interests of sexuality and child bearing, "civilization" requires that difficult tasks be performed, such tasks necessitate constraintment of instincts, and men are better able to sublimate their instincts than are women.

Women represent the interests of the family and of sexual life. The work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men, it confronts them

¹⁰Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, *ibid.*, p. 50.

¹¹Freud, *ibid.*, p. 50.

with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimation of which women are little capable.¹²

Such beliefs about personality and sex identity fathered by Freud typify conventional thought about gender. Yet the grounds upon which Freud developed his sex differentiated models of personality seem to me not appropriate for understandings within a sociological perspective. Additionally, the assumption most pervasive in Freud's model seems the least appropriate for understanding the meaning of human activity. At fault, in each instance, is Freud's reliance on instinct to explain social behavior.

What are the instincts that Freud discovered? Sex, Eros, Thanatos and aggression. Freud described sex as an instinct operating as a function of the libidinal energies of the id; Eros as the instinct for life; Thanatos as the death instinct; and aggression, a subsidiary of Thanatos, as a constitutional inclination of humans to be hostile towards one another. Freud further regarded aggression as the greatest hindrance to civilization. Countering the instinct toward aggression Freud postulated civilization as a process in service of Eros. What's the purpose of civilization?

to combine single human individuals and after that families, then races, peoples and nations, into one great unity, the unity of mankind.¹³

¹²Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, *ibid.*, p. 50.

¹³Freud, *ibid.*, p. 69.

It seems as if Freud sees humankind as destined to experience opposing instinctual pressures which are simultaneously operative.

Men do not feel comfortable without satisfaction of their inclination to aggression.¹⁴

Further, aggression is seen to be manifest in power relations, including love as well,

it forms the basis of every relation of affection and love among people (with the single exception, perhaps, of the mother's relation to her male child).¹⁵

The conflict inherent in the instinct theories presented by Freud is obvious. While civilization is depicted as a process toward the unity of humankind, representing one of Freud's few expressions of optimism, it is depicted as well as a main source of discomfort.

What we call civilization is largely responsible for our misery.¹⁶

The development of civilization, according to Freud, imposes restrictions on individual freedom.

The liberty of the individual is no gift of civilization.¹⁷

The sublimation of instincts, as Freud indicates,

makes possible higher psychical activities, scientific artistic or ideological—to play such an important part in civilized life.¹⁸

¹⁴Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, *ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁵Freud, *ibid.*, p. 60.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 44.

And what Freud called an "urge for freedom,"

is directed against particular forms
and demands of civilization or against
civilization altogether.¹⁹

It seems fair to say that Freud's images display humans as being instinctually repressed and hostile to each other; with aggression underlying love relations, and social activity fraught with tension and suffering. Freud depicts humankind as dwelling amidst such conditions with nearly no exit.

Freud enumerates three methods, however, that can be employed in order to avert suffering. One pertains to means employable by individuals to influence their own biophysiological organism. The means include: chemical intoxication; and a deadening of instincts, as attained by yogic control. Freud regards these means as effective in rendering an individual independent from the external world. A second method entails a means by which reality is remolded. Freud provides such examples for this method as: delusions like those attributed to madmen; and mass delusions such as those Freud considered to be manifested by religions. The third means to avert suffering involves the displacement of the libido through engagement in activities Freud deemed favorable for civilization. Freud illustrated such instances of sublimation of instincts by

¹⁹Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, *ibid.*, p. 43.

artistic joy in creativity; and a scientist's joy in solving problems or discovering truths. Each of the methods that Freud described as alleviating suffering were related to hypothesized instincts.

From the standpoint of a sociological perspective, however, there are no known instincts. As such, the methods outlined do not in themselves provide a meaningful indication of what action an individual may choose to engage in nor any effect it may necessarily have upon her or his pleasure or pain. For example, intoxication in and of itself may not be pleasurable. Pertinent factors that would bear on such an activity's effects would seemingly include the nature of the intoxicant, when it was taken, with whom, for how long, with what expectations... The drinking of alcohol, for example, depending upon such variables as the potency, quality and quantity consumed, may provide relief from the supposed pain of instinctual repression while at the same time engendering pressure from societal constraintment.

It is my view that Freud's reliance on instincts to describe behavior is the weakest aspect of his work. There is no in-born pattern of social activity common to all human beings—or all females or all males—cross-culturally or trans-historically. People do have reflexes, but there is nothing that all people do everywhere or everytime in response to a universally defined stimulus. Freud derived his notions of

human nature from his hypotheses about asocial predecessors of humankind. Yet from a sociological perspective that which may be true of nonhumans need not be considered as applicable to the human species.

As human creatures our flexibility and malleability is readily observable. We have taken up residence in climates of sun and rain and snow, and dwell in many varied areas of jungle, desert, mountain, flatland. We can work in fields or factories or outerspace. Some of us need not work at all. Human beings are social communicators sharing symbols that enable sharing of meanings. We can choose our words and we can choose our deeds according to our beliefs, values, ideals and the possibilities for alternative choices available to us. To attribute our deliberate actions to instincts would literally not make sense in terms of what we do and experience in our everyday living.

It is almost as if Freud has us dressed in the emperor's new clothes. As long as we believe we are controlled by instincts we will not attain self-mastery with the liberty or freedom of self-selection as who and how we individually may choose to be. My interpretation here is not altogether contrary to Freud's idea that:

The primacy of the intellect certainly lies in the far, far, but still probably not infinite distance.²⁰

²⁰Freud, The Future of An Illusion, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1953, p. 97.

Freud suggested that the future of humanity will follow a trend toward mind over instinct. He acknowledged that though

the voice of intellect is a soft one...
it does not rest until it has gained a
hearing.²¹

Freud directed his efforts toward an understanding of human nature in terms of instinctual drives and motivations. As previously indicated, he believed that such motivations originated in somatic organization and that through the psychobiological maturation which takes place during the very early years of living, the motivations become constitutionally fixed and unalterable by psycho-social nurturance. Applying this further, it seems that Freud's explanation of a motivation ascribed to girls or to boys at a very young age would pertain to the female species or to the male species throughout their lives.

From a sociological perspective, behavioral acts cannot be explained in terms of instinctual motivation. Instead, they concern a statement of motives or the identification of means by which conduct is rendered understandable as social phenomena. Further, human beings do not respond in pre-determined ways to particularized stimuli, but engage in the meaningful construction of action. As such, any particular interpretation of motives would not necessarily

²¹Freud, The Future of An Illusion, *ibid.*, p. 96.

hold for anyone of either sex for all time or for all circumstances.

Freud was not in disagreement with the idea that members of either sex may display like characteristics. He stated that every individual

displays a mixture of the character-traits belonging to his own and to the opposite sex; and he shows a combination of activity and passivity whether or not these character-traits tally with his biological ones.²²

Freud acknowledged further, that the theoretical constructions of masculinity and femininity were ambiguous; and suggested that the bisexual disposition of all human beings might preempt the possibility of the attainment of "ideal" or "pure" masculinity or femininity.

we shall, of course, willingly agree that the majority of men are far behind the masculine ideal and that all human individuals, as a result of their bisexual disposition and of cross-inheritance, combine in themselves both masculine and feminine characteristics, so that pure masculinity and femininity remain theoretical constructions of uncertain content.²³

Along these lines, Freud affirmed:

It is essential to realized that the concepts of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' whose meanings seem so ambiguous to ordinary people, are among the most confused that occur in science.²⁴

²²Freud, Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality, (1905) New York: Avon Books, 1965, p. 220.

²³Freud, "Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes," op.cit., p. 25.

²⁴Freud, Three Essays, op.cit., p. 2.

Despite his awareness of the confusion attending gender conceptualizations, Freud presupposed that differences between males and females were determined by their "sexual functions." Also, he asserted that the concept of libido was attributable to both the masculine and the feminine sexual functions. Freud indicated about libido that

to it itself we cannot assign any sex.²⁵

Perhaps Freud's understanding of libido as a common aspect of all people might suggest grounds for commonality among humans more basic than variations of sex typings. Perhaps, as well, Freud's usage of the concept of libido as an innate endowment of all might suggest the possibility that sexual differences observed between males and females are products of social life.

Such an issue—of the nature-nurture controversy mode of analysis—is not resolvable on the basis of evidence attributed to Freud. As Freud recognized, psychoanalytic depictions of femininity do not allow for the differentiation between biophysically determined sex characteristics and qualities of social nurturance.

(it is not) always easy to distinguish what should be ascribed to the influence of the sexual function and what to social breeding.²⁶

²⁵Freud, "Femininity," *op.cit.*, p. 90.

²⁶Freud, *ibid.*, p. 90.

Freud further asserted that, despite his belief that the sexual function had extensive influence as a determinant of feminine characteristics, the interpretation of gender may be qualified by human factors that do not concern the sexual function.

we do not over look the fact that an individual woman may be a human being in other respects as well. If you want to know more about femininity, enquire from your own experience of life, or turn to the poets, or wait until science can give you deeper and more coherent information.²⁷

Apparently, Freud's model of human nature and psychoanalytic method did not enable him to conclusively link gender with psychological conceptions that differentiate human beings on the basis of biophysical sex characteristics.

As such, all understandings of gender grounded on Freud's hypothesis that gender differences naturally correspond to biophysical sex characteristics by no means represent the whole picture. Multiple issues remain to be considered, for instance: On what bases can social scientists distinguish ways in which gender is effected by nature or by nurture? In what ways can we assess the bases of Freud's notion that females were less capable than males to make contributions to civilization? Have developments in science—perhaps like sampling techniques and construc-

²⁷Freud, "Femininity," *ibid.*, p. 93.

tion of measurement tools for the purpose of quantifying gender categorizations—created "more coherent information?" And might the "deeper information" anticipated by Freud concern essential factors characteristic of human beings not distinguishable on the basis of biophysical criteria?

Chapter 5. Origins of measurement of femininity and masculinity

The measurement of masculinity and femininity has served as some sort of "proof positive" that what scientists measure really exists. This chapter explores the early tools and techniques used to measure gender, and serves to provide a basis for assessing traditional stereotypes underlying characterizations of gender.

Methodologically, the early measures of social gender—femininity and masculinity—were not selected to represent ways in which people typically express themselves. However, the treatment of masculinity and femininity measures implies that they do typify the social natures of males and females. The measurements initially formulated to denote masculinity and femininity were constructed in order to quantify differentiations between males and females. Similarities among males or similarities among females or among all people studied were ignored.

As such, gender stereotypes could not be understood as patternings of the typical ways in which women and men behave. Rather, these gender stereotypes are no more than generalizations about particularized ways in which groupings of females and males are regarded as dissimilar from each other.

Underlying the measurement of gender differentiation is the presupposition that, above and beyond a biophysical polarity, the psychological or personality structures of males and females differ. Further, it is tacitly assumed that individuals demonstrate consistent and enduring qualities of experiences and self-expressions that correspond to status placements and role performances which are identified as feminine or masculine.

The measurement of gender was pioneered by Terman and Miles, as set forth in their seminal work Sex and Personality: Studies in Masculinity and Femininity. The methodology they employed was inextricably intertwined with theoretical beliefs about gender differentiation. Perhaps the foundation for their theoretical beliefs is suggested by their alignment with the discipline of psychology during the time of Freud's productivity and popularity. Terman and Miles stated their position, in the opening sentence of their work, as follows:

The belief is all but universal that men and women as contrasting groups display characteristic sex differences in their behavior, and that these differences are so deep seated and pervasive as to lend distinctive character to the entire personality.¹

¹Lewis M. Terman and Catherine Cox Miles, Sex and Personality: Studies in Masculinity and Femininity, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936, p. 1. Other early work in the measurement of masculinity and femininity, as Anne Constantinople points out in "Masculinity-Femininity: An Exception to A Famous Dictum?," Psychological Bulletin, 1973, Vol. 80, No. 5, 389-407, includes that of: Hathaway and McKinley—The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, 1943; Strong—Vocational Interests of Men and Women, 1943; Guilford and Zimmerman—The Guilford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey, 1949; and Gough—The Femininity Scale, 1952, and California Psychological Inventory, 1964.

Terman and Miles treated masculinity and femininity as if they corresponded with the biophysical differentiations of male and female; they did not, however, base their work on the belief that gender orientation is inborn.

The M-F test rests upon no assumption with reference to the causes operative in determining an individual's score. These may be either physiological and biochemical, or psychological and cultural; or they may be the combined result of both types of influence. The aim has been merely to devise a test which would measure existing differences in mental masculinity and femininity, however caused.²

It is important to note as well that Terman and Miles observed that, regardless of a trend toward viewing females and males as equal,

the belief remains that the sexes differ fundamentally in their instinctive and emotional equipment and in the sentiments, interests, and modes of behavior which are the derivatives of such equipment.³

This a priori assumption that the personalities of females and males differ is a presupposition pervasive throughout the work of Terman and Miles. The assumption of difference is not, therefore, solely based upon the interpretation of their findings. The measures of femininity and masculinity were designed to substantiate impressions customarily believed to distinguish between biophysical groupings of females and males. Differences were focused upon in order to verify rather than test the reality of the dissimilarity posited.

²Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 6.

³*Ibid.*, p. 2.

Terman and Miles identified preconceived notions which they had about the nature of gender differentiations. For example, they presupposed that the "typical woman" could be depicted as follows:

In particular, she is believed to experience in greater degree than the average man the tender emotions, including sympathy, pity, and parental love; to be more given to cherishing and protective behavior of all kinds. Compared with man she is more religious and at the same time more prone to jealousy, suspicion, and injured feelings⁴

Whether or not such impressions might be accurate or the extent to which any of them might be manifest is not knowable based upon the masculinity and femininity test. The items measured were selected on the basis of their utility in discriminating between response selections made by males and by females. This technique, as Terman and Miles pointed out, necessarily exaggerates "true" gender differences.

The method utilized by Terman and Miles was to select, from among thousands of items, criteria which distinguished between the response sets that typified men as different from women. There are seven exercises comprising 456 items,⁵ that make up the classic work of Terman and Miles. They are: word association, ink-blot association, information, emotional and ethical responses, interests, personalities and opinions, and introvertive response.

⁴Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵Two forms of the Terman and Miles M-F test were constructed; one form includes 456 items and the other 454 items.

Representative items from each exercise will be presented here in order to display specific ways in which Terman and Miles measured masculinity and femininity.

Word Association

The word association exercise scored femininity and masculinity based upon associations selected among four choices. The following columns represent respectively the stimulus word, the responses scored as feminine, the responses scored as masculine, the responses scored as neutral—neither indicative of femininity nor masculinity—for a few items included in the word association exercise.

<u>Stimulus</u>	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
DATE	appointment	dance, fruit history	
BAR	prisoner, stop	drink, sand	
SHARP	bright, flat	pin	knife
TRUNK	travel	elephant	baggage, tree
ORDER	buy, neat, quiet	command	
CASE	doctor, grammar	bottles	container
BOND	paper, tie	love, security	
BOOK	read	paper, print	cover
PURE	good, water	milk	white
FAMILY	kind	brother, quarrel	sister
MARRIAGE	children, happy	divorce	license
TWILIGHT	dusk	dark, sunset	morning





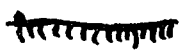
Stimulus words which yielded different frequencies for each sex on the basis of a free association test were utilized as the possible choices in the word association exercise.

No specific rationales are offered for particular items. For example, how the association of brother with FAMILY might be interpreted as masculine and the association of sister as neutral, is not addressed; or the social significance of attributing masculinity and femininity to the association of milk, as opposed to water for the stimulus word PURE, is not considered. The validity of suggested gender differentiation on the bases of any such one word forced-choice response is not apparent. Further, as Terman and Miles stated:

All of the types of association tests we have used as measures of M-F differences have low reliability.⁶

Ink-blot Association

The following are selected ink-blotts as presented, along with four choices of an association word.

