

Instructor's Manual and Test Bank

for

Denmark, Rabinowitz, and Sechzer

Engendering Psychology Women and Gender Revisited

Second Edition

prepared by

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INTRODUCTION

Courses in the psychology of women and gender are not ordinary courses. Those of us fortunate enough to teach these courses know that they are uncommonly engaging for our students. However, they are also unusually demanding, for instructors and students alike. By their very nature, courses on the psychology of women and gender are intellectually and emotionally challenging. They require people to reexamine their most personal experiences and rethink their deepest assumptions about women, men, sex and gender, as well as reconsider the interrelationships between biology and culture, human development, ability and achievement, intimate relationships, and mental and physical health. This inherently interdisciplinary field requires teachers and students to integrate material across scholarly disciplines ranging from the natural sciences to the humanities.

The second edition of *Engendering Psychology: Women and Gender Revisited* by Florence L. Denmark, Vita C. Rabinowitz, and Jeri Sechzer provides an excellent foundation to meet all these challenges. This text is extraordinarily rich in scholarship and analysis. Yet, it is not enough to simply read about the psychology of women and gender. Courses like this require special support for instructors who seek to enhance their students' appreciation of theories, concepts, and research through class discussions, group activities, exercises, and fieldwork, as well as through examinations.

This instructor's manual is specifically designed to serve as a guide to the second edition of *Engendering Psychology: Women and Gender Revisited*. The manual begins with a few brief thoughts on general considerations in teaching the psychology of women and gender, and then proceeds to a chapter-by-chapter guide. There are 14 chapters in the Instructor's Manual, each of which corresponds to the same numbered chapter in the *Engendering Psychology* textbook. You'll note that each chapter in this manual includes the following:

- ***Chapter Highlights/Summary***
This section underscores the major topics covered in each chapter and provides definitions for key terms.
- ***Discussion Topics and Classroom Activities***
These are provided with the intent of helping students to develop a deeper understanding of the topics and issues discussed in the textbook.
- ***Chapter Tests***
For each chapter, there are 20 multiple-choice questions and 5 essay questions. The test items generally focus on three main objectives: explaining concepts and definitions, relating and critically analyzing concepts, and applying concepts to real world situations.
- ***References and Suggested Readings***

At the end of every chapter, I list a number of web links, reading resources, and videos that can be helpful in finding additional material to enrich lectures and classroom discussions. These can also be provided to students as additional vehicles to assist them in completing class assignments.

General Considerations in Teaching the Psychology of Women

Course Guidelines:

When teaching a course in which personal, sensitive, and controversial issues are likely to arise, it is useful to introduce a set of guidelines aimed at increasing students' awareness and comfort level. For this purpose, make a list of suggestions that are important for creating and maintaining a constructive classroom environment. Discussing the relevance of each item can also serve as a useful ice-breaker at the beginning of a course. I am fortunate to have the approval of Lisa Bowleg, associate professor at the University of Rhode Island, to use her list of the following classroom guidelines.

- 1. Respect for diverse opinions:** In comparison to other types of classes, many of the topics that we will discuss in this class are sensitive areas in which people may have preexisting opinions. Inevitably, there will be issues on which we disagree. While disagreement is fine, disrespect is not. I encourage you to voice your opinions freely, including opposing points of view, and to allow your classmates the opportunity to voice their perspectives without interruption or fear of personal attack. Also remember that sometimes we simply must agree to disagree.
- 2. Disclosure of personal information:** I encourage you to disclose personal information to the extent that it is relevant to the topics that we cover in this course. However, sharing personal information is not required and you will not be penalized for not doing so. Avoid disclosing deep secrets or more information than you feel comfortable disclosing. You, and only you, reserve the right to disclose personal information in class. Moreover, remember that while personal experience is certainly a valid part of learning, your experience has a sample size of one. Even though many people may share your experience, your experience is not necessarily the definitive one, and therefore cannot be generalized to all people.
- 3. Confidentiality:** Please guard the privacy of your classmates by not sharing personal information disclosed in class with others outside of class. Similarly, you should protect the privacy of those outside of the class (e.g., friends, roommates). If you feel you must share information about someone else that is relevant to a class topic, try to make your description of the person and/or event as anonymous as possible. As for your papers, I will be the sole reader and will keep all of the information provided in your papers confidential.
- 4. Critical thinking & analysis:** Avoid the anti-intellectualism that results from ill-informed perspectives and unexamined assumptions. Ask questions such as: What is fact? What is opinion? What is propaganda? Phrases such as, "Well, it's just always

been that way" or " It's just impossible to change people" are examples of shallow thinking that do nothing to advance intellectual growth.

