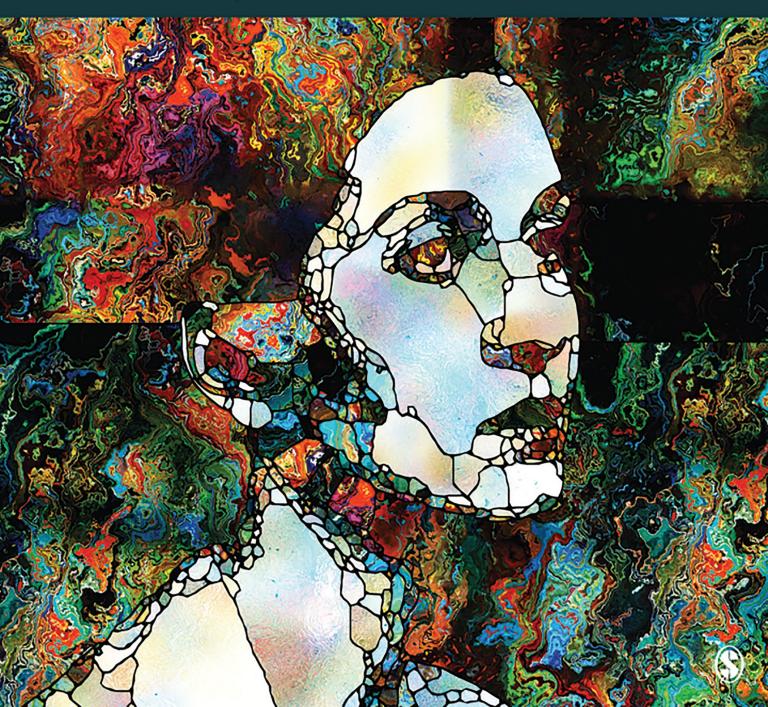Nicole M. Else-Quest
Janet Shibley Hyde

TENTH EDITION

The Psychology of
WOMEN AND GENDER

Half the Human Experience +

SAGE

The Psychology of Women and Gender

Tenth Edition

To Raeka and Isador, for the insight and perspective. (NEQ)

*To Margaret and Luke, the two best kids a professor/author/mom
could ever have. (JSH)*

The Psychology of Women and Gender

Half the Human Experience +

Tenth Edition

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University of Wisconsin–Madison

⑤SAGE

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Preface

Welcome to the 10th edition of *The Psychology of Women and Gender: Half the Human Experience +*. It's hard to believe, but in the years since our 9th edition was published, much has changed in the world and in the psychology of women and gender. Indeed, we have written these chapters at a unique time in modern history: A global pandemic has taken hundreds of thousands of lives and triggered economic and mental health crises that are disproportionately borne by women and people of color. Black Lives Matter—an anti-racism movement founded by women of color—has gathered momentum and gripped the consciousness and conscience of people around the world. It will take many years to understand the full significance of these events. Although we don't yet know how history will remember this time, we do know that there has never been a more pressing need for an intersectional approach to the psychology of women and gender.

Intersectionality has continued to be a guiding force in women's and gender studies, and its role in psychology has continued to develop. We introduced intersectionality in this textbook in the 8th edition, though at that time there was little mention of it in the empirical literature. Now, research using an intersectional approach has blossomed in psychology, and we have new insights and discoveries thanks to that development. For the 10th edition, we have been able to integrate intersectionality thoroughly, incorporating it throughout every chapter.

Language is extremely important. We have aimed to create a trans-inclusive textbook written in trans-inclusive language. Yet that turns out to be more difficult than it might sound. Within the trans community, there are often disagreements about preferred terminology, and terminology often changes over time. We have done our best to use respectful language based on today's norms, but it is possible, indeed likely, that preferred terms will change over the years. All of us need to keep up with these trends. A good basic rule is that people should be called what they prefer to be called.

Related to these points about language and change, the title of our textbook reflects a conscious evolution in our field. The 9th edition began with a revised title: *The Psychology of Women and Gender: Half the Human Experience+* replaced *Half the Human Experience: The Psychology of Women*. That revised title reflects our objective of teaching a more inclusive psychology that recognizes how women as well as trans and nonbinary people are oppressed by a system that privileges cisgender men over all other groups. Thus, consistent with the evolution of women's and gender studies, we have sought to hold our focus on women while simultaneously respecting the diversity among women and reconciling how a focus on women can reinforce the gender binary that excludes trans and nonbinary people.