	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
	ball bat	.	.
		pear, tadpole	ham
		.	.
	mailbox	.	.
		pipe, tombstone	jar
		.	.
	spoon	.	.
		snowshoe	fish, mirror
		.	.
	dish	.	.
		target	ring, tire
		.	.
	comb, teeth	.	.
		brush, centipede	.
		.	.

⁶Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, op.cit., p. 25.

Scoring for these items was based upon predictions of the likelihood of males and females selecting a particular choice. However, the ink-blot associations did not adequately serve to differentiate masculinity and femininity. As Terman and Miles pointed out, due to the very low reliability of this exercise:

The test could therefore have been eliminated from the battery without appreciable loss, but has been retained partly because of its appeal to subjects and partly in the hope that its retention would stimulate further experimentation.⁷

The Information Test

Terman and Miles searched for information items that would yield differences in the responses of males and females. For nearly all items, they found greater differentiation between males and females for incorrect responses than for correct ones. As a result, although the reliability of the measures remained low, all responses—including incorrect responses and omissions—were scored.

A sampling of items from this exercise are presented here, along with the categorization of choice responses as feminine or masculine.

⁷Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 30.

	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Masculine</u>
Marigold is a kind of	. flower, grain	. fabric, stone
Things cooked in grease are	. fried	. boiled, broiled, . roasted
We should drink tea from the	. cup	. saucer, spoon
Eggs are best for us when	. deviled, soft- . boiled	. fried, hard- . boiled
The turquoise is	. blue	. red, white, . yellow
Red goes best with	. black	. lavender, pink . purple
When water freezes it	. neither . contracts nor . expands	. contracts, . expands
Babies should be weaned at about	. 6 months, . 12 months	. 3 months, . 2 years
A decisive Revolutionary battle was	. Gettysburg, . Valley Forge	. New Orleans, . Yorktown

Some items included neutral responses as well:

	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Masculine</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
Pongee is a kind of	. cloth	. game	. drink, flower
Tokyo is a city of	. China, India	. Japan	. Russia
The mossy side of a tree is usually on the	. east	. north	. south, west

Again, the way in which any of these selected items may pertain to supposed personality traits is not clear. Some items seem to tap value judgements or simply a matter of taste; like when eggs are best, or what color red goes best with, or when babies should be weaned.

Emotional and Ethical Response

The rationale for this exercise is related to the following three issues addressed by Terman and Miles:

women are characterized as having a higher degree of affectibility than men in the sense that they respond to a greater variety of stimuli and experience more intense feeling.

it is commonly believed that there are important sex differences in the relative contribution of the specific emotions to the total affective life.

sex differences are alleged with respect to the stimuli that are effective in calling forth a given emotion.⁸

As Terman and Miles indicated, this exercise was developed in order to confirm notions about how males and females differ. The items called for an assessment of the extent to which emotion might be aroused in particular situations—very much, much, little, or none—and the degree of moral seriousness attributed to a particular behavior—extremely wicked, decidedly bad, somewhat bad, or not really bad. Throughout this exercise the situations posed are hypothetical and they need not be assumed to pertain to actual experiences of the respondents.

Items selected to measure anger along with the responses which typified masculine and feminine scoring, are exemplified by the following:

⁸Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 35.

	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Masculine</u>
Being blamed for something you have not done.	. . very much	. . little
Being called lazy	. very much	. none
Being deceived by a supposed friend	. . very much	. .
Being disturbed when you want to work	. . none	. . little
Seeing people disfigure library books	. . very much, . much	. . little, . none

Items selected to measure fear are exemplified by the following:

	<u>Feminine</u>	<u>Masculine</u>
Automobiles	. . much, little	. . none
Deep water	. very much, little	. none
Burglars	. very much	. little, none
Punishment in the next world	. . little	. . none

Terman and Miles interpreted the fear items in the following manner:

since instinctive fear in man or higher animals is for objects or events that are perceived as threatening immediate danger to life and limb...what the record suggests is not that there are objects or events that in themselves are more or less terrifying to one sex than the other, but that things that are generally fearsome are, or are declared by them to be, more fearsome to female.⁹

This conclusion cannot, however, be evaluated on the basis of the test items. Terman and Miles assumed that fear was 9Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, ibid., p. 395.

instinctual, and they attributed the tendency of females to respond with "very much" and the tendency of males to respond with "none" to socially determined response sets.

A few of the items designed to measure arousal of disgust concern: an unshaven man, crooked teeth, gum chewing, seeing a woman smoking, and spitting in public. On each of these items the feminine response indicated very much disgust; on no items at all was the masculine response very much disgust. Selected items geared to measure arousal of pity included: a bee that is drowning, a man who is cowardly and can't help it, an orphan girl, an underfed child, and a baby bird whose mother is dead. Here again, for each of these items the feminine response indicated the arousal of very much pity. In no instance was the masculine response arousal of very much pity.

Items from the list of acts to assess degree of wickedness or badness are as follows: stealing a ride on a truck, using slang, moderate drinking, going to bed without saying your prayers, shooting rabbits just for fun. A feminine response for all of these acts was to regard them as not really bad.

Terman and Miles suggested possible interpretations of the emotional and ethical response exercise: that females are more emotional than males by nature; that females are encouraged to be more expressive; or that due to their

training and occupations, females tend more than males to exaggerate verbally. The position taken by Terman and Miles, despite their subscription to the notion that emotions are innate factors, is formulated in terms of nurturance factors:

The conclusion may be ventured that a cultivated masculine reticence and feminine exuberance combine to account for the scores. On these assumptions it becomes unnecessary to resort to our unverifiable 'greater emotionality' hypotheses.¹⁰

For what reasons would their theory of emotionality be unverifiable that would not apply to the concepts of masculinity and femininity as well? It seems that the conclusion just cited raises the issue, also, of whether Terman and Miles considered reticence and exuberance as factors of emotional expression that distinguish masculinity and femininity.

Interests

The interests exercise was designed in order to differentiate between females and males with respect to their likes, dislikes or indifference to occupations, people with particular characteristics, forms of pastime, books assuming the role of artist and reporter, and interests in travel. Some of the items call for an imagined response. Further, some of the items do not correspond with the actual life experiences or expectations of the respondents. For example, one instruction read: imagine that you have the ability to do

¹⁰Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 415.

work, that you are the right age for it, and that it is equally open to men and women.

By example, this exercise includes items about people with loud voices, argumentative people, detective stories, adventure stories, comic supplements, Charlie Chaplin and Coca Cola. For each of these items, the selection of the like response to the reference, e.g., Charlie Chaplin or Coca Cola, was scored as masculine—for both males and females. Examples of items for which a like response was considered as feminine and a dislike response as masculine includes optician, novelist, artist, preacher, very forgiving people, civics, horseback riding and candies. Further, as Terman and Miles noted, a factor which may be operative in effecting the results of the test is that females more often than males demonstrated a tendency to express like, and males more often than females expressed dislike.

Personalities and Opinions

In this exercise, the scoring of like was feminine and dislike was masculine for Christopher Columbus, Florence Nightingale and Woodrow Wilson. Responses of dislike were scored as feminine and like as masculine for Daniel Boone, P. T. Barnum and Ulysses S. Grant. Items responded to as True were scored as feminine and responses of False were scored as masculine for opinions such as: Girls are naturally more innocent than boys, Children should be

taught never to fight and There should be perfect equality between men and women in all things. The reverse gender scoring applied to opinions such as Love "at first sight" is usually the truest love, We should never give to beggars and Green-eyed people are not to be trusted.

The conclusions drawn from this exercise were summed up by Terman and Miles as follows:

it is obvious the test of opinions could have been eliminated from the battery

it would appear that sex differences of the kind in question have probably been much exaggerated; that they are perhaps almost negligible.¹¹

Introvertive Response

The items that comprise this exercise called for a Yes or No response. A Yes response was considered masculine for items such as: Do you like most people you know?, Do you rather dislike to take a bath?, Have you been bossed too much for your own good?, and Do you feel yourself to be lacking in self control?. A No response to these questions was scored as feminine. A Yes response was considered feminine and a No response masculine for items such as: Do you nearly always prefer for someone else to take the lead?, Do you shrink from facing a crisis or difficulty?, Do you usually enjoy your meals? and Do you feel tired a good deal of the time?.

¹¹Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 51.

Terman and Miles found the reliability of this exercise to be "very low," and they considered discarding the results altogether.¹² Here again, items that were developed on the basis of stereotyped beliefs about males and females did not conclusively distinguish between masculinity and femininity.

In their conclusion, Terman and Miles reaffirm that masculinity and femininity are core aspects of personality. However, they acknowledge the possibility that the differentiation between masculinity and femininity may not be integral to an understanding of human nature. Relating to the masculine-feminine dichotomy, they stated:

In how far the lines of cleavage it represents are inevitable is unknown, but the possibility of eliminating it from human nature is at least conceivable.¹³

Further, Terman and Miles indicated that descriptions of gender are inexact and often contradictory, suggesting that:

This state of affairs betokens the vagueness of current ideas with respect to what constitutes the masculine or feminine temperament and the chaos of opinion with regard to what is valid evidence of its existence.¹⁴

The efforts of Terman and Miles serve to indicate a number of methods that are problematic in the measurement of gender.

Terman and Miles constructed the M-F test on the premise

¹²Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p. 44.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 451.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 453.

that males and females manifested different personality traits. Further, males and females were presumed to comprise separate groupings that are biophysically and psychologically homogeneous. These presumptions were not tested. It seems that the presumption of dissimilarity between males and females suggests that the responses considered to represent manifestations of masculinity or femininity would require independent assessment. Yet, Terman and Miles assumed that the differences found between the normative patterns of the responses of the male and female grouping were the significant aspects that characterized the personality traits of men and women. Also, the practice of attributing such generalizations, based on findings of group differences, to particularized gender qualities which are assumed to characterize all females or all males is not appropriate.

Another procedure considered problematic concerns the items selected to measure gender. When individuals are viewed in regard to predifferentiated determinations of masculinity and femininity, they may appear to differ in ways that in actuality they may not. For example, the scoring of like for Coca Cola or dislike for candies as differentiating a masculine from a feminine response; or the scoring as feminine the response of black as opposed to lavender, pink and purple, for the color that goes best with red. Further, it does not seem appropriate to interpret the results of

responses based on hypothetical situations or imagined interests, as typifying the personalities of males and females. For example, responses indicating the anticipation of very much pity in response to a bee that is drowning, or imagining that one would like the work of an optician or novelist or preacher. The responses indicated here were each scored as feminine.

In line with these difficulties in the measurement of gender, there is a main criticism that has been cited in recent literature.¹⁵ It pertains to the treatment of gender as bipolar or unidimensional. Based upon the presumption of bipolarity, each item is presumed to distinguish between a masculine and feminine response, and is scored according to the biophysical sex of the respondent. Also, items were scored a plus for a masculine response and a minus for a feminine response, suggesting that the opposite or absence of the masculine is feminine. However, the items utilized to typify gender differentiation are not exclusive to one sex or the other. Terman and Miles assert that

It is not to be supposed that the sexes really differ from one another in their

¹⁵R. Carlson, "Sex differences in ego functioning," Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1971, 37, 267-277. J. H. Block, "Conceptions of sex roles: Some cross-cultural and longitudinal perspectives," American Psychologist, 1973, 28, 512-526. A. Constantinople, "Masculinity-Femininity: An exception to the famous dictum?," op.cit. S. Bem, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny," Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1974, 42, 155-162. The issues of bipolarity or unidimensionality of gender measurement is also addressed in Chapter 8.

interests, attitudes, and thought trends as much as the small overlap on the M-F test and its exercises might at first suggest; the fact that the test is composed entirely of items selected on the basis of their M-F discrimination necessarily exaggerates the true differences.¹⁶

Also suggested in this regard is the pervasive bias of not addressing ways in which females and males were found not to differ. According to Terman and Miles,

no one knows what amount of overlap would be found if the totality of M-F traits were adequately and reliably measured.¹⁷

Reflecting the presumption of unidimensionality of gender traits, a single score, representing the sum of M and F responses on all items, was utilized to characterize both masculinity and femininity. This unidimensional scoring technique was employed even though Terman and Miles found low intercorrelations among the exercises and acknowledged that:

It is evident that the several parts of the M-F test have little in common.¹⁸

Rather than measuring masculinity or femininity or providing a measure of gender differentiation, the M-F score represents a composite scoring of multiple factors that have not been demonstrated to be sex-specific.

Terman and Miles provided the following over-all evaluation

¹⁶Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, op.cit., p. 65.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 57.

of their work:

That the purpose of the test has been accomplished only in part hardly needs to be said. Our sampling of the universe of mental attitudes and interests which differentiate the sexes is far from adequate. The sampling used has not been validated by item counts for sufficiently large populations. Numerous questions remain unanswered with respect to the selection of test items, the best method of weighting responses, and the most meaningful kinds of scores to employ.¹⁹

In the preface of their work, Terman and Miles forewarned their readers that the concepts of masculinity and femininity are vague and, that given the state of psychometric development, an attempt to accomplish exact measurement of gender traits would be "fatuous and unprofitable."

Humbly, they suggest that:

the experiment will have justified itself if in some degree it opens the way to more precise measurements and methods.²⁰

No matter how formulated or carried out, all measurement of gender serves to perpetuate presumptions about how females and males differ from one another. Characteristics shared in common are ignored or at least obscured. By supplanting the concepts of masculinity and femininity with the formulations of gender neutrality and gender neutral androgyny my intent is to focus upon an understanding

¹⁹Terman and Miles, Sex and Personality, *ibid.*, p.454.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. vii.

of human nature without sex-specific categorizations. In the terms used in this chapter to describe and critique the Terman and Miles measures, methodologically a change in underlying presumptions would mean a shift from measuring gender differentiation to measuring traits that people share in common without regard to biophysical sex or social gender.

Chapter 6. Nature versus Nurture and beliefs about gender-specific capabilities for contribution to civilization

As supported by the theoretical formulations of social scientists and reflected in the techniques utilized for the measurement of gender, a masculine bias in thought prevails. Most of all, perhaps, the notion that life could be no other way assumes male dominance and presumes that men are better able than women to contribute to civilization.

This chapter surveys such beliefs about gender differentiation in terms of the "Nature" and "Nurture" perspectives. Particular attention is directed toward consideration of the idea that women are underrepresented among the great contributors to our civilization.

Employing the practice of platonic dialogue, the issue of this chapter is presented in the style of discourse, with two social scientists responding to the question: Why are women underrepresented among the great contributors to our civilization? The dialogue is engaged in by Nature and Nurture, assuming two polar positions. The Nature perspective represents the assertion that innate biophysical endowment of females and of males is the source of gender differentiation; the Nurture perspective endorses the belief that differences between women and men are attributable to differences in their social learning and psycho-social nurturance.

Nature's belief is that the answer to the question for discourse lies in innate sex characteristics. Nature believes that cultural descriptions can be derived from biophysiological descriptions. Nurture's belief is that the answer concerns social conditions. Nurture believes that questions concerning manifest social nature can be adequately handled by employing only social data.

As we pick up on their dialogue, Nature and Nurture are proceeding to defend their positions. Initially they refused to agree that their respective premises were arguable. Yet they have recognized that, in order to understand each other and engage in the reciprocal influencing which social interaction entails, they require a shared conceptualization that allows for shared identification of problems disjointedly viewed.

Nurture—Social conditions enable an understanding of social consequences. Measures of the great contributors to civilization have been determined by men. If the measure was production of new members of a society, innate sex differences may be seen as the source of contribution, and women and men might be regarded as equally represented in their contribution. If the measure was the childbearing function, then this innate difference would render women the only contributors. However, with the chief measures as scholarly works or scientific products or artistic creations, it is apparent that women

have less often been taught to read and write, less often been permitted shared communication or activity in educational or occupational endeavors, and have been less often recognized by men as being individually meaningful or socially significant.