5. **Beliefs & Values:** There are no rewards or penalties for anyone's beliefs or values. However, I encourage you to challenge yourselves to critically investigate your values and beliefs. Think about where you learned them. When? From whom? Are these your own beliefs or beliefs passed down by others? Be open-minded and willing to learn from others.
6. **Work through your discomfort:** Due to the nature of this course, discomfort is virtually guaranteed for several of the topics that we will discuss. While these ground rules are designed to foster a safe learning atmosphere, it is important that you do not confuse safety with comfort. Indeed, discomfort is an important indicator of growth (Adams & Marchesani, 1997).
7. **Recognize and value different experiences:** Never demean, devalue or in any way denigrate people for their experiences. Your not having had a specific experience does not negate or invalidate someone else's experience (For example, you may not have ever witnessed a racist act, but that does not mean that racism does not exist.)
8. **Avoid the homogeneity bias:** Do not single any member(s) of the class out as the representative(s) or spokespersons for any particular group. Examples of this would be asking a transgendered person to answer the question "How do transgendered people feel about...?" or asking a Korean student to tell what "Korean students think about...".
9. **Languages & stereotypes:** The Whorfian hypothesis tells us that language shapes and constrains thought. To this end, I encourage you to monitor the language that you use when discussing topics this semester. If you suspect that a word or term might be offensive, then err on the side of caution and choose another word. Also be aware of language that: (1) stereotypes entire groups of people (e.g., "All Latino men do ...; All heterosexual women want ..."); (2) devalues people (e.g., calling adult women "girls"); (3) is not gender-neutral (e.g., avoid the use of the generic "he" as in the sentence, "If a person wants to succeed in life, he must..."; and (4) robs individuals of their integrity as human beings (e.g., notice the difference between "disabled people" and "people with disabilities."

10. Other? _____

Ice breaker exercises

In addition to discussing guidelines at the beginning of a course, it can be valuable to engage the class in other ice breaker activities that encourage class participation and foster group cohesiveness. The following activities can be particularly engaging when students pair off, discuss the subject matter with their partner, and then present their partners' information to the class. Partnering up students can also be done with simple introductions including name, major, interest in the psychology of women, etc.

“My _____ named me _____ because”

Until I was a participant in a similar exercise when I was a student at the University of Massachusetts, I had no idea that name origin could be so meaningful. Ask students to introduce themselves to the person sitting next to them and describe the special circumstances under which they were given their names. I have heard students share examples of being named after the nurse in the delivery room, a grandparent, a historic figure, and a movie star. This exercise can produce a warm first class interaction, and will help students and teachers get to know each other, as well as remember each other's names!

“Whom do you admire?” exercise

This is a good exercise that helps us to explore our values, which will play an important role in this class. Ask students to write about a person who has had a positive impact on their lives, such as a family member, fictional character, historic figure, movie star, etc. Students should write down three qualities that make this person admirable. As students present the traits they selected with the class, discuss the implications of these qualities for our beliefs and values about what comprises an ideal person or an ideal life.

CHAPTER 1
EXPLORING SEX AND GENDER

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

This chapter lays out the basic framework for the distinctions between sex and gender. Sex is defined as “the biological differences in the genetic composition and reproductive system,” and is ascribed to both animals and humans. Gender, on the other hand, is limited to humans. Gender is a socially constructed concept that refers to how differences between boys and girls and men and women are created, maintained and explained by society.

Beliefs about gender are analyzed through several approaches. The cultural approach states that societal rewards and punishments reinforce and perpetuate gender stereotypes. The structural approach focuses on the ongoing structural and social role requirements that channel each person’s gendered experience. The cognitive perspective explains beliefs about gender through stereotypes, or the way people condense information into manageable categories based on some similarity among group members. This chapter provides a discussion of the effects of sex discrimination on various aspects of our society, and our personal and professional lives. Three forms of sexism are mentioned: blatant, subtle, and covert.

Feminist ideologies and perspectives are also presented in this chapter. A feminist is broadly defined as a person (woman or man) who promotes equality for all, seeks social justice, and values human rights nationally and internationally. There is not one type of feminist; socialist, radical, cultural, and liberal feminists all hold different perspectives on feminism that inform research and generate theory.