This 10th edition builds upon the strengths of the previous editions: It is readable, comprehensive, and grounded in science and a commitment to gender equality. We believe that the readability of textbooks is a feminist principle. One of the goals of feminists has been to demystify science, and as part of that effort we must demystify psychology, including the psychology of women and gender.

And, as scientists and teachers, we care deeply about sharing the most up-to-date and rigorous research with our students. Our goal, therefore, has been to provide a text with

solid, cutting-edge scholarship, clearly explained so that students can grasp it—indeed, be captivated by it. We have each taught psychology of women and gender numerous times using earlier editions of this textbook. Those experiences help us strengthen and refine the book. For example, if students have problems with a question on an exam, is it because that passage in the book is not clearly written? If so, we fix it. Both of us have a deep understanding of what is fascinating and what is difficult for students, and we put that knowledge into our crafting of the book.

We want students to feel excited to learn about the psychology of women and gender, and we hope that our excitement about the field is apparent throughout this book. This is truly one of the most meaningful and relevant courses that a student can take. It can be life changing. Those of us who teach the psychology of women and gender can feel a deep pride in the body of research and inspiration from which we can draw.

Although we can't begin to list all of the additions and updates, here are a few highlights:

Chapter 1: Introduction

- Updated and expanded material on important language and terminology regarding gender, including critique of the gender binary

- New research on feminism, sexism, and global gender equality

- New findings on gender bias in psychological research methods

Chapter 2: Theoretical Perspectives on Gender

- Added research on culture and gender development

- New research on the cognitive-developmental theory of gender and gendered toy marketing

Chapter 3: Gender Stereotypes and Gender Differences

- New studies documenting anti-trans prejudice and discrimination

- New research on the presence of gendered implicit associations as early as age 6

Chapter 4: The Intersection of Gender and Ethnicity

- New research on microaggressions and psychological adjustment outcomes

- Expanded coverage of intersectionality and gendered racism

- New data on BIPOC women in the United States

Chapter 5: Gender and Communication

- New research on gender bias and nonverbal communication

- New data on misgendering and communication therapy for trans and gender diverse people

Chapter 6: Gender and Emotion

- New research findings on gender and emotional intelligence, including emotion regulation and recognition
- Added research on gender and emotion in trans and gender diverse people

Chapter 7: Lifespan Development

- Expanded coverage of gender development in trans and gender diverse youth
- New research on gender and play
- New Focus box: Feminist Theory in Psychology: Objectification Theory

Chapter 8: Abilities, Motivation, and Achievement

- New research on teachers' bias in estimating the math ability of girls and children of color
- New data on women in STEM when they become mothers
- New interventions to reduce gender bias among powerful gatekeepers in STEM

Chapter 9: Gender and Work

- New data on the wage gap and occupational segregation by gender
- New research on gender and negotiation

Chapter 10: Biology and Gender

- Surprising findings on gender similarities in estrogen and progesterone levels in adults
- New data on differences between women and men in basic physiological processes such as metabolism
- Research on endocrine disrupters' disproportionate impact on women of color

Chapter 11: Psychology, Gender, and Health

- New research on transgender health and health at the intersection of gender, race/ethnicity, and social class
- New research on abortion incidence and outcomes
- New research on cervical cancer and HPV

Chapter 12: Gender and Sexuality

- New Focus box on a scale that measures endorsement of the contemporary sexual double standard

- Mindfulness therapy for sexual disorders

- Coverage of bremelanotide, the new FDA-approved drug for treatment of women with hypoactive sexual desire

Chapter 13: Gender and Sexual Orientation

- Pansexual and asexual added as sexual orientations

- The latest data on Americans' attitudes toward same-gender sexuality

- Coverage of a new intervention to reduce sexual prejudice

Chapter 14: Gender and Victimization

- New and expanded content on prevention of gender-based violence

- New research on childhood sexual abuse outcomes

- New data on gender-based violence incidence and prevalence

Chapter 15: Gender and Mental Health Issues

- New content from American Psychological Association's *Multicultural Guidelines* (2017) and *Guidelines for Psychological Practice With Girls and Women* (2018)

- New content on suicide

- New research on eating disorders

Chapter 16: The Psychology of Men and Masculinity

- New content from American Psychological Association's *Guidelines for Psychological Practice With Boys and Men* (2018)

- New research on men and precarious sexuality

- New data on the male role and health

Chapter 17: Retrospect and Prospect

- Introduction of new research on androcentrism and gender bias

- Expanded coverage of feminist identity

Learning Aids

Strong resources for students' learning are included in the text.