George Eliot had decided to publish her works under a masculine pseudonym, in order to avoid the Jane Eyre incident—when it became known that it was written by a woman, sales sharply dropped. George Eliot wrote in her journal of March, 1858, about a time when she had revealed herself as George Eliot to her publisher, Mr. Blackwood. His response was to disbelieve that she was the author of "Clerical Scenes." Eliot reported that Mr. Blackwood had told her that:

Thackery spoke highly of the 'Scenes' and said they were not written by a woman. Mrs. Blackwood is sure they are not written by a woman. Mrs. Oliphant, the novelist, too, is confident on the same side.¹

Nature—Charles Dickens also believed that the author of "Scenes" was surely a woman.

As you have pointed out, I, too, know that variations in the stratification of occupations and social power, prestige and wealth have been prevalent. Data have been well documented: there have been government studies; there are historical accounts supporting the finding that "many women used

¹Mary Jane Moffat and Charlotte Painter, eds., Revelations: Diaries of Women. New York: Vintage Books, 1975, p. 224.

pseudonyms;"² and as hypothesized by Virginia Woolf,³ it is likely that an identical-other female to Shakespeare would not have been acknowledged. In line with this, Novak⁴ contended that male critics of playwrights have shown prejudice and insensitivity to the work of women.

The most crucial factor, however, is that there are innate sex differences that provide different potential for great contribution to our civilization.

Nurture—How can your belief account for the fact that all men have not been great, and that some women have been great?

Nature—Well, variation may be due to an innate factor which is more often endowed to males than to females, or females may have it to a lesser degree.

Nurture—In your view, can there be inhibitory factors which negate the actualization of such innate factors in women, regardless of the comparative degree to which they may be biophysiologicaly present in females and males?

Nature—Perhaps. But the fact is that females are under-

²Sigrid Scholtz Novak, "The invisible woman: The Case of the female playwright in German literature," Journal of Social Issues, 28 No. 2 (1972), p. 48.

³Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1929.

⁴Novak, op.cit., p. 56.

represented among the great contributors to civilization. If they were equally able to contribute, they would have been equally capable of representation. Bean⁵ studied 875 written products of 238 students. She found that there was more variation in creative writing among the males than among the females.

Nurture—However, no significant differences in creativity in writing between the women and the men were found in that study.

Nature—In another study by Kogan,⁶ it was found that being male was a determinant of creative output. And further substantiation of sex differences has been offered by Gourd.⁷ He studied the "information processing abilities" and the reactions of 60 female and 30 male undergraduates to a "complex" and a "simple" play. Gourd concluded that females "preferred" the less complex play.

Nurture—But the author did not address qualitative differences in the kinds of activities portrayed. There may be no innate processing capacities that relate to supposed complexity of

⁵Ariel Storey Bean, "A descriptive study of creative writing at the Junior High School level," ED.D. Brigham Young Univ., 1974.

⁶Nathan Kogan, "Creativity and Sex Differences," Journal of Creative Behavior, 8 No. 2 (1st Quarter, 1974), pp. 1-14.

⁷William Gourd, "Information processing in the theatre: sex differences and responses to 'The Homecoming' and 'Private Lives.'" Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association, New Orleans, La., April, 1974.

any play, or to any preferences displayed.

Interloper—If there is a different nature manifested by women and men, are they capable of doing the same things? Whether differences stem from innate endowments or acquired capabilities or both, it seems that some men can engage in some of the same activities that women can. Are great women contributors more like great men contributors, and less like other nongreat contributors or great or nongreat noncontributors of either sex? Are great men contributors more like great women contributors than they are like any others? What innate differences might there be between contributors and noncontributors?

What about social conditions? Considering great contributors, if more are measured as having short hair than as being long-haired, can this be explained as a biophysically linked sex difference? Are some great contributors greater than others? Can you attribute this to labeling or recognition of greatness rather than account for it as a genetically identifiable phenomenon? What kind or degree or frequency or duration or intensity or diversity or homogeneity of contributing is pertinent—with what bases of typing, for what pursuits, where, when, by what means, and with the regard of which persons?

Nature and Nurture—(continuing undisturbed...)

Nurture—Have all great contributors to our culture been educated?

Nature—Not in the same ways.

Nurture—Do contributors have more education as compared to noncontributors?

Nature—Yes.

Nurture—Then could we say that persons with an education, whether women or men, are more likely to be contributors than others?

Nature—Yes. However, due to innate factors females are less or differently educable than males.

Nurture—Well, if some women are readily educable, and some men find it quite hard to learn, then could there be an innate factor of educability which accounts for the variance in representation of contributors and noncontributors? Further, even if fewer women than men might be educable, a higher proportion of educable women than of educable men might be great contributors.

Nature—Well, as Hutt⁸ points out, females have greater
⁸Corinne Hutt, Males & Females, England: Penguin Books, 1972, p. 83, and p. 91.

sensitivity to touch and pain than do males and their auditory discrimination and localization is superior. Females have a keener sense of smell, though males see better. And it may be, as Buffery and Gray⁹ suggest, that there is an innate, neural mechanism for speech which is more developed in females than males.

Nurture—Can males whose lateralization of linguistic functions to the left hemisphere is retarded, or rather not accelerated, or whose lateralization of verbal function is less complete than some females, perform equally well in verbal ability?

Nature—Perhaps. However, males more often reflect bilateral control and superior spatial ability, and lateralization of females is associated with superior verbal ability. Although there have been few findings of sex difference in average intelligence, the distributions of intelligence scores differ for females and males. Wechsler, after extensive testing, concluded the following:

our findings do confirm what poets and novelists have often asserted, and the average laymen long believed, that men not only behave but think differently from women.¹⁰

Another finding, by Money and Ehrhart,¹¹ is that the "male"

⁹Buffery and Gray, cited in Hutt, *ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁰David Wechsler, quoted in Bernard Berelson and Gary Steiner, eds., Human Behavior, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1964, p. 220.

¹¹John Money and A. A. Ehrhardt, 1968, cited in Hutt, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

hormone androgen enhances the I.Q. scores of females.

Nurture—Do such hormones, when administered to males, show the same results?

Nature—It has been speculated by Hutt¹² that steroid hormones with an androgenic action affect protein synthesis and neural integration and enhance "intelligent" behavior.

Nurture—What are the implications? Following your argument, it seems that any effect might merely reflect enhanced performance in supposed male thinking modes, or there might be a defacilitation of other thinking modes.

Nature—Well, creative artists, musicians, and scientists are more often male. Female contributors tend to be in literary fields. However, Tyler¹³ indicated that the innovators and the leaders in traditionally women's fields have been men.

Nurture—Could there be areas as yet unmeasured where women display similar, perhaps equivalent, predispositions to sense and act in one way or another? For example, might spatial ability be manifest in differing modes than now explored by men, or might there be other thinking processes than those which have dominated the fields of biology,

¹²Hutt, Males & Females, op.cit., p. 91.

¹³Tyler, cited in Hutt, *ibid.*, p. 101.

physiology, medicine, and psychology? Additionally, might predispositions of women and men be differentially afforded social support for expression or development?

Nature—There are other sex differentiations between females and males that have been known for a long time, but I am not sure how they pertain to great contributors. Allen¹⁴ reported that a number of studies have supported the finding that women are better able to remember than are men. Also, based upon sex difference findings of Burt and Moore, he reported that at 15 years of age the female is relatively more mature in brain capacity than the male, but he stated that "women show no marked inferiority when given an equal opportunity to compete with men."

Nurture—The point made suggests, as well, that men are not superior when provided with an opportunity to compete with women. Also, Allen, based on Webb's findings, reported that men's rating of women regarding intelligence and personal traits were "worthless."¹⁵ Allen further asserted that:

the social training of the two sexes is and always has been different, producing differential selective factors, interests standards, etc.¹⁶

Nature—Yes. Although Bardwick asserts that:

¹⁴Chauncey N. Allen, "Studies in Sex Differences," Psychology Bulletin, 25 (1927), p. 297.

¹⁵Allen, *ibid.*, p. 300.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 301.

to a very large extent women are their bodies¹⁷

she acknowledges that dependency is fostered in girls whereas boys are pressed to become independent.

Nurture—The American Association of School Administrators took the following position:

In restricting people according to their sex—occupationally or psychologically—our schools reflect our society.

Society restricts people by putting overt or implied sex labels on jobs...; schools in some places...label courses...'for boys' or 'for girls.'

Society restricts imagination and aspiration by example—executives are males, secretaries are female...

Society constantly shows...images of men and women that reinforce present conditions; the schools show the same kinds of images in educational materials.¹⁸

Based on the AASA study of sex-stereotyping in 2,760 stories in 134 readers from 14 major publishers, findings were: stories about boys outnumbered stories about girls, five to two; stories about men outnumbered stories about women, three to one; there were 119 biographical stories about 88 men and 27 about 17 women; men were shown in 147 jobs and women in 26, which included such positions as witch, circus fat lady, and queen. There were only three working mothers

¹⁷Judith Bardwick, "Conflict and the Reproductive System," in Bardwick et. al., Feminine Personality & Conflict, California: Brooks/Cole, 1970, pp. 3-5.

¹⁸American Association of School Administrators, Sex Equality in Educational Materials, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1974, p. 2.

depicted; and 65 stories were found to "belittle" girls compared to two for boys. With the prevalence of inequitable educational knowledge, how could you know whether any innate differentiations could account for differential representation of great contributors to our culture? Perhaps it is the man-established predetermination of who can and should be acknowledged that is the determinant of recognition as a contributor.

Nature—Long ago, in 1914, Wooley reviewed the literature that focused on sex differences. According to Wooley's review, the psychologists—all male—had worked on the premise that there are inherent psychological characteristics of sex, not explainable by environmental influences. Further, she noted that the historical and sociological approaches offered evidence that:

social conditions account for most of the traits ordinarily considered feminine, and particularly for the limited accomplishment of women in art and science.¹⁹

Wooley's view was that at the time, scientific evidence played a weak role in producing convictions when compared to biased expectations. She too had biased expectations. As she reported:

one element in the success of men in scientific, artistic or social fields is their love of getting ahead of the other fellow, while women have less of a desire to win, and a more personal humanitarian tendency.²⁰

¹⁹Helen Thompson Wooley, "The Psychology of Sex," Psychology Bulletin, 11 (1914), pp. 353-379.

²⁰Wooley, *ibid.*, p. 374.

Neither the derivation of desire, nor the issue of why reasons underlying a more pronounced "humanitarian tendency" in women did not lead to such contributions to civilization as those represented by success in scientific, artistic, or social fields was addressed. However, Wooley did treat sex differences in terms of the combined influence of innate differences and social conditions.

Interloper—Now a dualistic approach is being presented.

As Maccoby and Jacklin indicated,

it is tempting to try to classify the differential behaviors as being either innate or learned, but we have seen that this is a distinction that does not bear close scrutiny.²¹

Perhaps during the gestation period, prenatal, innate proclivities are modified according to social conditions. And in the postnatal development of cortical functions and awareness of biophysical stimuli, social factors may serve to initiate, facilitate, inhibit or prevent actualization of innate proclivities. Did you know that neonates, during the first day of life, have been observed to move

in precise and sustained segments of movement that are synchronous with the articulated structure of adult speech.²²

²¹Eleanor Emmons Maccoby and Carol Nagy Jacklin, The Psychology of Sex Differences, Stanford University Press, 1974, p. 363.

²²William Condon and Louis Sandor, "Neonate Movement is Synchronized with Adult Speech: Interactional Participation and Language Acquisition," Science, 183 (January, 1974), p. 99.

Nature and Nurture—(suspended in their stillness...)

Interloper—You employ a tautological method of presentation. You begin with observed behavior, label it according to predetermined categorizations, then apply the label as a descriptive and explanatory principle. It seems that your dialoguing is logically fallacious.

Nurture—What does he mean? What light does he shed on our exploration? Aren't women underrepresented among the great contributors to civilization?

Nature—How could we know? What if all men agreed and no women did? Would it reflect an innate sex difference?

Nurture—What if all knowledgeable men agreed? Would it reflect learned differences? Might all of us agree, if we could be aware of our agreement? What if all knowledgeable women disagreed with all others?

Nature and Nurture—(reflecting, questioning the validity of their own positions, agreeing to explore the issue further; pondering how they could know of that which thus far they had not understood.)

Nurture—On what grounds have great contributors assessed differences between women and men?

Nature—What constitutes a contribution to civilization?

Nurture—On what grounds might we consider a contributor or a contributor to civilization to be great?

Epilogue

Nature and Nurture proceed together to address the issues of their mutual concern...

—In our consideration of contributors can we do more than relate to contributions identified by men?

—Well, very few have been principally recognized by women.

—But that would exclude many contributors. Like no one woman is credited for domesticating gardening or institutionalizing agricultural procedures.

—And Aristotle, Aquinas, Locke, Kant, Schopenhauer,... as greats, contributed to the belief that women were not as well endowed for greatness as were men. Could a self-fulfilling prophesy be at work?

—Surely, for what's not in the mind's eye will not be seen, and that that is considered to be true will be true in its consequences.

—Shall we consult Margaret Mead? Mead²³ found that in some cultures, like that of the Tchambuli, females had so-called masculine traits, and males had so-called feminine traits. Such standardized personality differences between the sexes were considered to be cultural creations.

—Yes, and as D'Andrade²⁴ noted, within each society there are culturally transmitted patterns of behavior, and culturally determined male-female differences in the performance of daily activities, ascription to social statuses, gender identity and fantasy productions.

—What female-male differences are there?

—Maccoby and Jacklin²⁵ reviewed the vast literature of research efforts to document sex-role differentiation. Their efforts served to confirm the difficulty of specifying any gender differentiations.

—Yes. Only a few factors of behavioral sex-differentiation were found to be even moderately reliable. Like verbal ability, mathematical ability and spatial relations.

—Such differences were found among adolescents. Among

²³Margaret Mead, Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies, New York: The New American Library, 1935.

²⁴Roy D'Andrade, "Sex Differences and Cultural Institutions," in Eleanor Maccoby, The Development of Sex Differences, California: Stanford University Press, 1966, pp. 174-202.

²⁵Maccoby and Jacklin, The Psychology of Sex Differences, op.cit.

younger children, differences were found in physical aggressive-
ness. But with aging, none of these sex differences were found
to be sustained.

—Well, following a different tack, who would we consider
to have made the greater contribution to civilization, Mona
Lisa or the man who painted her?

—It appears that we view Mona Lisa as the attraction.

—And what of Venus de Milo or the Winged Victory of
Samathrace? Do we consider the female beauty expressed
as contributions, or is it their artistic representation
that constitutes male contribution?

—I wonder. Art may not serve as a good standard for
assessing contribution. As Plato taught us, identification
of art is based upon learned beliefs about form, beauty,
creativity... Women have been chief objects of art, the
property and province commissioned by, to and for men.

—Our cultural history pervades our present. Manmade
modeling of social existence pertains to our religious,
scientific, educational and recreational institutions as
well as to the arts of painting, letters, song, music,
dance, drama...

—It seems that way.

At one event Antonia Broca—a woman conducting manmade music and an all male symphony—appeared before a laughing audience who found it difficult to believe that she was competent to do what they considered to be a man's work.

—Women have been forewarned that the achievement of certain accomplishments, considered to be appropriate for men only, could lead to negative consequences—like being declared ineligible as a marriage partner.

—As a result, some women purposefully did not make contributions in order to avoid censure.

—Apparently, specific criteria with which to assess what women and men can and cannot do, or with which to identify contributors or contributions to civilization, have not been explicated.

—It is clear that our conceptualizations warrant clarification.

—Perhaps the question we might better have been questioning was our question itself.