The last part of the chapter is devoted to a discussion of traditional research methods and the ways in which they can be limited and/or biased. Feminists have critiqued traditional research strategies and provided a number of guidelines for gender-fair research. These solutions hinge on accepting that science can never be completely value neutral. However, research can be more gender-fair when researchers are mindful of the way they formulate research questions, conduct literature reviews, choose research participants, implement research designs, operationalize variables, and analyze and interpret their results.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

Why the psychology of women?

This exercise can serve as an opening discussion for the course. Engage the class in a conversation about the following questions: How has psychology as a discipline represented females? To what extent is general psychology the psychology of men?

Ideally, what would a psychology of women look like? Ultimately, what would the psychology of men, in which men were studied as men rather than as exemplars of humanity, look like? This book hopes to go beyond a psychology of women to explore the psychology of gender and, by extension, all people.

This discussion can lead to an examination of the history of the sub-discipline, the reasons for the birth of the psychology of women, and evidence of its progress in our college curricula. It can help students to ponder the valuable contributions of this discipline to our scholarly wealth, social justice, and human rights.

Examples of feminist contributions

A discussion of the scholarship and activism of some historical and contemporary women/feminist leaders provides a good foundation in which to consider and appreciate the value of such contributions from a social/cultural context. Texts and websites are full of information on such role models and their considerable accomplishments. I find this discussion to be essential, since women's work is at times overshadowed and often underestimated.

Use the list of names in Handout 1.1, or develop a list of your favorite feminist leaders, activists, scientists, researchers, scholars and teachers who made real changes in the world. Ask students to conduct a search and bring their findings back to class. In addition to acknowledging those who lead the way, students benefit greatly from the wonderful examples set by these women and men.

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

After discussing the difference between sex and gender, ask students to come up with examples of what constitutes gender. This really helps the students illuminate the stereotypical elements comprising gender. Make a list of their examples and show that not all men or all women share these traits or engage in these behaviors, except for the most basic biological characteristics. In fact, in our society especially, we are moving away from stereotypic descriptions that restrict us as women and men.

Discuss the usefulness (if any) or uselessness of assumptions about women and men, analyze how they are formed and explore the reasons for their persistence, even when they appear to be simplistic, misleading and/or harmful. This could lead to a discussion of the effects of stereotypes on prejudice and discrimination. I like to end with some possible plans of action to transcend or limit stereotypes. Some ideas students have generated include the use of language free of stereotypes, attention to continuously questioning stereotype dominance, as well as understanding stereotypes as tools of power and control. Handouts 1.2 through 1.5 are useful in helping students understand gender, stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

The label of “feminist”

Pondering the status and connotations of the label of “feminist” can launch great discussions. You can open a class by asking students to raise their hand if they consider themselves a feminist. Usually, only a few admit that they are, but the rest tend to follow

as the class discussion progresses. An introduction to the various ideologies of the four main schools of feminism--social, radical, cultural, and liberal--is valuable in helping students learn that there is not one type of feminism.

Feminism is almost always misunderstood and frequently accused of platforms for which it does not stand. For example, feminists are accused of bashing men and wanting to overcome men. Some of my favorite reactions occurred when former students asked if this feminist teacher shaved her underarms or wore a bra. A student once reported that her boyfriend warned her about the biases that will be introduced in the course due to teacher's philosophy and practices of feminism. To clarify some misconceptions about feminists, follow the exercise on Handout 1.6.

Feminist critiques of traditional research

There is a large body of evidence showing bias against women and minorities in research. In most classes, science is presented as a dispassionate activity in which the scientist is not sentimental, irrational, emotional or imprecise. However, there are many seemingly hidden biases that can negatively impact research. Some examples of this include bias in formulating the research question (a researcher assumed that men are better than women on spatial abilities), and bias in the review of literature (the researcher ignored the areas of similarities and stressed only those studies that showed differences). There are many other types of bias. Ask students to find a study conducted in the past 50 years with evidence of bias. This can be discussed in class. An alternative is to make up a biased research methodology and ask students to locate the problematic areas. A sample vignette is provided in Handout 1.7.

Feminist research methods

How do feminist researchers conduct research? This is an important discussion, which can generate a deeper understanding of the significant progress made by the contributions of both men and women feminist researchers.