- *Chapter outlines*. Each chapter begins with an outline, providing students with the structure of the chapter, which will help their cognitive processing of it.

- *Margin glossary*. Each chapter has a margin glossary, with terms defined clearly when they are first mentioned. A comprehensive glossary can be found at the end of the book. These features help students learn the meaning of important terms in the field.

- *Experience the Research boxes*. Each chapter has a boxed insert toward the end that is designed to give students active experience with research in the psychology of women and gender. Each one includes an exercise such as collecting a small amount of data from friends to replicate a study in the text or analyzing the gendered content of computer games in a local store. Although individual students may collect only a small amount of data, if data are pooled by all students in the class, a data set large enough for statistical analysis can be produced. We hope that students will benefit from these experiences and that faculty will find them useful for assignments.

- *Focus boxes*. This feature draws from research, theory, and case studies to examine key issues in depth. Topics include "Health at the Intersection of Gender and Disability," "Gender Diversity and Athletics," and "The Politics of Psychiatric Diagnosis: Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder."

Ancillaries

SAGE Publishing offers an array of instructor resources to instructors on the cutting edge of teaching and learning. Go to **study.sagepub.com/else-quest9e** to access the companion site.

SAGE for Instructors

The SAGE Instructor Companion Site, a password-protected resource, supports teaching by making the classroom a learning-rich environment for students. The following assets are available on the teaching site:

- Sample syllabi—for semester, quarter, and online courses—provide suggested models for instructors to use when creating the syllabi for their courses.

- A Microsoft Word test bank is available containing multiple-choice, true/false, short-answer and essay questions for each chapter. The test bank provides a diverse range of prewritten options as well as the opportunity to edit any question and insert personalized questions to effectively assess students' progress and understanding.

- Editable, chapter-specific Microsoft PowerPoint slides offer complete flexibility in easily creating a multimedia presentation for your course.

- Carefully crafted lecture notes follow the structure of each chapter and can be used alongside the PowerPoint slides, providing an essential reference and teaching tool for course lectures.

- Lively and stimulating chapter-specific activity ideas reinforce active learning and critical thinking, and can be used in individual or group settings in the classroom or assigned as homework.

Acknowledgments With Gratitude

We hope that the 10th edition of *The Psychology of Women and Gender: Half the Human Experience +* will help students and faculty alike develop a deeper, richer, more intersectional understanding of the psychology of women and gender.

Nicole M. Else-Quest
Janet Shibley Hyde
June 2020

Introduction

Outline

> " Sex is given as an assignment; homework. No wonder mere description (it's a girl; it's a boy!) provides the basis of a task (being boy! being girl!) as well as a command (You will be boy! You will be girl!). To receive an assignment is to be given a sign: boy or girl. This or too is doing something, registering as opposition; one or the other. "
>
> Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (2017)

PHOTO 1.1 What is this baby's gender? How does it matter?

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth.

Pregnant people are commonly asked, "What are you having?" Unless the person is ordering food at a restaurant, the question has to do with whether they are expecting a girl or a boy. About two-thirds of pregnant women in the United States want to find out in advance whether they'll give birth to a daughter or son (Kearin et al., 2014). Today, advances in medical technology mean that many expectant parents may obtain relatively detailed ultrasound images of the developing fetus; that technology can be used to identify the fetus's genitals. Most expectant parents assume that if the ultrasound shows that the fetus has a penis, they'll have a son, and if it doesn't, they'll have a daughter. Seems simple, right? Parents soon imagine gendered names, clothing, colors, toys, activities, and so on for the child, all on the basis of whether or not they saw a penis on that ultrasound.

The question "What are you having?" is ubiquitous because most people understand gender as an essential and central characteristic of humans. We tend to have a hard time perceiving or thinking about a person without knowing their gender. To some extent, that's not surprising; our social world is organized on the basis of gender. Public restrooms are often segregated by gender, as are sports teams, social clubs and organizations, items in clothing stores and toy stores, and sometimes even classrooms and schools. In addition, power and status are conferred by gender; around the world, men have more power and higher status relative to women (United Nations Development Programme, 2019; see Focus 1.1 for more on this). In short, gender matters.