—Yes. Perhaps we might have addressed the question of how men came to be overrepresented as the great contributors of our culture.

—Would we have treated it differently?

—Now we would. Awareness of what we do not know clears the way for new possibilities.

—There's hope then... good luck to us.

* * * * *

Together Nature and Nurture were able to clarify their respective stances. Their seemingly contradictory views became mutually positioned as individualized expressions of experience of a jointly viewed subject. They turned out to share the typical approach to the study of differences between women and men; for their approach, too, was geared toward a substantiation of difference. What seems to be apparent in light of the Nature-Nurture dialogue is that our traditional conceptualizations and methods of scientific study have not afforded us with clear understandings of the whys and wherefores of gender differentiations.

As stated in the opening chapter of this study, the intent of the concept of gender neutrality is to provide a basis for viewing the commonality of our social nature as human beings. With common grounds of self-definition and social consciousness, we shall become able to understand newly the nature of how we can be as biophysical females and

males, alike and dissimilar. Only then we may know, too, who of what nurturance is associated with contributing to civilization.

Part III

Gender Differentiated Androgyny

Chapter 7. Jung's model of the femaleness of males and the maleness of females

Jung, as an influential contributor to psychological understandings, interpreted human nature to be based upon instinctual dimensions of gender. A viewing of Jung's contentions, that affirm that there are two distinct personality types predetermined by genetic endowments ascribed to individuals along with their biophysical sex categorization, serves to illuminate by contrast my formulation of gender neutrality. Jung's conceptualizations of human nature are not free of gender stereotypes, nor are they designed to be applicable to ways in which each individual can realize androgynous being or achieve what Jung himself saw as a harmonious balance of genetically determined gender characteristics.

In line with androgyny, however, Jung advanced the notion that femaleness is an intrinsic quality of the nature of males and that females encompass a quality of maleness. Further, although Jung claimed that individual psyches are constituted by androgynous qualities associated with both genders, his theories rely upon the notion that masculinity and femininity are basic attributes which describe the social natures of all. Therefore, Jung's work provides clues to the basic assumptions and limits underlying androgyny.

Within the personality or soul of males Jung posited anima as the female dimension of their being. As part of the

personality of females, Jung identified maleness as animus. Anima represents the feminine unconscious of males and animus represents the masculine unconscious of females.

Just as every child derives from masculine and feminine genes, and the sex is determined by the predominance of the corresponding genes, so in the psyche it is only the conscious mind, in a man, that has the masculine sign, while the unconscious is by nature feminine. The reverse is true in the case of a woman.¹

According to Jung, anima and animus operated on an unconscious plane of existence associated with but distinguishable from both the psyche which includes conscious processes, and the persona which is accessible only through social observation, Jung made distinctions such as the following:

By the psyche I understand the totality of all the psychic processes, both conscious as well as unconscious; whereas by soul I understand a definitely demarcated function complex that is best characterized as a 'personality.'²

Further:

The inner personality is the manner of one's behavior towards the inner psychic processes; it is the inner attitude, the character, that is turned toward the unconscious. I term the outer attitude, or outer character, the persona, the inner attitude I term the anima, or soul.³

¹Carl Jung, "The Special Phenomenology of the Child Archetype," 1951, Psyche and Symbol. New York: Anchor Books, 1958, p. 141.

²Jung, "Psychological Types," 1922, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, Violet De Laszlo ed., New York: Random House, 1959, p. 270.

³Ibid., p. 272.

Jung considered qualities of people that were beyond the realm of the conscious psychic processes to be of a complementary nature to the persona. In line with this belief, Jung understood a male's unconscious to constitute the complement of his persona as the femininity of his soul or anima. In like manner, Jung understood the unconscious of the female in terms of the masculine animus.

As regards the character of the soul, my experience confirms the validity of the general principle that it maintains, on the whole, a complementary relation to the outer character... A very feminine woman has a masculine soul, and a very manly man a feminine soul.⁴

It appears that Jung considered people to be androgynous in the sense that he envisioned the soul image of each person to be other than their biophysiological sex-type. More generally, Jung's method was to understand in terms of opposites. As Jung stated,

everything that works is grounded on its opposite. It takes man's discriminating understanding, which breaks everything down into antinomial judgements to recognize this.⁵

In Jung's view, human awareness itself entails a grasp of contrasting principles or properties.

Differentiation is the essence, the sine qua non of consciousness.⁶

Just as Jung affirmed that male presupposes female and that

⁴Jung, "Psychological Types," *ibid.*, p. 273.

⁵Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," 1934, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, *op.cit.*, p. 316.

⁶Jung, "Anima and Animus," 1945, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology. Ohio Meridian Books, 1969, p. 217.

the persona or outer character of one gender posits an inner character of the opposite gender, he employed polar images to represent the natures of the persona and the unconscious psychic processes of males and of females. Jung regarded the persona of males to be more general and diffuse than the personal and particularistic roles he attributed to females. This differentiation between the sexes is reflected in Jung's formulation of the femaleness of males in terms of the singular anima, as compared with his treatment of the masculine quality of females in terms of the incorporative concept of animus. As Jung indicated, first about animus and then about anima,

it would be more accurate to describe it as an image of men, whereas in the case of the man it is rather the image of woman.⁷

The ways in which Jung characterized the persona of each sex served as well as a basis for his characterization of anima and animus.

Whereas logic and objective reality commonly prevail in the outer attitude of man, or are at least regarded as an ideal, in the case of woman it is feeling. But in the soul the relations are reversed; inwardly it is the man who feels and the woman who reflects.⁸

Further, Jung subscribed to the notion that the degree to which a man or woman reflects the "ideal" traits for his or her sex is indicative of the likelihood that his or her inner

⁷Jung, "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship," 1925, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, op.cit., p. 540.

⁸Jung, "Psychological Types," op.cit., p. 274.

character will reflect traits of the opposite gender.

the very manly men are most subject to characteristic weaknesses; their attitude to the unconscious has a womanly weakness and impressionability. And, vice versa, it is often just the most womanly women who, in respect of certain inner things, have an extreme intractableness, obstinacy, and willfulness; which qualities are found in such intensity only in the outer attitude of men.⁹

It seems too that, according to Jung, the potential for personality development is not the same for males as it is for females. In Jung's view, not only do males and females not manifest the same traits, but qualities of their so-called conscious and unconscious attitudes are reversed.

The conscious side of woman corresponds to the emotional side of man, not to his 'mind.' Mind makes up the 'soul,' or better, the 'animus' of woman, and just as the anima of man consists of inferior relatedness, full of affect, so the animus of woman consists of inferior judgements, or better, opinions.¹⁰

Jung's depiction of the femaleness of males and the maleness of females presumes that they are at odds. Also, Jung believed that, as inferior partial personalities, they account for what he identified as an irritating character of the unconscious. As Jung indicated about anima and animus:

One of the most typical manifestations of both figures is what has long been

⁹Jung, "Psychological Types," *ibid.*, p. 274.

¹⁰Jung, "Phenomena of the Way," 1938, The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 13, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967, p. 41.

called 'animosity.' The anima causes illogical moods, and the animus produces irritating platitudes and unreasonable opinions. ...As a rule they personify the unconscious and give it its peculiarly disagreeable or irritating character. ...Being only partial personalities, they have the character either of an inferior woman or of an inferior man—hence their irritating effect.¹¹

Not only did Jung regard unconscious personality traits of both males and females as being illogical or unreasonable. He also maintained that females were generally less capable than males of engaging in logical thought and reflection.

In men, Eros, the function of relationship, is usually less developed than Logos. In women, on the other hand, Eros is an expression of their true nature, while their logos is often only a regrettable accident. It gives rise to misunderstandings and annoying interpretations in the family circle and among friends. This is because it consists of opinions instead of reflections.¹²

From Jung's vantage, the psychological natures of males and females differed considerably in that the male facility with logic could not be equaled by females. One effect of this disparity pointed out by Jung is that when a female's action is influenced by the maleness—animus:

No matter how friendly and obliging a woman's Eros may be, no logic can shake her¹³

Jung suggested further that circumstances under which a man

¹¹Jung, "Psychology and Religion," 1937, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, op.cit., p. 495.

¹²Jung, "The Syzygy: Anima and Animus," 1951, Psyche and Symbol, op.cit., p. 13.

¹³Ibid., p. 13.

cannot break through to change a woman's consciousness may arouse him to feel that he could persuade her only with seduction or beating or rape.

Often the man has the feeling—and he is not altogether wrong—that only seduction or a beating or rape would have the necessary power of 'persuasion.'¹⁴

According to Jung, it is not out of the ordinary for females to be unmoved by so-called rational argument or, on the other hand, for males to be aroused by irrational feelings. On what basis were such differences of social nature attributed to males and females? According to Jung, the basis of personality differences between males and females is genetically determined.

it seems a very natural state of affairs for men to have irrational moods and women irrational opinions. Presumably this situation is grounded in instinct.¹⁵

The differentiation of the unconscious femaleness and maleness of males and females was considered by Jung to be inborn. Jung believed that members of each sex were endowed with a memory trace reflective of the phylogenetic history of the opposite sex species type. Anima and animus were conceptualized as archetypal symbols or universal images derived from experiences of racial ancestors. Along with the notion of sex-differentiated soul images, Jung conceptualized a collective unconscious as an all encompassing

¹⁴Jung, "The Syzygy: Anima and Animus," *ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 16.

representation of ancestral experiences. This predisposes individuals to response patterns of sensation, feeling, intuition and thinking.

All basic instincts and basic forms of thought and feeling are collective... one is always astonished to see how much our so-called individual psychology is really collective. So much indeed, that the individual traits are completely overshadowed.¹⁶

Anima and animus, as genetically inherited prototypical models of an unconscious nature, served as the concepts with which Jung formulated the psychological make-up or personalities of males and of females.

The anima is... a natural archetype that satisfactorily sums up all the statements of the unconscious, of the primitive mind, of the history of language and religion.¹⁷

While anima is presented as a collective universal image, however, Jung attributed the anima only to males of the species. It was Jung's belief that the anima predetermines the nature of male consciousness and underlies all spontaneity in psychic life. As Jung described the anima,

It is a 'factor' in the proper sense of the word. Man cannot make it; on the contrary, it is always the a priori element in his moods, reactions, impulses, and whatever else is spontaneous in psychic life. It is something that lives of itself, that makes us live; it is a life behind consciousness that cannot be completely integrated within it, but from

¹⁶Jung, "The Relations Between the Ego and the Unconscious," 1928, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, op.cit., p. 135.

¹⁷Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," 1934, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, op.cit., p. 311.

which, on the contrary, consciousness arises.¹⁸

Jung regarded consciousness as predicated upon the archetypal, genetically determined, instinctually operative factor of anima.

Jung considered the anima to derive from the presence of female genes in a male body. Jung accepted as scientific fact the belief that as the offspring of male and female genes, homo sapiens necessarily comprise both male and female genes.

Either sex is inhabited by the opposite sex up to a point, for, biologically speaking, it is simply the greater number of masculine genes that tips the scales in favor of masculinity. The smaller number of feminine genes seems to form a feminine character, which usually remains unconscious because of its subordinate position.¹⁹

According to Jung, a predominance of either gene type determines, along with biophysical sex attributes, the psychological predisposition or inner character of the opposite gender.

Jung further pointed out that there was a possibility that both the male and female species had common origin in hermaphroditic form, noting that

from time immemorial, man in his myths has expressed the idea of a male and female coexisting in the same body. Some psychological intuitions were

¹⁸Jung, "Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious," *ibid.*, p. 311.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 312.

usually projected in the form of the divine syzygy, the divine pair, or in the idea of the hermaphroditic nature of the creator.²⁰

Notions of hermaphroditism did not serve, however, as the source of Jung's development of the concepts of anima and amicus. The point of origin for the development of these concepts, as Jung indicated, was his observation of feminine characteristics manifest by males.

Careful investigation has shown that the affective character of a man has feminine traits. From this psychological fact derives... my own concept of anima.²¹

Jung believed that males, as a result of their biophysical nature, manifested feminine traits whether or not any male had any actual social exposure or experience with a female. Further, he believed that irrespective of the existence of any females, anima would be operative among the male species. According to Jung, males have genetic traces of the totality of impressions made by females throughout history. Additionally, he thought that the inherited image of femaleness was so clearly representative of all female experiences that he suggested that the attributes of the psyche of a woman could be derived merely from knowledge reflected by the image of anima.

Every man carries within him the eternal image of woman... fundamentally unconscious, an hereditary factor of primordial origin... an imprint or 'archetype' of all the ancestral

²⁰Jung, "Psychology and Religion," op.cit., p. 494.

²¹Jung, "Phenomena of the Way," op.cit., pp. 39-40.

experiences of the female, a deposit... of all the impressions ever made by woman... Even if no woman existed, it would still be possible, at any given time, to deduce from this image exactly how a woman would have to be constituted psychically.²²

This notion seemingly freed an understanding of male psychology from dependence upon any actual involvement with or knowledge of females. It suggests, as well, that Jung's conceptualization of androgynous nature was divorced from any direct concern to empirically demonstrate it in the social world of males and females.

Along the same lines, according to Jung, the male-feminine-anima, as a genetically determined system of psychic adaptation, was prerequisite for human experience—a woman herself, at least theoretically, was not. Rather, Jung relegated "woman" to the position of being presupposed by the "nature of man."

the whole nature of man presupposes woman from the start, just as it is prepared for a quite definite world where there is water, light, air, salt, carbohydrates, etc. The form of the world into which he is born is already inborn in him as a virtual image.²³

Along with light and the physical elements of existence, Jung not only regarded the image of woman to be inherent in man, but he also posited the presence of genetically

²²Jung, "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship," 1925, The Basic Writings of C. G. Jung, op.cit., p. 540.

²³Jung, "Anima and Animus," op.cit., p. 200.

transmitted dispositions or psychic aptitudes regarding birth, death and even social roles.

parents, wife, children, birth, and death are inborn in him as virtual images as psychic aptitudes.²⁴

It thus appears clear that Jung took it to be self-evident that such "a priori categories"—inborn, unconscious, archetypal, universal, collective—were basic to the psychosocial nature of men. Further, understandings of anima served as Jung's basis for depiction of the psychic constitution of females and also as a source for description of the social nature of women. As Jung asserted, with reference to the anima:

Every mother and every beloved is forced to become the carrier and embodiment of this omnipresent and ageless image which corresponds to the deepest reality in a man.²⁵

Considering the anima in respect to females, Jung acknowledged that descriptions of females may bear distortions that form the projections of the male images of femininity. In his view, since the females have no anima and males no animus, those in a marital relationship, for example, are likely to understand each other emotionally as they might more appropriately be understood themselves. As Jung indicated:

Woman has no anima, no soul, but she has an animus. The anima has an erotic, emotional character, the animus a rationalizing one. Hence most of what men say about feminine eroticism, and particularly about the

²⁴Jung, "Anima and Animus," *ibid.*, p. 200.

²⁵Jung, "The Syzygy: Anima and Animus," *op.cit.*, p. 11.

emotional life of women, is derived from their own anima projections and distorted accordingly.²⁶

Similarly, Jung suggested that females display biasing effects of their own masculine nature.

the astonishing assumptions and fantasies that women make about men come from the activity of the animus, who produces an inexhaustible supply of illogical arguments and false explanations.²⁷

Contrasting the anima, animus was neither understood as soul nor as a singular composite of all ancestral experiences. The animus was conceptualized as a plurality, like a "collection of condemnatory judges."²⁸ Additionally, whereas the anima of a male did not result from any of his actual experiences, the animus was depicted as reflective of sayings and opinions acquired by a female from her time of childhood.