Here are some of the points that I usually highlight:

- Feminist researchers sometimes study women's issues as stand-alone topics and do not study women only in comparison to men. This is different from traditional research methods that induced us to think of men as the norm and woman as the deviation from the norm.
- Feminist researchers promote the study of girls and women by treating gender as a medium or context in which experiences flourish. This is opposed to the traditional methods that treated gender as an independent variable (although it cannot be manipulated) and permitted causal statements to be made.
- Feminist researchers emphasize critical thinking and questioning assumptions, and consider alternate explanations for gender differences.
- Feminist researchers may employ qualitative methods that pay

more attention to understanding women as well as special populations. Qualitative methods are increasingly being used -- and respected -- as a way of understanding particular topics from the participants' worldviews.

- Feminist researchers understand experience as essentially subjective, and understand that it cannot always be objectified.
- Feminist researchers respect the social context in which experiences occur and acknowledge problems with experimental methods that ignore context. They view the psychological experience in relation to social, political and economic contexts.
- Feminist researchers acknowledge their own values and biases and attempt to take these into account in every step of the research process. They do not claim objectivity or even believe that true objectivity is achievable, although they continue to seek fair and just methods that can illuminate truths.
- Feminist researchers acknowledge research as interactive and participatory, placing emphasis on dialogue and collaboration, not control and power.
- Feminist researchers want their research to contribute not only to a growing body of knowledge, but to improving conditions for oppressed people, including women.

Handout 1.1

These are the names of leaders, activists, scientists, researchers, scholars and teachers who have made their mark in feminist thought. Please research at least one of them, jot down some highlights about their accomplishments and how they lived their lives, and bring the information to class.

Mary Whiton Calkins	Peter Glick
Dorothea Dix	Susan Fiske
Frieda Fromm-Reichmann	Mary Ainsworth
Karen Horney	Hope Landrine
Melanie Klein	Paula J. Caplan
Christine Ladd-Franklin	Laura S. Brown
Maria Montessori	Celia Kitzinger
Margaret Floy Washburn	Anne Anastasi
Florence Denmark	Betty Friedan
Bonnie Ruth Strickland	Dorothy Heights
Martha Bernal	Laura S. Brown
Leona Tyler	Loretta Bender
Janet Taylor Spence	Margaret Sanger
Dorothy Cantor	Michelle Fine
Norine Johnson	Marie Curie
Carolyn Wood Sherif	Marnie Phipps Clarke
Jessica Henderson Daniel	Mary Gergen
Jean Lau Chin	Barbara Reskin
Lillian Comas-Diaz	Rosalind C. Barnett
Beverly Greene	Anna Freud
Anne Fausto-Sterling	Suzan B. Anthony
Sandra Lipsitz Bem	Carol Gilligan
Nancy Chodorow	Linda Garnets
Janet Shibley Hyde	Gloria Steinem
Alice Eagly	Virginia Valian
Kay Deaux	Deborah Tolman

Handout 1.2

Sometimes, students assume that only negative stereotypes are harmful. The objective of the following activity is to show that positive stereotypes about widely recognized social groups can also be limiting. As a class, generate a list of “positive” stereotypical traits such as “nice”, “quiet”, “conscientious”, etc. Write each trait on a label, and place the label on each student’s forehead so that the student is unable to read their label. Instruct the students to interact with each other, discussing any issues they like. As they do this, they should relate to each other based on the labels each person is wearing. The student is not to ask what her or his label is. After about 15 minutes of interactions, the experience is processed and students are asked to guess her/his label. This handout offers questions for students to work through after the experience. When all the students complete the questions, ask for volunteers to share some of their answers.

Instructions:

Take a few minutes to process the thoughts that went through your mind and the feelings that you experienced as a result of this activity. Then, work through the following questions:

1. Were you able to guess your label? What was it?
2. Was it difficult to guess?
3. How did you get your clues?
4. Did the label act as a barrier to the conversation in any way?
5. How did it make you feel to be judged by others who had preconceived, possibly inaccurate, ideas of who you are?

Handout 1.3

By a very early age, our gendered life has begun to take shape and we often feel pressure to satisfy the social requirements of what it means to be female or male in our society. An exercise that illustrates the power and rigidity of those labels is to have students ask four participants to provide descriptions of women and men. This handout helps the student collect the information and think about its implications. It is important to ask students to select females and males that vary along the dimensions of age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation to interview. Think about how the characteristics of the interviewee affect their descriptions.

Instructions:

Questions for the participant:

Participant # _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Education: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Religion: _____

Marital status: _____

1. Use your own words to describe what comes to your mind when you think of a typical woman.
2. Use your own words to describe what comes to your mind when you think of a typical man.
3. Use your own words to describe what comes to your mind when you think of a typical girl
4. Use your own words to describe what comes to your mind when you think of a typical boy.
3. Do you think these descriptions are universal?
4. Do you know where these descriptions came from?
5. What are feminine qualities?