Gender is also complex. Our goal in this textbook is to help you understand the complexity of gender; that is, when, why, and how gender matters in psychology. Historically, **cisgender** men have dominated in society and in psychological science. To redress this balance, we focus on women and, when possible, trans and nonbinary people. Each of these groups has been marginalized, "othered," or oppressed because of their gender. In this book, we use the science of psychology as a tool to examine gender broadly.

Why Study the Psychology of Women and Gender?

When thinking about why students might take a course on the psychology of women and gender, we (as professors and researchers) reflect on why we would write a book or teach a course on the psychology of women and gender. One of the main reasons is simple: It is a fascinating topic. The questions we ask in our psychology of women and gender courses are unique and provocative. What does it mean to be a woman? How is that identity shaped by things like race or ethnicity, class, or sexual orientation? What roles do our hormones or brains play in our gender? How does our gender influence how others treat us? In some cases, these questions have complex answers that lead to more questions. In others, we have only begun to gather the evidence needed to answer the questions. And, often, the answers surprise us.

The psychology of women and gender is also personally meaningful. Students take this course for a variety of reasons. For example, many women take the course to understand themselves better, a goal they may feel was not met by their other psychology courses. Some students may take this course because they have questions about their own gender and how they fit into the world.

The psychology of women and gender is essential to psychology. That is, there are many academic reasons to study the psychology of women and gender. For example, many traditional psychological theories have literally been theories about men (as you'll learn in Chapter 2). Sexism or gender bias exists not only in our everyday experiences, but also in the science of psychology. As a result, the experiences of cisgender men often have been considered the norm and the experiences of women and anyone who doesn't fit into the traditional masculine role have tended to be marginalized, ignored, or devalued. One way to address these biases in psychology is to think critically about gender and study the psychology of women as well as trans and nonbinary people.

More broadly, the psychology of women and gender is relevant to understanding our society and improving people's lives. That is, our social world is organized on the basis of gender, and that social organization shapes the opportunities and experiences available to all of society's members. One of the central themes of the feminist movement has been that "the personal is political." What this means is that social roles, norms, policies, and laws play an important role in determining many aspects of our lives. In some circumstances, our gender may offer unearned privileges or disadvantages. Understanding how our personal experiences are connected to the context of our community and culture is important not only for our own knowledge, but also for improving the conditions in which we all live.

Sex, Gender, Transgender, and Cisgender

Language is constantly evolving and changing, especially regarding gender. The fact that the meanings and connotations of words are in flux can lead to misunderstandings and different interpretations. Moreover, many people define terms like *gender* and *sex* for themselves in different ways (Schudson, Beischel, & van Anders, 2019), which can complicate conversations. To establish a common vocabulary for readers, we clarify our choice of language here (see also Table 1.1).

TABLE 1.1   **Language and terminology about gender are constantly evolving. Below is a list of some of the terms we use throughout this book.**

Term	Definition
Gender	The state of being male, female, both male and female, or neither male nor female
Sex	Physical or physiological characteristics of maleness and femaleness; sexual behaviors
Gender binary	A system of conceptualizing gender as having two distinct and opposing groups or kinds (i.e., male and female)
Nonbinary or *Genderqueer*	A gender category that is not exclusively male or female and therefore is not captured by the gender binary
Gender identity	A person's internal sense of their own gender
Cisgender	Describes a person whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth
Transgender	Describes a person whose gender identity differs from the gender they were assigned at birth
Intersex	A variety of conditions in which a person is born with genitals or reproductive anatomy that is not typical of female or male people. Also termed *disorders of sex development* in the DSM-5 and *differences of sex development* or *genital diversity*
Trans	An umbrella term for the transgender spectrum; *may* include people who identify as transgender, genderqueer, gender nonconforming, gender variant, gender fluid, or other nonbinary identity

Source: Created by the authors.