The animus is rather like an assembly of fathers or dignitaries of some kind who lay down incontestable, 'rational,' excathedra judgements. On closer examination these exacting judgements turn out to be largely sayings and opinions scraped together more or less unconsciously from childhood on.²⁹

In contradiction to this description, in the same essay Jung indicated that the animus

is the deposit... of all woman's ancestral experiences of man³⁰

²⁶Jung, "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship," op.cit., p. 540.

²⁷Ibid., p. 540.

²⁸Jung, "Anima and Animus," op.cit., p. 218.

²⁹Ibid., p. 218.

³⁰Ibid., p. 220.

In another work Jung summed up animus simply as prejudice.

Primarily, it is not of an affective nature but is a quasi-intellectual factor best described by the word 'prejudice.'³¹

Jung found the task of describing the animus nearly insurmountable:

If it was no easy task to describe what is meant by the anima, the difficulties become almost insuperable when we set out to describe the psychology of the animus.³²

Perhaps one reason for the difficulty is what Jung observed to be a result of the way in which a male related to a female and expressions attributed to her masculine animus. In other words, the assessment of animus was understood to be determined by a man's evaluation of a female's prettiness or by his expectations of her. As Jung explained:

If the woman happens to be pretty, these animus opinions have for the man something rather touching and childlike about them, which makes him adopt a benevolent, fatherly, professional manner. But if the woman does not stir his sentimental side, and competence is expected of her rather than appealing helplessness and stupidity, then her animus opinions irritate the man to death...³³

More than that, when a woman is considered to be intellectual, then her animus opinions are regarded as irrelevant. Jung related that such "creatures," although unaware of it, purposefully exasperate males:

³¹Jung, "Phenomena of the Way," op.cit., p. 41.

³²Jung, "Anima and Animus," op.cit., p. 216.

³³Ibid., p. 219.

In intellectual women the animus encourages a critical disputatiousness and would-be highbrowism, which, however, consists essentially in harping on some irrelevant point and nonsensically making it the main one. Or a perfectly lucid discussion gets tangled up in the most maddening way through the introduction of a quite different and if possible perverse point of view.³⁴

Such understandings appear as negative valuations of the social nature of females from a man's point of view. Nonetheless, Jung considered that the female could well serve the adult male—to whom she "belongs" as a sharer of his life. Jung depicted such a woman as one who, taking the place of a man's parents, assumes the position "as the most immediate environmental influence" in his life. As Jung stated further:

She becomes his companion, she belongs to him in so far as she shares his life and is more or less of the same age. She is not of superior order, either by virtue of age, authority, or physical strength.³⁵

Despite the implication of male superiority cited here, Jung went on to describe ways in which he believed males to be complemented by superior qualities of females.

woman...always has been a source of information about things for which a man has no eyes. She can be his inspiration; her intuitive capacity, often superior to man's, can give him timely warning, and her feeling, always directed toward the personal, can show him ways which his own less personally accented feeling would never

³⁴Jung, "Anima and Animus," *ibid.*, p. 220.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 198.

have discovered.³⁶

In sum, Jung affirmed that superiority of consciousness cannot be attributed to the male species.

An inferior consciousness cannot eo ipso be ascribed to women; it is merely different from masculine consciousness.³⁷

Jung, as a contributor to the culture of contemporary thought, went beyond the boundaries of what had been accepted as traditionally logical understanding. As Jung explained about his understanding of the traits of each sex that he thought to inhere in both sexes:

I deliberately and consciously give preference to a dramatic, mythological way of thinking and speaking, because this is not only more expressive but also more exact than an abstract scientific terminology.³⁸

He claimed further that anima and animus were not metaphors nor were they derived by deduction. Yet a recapitulation of some of his ideas thus far cited here suggest grounds for doubting the "exactness" of his theoretical formulations and their independence from metaphor.

Apparently, Jung did the following: observed feminine characteristics in males; conceptualized anima and animus; attributed these unconscious inner characters or attitudes to opposite sexed genes; believed that differentiation is

³⁶Jung, "Anima and Animus," *ibid.*, p. 198-199.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 217.

³⁸Jung, "The Syzygy: Anima and Animus," *op.cit.*, p. 12.

the key to consciousness; regarded the inner character and outer character or persona as complementary for members of a sex grouping; characterized the persona of one sex as opposite to the persona and like the inner character of the other sex; considered the relationship between anima and animus to be typified as "animosity"; identified the anima as a composite image of ancestral woman; and contrastingly viewed the animus as an inherited image of men and as acquired unconsciously from childhood on.

Overall, Jung like Freud held the belief that the psychologies of males and females differ as a result of genetic endowment. Jung's descriptions of the factors of anima and animus, or femininity and masculinity, merely represent the ways in which he recognized males and females to differ. Jung's bases for differentiating between males and females concerned values, interests and the type and realm of social contacts and activities engaged in. For example, Jung typified females as placing a higher value on personal relationships than males. In comparison, Jung characterized the masculine mind as being involved with more objective concerns like commerce, politics and science. As for females in general, Jung wrote:

Personal relations are as a rule more important and interesting to her than objective facts and their interconnections. The wide fields of commerce, politics, technology and science, the whole realm of the applied masculine mind, she relegates to the penumbra of consciousness;... she

develops a minute consciousness of personal relationships, the infinite nuances of which usually escape the man entirely.³⁹

Due to such differences with which Jung characterized males and females, he affirmed that males and females virtually inhabited different social worlds. According to Jung, the female world was centered around the family, whereas for males the family was merely a means to an end. Jung viewed the male world as more expansive, including business concerns and matters of national importance. Jung summed up the worlds of the female and the male as follows:

Her world is made up of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, husbands and children. The rest of the world consists likewise of families, who nod to each other but are, in the main, interested essentially in themselves. The man's world is the nation, the state, business concerns, etc. His family is simply a means to an end, one of the foundations of the state, and his wife is not necessarily the woman for him (at any rate not as the woman means it when she says 'my man'). The general means more to him than the personal; his world consists of a multitude of coordinated factors, whereas her world, outside her husband, terminates in a sort of cosmic mist.⁴⁰

Jung derived his understanding of the social world of females and males from his notions of the differential effects of the genetic endowments of anima and animus. Nevertheless, he could not empirically verify his notions

³⁹Jung, "Anima and Animus," op.cit., p. 218.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 221.

of anima and animus.

I must confess that I have never yet found
infallible evidence for the inheritance of
memory images⁴¹

Further, despite his contention that his long and varied
experience had afforded him with an empirical grasp of the
archetypes of anima and animus, Jung declared:

I am fully aware that we are discussing
pioneer work which by its very nature
can only be provisional.⁴²

As such, Jung advanced his idea that people are psychological-
ly androgynous—with the gender persona corresponding to
their biophysical sex type, and an inner attitude character-
istic of the gender other than their sex type—without
demonstrating any clear cut differentiation of personality
traits according to biophysical sex criteria.

⁴¹Jung, "Anima and Animus," *ibid.*, p. 200.

⁴²Jung, The Syzygy, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

Chapter 8. Measurement of androgyny

The measurement of androgyny was based upon the idea that some individuals might express themselves or be experienced in ways describable as feminine as well as in ways describable as masculine. Measurement tools have recently been devised for the purpose of empirically distinguishing the androgynous personality. Most notably, in 1974 Bem presented the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI)¹ as an instrument for the measurement of psychological androgyny.

many individuals might be 'androgynous'; that is, they might be both masculine and feminine²

In order to demonstrate that some people are masculine and feminine—androgynous—the BSRI was constructed. As the concept of androgyny was operationalized, it consists of an independent masculinity (M) dimension and an independent femininity (F) dimension. For this reason, the BSRI yields an androgyny score as some sort of combined M and F score.

Further, the personality characteristics in the BSRI were selected as masculine or feminine on the basis of what Bem had evaluated as "sex-typed social desirability." The inventory was designed to differentiate persons as masculine or feminine or androgynous according to individual self-descriptions in response to personality characteristics

¹Sandra Bem, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny," Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, Vol. 42, No. 2, 1974.

²Bem, *ibid.*, p. 155.

prejudged in accord with stereotypes of gender desirability.

In the BSRI,

a characteristic qualified as masculine if it was judged to be more desirable in American society for a man than for a woman, and it qualified as feminine if it was judged to be more desirable for a woman than a man.³

The third category was constructed in order to represent neutral (N) characteristics considered as neither masculine nor feminine. Unlike the 20 masculine descriptors and the 20 feminine descriptors which were all regarded as socially desirable, only half of the 20 neutral items were valued as positive for males and females alike, and half were considered to be undesirable for anyone. However, the neutral items were not utilized to measure androgyny.

Overall, the criteria for classification of personality characteristics in the BSRI derived from notions of traditional gender distinctions for females and for males.

A masculine sex role...represents not only the endorsement of masculine attributes, but the simultaneous rejection of feminine attributes, just as a feminine sex role represented not only endorsement of feminine attributes, but the rejection of masculine attributes... An androgynous sex role represents the equal endorsement of both masculine and feminine attributes.⁴

Bem further claimed that individuals classified as androgynous on the basis of their self description could effectively

³Bem, "The Measurement of Psychological Androgyny," *ibid.*, pp. 155-156.

⁴Bem, "Sex Role Adaptability: One Consequence of Psychological Androgyny," Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. Vol. 31, No. 4, 1975, p. 636.

experience or express themselves without regard for stereotyped notions of appropriateness as masculine or feminine. In this sense, psychological androgyny was associated with sex role adaptability. Also, Bem concluded that, in comparison to the androgynous, masculine and feminine subjects manifest "behavioral deficits" when in an experimental situation involving kittens.⁵

Just as those who were characterized as androgynous were associated with flexibility and adaptability in role performances, Bem characterized the behavior of the "non-androgynous" as detrimentally limited by adherence to traditional sex roles. Bem's image of psychological androgyny was somewhat idealized:

An androgynous personality would...represent the very best of what masculinity and femininity have come to represent, and the more negative exaggerations of masculinity and femininity would tend to be canceled out.⁶

Bem further asserts that psychological androgyny, or the copresence of socially desirable feminine and masculine traits, is associated with effective and healthy human functioning:

for fully effective and healthy human functioning, both masculinity and femininity must be tempered by the other, and the two must be integrated into a more balanced, a more fully human, a truly androgynous personality.⁷

⁵Bem, "Sex Role Adaptability," *ibid.*, p. 643.

⁶Bem, "Beyond Androgyny: Some Presumptuous Prescriptions for a Liberated Sexual Identity," Keynote Address of APANIMH Conference on The Research Needs of Women, Madison, Wisconsin, May 31, 1975, p. 4.

⁷Bem, *ibid.*, p. 4.

Therefore, by implication, people who are healthy and effective in what they do are indistinguishable as either masculine or feminine. However, the traits represented in the BSRI are not in themselves readily identifiable as either characteristics that typify males as masculine or females as feminine.

To illustrate, an androgynous self-description on the BSRI might entail a combination of traits deemed as desirable for males along with traits deemed as desirable for females: defends own beliefs, compassionate, assertive, does not use harsh language, willing to take a stand, understanding, acts as a leader, sensitive to the needs of others, makes decisions easily, and loyal. In comparison, an individual of either sex might describe herself or himself in terms of the following masculine traits: assertive, willing to take a stand, acts as a leader, and makes decisions easily. But, here the interpretation is not the same for males and females alike.

Whereas the traits are considered desirable for males, females described in terms of these masculine traits—without description in terms of feminine traits as well—are considered as cross-sexed typed. The neutral traits, like those of tactful, reliable, conventional, conscientious, and truthful, were not utilized in the scoring of the BSRI in order to distinguish individuals as masculine,

feminine or androgynous.⁸ However, such neutral items appear to be descriptive of the effective and healthy functioning that Bem associates with the androgynous personality.

A viewing of the BSRI items displays the difficulty of readily discerning those traits considered to be socially desirable for males as masculine, as opposed to those identified as socially desirable for females as feminine. In order to show this, the BSRI items are listed here as they are ordered on the inventory:

1. Self-reliant (M)
2. Yielding (F)
3. Helpful (N)
4. Defends own beliefs (M)
5. Cheerful (F)
6. Moody (N)
7. Independent (M)
8. Shy (F)
9. Conscientious (N)
10. Athletic (M)
11. Affectionate (F)
12. Theatrical (N)
13. Assertive (M)
14. Flatterable (F)
15. Happy (N)
16. Strong personality (M)
17. Loyal (F)
18. Unpredictable (N)
19. Forceful (M)
20. Feminine (F)
21. Reliable (N)
22. Analytical (M)

⁸The BSRI was revised to distinguish among four groups of subjects: masculine; feminine; androgynous, as the high masculine and high feminine scorers; and the undifferentiated as the low masculine and low feminine scorers who were no longer classified as androgynous. Bem, "On the Utility of Alternative Procedures for Assessing Psychological Androgyny," Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, Vol. 45, No. 2, 1977, pp. 196-205.

23. Sympathetic (F)
24. Jealous (N)
25. Has leadership abilities (M)
26. Sensitive to the needs of others (F)
27. Truthful (N)
28. Unwilling to take risks (M)
29. Understanding (F)
30. Secretive (N)
31. Makes decisions easily (M)
32. Compassionate (F)
33. Sincere (N)
34. Self-sufficient (M)
35. Eager to sooth hurt feelings (F)
36. Conceited (N)
37. Dominant (M)
38. Soft spoken (F)
39. Likable (N)
40. Masculine (M)
41. Warm (F)
42. Solemn (N)
43. Willing to take a stand (M)
44. Tender (F)
45. Friendly (N)
46. Aggressive (M)
47. Gullible (F)
48. Inefficient (M)
49. Acts as a leader (M)
50. Childlike (F)
51. Adaptable (N)
52. Individualistic (M)
53. Does not use harsh language (F)
54. Unsystematic (N)
55. Competitive (M)
56. Loves children (F)
57. Tactful (N)
58. Ambitious (M)
59. Gentle (F)
60. Conventional (N)

Androgynous personality traits are merely those masculine and feminine traits that an individual scores in a numerically equivalent fashion in order to describe herself or himself. There is no item that in and of itself is considered to represent an androgynous trait. Therefore, regardless of the way in which psychological androgyny may be conceptual-

ized, for purposes of measurement it does not transcend conventional evaluations of socially desirable traits for females along with socially desirable traits for males.

In addition to the BSRI, Spence and Helmreich utilized the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ)⁹ for the measurement of androgyny as a combination of both masculine and feminine traits.

Unlike the BSRI, the PAQ was not developed for the specific measurement of psychological androgyny. The PAQ was developed with a rationale, according to Spence and Helmreich,¹⁰ that resembles that employed in the BSRI in so far as it treats masculinity and femininity as dualistic, in the sense of independently measurable personality traits. For this reason, the work of Spence and Helmreich touches upon the measurement of androgyny. However, their study is focused on gender differentiation mainly in terms of masculinity and femininity. Therefore, only their work that pertains to androgyny is discussed here, and not their work as a whole. In addition to use of a dualistic model of gender which incorporates an F and an M scale for the measurement of gender, Spence and Helmreich use a bipolar M-F scale that

⁹Janet Spence, Robert Helmreich, and J. Stapp, "The Personal Attributes Questionnaire: A measure of sex-role stereotypes and masculinity-femininity." JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology, 1974, 4, p. 127.

¹⁰Spence and Helmreich, Masculinity & Femininity: Their Psychological Dimensions, Correlates, and Antecedents, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978.

measures gender in terms of personality traits which are believed to typify males in a way opposite to the way in which they typify females. The claim made by Spence and Helmreich is that each of the three scales has potential for meaningful application despite the seeming mutual exclusivity of treating femininity and masculinity as independent dimensions as well as opposite traits along the same dimensions. In this respect, Spence and Helmreich self-critically acknowledge

the conceptual embarrassment of having to embrace simultaneously a dualistic and a bipolar model of masculinity and femininity.¹¹

Employing the PAQ, Spence and Helmreich studied four groupings of subjects: the Androgynous, individuals who scored high on both masculinity and femininity; the Masculine, males who scored high on masculinity and low on femininity, or "cross-sex" females; the Feminine, females who scored high on femininity and low on masculinity, or "cross-sex" males; Undifferentiated, who scored low on both masculinity and femininity. The revised PAQ¹² includes 24 items for self-rating that are believed to reflect sex role stereotypes.