6. What are masculine qualities?
7. Can a woman have both masculine and feminine qualities?
8. Can a man have both masculine and feminine qualities?

Questions for the student:

1. Do you know a man or a woman that the data you collected fail to describe?
2. If so, why do you think those faulty descriptions persist?
3. How do you think that gender roles in your society differ from those in other societies, such as Eastern societies or developing nations? Are they more or less defined?

Handout 1.4

I learned one of my favorite activities from Professor Kathryn Quina at the University of Rhode Island when I co-taught a class with her. It is called “The Female Experience” and I am using it here with her permission. In this exercise, the student is asked to read a Harlequin romance novel and briefly answer a set of questions provided on Handout 1.4. This becomes a fun learning experience as students share their answers.

Read a Harlequin romance novel and briefly answer the following questions:

1. Give a brief summary of your novel. Include how the heroines and heroes were portrayed.
2. Did the descriptions adhere to what society defines as the utmost man or the ideal woman?
3. Imagine reading those novels through the eyes of a young teenager. What type of message do you think you would get?
4. What are the implications for the development of gender identity?

Handout 1.5

An exercise that demonstrates the strength of societal gender role pressures is to ask students to violate a gender norm and report reactions to the class. Questions on Handout 1.5 can help establish a structured discussion as well as provide guidance to what the students need to observe and report. Students should focus on their own and others' reactions. Here are some examples:

- Kai, a white male student, came to class with red nail polish on one hand. He reported that the only other person on the train, a white male, did everything possible to look away.
 - Hao, a Chinese female student broke a gender and cultural norm when at a typical Chinese gathering, she introduced herself first and then her spouse as her husband (the norm is to introduce the man first and then the woman as his wife).
 - Elizabeth, a white female student, invited her boyfriend to dinner, placed his order, and paid the bill.
1. List as many gender role norms you can think of. (Examples include wearing make up, carrying boxes, opening the door, giving away your seat, giving flowers or stuffed animals, cuddling a child, paying for dinner, etc.)
 2. Choose to violate one of those norms, observe and report your findings
 3. What were the responses you received and the reactions you observed?
 4. Did you get resistance from others aimed at “normalizing” you?
 5. Did you observe any influence of those norms on your behavior?
 6. What might be the consequences of challenging the norms?

Handout 1.6

Tell four people (other than your feminist friends) that you are taking “The Female Experience” course taught by a Feminist professor. Then jot down their responses and bring them to class for discussion.

Participant # 1

Sex: _____

Age: _____

Education: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Religion: _____

Marital status: _____

Occupation: _____

1. Did people react to the label “feminist”? If so, how?

2. Did people react to the label “feminist” in a positive way?

3. Did people react to the label “feminist” in a negative way?

4. Did anyone ask you to clarify their understanding of the definition of “feminist?”

5. What are other responses you received?

6. Jot down any additional comments.

Handout 1.7

The following vignette is an example of a research project. Your task is to provide a critical analysis and identify flaws cited by feminist researchers in the various stages of the scientific investigation, including how the research question is stated, the bias in sampling, and in the interpretation of results.

Dr. Adam Forefather is a famous psychoanalyst who wanted to investigate the reasons why men perform better than women on tasks of spatial ability. He reviews the literature and finds out that there are many studies that discuss those differences. He recruits a sample of 100 participants, 50 men and 50 women. The procedure consists of showing each participant a map of a small neighborhood for five minutes, after which time the participant is asked to draw a map showing the way to specific locations. His statistical analyses show no significant differences, so he abandons the study since it doesn't support his hypothesis.

Chapter test questions:

Multiple choice questions

1. The Psychology of Women is considered interdisciplinary because:
- A) Professors that teach the psychology of women come from different subfields of psychology
 - B) It is informed by research conducted in such fields as biology, sociology, anthropology, history, media studies, economics, education and linguistics
 - C) It insists on a complex interconnected science of psychology
 - D) It receives great attention from human rights committees and the feminist movement

Answer B

2. Chapter 1 implies that
- A) psychology can not be considered a complete science if it ignores women's and girl's issues
 - B) sex refers to both biological and social differences
 - C) gender is determined purely by biology
 - D) estrogen and progesterone are uniquely female hormones, while androgens are hormones that belong exclusively to males