In the English language the term *sex* is often used ambiguously. Sometimes it is used to refer to sexual behaviors such as sexual intercourse; sometimes it is used to refer to physical or physiological characteristics of maleness and femaleness; and sometimes it is used as way of categorizing a species based on reproductive function. Often, the meaning is clear from the context. For example, if a job application says, "Sex: ____," you don't write, "As often as possible." Yet what is the topic of a book titled *Sex and the Single Girl*? Is it about the unmarried woman's fulfillment of social roles, or is it about the sexual behavior of such women? To reduce this ambiguity, in this book we generally use the term *sex* to refer to sexual behaviors.

Gender: The state of being male, female, both male and female, or neither male nor female.

Sometimes people use *sex* interchangeably with **gender**, which we define as the state of being male, female, both male and female, or neither male nor female. Gender has, at least in Western cultures, long been understood as a binary, such that individuals are *either* male or female but never both or neither (a theme we revisit later in this chapter). The **gender binary** is a system of thinking about gender as having two distinct and opposing groups or kinds (i.e., male and female). It is evident in phrases such as "the opposite sex" and in assuming that all people must fit squarely into one of these two groups. When you apply for a driver's license, for example, you typically must choose *either* male or female for gender; in nearly all states, you may choose only one of these options, and there are no others. Today, we know that people may identify themselves as being either within or outside the gender binary, such as belonging to a third gender category like **genderqueer** or as being *nonbinary*.

Gender binary: A system of conceptualizing gender as having two distinct and opposing groups or kinds (i.e., male and female).

Genderqueer: A gender category that is not exclusively male or female and therefore is not captured by the gender binary; may also be known as *nonbinary*.

Similarly, in recent years we have seen increased visibility and awareness of transgender men and women. A person who is **transgender** is a person whose self-identified gender differs from the gender they were assigned at birth, typically based on the appearance of external genitalia. A transgender woman, then, is a person who identifies as female but was assigned a male gender at birth, and a transgender man is a person who identifies as male but was assigned a female gender at birth. Still, it is important to note that not all people whose self-identified gender differs from their birth-assigned gender will call themselves transgender. By contrast, a person who is cisgender is a person whose self-identified gender matches their birth-assigned gender. The prefixes *cis*- ("on the same side of") and *trans*- ("across or on the other side of") come from Latin and appear in chemistry, which uses *cis* and *trans* for different pairs of molecules.

Transgender: Describes a person whose gender identity differs from the gender they were assigned at birth.

Some people use *trans* as an umbrella term to refer to anyone who is not a cisgender man or cisgender woman, such as transgender men and women and nonbinary people. You will notice that our definition of gender allows for some flexibility and avoids adhering to the gender binary.

Nonetheless, psychology has, until recently, neglected the study of transgender men and women or considered them as abnormal (dickey, Hendricks, & Bockting, 2016), operating from **cisgenderism** (or *cissexism*). Cisgenderism refers to prejudice against people who are outside the gender binary or bias that recognizes a person's birth-assigned gender but not their gender identity (Ansara & Hegarty, 2012). While we believe awareness of cisgenderism is improving and research on the experiences of transgender persons is blossoming, there is still much room for growth.

Cisgenderism: Prejudice against people who are outside the gender binary; also refers to bias that recognizes a person's birth-assigned gender but not their gender identity. Also termed *anti-trans prejudice* or *cissexism*.

The fact that most empirical research in psychology has not incorporated the experiences of transgender persons raises questions about the psychology of women and gender. In psychology, *gender differences* has generally been used to refer to differences between men and women. Thus, gender differences research is rooted in the gender binary. In this book, we review the existing science, thus we follow this convention and use the term *gender differences* to refer to male-female differences because the vast

majority of empirical research in psychology has assumed the gender binary. We believe it is possible to be sophisticated consumers of that research without adopting the gender binary (a point we'll return to later in this chapter).

With regard to describing psychological differences between men and women, we recognize that other scholars have adopted other conventions. For example, some scholars prefer to use the term *sex differences* to refer to innate or biologically produced differences between men and women and *gender differences* to refer to male-female differences that result from learning and the social roles of men and women (e.g., Unger, 1979). The problem with this distinction is that studies often document a difference between men and women without providing any evidence as to what causes it—biology, society, or both. Furthermore, the sharp distinction between biological causes and cultural causes fails to recognize that biology and culture often interact. Sometimes, the distinction between sex and gender isn't obvious or even possible to make. Therefore, we simply use the term *gender differences* for differences between men and women and leave their causation as a separate question.