¹¹Spence and Helmreich, Masculinity and Femininity, *ibid.*, p. 20.

¹²*Ibid.*, Appendix A.

The independent masculinity scale is comprised of items that represent the characteristics of independence, activity, competitiveness, decision making ease, not giving up easily, self-confidence, superiority, and standing up under pressure. The independent femininity scale items encompass characteristics of emotionality, ability to devote self completely to others, gentleness, helpfulness to others, kindness, awareness of feelings of others, understanding of others and warmth in relations with others. The items on the M-F scale distinguish between masculinity and femininity in terms of the following distinctions: very aggressive & not at all aggressive, very dominant & very submissive, not at all excitable in a major crisis & very excitable in a major crisis, very worldly & very home oriented, indifferent to other's approval & highly needful of other's approval, feelings not easily hurt & feelings easily hurt, never cries & cries easily, and very little need for security & very strong need for security.

Despite the use of the PAQ for classification of individuals as androgynous, Spence and Helmreich do not favor its usage other than as a descriptor of individuals who score high in both masculinity and femininity. As Spence and Helmreich stated:

We eschew the work 'androgyny' to identify our general conception, preferring to describe it as a 'dualistic approach to psychological masculinity and femininity,' despite

the greater clumsiness of this title
and its partial inaccuracy.¹³

Therefore, rather than measuring androgyny, what the PAQ
M and F scales seem to measure is merely how individuals
rate themselves in terms of stereotypical notions about
ways in which females and males are not alike. In this
regard, Spence and Helmreich maintain that feminine and
masculine characteristics are "true" for the reason that
the self-ratings of females and males differ. As they put it,

the sexes do in fact differ, so that
labels cannot be said to be false.¹⁴

Nevertheless, Spence and Helmreich maintain that their
measurements of gender

tap personality constellations that
have implications for the behavior
of both sexes, over and above what they
may tell us about sex differences.¹⁵

Bem, like Spence and Helmreich, notes that the measurement
of psychological androgyny or dualistic psychological
masculinity and femininity is elusive. Bem suggested that,
conceptually, psychological androgyny cannot forever be
bound to a notion of gender differentiation despite its
operationalization in terms of masculinity and femininity
characteristics. As Bem stated,

if there is a moral to the concept of
psychological androgyny, it is that
behavior should have no gender. But
there is an irony here, for the concept
of androgyny contains an inner contra-
diction and hence the seeds of its own

¹³Spence and Helmreich, Masculinity & Femininity, *ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 123.

destruction. Thus, ...the concept of androgyny necessarily presupposes that the concepts of masculinity and femininity themselves have distinct and substantive content. But to the extent that the androgynous message is absorbed by the culture, the concepts of masculinity and femininity will cease to have such content and the distinctions to which they refer will blur into invisibility.¹⁶

What long range effect will the disappearance of gender distinctions have on the measurement of psychological androgyny or the conceptualization of androgyny itself?
Bem prophesies:

when androgyny becomes a reality, the concept of androgyny will have been transcended.¹⁷

The measurement of androgyny was predicated on the notion that some personality attributes are common among both females and males. However, the operationalization of androgyny exclusively in terms of feminine and masculine traits relegates the measurement of androgyny to a reliance upon conventional beliefs about socially desirable attributes presumed to distinguish between females and males. The methodology, therefore, is contradictory to the claim that androgyny is a measure of attributes of human beings regardless of biophysical sex status.

¹⁶Bem, "Beyond Androgyny," op.cit., p. 15.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 15.

In contrast to the measurement of androgyny, in so far as gender neutrality reflects reality, the concept of gender neutral androgyny will be subject to measurement in terms of human attributes common to females and males alike.

Chapter 9. Singer's interpretation of androgyny

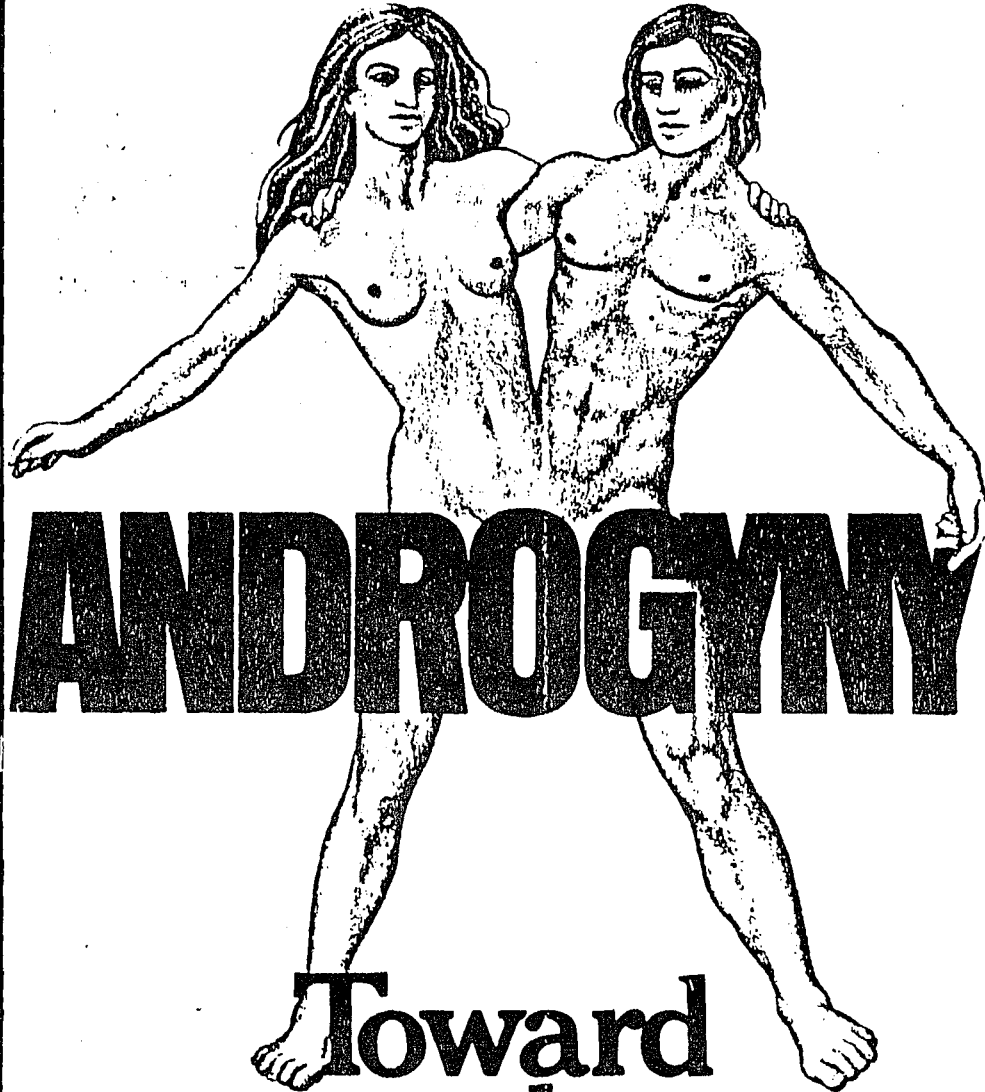
Singer's work, Androgyny: Toward a new theory of sexuality,¹ is treated here for a number of reasons. It is the most recent theoretical exploration of the concept of androgyny and it has been widely distributed. As such, Singer's work influences current ways in which people conceptualize androgyny and apply it to understandings of current-day modes of thought and patterns of activity. Most of all, the framework Singer used to develop her interpretation of androgyny incorporates historical allusions of a psychological kind. In this way, it represents an incorporative model of historical meanings attributed to androgyny up to now with which meanings pertinent to an understanding of gender neutral androgyny can be contrasted.

As indicated in the title of Singer's work, androgyny is presented in connection with sexuality. Further, the concept of androgyny is coupled with a depiction of bio-physical sex characteristics in the form of a two headed, two legged, four armed unclothed figure—half female and half male. This hard cover edition (Picture I) has 14,000 copies in print.² Singer's book was also published in a soft cover edition which has 30,000 copies in print. The

¹June Singer, Androgyny: Toward a new theory of sexuality, New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1976.

²These figures were reported via telephone, (212) 953-4580, on December 5, 1978 by Barbara Piazza, Anchor/Doubleday.

June Singer



ANDROGyny

**Toward
a new theory
of sexuality**

Picture I

jacket cover of this edition features a photo of a female dressed in traditionally masculine attire. (Picture II) The jacket cover image of androgyny on the hardback edition associates androgyny with hermaphroditism while the softcover suggests a connection between androgyny and transvestism.

I will treat some of Singer's historical references to androgyny. Historical references are not cited here in order to suggest any intrinsic or established validity of androgyny, but in order to clarify Singer's overall conceptualization of androgyny and to identify meanings that have been associated with androgyny in the past. For the most part, the association between Singer's theoretical formulations and my formulations is negative: the attributes used to describe androgyny or androgynous sexuality are not distinguishing features of gender neutrality or gender neutral androgyny.

As already indicated, the distinction between the use of the terms female or male to denote biophysical sex types, and the use of feminine or masculine to denote attributions of social gender is maintained throughout this thesis as a clarifying practice. Historically, however, this distinction was not conventionally employed; and Singer's usage of these sex and gender referents varies. According to her formulation, each and every conceptualization that is

ANDROGYNY

Toward a new theory of sexuality
June Singer



Picture II

symbolized in terms of polarities of female and male or feminine and masculine constitutes an allusion to androgyny.

Central to Singer's interpretation is her belief that any conceptualization that is defined in terms of the union of two as one is a metaphor of androgyny.

androgyny...in its broadest sense can be defined as the One which contains the Two³

Further, expressing her view that the fundamental symbolism for all polarities is the pairing of female and male, Singer states:

One pair, male and female, serves as the symbolic expression of the energetic power behind all other polarities.⁴

This mode of analysis reflects Singer's belief that androgyny is a basic archetype inherent in the psychic make-up of humans. In her view, we find the archetype of androgyny in the psyche along with an innate sense of cosmic unity or oneness:

Androgyny may be the oldest archetype of which we have any experience. It derives from, and is second only to the archetype of the Absolute... The archetype of androgyny appears in us as an innate sense of a primordial cosmic unity, having existed in oneness or wholeness before any separation was made.⁵

Although Singer regards the archetype of the Absolute to be

³Singer, Androgyny, op.cit., p. 20.

⁴Ibid., p. 21.

⁵Ibid., p. 20.

beyond the realm of human awareness, she contends that the psyche maintains a sense of oneness. Further, just as she believes that separation as two presupposes wholeness as one, Singer claims that biophysical sex differentiation presupposes the bodily union of female and male. As Singer indicates, union presupposes differentiation and differentiation presupposes union.

Before (female and male) can be joined they must first have been apart, differentiated, separated from one another. Before they were separated they were bound together in one body, and that body was the Primordial Androgyne.⁶

Singer notes the similarity between her depiction of the primordial androgyne and Plato's portrayal of a mythical hermaphroditic creature. In the Symposium, she points out, Plato evokes the notion that in the remotest of times there was a third sex—a union of female and male. As Plato expressed it:

I must explain the real nature of man, and the change which it has undergone—for in the beginning we were nothing like we are now. For one thing, the race was divided into three; that is to say, besides the two sexes, male and female, which we have at present, there was a third which partook of the nature of both, ...though the creature itself is forgotten...there really was a man-woman in those days, a being which was half male and half female.⁷

⁶Singer, Androgyne, *ibid.*, p. 21.

⁷Edith Hamilton & Huntington Cairns, eds. The Collected Dialogues of Plato. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1961, p. 542.

In the Judeo-Christian Bible, the references to creation are considered by Singer to reflect the archetype of androgynous union. For example, God's creation of male and female depicts God as encompassing both male and female components. Genesis 1:26-28 reads:

And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply⁸

In the ancient Hebraic texts, the word used for God is Elohim. This term, according to the Christian Kabbalist von Rosenroth, is a plural formed by a feminine noun with a masculine suffix.⁹ For this reason, along with the self-references of "us" and "our" attributed to God, Singer views God as androgynous. Additionally, in verse 27 the androgynous reference seems to shift to human creation as "them"—male and female. Further, verse 28 suggests that, as originally created, the human form was endowed with the capacity of progeneration.

Singer goes on to suggest that Genesis 2 indicates that Adam alone, and not one male and one female, was the original human creation. Further, she maintains that the indication in Genesis 2:23 is androgynous, for from the physical form of Adam woman was brought forth.

⁸The Holy Bible, New York: American Bible Society, 1894, p. 3.
⁹Knorr von Rosenroth, quoted in Singer, op.cit., p. 94.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone,
and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called
woman, because she was taken out of man.¹⁰

In Genesis 5:2, as well, Adam is referred to as both male
and female:

Male and female created he them; and
blessed them, and called their name Adam...¹¹

This passage, Genesis 5:2, is cited in the sacred mystical
writing of the Kabbalah along with the indication that the
collective form of the pronouns used for Adam is considered
to be grammatically androgynous.¹² Also, as indicated in
The Kabbalah Unveiled, Kabbalists believed that the basic
nature of the soul is androgynous prior to becoming life
bound as an inhabitant of a male or female body.

All souls are pre-existent in the world of
emanations, and are in their original state
androgynous, but when they descend upon earth
they become separated into male and female,
and inhabit different bodies.¹³

Additionally, Singer suggests that accounts from another
ancient text refer to the original human creation as
androgynous. These accounts are from the Midrash, an early
rabbinic commentary on the Bible:

Adam and Eve were made back to back, joined
at the shoulder; then God divided them...
the first man (Adam) was man on the left side,
a woman on the right, but God split him in

¹⁰The Holy Bible, op.cit., p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., p. 6.

¹²S. L. MacGregor Mathers, The Kabbalah Unveiled, New York:
Samuel Weiser, 1974, p. 86.

¹³Ibid., p. 86.

two halves.¹⁴

The Tantric tradition provides another source of androgynous imagery. As Singer indicated, the Tantric traditions of both Buddhism and Hinduism are concerned with the inter-relationships between male and female polar principles, identified as the static and the dynamic.¹⁵ The concept of androgyny, as it appears in Tantric philosophy, is attributed to a view of creation. I found that Rawson described it as follows:

an original splitting in two... symbolized both male and female, but also the dividing of an anthropomorphic image of the deity down the centre.¹⁶

Here again with respect to Tantric philosophy, as with the Judeo-Christian tradition, the idea of androgyny pertains to a unity comprised of biophysically differentiated male and female components.

As Singer described it, the designation of dynamic and static as female or feminine and as male or masculine¹⁷ differed for Hinduism and Buddhism. The Hindu belief is that the male principle is passive and the female principle is active. In order to exemplify this, I cite Bharati. He

¹⁴Mircea Eliade, quoted from The Two and the One, pp. 104-5, in Singer, Androgyny, op.cit., p. 98.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 184.

¹⁶Philip Rawson, Tantra: The Indian Cult Ecstasy. New York: Avon, 1973, p. 125.

¹⁷The distinctions employed in the use of terminology for sex—female and male, and that for gender—feminine and masculine, are not reflected in the references cited here.

noted that the Hindu pandit

identifies 'power,' 'energy,' etc. with the feminine...the imperturbable, static, supreme principle of pure wisdom is male¹⁸

The opposite identifications were made in Buddhist belief, which

ascribed the dynamic function to the male principle, the static function to the female principle.¹⁹

These contrasting designations in Tantric philosophies are significant from the vantage of gender neutrality in that they suggest that the basis of gender characterizations is arbitrary.