Answer A

3. After a lecture in the psychology of women, a friend comes up with a new explanation of why she was once refused employment. She is probably referring to:
- A) Racism
 - B) Sexism
 - C) ethnocentrism
 - D) feminism

Answer B

4. An example of sex is:
- A) Mother
 - B) Teacher
 - C) Female
 - D) woman

Answer C

5. A feminist is a woman or man who:
- A) discounts the contributions of men
 - B) overemphasizes the contributions of women
 - C) strives for justice and equal opportunities for all men and women
 - D) wants less power

Answer C

6. The cultural approach view explains the origin of gender stereotypes from
- A) The perspective that children are socialized to act in accordance with their society's conventions
 - B) the position that ongoing structural and social role requirements shape our experience in society
 - C) the cultural injustices that surrounded women
 - D) religious and spiritual ideologies
- Answer A

7. Stereotypes can be
- A) Positive
 - B) Inaccurate
 - C) negative
 - D) all of the above
- Answer D

8. Blatant sexism is different than subtle sexism in that blatant sexism
- A) Is intentional, hidden, and frequently hostile
 - B) Is less apparent than covert sexism
 - C) occurs when women are treated in a transparently harmful and unequal way
 - D) is less visible to others as well as to ourselves
- Answer C

9. Alia states: "the marriage institution is created to enslave women." You can safely conclude that Alia is a
- A) radical feminist
 - B) social feminist
 - C) liberal feminist
 - D) cultural feminist
- Answer A

10. Omar argues that women should be given similar opportunities as men in the work place. Omar is probably
- A) radical feminist
 - B) social feminist
 - C) liberal feminist
 - D) cultural feminist
- Answer C

11. Which statement describes the views of a cultural feminist:
- A) women can create peace and harmony in our society due to their less aggressive nature
 - B) men and women should have equal rights and opportunities

- C) major changes are needed to stop the oppression of women
- D) psychology of women classes must be more effective in producing social change

Answer A

12. If a researcher conducts a study looking for differences between women and men's abilities, chances are she will find those differences. This is an example of

- A) experimenter bias
- B) bias theoretical model
- C) biased in interpretation
- D) bias in sampling

Answer A

13. A psychoanalyst is investigating "penis envy" in women. This is an example of:

- A) experimenter bias
- B) a biased theoretical model
- C) bias in interpretation
- D) bias in sampling

Answer B

14. Continuing to focus on differences between males and females may serve to

- A) keep women down
- B) keep men down
- C) understand women's issues in a new light
- D) none of the above

Answer A

15. Feminist research encourages

- A) exploring various research methods including qualitative methods
- B) questioning the biases contained in the literature reviews
- C) questioning the biases in sampling
- D) all of the above

Answer D

16. Which theory argues that "psychological traits, like physical ones, are selected through an evolutionary process because they are adaptive?"

- A) social constructionism
- B) sociobiology
- C) traditional feminism
- D) structured fundamentalism

Answer B

17. Which view claims that behavior is not merely biological, rather is influenced by the particular situation, the environment, history, political conditions and society as a whole?

- A) social constructionism
 - B) sociobiology
 - C) traditional feminism
 - D) structured fundamentalism
- Answer A

18. "We can only understand behavior in light of the social context in which the behavior takes place." This statement best explains the beliefs of:

- A) social constructionism
 - B) sociobiology
 - C) traditional feminism
 - D) structured fundamentalism
- Answer A

19. A research study that questions the reasons a battered woman stays with her husband

- A) sheds very important light on the behavior of battered women
 - B) helps guide women to effectively seek help
 - C) implies that the problem is really with the woman since she chooses to stay in that relationship
 - D) helps the abusers understand their victims
- Answer C

20. Feminist theorists value

- A) considering your own biases when doing research
 - B) critically questioning traditional research methods and findings
 - C) trying to understand the issue from the participants' point of view
 - D) all of the above
- Answer D

Essay test questions

1. Differentiate between the sociobiological and the social constructionist views of gender.
2. Explain and give examples of the cultural approach and the structural approach and how they conceptualize the process of socialization of men and women.
3. Discuss the four schools of feminism mentioned in the text (socialist, radical, cultural, and liberal) and give examples of each.
4. Describe three areas where feminist researchers criticize traditional research. What are the problems with research that focuses on gender differences?
5. What is feminism? How has feminism positively affected research in psychology?