Sexism and Feminism

Sexism

Another term that will you will find throughout this book is *sexism*. **Sexism** or gender bias can be defined as discrimination or bias against people based on their gender. Anyone, regardless of their gender, can engage in sexist behavior or hold sexist attitudes.

Social psychologists have studied sexism extensively, and their research has yielded several findings that are relevant here. First, sexism isn't what it used to be. **Old-fashioned sexism**, the kind that was prevalent in the 1950s and earlier, was characterized by open or overt prejudice against women. An example would be the belief—common in the 1950s and 1960s in the United States—that women could not be anchors on TV news programs because they wouldn't be good at it and because viewers wouldn't accept the news as authoritative if it were delivered by a woman. Today, of course, news programs often have co-anchors, one male and one female, and the old view seems ridiculous. Psychologists measure old-fashioned sexism with items like "Women are generally not as smart as men"; 50 or more years ago, many people would have agreed with such a statement. Today, old-fashioned sexism has largely been replaced by **modern sexism** or neosexism, which refers to covert or subtle prejudiced beliefs about women (Lewis, 2018; Swim et al., 1995). Modern sexism is more subtle than old-fashioned sexism and consists of three components: denial that there is continuing discrimination against women, antagonistic feelings about women's "demands," and resentment about perceived special favors granted to women (Swim et al., 1995). Although anyone can be sexist, modern sexist beliefs are most strongly endorsed by White men (Hayes & Swim, 2013).

Even in the 21st century, experiences with sexism are widespread and harmful. Women from diverse racial/ethnic groups and sexual orientations experience sexism, and these experiences have negative effects on women's mental health (Lewis, 2018).

Social psychologists Peter Glick and Susan Fiske (2001) have documented two other types of sexism that exist today: hostile and benevolent. **Hostile sexism** refers to negative, hostile attitudes toward women and adversarial beliefs about gender relations in which women are thought to spend most of their time trying to control men, whether through sexuality or feminism. **Benevolent sexism**, in contrast, consists of beliefs about women that seem to the perpetrator to be flattering or positive but are patronizing and

Sexism: Discrimination or bias against other people based on their gender; also termed *gender bias* or *sex bias*.

Old-fashioned sexism: Open or overt prejudice against women.

Modern sexism: Subtle prejudiced beliefs about women; also termed *neosexism*.

Hostile sexism: Negative, hostile attitudes toward women and adversarial beliefs about gender relations.

Benevolent sexism: Beliefs about women that seem to be kind or benevolent; women are seen as pure and morally superior beings who should be protected and adored.

paternalistic. Here, women are put on the proverbial pedestal and viewed as both pure and weak. Benevolent sexism promises women protection and adoration from men, as long as women comply with their gender roles (Glick & Raberg, 2018).

Although benevolent sexism may seem harmless, it is still a form of sexism because it reaffirms gender inequality and stereotypes women as weak and dependent on men, and being put on a pedestal is extremely confining, both literally and figuratively. Hostile sexism is often easier to recognize and call out as unfair or negative, but benevolent sexism is potentially more insidious simply because it seems positive. Indeed, both types of sexism are harmful: A study of male and female STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) majors found that students' experiences or observations of both hostile and benevolent sexism were linked to women actually performing worse in their STEM classes (Kuchynka et al., 2018).

Feminism

Feminist: A person who favors the political, economic, and social equality of all people, regardless of gender, and therefore favors the legal and social changes necessary to achieve gender equality.

Another important term that needs to be defined in this context is *feminist*. A **feminist** is a person who favors political, economic, and social equality of all people, regardless of gender, and therefore favors the legal and social changes necessary to achieve gender equality. Most Americans support the feminist principle and goal of gender equality, and these numbers have continued to rise over the last four decades (Scarborough, Sin, & Risman, 2019). However, a much smaller percentage of Americans actually call themselves feminists. A well-sampled national survey conducted in 2018 asked the question, "In general, do you consider yourself to be a feminist?"; 38% of the women and 22% of the men said yes (YouGov, 2018).

Focusing just on millennials, we see similar patterns: About two-thirds of folks don't identify as feminists but say they support gender equality (GenForward, 2018). And, across diverse racial/ethnic groups, women are more likely than men to identify as feminists.