As thus far noted, Singer's historical interpretation of androgyny has been associated with: the biophysical nature of "a man-woman"—Plato; the references to the nature of God and earthling creation—Judeo-Christian Bible, the Kabbalah and Midrash; the static and dynamic principles of cosmic existence—Hindu and Buddhist philosophy. There are additional interpretations of androgyny that are noted by Singer. These include allusions to the I Ching, Tao, astrology, alchemy, myths and dreams employed by Jung for description of anima and animus. For example, Singer points to: the Gnostic tradition, which considered Christ to be androgynous; the teachings of Tao expressed in terms of yin and yang; the disciplines of Yoga and Tai Chi; and the attribution of gender typifications to physical properties and processes in the formulations of alchemy and astrology.

¹⁸Agehananda Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, New York: Anchor, 1970, p. 201.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 204.

These cross-references further illustrate that there is considerable variety among the historical references to which the term androgyny has been applied.

Predominantly, as I indicated earlier, Singer's definition or the meaning that she attributes to androgyny is common among the historical references to androgyny. Whether applied to biophysical characterizations of people or spiritual nature or force or matter, androgyny refers in each case here to a division into polarities. Further, such polarities have been identified in terms of sex or gender characterizations. Not surprisingly, therefore, all of Singer's historical references to androgyny are associated with biophysically based sex or gender differentiations. None supercedes a sex differentiated model of human nature. None eliminates gender stereotypes. None describes life as it is socially lived.

In sum, Singer's interpretation of androgyny relies upon conventional conceptualizations of masculinity and femininity. According to Singer:

Masculinity and Femininity in the human being
are two irreducible properties, distinct and
different.²⁰

Also, Singer suggests that the harmonious union of the feminine and masculine properties of each individual constitutes androgynous nature. Singer claims that there is no way in

²⁰Singer, Androgyny, op.cit., p. 233.

which androgynous nature is inherently at odds with traditional beliefs. Applying her interpretations of androgyny toward the development of a new theory of sexuality, Singer indicates that there is no correspondence between androgynous nature and deviation from normative modes of sexual experience and sexuality.

The new androgyne is not in confusion about his or her sexual identity. Androgynous men express a natural, unforced and uninhibited male sexuality, while androgynous women can be totally female in their own sexuality.²¹

Singer's striking contention here, in accord with her belief that humans are endowed with inherent irreducible properties of masculinity and femininity, is that qualities can be typified as "natural, unforced and uninhibited male" or "totally female." At the same time, but with much less emphasis or elaboration, Singer suggests that androgynous awareness goes beyond the realm within which conventional sex and gender conceptualizations are meaningful. As Singer indicates about androgynous nature:

If human beings are released, or can release themselves, from the boundaries of sex and gender, there can be a far wider reaching-out in love to people as people.²²

It seems that, at least up to a point, Singer acknowledges that sex-status or gender dichotomization does not provide an adequate conceptual frame for grasping androgynous

²¹Singer, Androgyny, *ibid.*, p. 33.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 294.

consciousness. Reflecting further this line of thought, Singer states that:

Beyond the contest for dominance, beyond the polarization of masculine consciousness and feminine consciousness, lies the intuition that there must be something else, a further development in human consciousness.²³

Historical interpretations of gender differentiated androgyny have built in stereotypes that delimit modes of thought which, from the vantage of gender neutrality and gender neutral androgyny, prevent the further development in human consciousness that is envisioned by Singer. Hence she and the classic sources that she cites stop short of getting beyond a structuring of reality in terms of traditional gender differentiations.

²³Singer, Androgyny, *ibid.*, p. 24.

Part IV

Gender Neutrality

Chapter 10. Mead's gender-free model of human nature

The model developed by George Herbert Mead lends itself to an understanding of gender neutrality. Most importantly, Mead's understanding of human nature is not predicated on a differentiation by sex or gender. For this reason, various themes of Mead's work are applicable to human nature as it might be viewed from the perspective of gender neutrality. Here I touch on his social theory of self, the distinction between act and action, an understanding of the social construction of meaning, the emergence of mind, and the development of self.

Sociologically, a theory of human nature is relevant insofar as it pertains to existence amidst social process. This is borne out by Mead's interest in understanding how individuals conduct themselves within social process. As Mead observed,

some sort of an ongoing social process in which human beings were implicated must have been there in advance of existence of minds and selves in human beings, in order to make possible the development, by human beings, of minds and selves within or in terms of that process.¹

Unlike the theoretical formulations which underlie notions of masculinity, femininity, and psychological androgyny, Mead's does not focus upon the nature of presocial

¹George Herbert Mead, Mind, Self and Society, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934, p. 227.

homo sapiens or upon any psychobiologically, sex determined derivation of personality structure. Mead viewed infants as born in a state of activity into an ongoing society and he related to the issue of understanding the emergence of self and mind. According to Mead there is no self apart from society.

The essence of the self is cognitive; it lies in the internalized conversation of gestures which constitutes thinking, or in terms of which thought or reflection proceeds. And hence the origin and foundations of the self, like those of thinking, are social.²

Mead viewed people as unspecialized organisms, lacking instinctual equipment to determine and guide their responses to stimuli. According to Mead, even biological impulses are social in character, they

have social implications since they involve or require social situations and relations for their satisfaction by any given individual organism.³

Mead maintained that people require socially constructed frames of reference to serve as guides and determinants of their actions and to enable the realization of their social nature as human beings. As such, Mead's theory of self

assumes a social process or a social order as the logical and biological precondition of the appearance of the selves of the individual organisms involved in that process or belonging to that order.⁴

²Mead, Mind, Self and Society, *ibid.*, p. 173.

³Mead, *ibid.*, p. 228.

⁴Mead, *ibid.*, p. 222.

According to Mead's understanding, and that of gender neutrality as well, the motoric and sense organs of neonates are undifferentiated receptors, lacking instinctual filters. Through social structures and culturally determined forms of consciousness, human beings learn to select out impulses and transform them into meaningful action. In line with this, the focus of his theory of human nature is upon the social determination of the qualities of human beings. This is exemplified by Mead's distinction between "act" and "action."

Human beings do not respond to a mere gesture or act, nor do they engage in a "conversation of gestures," as Mead characterized the stimulus-response behavior of animals. Rather than engaging in such behavior based on non-symbolic interaction, Mead regarded humans as reacting on the basis of the interpretation of intentions or meanings attributed to gestures. In this way human action is symbolic, involving response to interpreted stimuli. Mead viewed people as engaging in the construction of action, and not a mere release of behavior or response to unconscious universal symbols as suggested by the theories of Freud and Jung. According to Mead,

Human society...is dependent upon the development of language for its own distinctive form of organization.⁵

A basis for sociality, therefore, and society as well, is

⁵Mead, Mind, Self and Society, *ibid.*, p. 235.

consensus or the sharing of meanings in the form of common understandings and expectations. This entails the learning of shared group symbols—verbal and nonverbal.

Meaning, Mead claimed, is an emergent social form. It is neither intrinsic to an act or gesture, nor is it individually created. The social construction of meaning requires an imaginative completion of an act or gesture. According to Mead, this is a skill acquired when an individual learns to assume the role of another person. In this way, by identifying who another is as well as identifying with another empathetically, significant symbols are shared and an individual acquires reflexiveness. Reflexiveness, as utilized in this context, refers to the ability of individuals to respond to their own gestures as others might—whether female or male. Mead regarded language development as the primary basis of the reflexive self.

As Mead indicated, the capacity for reflexiveness is the distinguishing feature of the symbolic nature of human interaction—it is the essential condition for the development of the mind. In line with this perspective, mind is a social phenomenon along with human intelligence. Both entail the capabilities of foresight and selection among alternative responses that distinguishes human conduct from instinctive behavior.

According to Mead, in order for individuals to become reflexive and engage in the processes of mind, they must be able to imaginatively take the role of others. In turn, this enables an individual to learn through interaction with others to anticipate another's response to herself or himself and be aware of how others might attribute significance to her or his own symbolic behavior. Mead indicated that this entails an awareness of the generalized other:

The organized community...which gives to the individual his (sic) unit of self may be called the 'generalized other.'⁶

By being aware of others, in the sense of the rules and expectations and attitudes of significant others regarding social activity within specific situations, an individual learns to function as a member of a social group.

Throughout Mead's formulations of the self there are no indications of gender differentiation. Mead stated:

There is, of course, the fundamental distinction of sex which remains a physiological difference, and in the main the distinctions between the parent-forms and child-forms are physiological distinctions, but apart from these there is practically no physiological distinction between the different individuals that go to make up the human community.⁷

Other than the relation of parents and children, Mead did

⁶Mead, Mind, Self and Society, *ibid.*, p. 154.

⁷Mead, *ibid.*, p.231.

not regard biophysical or physiological distinctions as determinants of social nature. As Mead indicated:

A social process is involved in the relation of parents and children... There we start off with the only physical differentiation (except sex) which exists among human individuals⁸

Further, Mead observed no differences between females and males with respect to their intelligence or capacity for self experience and expression. In Mead's view,

human individuals are to a large degree identical; there is no essential difference of intelligence from the point of view of physiological differentiation between the sexes.⁹

Most importantly, perhaps, Mead suggests that to the degree to which people identify themselves with regard to differing standards and expectations of action, they limit their ability to experience and express themselves as a whole self. As Mead put it:

If individuals are so distinguished from each other they cannot identify themselves with each other, if there is not a common basis, then there cannot be a whole self present on either side.¹⁰

Hence Mead's theory of human nature suggests to me that the forms of self-consciousness traditionally differentiating women and men delimit the possibilities for the creation of social integration and fulfillment.

⁸Mead, Mind, Self and Society, *ibid.*, p. 233.

⁹Mead, *ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁰Mead, *ibid.*, p. 317.

Mead sought to answer particular questions: How is meaning created and sustained in daily social living? How is human conduct carried on? What are the consequences of structures of consciousness or institutionalizations of meaning? Some of Mead's answers fit well within the realm of a gender neutral reality: As human beings, we communicate with shared symbols. We are aware of a cultural context of meanings. We are active in investing our social existence with meaning. Those who control the symbols control the meaning attributed to conduct. Sociologically, who people are and what they do can be described in the same terms for both females and males.

Chapter 11. Sociologists' conceptions about gender-free existence

In one way, formulating the concept of gender neutrality can be viewed as a means of providing an encompassing label for expressions of the need for sensitization and shared awareness of our common condition as human earthlings.

In recent times it has been of increasing interest to sociologists to entertain possibilities about gender-free social existence. In this context, gender neutrality can be useful in the development of a theory and methodology necessary to reliably predict and validly account for dynamics of social relations between and among human beings without the biasing effects of gender stereotyping.

This chapter treats ideas akin to gender neutrality which were advanced of late as some sociologists pursued understandings of human liberation in terms of social equality. Highlighted are Rossi, Chafetz, and Yorborg, whose works have engendered notions of a non-sexist social existence.

Alice Rossi

Rossi entertained possibilities of change in the prevailing cultural practices of social inequality.

Describing a "hybrid model" of equality, Rossi anticipated change in the roles of both females and males. As Rossi

stated, such a model

rejects both traditional psychological assumptions and the institutional structure we have inherited¹

Rossi further indicated:

The hybrid model is a radical goal which rejects the present structure of society and seeks instead a new breed of men and women and a new vision of the future.²

In comparison with the hybrid model, Rossi explores two other models of social equality—a pluralist model and an assimilation model. Rossi described each as follows:

A pluralist model of social equality is implicitly a conservative goal, a descriptive model that accepts what exists at a given point in time as desirable and good. The assimilation model is implicitly a liberal goal, a Horatio Alger model that accepts the present structure of society as stable and desirable, and urges minority groups to accept the values and goals of the dominant group within that system as their own.³

The main minority group pertinent here to Rossi's consideration of sex equality comprises females.

In Rossi's analysis she concluded that currently many people subscribe to values that are in tune with her hybrid model of equality. Rossi enumerated such values as follows:

¹Alice Rossi, "Sex Equality: The Beginnings of Ideology," in Toward A Sociology of Women, Constantina Safilios-Rothschild, ed., Massachusetts: Xerox College Publishing, 1972, p. 352.

²Rossi, *ibid.*, p. 353.

³Rossi, *ibid.*, p. 353.

the desire for a more meaningful sense of community and a greater depth to personal relations across class, sex, and racial lines; a stress on human fellowship and individual scope for creativity rather than merely rationality and efficiency in our bureaucracies; heightened interest in the humanities and the social sciences from an articulated value base; and a social responsibility commitment to medicine and law rather than a thirst for status and high income.⁴

It is interesting that Rossi points out that these ideas about the values underlying social change in the direction of sex equality are aligned more closely with values and interests traditionally associated with women. Based upon gender biases such as these in a male dominated culture context, Rossi concluded that traditional ideologies are not sufficient to generate a new conception of equality.

An analysis of sex equality goals may start with the reality of contemporary life, but soon requires an imaginative leap to a new conception of what a future good society should be.⁵

Towards this end, Rossi suggested that we are on the brink of a new ideology. What will a new reality be like? According to Rossi's description we are headed toward more than equality of the sexes:

With the hybrid model of equality one envisages a future in which family, community, and play are valued on a par with politics and work for both sexes, for all the races, and for all social classes and nations which comprise the human family.⁶

⁴Rossi, "Sex Equality," *ibid.*, p. 352.

⁵Rossi, *ibid.*, p. 353.

⁶Rossi, *ibid.*, p. 353.

It seems that the concept of gender neutrality would be pertinent to the new ideology that Rossi foresaw. Regarding the potential of social equality for all, gender neutrality could provide conceptual grounding for new hypotheses about humankind that are free of the bias of gender.

Janet Chafetz

Chafetz, after reviewing the sociology of sex roles and documenting sex role stereotypes, observed that our lives today go on amidst crises of legitimacy concerning all social institutions. Coupled with these crises, Chafetz suggests, is the question of whether our society is to be comprised of masculine and feminine people or humans. Humans, here, are understood as distinctly separate from notions of masculinity and femininity. As Chafetz points out, crises effect changes.

Times of deep social ferment force members of a society to examine the presuppositions upon which they have based their lives, and the collective activities of the whole, causing people to question their deepest values, their most habitual responses, and the very reasons for their existence.⁷

Social change, with alterations of institutional structures, norms, values and desired roles, encompasses changes in sex role stereotypes. Chafetz regards change in gender stereotyping as a necessity for the future of our species. As

⁷Janet Saltzman Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?: An Overview of the Sociology of Sex Roles. Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, 1974, p. 199.

Chafetz indicated:

The future of our species depends in large measure on our collective ability in the next several decades to control population growth, prevent further ecological deterioration, and avoid war, especially a nuclear holocaust. To accomplish these in the context of modern technology, our age-old notions of masculinity and femininity must be fundamentally altered.⁸

Chafetz went on to point out that currently our major social institutions both reflect and support gender stereotyping and "profit" from the perpetuation of gender dichotomization.

One vested interest in the perpetuation of present modes of dichotomization is the continuance of male supremacy. As Chafetz indicated, changes are threatening.

The threat to males is obvious; change entails a loss of many concrete prerogatives and an automatic ego haven, namely, their designation as intrinsically 'superior' to half the human species.⁹

According to Chafetz, the threat of changes in gender stereotypes is less obvious for females than it is for males.

One reason for this disparity is that status quo stereotypes picture the female as seemingly avoiding self-fulfilling activities that foster independence, competence and responsibility. The erroneous implication here is that what females are unaware of will not be threatening to them.

A fundamental principle in sociological thought is that

⁸Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, *ibid.*, p.200.