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Useful web links

- American Psychological association
www.apa.org
- American Psychological Society
www.psychologicalscience.org
- Psychology of Women
<http://apa.org/about/division/div35.html>
- Association for Women in Psychology
www.awpsych.org
- WWWomen
www.wwwomen.com

CHAPTER 2

THE IMPLICATIONS OF MYTHOLOGY AND RELIGION ON WOMEN AND GENDER

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS:

Mythology literature and religious scripts are filled with gender stereotypes and schemas, which contribute to society's definition of what it is to be a woman or man, and provide excuses for the abuses and injustices perpetrated against women. Most religions portray women as evil, inferior, and in need of a man to lead and direct them. This chapter opens with an historic review of gender stereotypes contained in mythology and religions from prehistoric times until today and highlights the implications of specific religious practices on women's lives.

One topic that is addressed in many mythologies and religions is menstruation. Over the years, stances towards menstruation have changed from viewing it as a puzzling concept, to a source of magic and fear, to an object of men's jealousy, and finally, to a taboo that decreases women's power and undermines their moral and cognitive development. In some societies women are isolated during menstruation, and forbidden from handling the family's food or children. The society's accepted explanation for this practice is that during menstruation, women are filthy and unholy.

In Eastern religions, the Yin and the Yang, identified in China prior to Confucius, are seen as the two energy modes that work together to create harmony in the individual. The Yang contains masculine qualities and the Yin contains feminine qualities.

Hindu philosophies and scriptures place people according to the caste system, ranking individuals in a hierarchy according to their birth status ranging from the untouchables on the lowest end of the scale to the Brahmas on the highest end of the continuum. The underlying belief is that people in the higher caste, the Brahmas, led exemplary previous lives, which allowed them to be reincarnated in a higher caste. The caste system has significant implications for personal motivation, the allocation of power, and general well-being. In addition, poor treatment of individuals in the lower castes is evident, with women in the lower castes particularly at risk for maltreatment.

The Middle East is the home for three main religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is quite notable that scripture from all three religions begins by blaming Eve for leading Adam into temptation, provoking God's anger, and ultimately causing the pair to be cast out of Heaven.

Judaism was the first religion to move from polytheism to monotheism. More than 4,000 years ago, Judaism was developed by Prophet Moses who led his people through the Egyptian desert to safety in Palestine. Roughly two thousand years later, Jesus Christ, who was born to a Jewish family, preached the essence of Christianity. A

few hundred years later, Muhammad, who some say was influenced by a Christian priest, built the religion of Islam. Although major differences do exist between these three religions, they follow a historical sequence of events as if one is merely a continuation of the other. Within each of these religions, there are various sects and groups, which disagree on many issues.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

Always blame the woman?

In the story of Creation, Eve decides to try an apple from the tree of knowledge, the only tree in Heaven from which God forbade them to eat. An interesting discussion follows from asking the students to consider the consequences of switching the story so that it was Adam who picked up the fruit. Would he have been accused of disobedience and empty curiosity or praised for his astute thirst for knowledge? The ensuing discussion can easily showcase the negative values and unjust attributes ascribed to women in most world religions.

Title for this exercise?

Ask students to attend a religious event, such as a wedding or a religious holiday celebration, carried out in a religion that differs from their own. Alternatively, students can choose to attend a weekly religious ritual outside of their own religion, such as attending a church mass for a non-Christian student or a mosque prayer for non-Muslim students. If this is not possible, students can seek out information about a particular religious group's beliefs on the web or in the literature. Students should then answer the questions on Handout 2.1 and bring to class for discussion.

I usually allow a flexible due date for this assignment, showing consideration for the scheduling constraints of the students.

How are women portrayed in religions?

A powerful exercise is to bring to class passages from different religious texts that discuss views of women. Handout 2.2 has three passages: from the Koran, the Bible, and the New Testament. Instruct students to ask four participants to read and comment on each of those passages. Ask students to give the passages randomly and one at a time, preferably to a diverse sample, and report their findings on Handout 2.2

Here are the passages:

From the Koran:

The men are placed in charge of the women, since God has endowed them with the necessary qualities and made them bread earners. The righteous women will

accept this arrangement obediently, and will honor their husbands in their absence, in accordance with God's commands. As for the women who show rebellion, you shall first enlighten them, then desert them in bed, and you may beat them as a last resort. Once they obey you, you have no excuse to transgress against them. God is high and most powerful.

From Hinduism:

She is always steadfast in her loyalty to him. His welfare, reputation, and wishes are uppermost in her mind. The ideal wife is a woman who always remains faithful to her husband, no matter what his character might be.