Just as sexism has changed over time, so has feminism. One way to think about the historical changes in feminism uses the metaphor of waves or periods in which there has been heightened feminist activism. Using that metaphor we can identify four such waves, termed *first-wave* feminism, *second-wave* feminism, *third-wave* feminism, and *fourth-wave* feminism. First-wave feminism occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900s in Britain, Canada, and the United States. These feminists fought for many aspects of gender equality, particularly for women's suffrage. Feminist activism, including picketing of the White House and even hunger strikes, was effective: In the United States, women's right to vote was won when the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1920. Still, voting by women of color remained restricted in many parts of the country.

PHOTO 1.2 Women suffragists picketing in front of the White House.

Second-wave feminism began in the 1960s and extended into the 1990s. Second-wave feminists were able to build on the successes of their predecessors and take on a much wider range of issues: sexual freedom; reproductive rights, especially access to contraception and abortion; pay equity; equal opportunity in education; and gender-based violence. The movement proposed

the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which declared, "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." The amendment, or ERA, passed in the House and Senate in 1972 but stalled at the stage of ratification by the states for 40 years. Then, in January 2020, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the ERA. There is current debate about whether Congress will remove the ratification deadline for the ERA, thereby clearing a path for ratification by remaining states.

By the 1990s, many goals of the second wave had been accomplished, and some declared that feminism was dead and that the nation had passed into the "postfeminist" era. There was actually no good scientific evidence of a decline in feminism (E. J. Hall & Rodriguez, 2003), but a new kind of feminism began to emerge sometime in the 1990s, known as third-wave feminism (Snyder, 2008). In part, it represented a rebellion against second-wave foremothers and attempts to rectify some of the perceived weaknesses of the second wave. One of the key criticisms of second-wave feminism is that it tended to essentialize and oversimplify the category of "women" by focusing on "universal" female experiences such as motherhood. In so doing, it ignored the great diversity among women along lines of race and social class. Second-wave feminists were also accused of being rigid in their ideology, saying that certain approaches were feminist and others definitely were not. Responding to these issues, third-wave feminism emphasized intersectionality—an approach originating in Black feminism—and diversity among women rather than universality of female experience. In addition, it favored the individual's right to define feminism, instead of everyone accepting a uniform ideology.

We are currently in the early years of the fourth wave of feminism, which has been fueled by recent advances in online technology, including user-generated content such as blogs and social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram (Naly & Smith, 2015). The #MeToo movement is an example of activism within the fourth wave, and it demonstrates the possibilities of leveraging online technology within activism. Building on the third wave, the fourth wave also includes greater emphasis on intersectionality and critique and rejection of the gender binary. Thus, transgender issues are more prominent than in previous waves. Still, it's important to note that, although the wave metaphor can be helpful in putting feminist activism in historical context, it doesn't capture the diversity of perspectives and goals within those waves of feminist activism (Nicholson, 2010).

Feminism is a political movement and ideology as well as a theoretical perspective. There is a wide spectrum of feminist theories and a rich literature within feminist psychology. We introduce these feminist theories in Chapter 2 and incorporate research from feminist psychology throughout this book.

Themes in the Psychology of Women and Gender

A number of themes will recur in this book. Some of these themes are rooted in history, taking somewhat different forms across cultures but remaining essentially the same. Some themes are rooted in feminism. Other themes are derived from current scientific psychological research on women and gender. We focus here on five themes that are central to understanding the psychology of women and gender.

Feminine Evil

One theme rooted in history is **feminine evil**. One of the clearest images of women in mythology is their portrayal as the source of evil (Mathews, 2017). In the Judeo-Christian

Feminine evil: The belief that women are the source of evil or immorality in the world, as in the Adam and Eve story.

tradition, Eve disobeyed God's orders and ate from the fruit of the tree of knowledge. As a result, Adam and Eve were forced to leave the Garden of Eden, and Eve, the woman, became the source of original sin, responsible for the fall of humanity. In a more ancient myth, the Greek god Zeus ordered Vulcan to create the lovely maiden Pandora to bring misery to earth in revenge for the theft of fire by Prometheus. Pandora was given a box containing all the evils of the world, which she was told not to open. But Pandora opened the box, and thus all the evils it contained spread over the world. In addition, in Chinese mythology the two forces, yin and yang, correspond to feminine and masculine, and yin, the feminine, is seen as the dark, or evil, side of nature.