⁹Chafetz, *ibid.*, p. 222.

people tend to go on doing that which members of their society have done before, and modifications or alterations in modes of action are typically not recognized as constituting social change until long after people carry on their lives in ways that belie stereotypes. As that which people do changes, attitudes change. In turn, as the values and norms supporting differentiation of social expectations and functions on the basis of sex status allocations change, our social institutions will be regarded as having changed as well.

Chafetz has reviewed emerging trends in search of an understanding of humanness that will supercede distinctions of masculinity and femininity. For example, with the industrial revolution the family ceased to be the center of productivity, the birth rate declined, the period of monetarily unproductive adolescence was extended, and the nature of productive labor changed. Effects of changes in the economic institution, according to Chafetz, have

frustrated, bored, and alienated many of those who staff its assembly lines and offices. In short, our species has created a radically new world for itself but has not yet learned how to use it to develop human potentials; it is strangling us rather than being controlled by us.¹⁰

¹⁰Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, ibid., p. 204.

Another structural change in the economic institution was that many jobs were created which did not preclude the possibility that a female could accomplish the tasks as a male could. In other words, under bureaucratic organizational form, the system of roles required to produce profit were not intrinsically sex-specific. As such, during WW II many employment opportunities were extended to females for the first time. It is interesting to note, as Chafetz points out, that despite the interest on the part of females to maintain their jobs, in the two years that followed VJ Day millions of women were fired and replaced by veterans.

Chafetz directed attention to a number of inconsistencies which prevail despite changes of some traditional stereotypes distinguishing between masculinity and femininity and the values implicit in them. For example, Chafetz states that:

You simply cannot clamor for zero population growth and still define the highest mission of females primarily in terms of motherhood, or fail to provide viable alternatives for females. Nor can you demonstrate for peace and not eventually come to reject the more aggressive and even violent aspects of the masculine stereotype¹¹

Also, Chafetz points out the discrepancy between increasing opportunities for careers of females and maintaining the expectation that females assume the full-time responsibility of housekeeping and child care. Due to social

¹¹Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, ibid., p. 219.

inequities, Chafetz identified a "new feminism"

oriented to nothing less than changing the basic values as well as the norms of this society.¹²

In Chafetz' view, utopian thinking is needed in order to anticipate the kinds of changes in sex roles that would render things better than they are at present.

To guide the future we need a positive image of how it might look if our goals and values should be embodied. That is utopian thinking.¹³

Chafetz claimed that in order to eliminate the damaging effects of gender differentiation we need alternative understandings that will not presume that that which denotes masculine means human as well. As Chafetz stated:

We need a vision of what it would mean to be a society not of feminine and masculine creatures, but comprised of humans. The truth of the matter is that we have no real notion of what it means to be human, divorced from notions of masculinity and femininity. Traditionally, human has largely meant masculine¹⁴

Becoming humans, according to Chafetz, entails females taking on masculine roles and males taking on feminine sex roles. For example, Chafetz stated:

Changing sex roles means males becoming more sensual and emotional as females become more rational and psychologically

¹²Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, *ibid.*, p. 213.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 201

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 201.

and intellectually confident and competent.¹⁵

Further, along with personality changes, Chafetz envisions changes in the ways in which people will participate in the social institutions.

Evolving into a society of humans undoubtedly entails the breakdown of the traditional division of labor and personality by gender, as the choices open to all are expanded.¹⁶

Chafetz anticipates that along with a continued diminishing of the role of nuclear family members, and the diminishing of gender stereotypes,

most children will be raised in a collectivized setting... It is also likely that fewer people will actually marry in legal terms.¹⁷

Additionally, Chafetz predicts that the national birth rate will decrease.

(as) females increasingly take life outside the home more seriously, they will be further encouraged to have few or no children.¹⁸

Relating to the economic institution, Chafetz believes that as females take on traditionally male roles industry may ultimately become more humane.

¹⁵Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, *ibid.*, p. 230.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 223.

Assuming that as females enter the decision-making ranks of the corporations they do not become engulfed in the essentially masculine emphasis on productivity for its own sake (and that males retreat from this position)... Goods may be built to last rather than to wear out and require replacement; ecological issues may become more central to policy decisions, not just advertisements. In short, industry may become more humane and socially oriented¹⁹

Similarly, Chafetz foresees changes that will attend the assumption of political leadership on the part of females.

wars for honor and aggressive purposes will decrease, and decision making in the context of saving face will no longer be salient to our national heritage.²⁰

Along with a decrease in war efforts, Chafetz believes that more attention will be given to the development of human potential.

a greater proportion of our national resources will be available for government to steer into human development rather than arms development.²¹

Ideally, Chafetz favors a society in which no ascribed characteristics will determine the ways in which people will carry on their social lives. As Chafetz pointed out:

I feel that progress in achieving a better society will only be made when and if all ascribed characteristics, including gender, are irrelevant to the way in which people spend their lives, the manner in which they are taught to view themselves and others, and the kinds of emotional and intellectual

¹⁹Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, ibid., p. 229.

²⁰Ibid., p. 230.

²¹Ibid., p. 230.

responses that are deemed appropriate.²²

Aiming toward this ideal, however, Chafetz acknowledges that there are major obstacles in creating the conditions for a society of humans. The most crucial consideration here is the recognition by Chafetz that we lack a conceptual frame within which we can exclude the distinctions of femininity and masculinity. Chafetz summed up the problem as follows:

In short, we lack a full-blown definition of 'humanness' divorced from masculinity and femininity... It is the task of the future to come to grips with this problem; to develop a viable definition of humanness that will enable us to live in personally and collectively rewarding ways in post-industrial society.²³

Along the lines of Chafetz' conceptualization of a gender-free existence, the concept of gender neutrality appears useful for the articulation of aspirations of new valued modes of being that do not rely upon beliefs of gender specific normative practices or legal or moral rights and privileges.

Betty Yorburg

An underlying sociological assumption of gender neutrality is that biophysically based sex differentiation is not a valid criterion upon which to dichotomize types of human nature.

This is not unlike the future anticipated by Yorburg which will evolve to a time when gender differentiation will be

²³Chafetz, Masculine/Feminine or Human?, *ibid.*, p. 231.

obsolete. As Yorburg concluded from her cross-cultural study of sexual identity and sex roles:

The terms masculinity and femininity will disappear from modern languages because they will no longer reflect standards that guide thought, emotion and behavior. The primary source of such standards will be the individual and his or her temperament and abilities—these factors alone will determine the roles and identities of all human beings, regardless of gender. When this change has been achieved, all humans will be liberated.²⁴

While Yorburg's projection claims that human nature will be liberated from gender differentiation it implies too that a gender-free existence cannot be adequately conceptualized in terms of femininity and masculinity. It seems that her idea that people could be understood in terms of the criteria of temperament and ability regardless of gender tacitly presupposes gender neutrality.

Conceptions of social change like those of Rossi and Chafetz and Yorburg, advancing possibilities of non-sexist social existence, serve as indicators of a crucial realization: social science is ready for the ideal typical concept of gender neutrality.

²⁴Betty Yorburg, Sexual Identity: Sex roles and Social Change, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974, p. 196.

Chapter 12. The significance of gender neutrality

Based on my study there is ample evidence that commands the questioning and reinterpretation of the constructs of masculinity and femininity. As modern science teaches: there is no absolute space, there is no absolute time, there is no finality to flux. We as the human species have no reason to believe that we are destined to forever see the future in terms of gender differentiation meaningful in our past. In essence, the importance of gender neutrality is the awareness that any explanation or interpretation of who people are or what they do can be formulated free of gender differentiation.

The entire study brought to light difficulties in differentiating humans in terms of femininity and masculinity. To recapitulate, some of the issues highlighted in Part I, *Sociology of Gender: Femininity and masculinity are value laden constructs*. Weber claimed that scientific comparison demands a value neutral framework. Comte and Durkheim regarded biophysical criteria as adequate grounds upon which to distinguish the nature of females from the nature of males—they did not treat the determination of gender differentiation as a scientific problem. Parsons, carrying this view forward, rooted his understanding of the social natures of females and males in psychoanalytic theory.

Some of the problems that were focused upon in Part II, Femininity and Masculinity, concern the following: Freud, despite his affirmation of the distinctiveness of males as opposed to females, maintained that masculinity and femininity are ambiguous concepts. Terman and Miles, who utilized thousands of items to differentiate masculinity and femininity, suggested that the distinct operationalization of personality traits that distinguish between the sexes is elusive. The Nature and Nurture perspectives both maintain the belief that under certain circumstances human beings may express themselves in certain ways that are indistinguishable according to criteria derived from biophysical sex differentiation.

Likewise, the analysis of Part III, Gender Differentiated Androgyny, indicated difficulties such as these in prevailing conceptualizations of androgyny: Jung, after many years of effort expended to empirically demonstrate an inherent feminine soul dimension of males and a masculine dimension of females, concluded that his work was only provisional. Bem sought to eliminate the debilitating effects of sex-role stereotyping on the actualization of human potential. However, the measurement of androgyny, whether by Bem or Spence and Helmreich, did not get beyond the dichotomizations of masculinity and femininity. And Singer, whose work toward a new theory of sexuality is grounded in historical accounts of androgynous creation—positing an archetype of androgyny

within the psyche of all—nevertheless maintained that masculinity and femininity are irreducible properties correspondent with biophysical sex.

Part IV, Gender Neutrality, concerns alternative approaches to the explication of human nature in terms of gender differentiation. Importantly, among these ideas, as with all the other notions germane to a sociology of gender, gender neutrality was not singled out as such by the theorists and methodologists that have been treated in this dissertation.

In so far as the concept of gender neutrality is entertained, the presumption of gender differentiation that has been demonstrated in this dissertation will be set aside. The following notions will no longer be tenable: that our genetic inheritance predetermines our socio-cultural ways of being as females and males; that beliefs about gender differentiation can shed light upon the natural endowment of males versus females or can clear up questions of differential contribution to civilization by men and women; that masculinity and femininity can be attributed to unconscious psychic memories that reflect a faculty of males which apprehends all women and a faculty of females which apprehends men. As well, it will not be valid for a concept denoting the commonality of personality characteristics for females and males—gender neutral androgyny—to

be operationalized in terms of masculinity and femininity.

Advancing the sociological perspective in order to encompass the possibility that biophysical endowment does not determine the meaning of human nature, without forcing reality to precept, a concept of gender neutrality posits the null hypothesis: There are no differences in the social natures of human beings rooted in biophysical criteria of sex.

As human beings, with the capacity to be understood and to be understanding of others, we share social consciousness—with language, beliefs, values and social skills enabling us to experience and express ourselves and relate with one another. Further, like other understandings of human nature, explanations and descriptions of gender neutrality are derived along with the cultural modes of thought represented by and reflected in our social institutions, ideologies and living practices.

In what ways might social scientists now attribute meaning to gender neutrality?

As the constructs of femininity and masculinity are found to be inadequate to clarify the ambiguities and the complexities of social living, we can pursue our sociological understandings keeping gender neutrality in mind. With this new perspective, people, individually and collectively,

can be regarded in a new way.

Sociologically, who people are and what they do can be described in the same terms for both females and males. Description, for example, could entail "quality of life criteria" such as these: how, when, where, under what circumstances, with what meaning, with what effect: Are we nurturant, supportive, loving, affectionate, pleasing, kind? Are we competent, capable, skilled, experienced? Do we have the integrity, sensitivity, clarity, to be aware of who and how we are? With what energy, ease, interest, do we engage in interacting, befriending, parenting, laboring, neighboring?

To the extent that such structurings of consciousness are free of gender stereotyping they depict gender neutral qualities of living. However, awareness that is not perceived along lines of gender dichotomization, and that is without sex and gender bias, presupposes a model of human nature that is neutral in terms of gender. In order for us to derive sociological understandings, and apply the concept of gender neutrality, we need a gender neutral model of how people regard themselves and relate with others in social living.

Toward the formulation of a new model of human nature we can further consider the construct of gender neutral

androgyny. In terms of gender neutrality, gender neutral androgyny differs sharply from all other conceptualizations of androgyny. Former conceptualizations of androgynous human nature are predicated on the notion that human nature varies according to biophysical criteria of sex. In contrast, as I conceive of it:

Gender neutral androgyny would not pertain to innate biophysical make-up.

Gender neutral androgyny would not reduce human nature to properties of femininity and masculinity.

Gender neutral androgyny would not pertain to a primary archetype of the psyche.

Gender neutral androgyny would not convey the notion of a dynamic equilibrium of feminine and masculine personality traits.

Gender neutral androgyny would not implicitly relate to modes of sexual experience or practices of sexuality.

No theory about who and how we are as human beings that has been analyzed in this dissertation provides an understanding that goes beyond the traditional time and space specific notions of femininity and masculinity. Each assumes that the social natures of males and females are divergent. Any such assumption of differentiation implicitly obscures the characteristics common to all human beings regardless of their sex or gender. Further, as I have indicated, those notions that have pervaded contemporary thought about gender differentiation have not served to clarify, and have not provided grounds upon which to empirically demonstrate, a correspondence between biophysical criteria of

sex and the social nature of females or the social nature of males.

From the vantage of a theory of gender neutral androgyny, gender neutrality could be applied to new understandings of the ways in which humans experience and express themselves that are now enmeshed with sex and gender linkages. For example, the concept of gender neutrality could be applied toward a new theory of sexuality. A gender neutral interpretation of sexuality would rest on the premise that the ways in which people are able to conduct themselves and create meanings are indistinguishable on the grounds of biophysical sex criteria.

In our society, understandings of sexuality are associated with other symbols and norms of socially organized living—supported by and supportive of the familial, political, religious, economic, educational, and recreational institutions. In the same fashion, traditional interpretations of masculinity and femininity are intertwined with notions of normative sexuality. Therefore, in contrast with heterosexuality, other modes of sexual expression do not correspond with masculine and feminine stereotypes, and are thereby devalued. From the vantage of gender neutrality, sexual manifestations of social living, like all other forms of action, can be attributed multiple meanings and values.

Just as the forms and structures of consciousness in a society are shared by females and males alike, it seems likely that the means by which individuals attribute social meaning and significance to their sexual activity—whether via fantasies, dreams, anticipations, or interpersonal actions—do not differ according to biophysical criteria of sex. Therefore, from the standpoint of the concept of gender neutrality, or according to a theory of gender neutral androgyny, I advance the hypothesis that the potential for attributing meaning or for transforming any act to incorporate varied dimensions of sexuality—heterosexuality, homosexuality, transvestism, sadism, masochism, dominance, submission—does not vary according to biophysical criteria of sex.

Ideally, gender neutrality will be applied toward the neutralizing of sexism in all forms. Stated as a moral issue, my formulation of gender neutrality implies that there is a need for social scientists to take responsibility to generate alternative rationales to replace anachronistic, gender biased evaluations about how females and males should design their social existence in terms of gender complementarity.

Until we create the means to display social reality without coloration in terms of social ranking hierarchies, we, as social scientists, cannot mirror the as yet unnamed

picturings of realities of human nature that are not clearly visible amidst and in terms of gender differentiated forms and structures of consciousness.

The application of gender neutrality will shed light upon the actualities and potentialities of our human nature. By applying the concept of gender neutrality, and interpreting realities in terms of a gender neutral theory of human nature, we can understand our social existence without the prescriptions and the proscriptions of gender differentiation and without any notion of moral imperatives of doing something or not doing anything because we are biophysically either female or male, or because it is tagged according to gender.

No one revision of the constructs of masculinity and femininity will have a singular impact on the ways in which meanings will be attributed to social living. We can anticipate that effects of all sorts will attend the usage of the concept of gender neutrality. With the awareness of alternatives to traditional gender structurings generated by the concept of gender neutrality, we can determine the direction and course of our action in new ways. By selecting the quality of our becoming we create the nature of our being.

The significance of the concept of gender neutrality will be in its use by you in considering human nature and social living free of the binds and blinds of the bias of gender.

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