From the Old Testament:

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Chapter test questions:

Multiple choice questions

1. The chapter implies that:
 - A) Mythology and religions viewed women as pure and virtuous
 - B) Religions have no direct implications on how societies define man and woman
 - C) Most religions portrayed women as inferior to men
 - D) Historical context is irrelevant in studying women's issues

Answer C

2. Williams and Best's (1990) cross-cultural research found that the one variable that differed between the countries in terms of gender stereotypes was:
 - A) Religion
 - B) Income
 - C) Political party
 - D) Education

Answer A

3. Williams and Best (1990) showed that there was consistency on a number of gender stereotypes:
 - A) in Eastern cultures
 - B) across all surveyed cultures
 - C) in at least half the surveyed cultures
 - D) In Western religions

Answer D

4. Williams and Best (1990) found that religions that showed females participating in religious ceremonies and portrayed them as virtuous and powerful
 - A) belonged mostly to the matriarchy system
 - B) had negative views of women in general
 - C) had positive views of women in general
 - D) were no different than religions that did not feature women predominantly

Answer C

5. The ancient Asian Indian deity with the power of creation and destruction
 - A) is Shakti, a male god
 - B) is Shakti, a female goddess

- C) has more feminine qualities
- D) has more masculine qualities

Answer B

6. There are parallels in the way Eve sinned by disobeying the rules and leading Adam into temptation, and
- A) the negative views associated with women
 - B) placing blame on innate tendencies in woman
 - C) the reason to oppress women as the source of all evil
 - D) all of the above

Answer A

7. In many different tribes in Europe, Asia, and North America, matrilineal social organization
- A) confirmed the superiority of men over women
 - B) confirmed the superiority of women over men
 - C) is responsible for handing down pre-described gender roles
 - D) Granted women important rights and decision-making roles

Answer D

8. In primitive societies, moons symbolize:
- A) destruction
 - B) fatherhood
 - C) fertility
 - D) all of the above

Answer C

9. Menstruation has been viewed as:
- A) taboo
 - B) unclean
 - C) magical
 - D) all of the above

Answer D

10. The Yin and the Yang are two energy modes that
- A) are similar between men and women
 - B) adhere to the rules of mythology and religions

- C) act together in every natural object
- D) are specific to the various needs of males and females

Answer C

11. The Indian caste system places people in a hierarchy according to their:
- A) merit
 - B) age
 - C) thoughts and deeds in the previous life
 - D) thoughts and deeds in the present life

Answer C

12. Which of the following is NOT one of the precepts of Buddha
- A) Do not take what is not given
 - B) Do not desire your neighbor's wife
 - C) Eat moderately and not after noon
 - D) Do not use high or broad beds

Answer B

13. In today's India,
- A) Childhood marriage is outlawed
 - B) Infanticide is outlawed
 - C) Women have the same political rights as men
 - D) All of the above

Answer B

14. Puritans viewed the woman as
- A) needing of a man to look after her and keep her in line.
 - B) An important guide for family unit
 - C) Equal to man
 - D) Essential for the continuity of mankind

Answer A

15. _____ treated all members, men and women, as saved by Christ, and therefore equal in church roles and responsibilities:

- A) Puritans
- B) Christians
- C) Protestants
- D) Quakers

Answer D

16. Which one of the following is NOT a pillar of Islam:

- A) almsgiving
- B) meditation
- C) ritual prayer
- D) fasting

Answer B

17. What religion preaches total submission to the will of God?

- A) Christianity
- B) Hinduism
- C) Islam
- D) Judaism

Answer: C

18. The Adam and Eve story can be cited as setting up the grounds for:

- A) the patriarchy system
- B) the matriarchy system
- C) the caste system
- D) none of the above

Answer: A

19. The Lord's prayer is the fundamental prayer for

- A) Muslims
- B) Jews
- C) Hindus
- D) Christians

Answer: D

20. Muhammad replaced the practice of polyandry with polygamy and restricted the number of wives to:

- A) 3
- B) 4
- C) 6
- D) depends on the wealth and social status of the husband

Answer: B

Essay test questions:

1. Explain the implications of the traditional patriarchal concepts practiced in Western religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).
2. List and explain the five pillars of Islam.
3. What is the Koran and how did it become the word of God?
4. What are the main differences between Catholicism and Orthodoxy?
5. What are the Ten Commandments and how did they come to be?