Historically, perhaps the most frightening manifestation of the belief in feminine evil was the persecution of witches beginning in the Middle Ages in Europe and persisting into Puritan America. Guided by the Catholic Church in a papal bull of 1484, the *Summis Desiderantes Affectibus,* the Inquisition tortured or put to death unknown numbers of witches. The vast majority of those accused and tried were women (Hays, 1964). Thus, it is woman who is seen as being in collaboration with the devil, visiting evil upon humans.

FOCUS 1.1

GENDER EQUALITY AROUND THE WORLD AND TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISM

In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists met and created the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Platform for Action affirmed a commitment to gender equality and described specific steps that needed to be taken in order to improve the lives of girls and women and achieve gender equity. It stated, "The status of women has advanced in some important respects in the past decade but that progress has been uneven, inequalities between women and men have persisted and major obstacles remain, with serious consequences for the well-being of all people" (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995, p. 2). As a result, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) now regularly publishes data on how women are doing in all nations of the world, and these data are used to monitor progress toward gender equality. In its 2019 report, the UNDP concluded that gender inequality is "one of the greatest barriers to human development."

What does gender equality look like? Gender equality has several aspects, such as education, politics, economics, health, and gender-based violence (Else-Quest & Hamilton, 2018). For example, educational gender equality would entail equal numbers of men and women attending high school or university, or equal numbers of men and women being able to read and write. Political gender equality could include equal political representation or having equal numbers of men and women elected to congress or parliament. Economic gender equality would entail equal pay for equal work and adequate family leave policies, regardless of gender. Gender equality in health would include improving women's access to prenatal care and reducing maternal mortality and adolescent pregnancy rates. With regard to gender-based violence, gender equality would mean freedom from forms of violence in which men are the predominant perpetrators and women are the predominant victims (such as rape and intimate partner violence, discussed further in Chapter 14). All of these aspects of gender equality are important and were described in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

Data from 20 countries are shown in Table 1.2. The UNDP computes a Gender Inequality Index (GII), which is one of many measures of country-level gender equality. The GII indexes inequality of women relative to men in three areas: reproductive health (measured by adolescent pregnancy and maternal mortality), empowerment (measured by educational attainment and representation of women in parliament or congress), and labor force participation. High scores indicate greater inequality, and low scores indicate less inequality (i.e., greater equality). A country's overall rank, shown in the left column of Table 1.2, results from an average of these indicators. As the data show, no country in the world can claim to be truly gender equal.

American readers may be surprised that the United States does not rank first; some believe that we have a great deal of gender equality in this country, but it's clear we still have areas of inequality. We rank only 42nd and are beaten

TABLE 1.2	Gender Inequality Index (GII) Scores and Ranks of 20 Countries.	
GII Rank	**Country**	**GII Value**
1	Switzerland	0.037
2	Denmark	0.040
2	Sweden	0.040
10	Republic of Korea	0.067
18	Canada	0.083
24	Israel	0.100
25	Australia	0.103
27	United Kingdom	0.119
39	China	0.163
42	United States	0.182
54	Russian Federation	0.255
67	Cuba	0.313
74	Mexico	0.334
97	South Africa	0.422
102	Egypt	0.450
106	Venezuela	0.458
122	India	0.501
136	Pakistan	0.547
156	Democratic Republic of Congo	0.655
162	Yemen	0.834

Source: Created by Nicole Else-Quest based on data from UNDP (2019), available at http://hdr.undp.org/en/2019-report.

by many European nations, Canada, and the Republic of Korea (also known as South Korea). The United States does not fare so well because of our high teen pregnancy rate (19.9 births per 1,000 women, compared with 2.8 in Switzerland) and our persistent underrepresentation of women in Congress. What would we have to do to get the United States in first place?

Psychological research has shown data such as these are linked to individual endorsement of sexism and hostile sexism against women (Brandt, 2011; Glick et al., 2000; Napier et al., 2010). That is, countries that have more gender inequality also have more people who hold sexist beliefs. So, achieving gender equality means more than just changing laws and improving our scores on the GII. It also means changing people's beliefs about gender and the roles of women so that women can be free to make their own choices.

Transnational feminism advocates for gender equality across countries and points out that we need to carefully consider women's and girls' experiences not only across countries, but also within them (Grabe & Else-Quest, 2012). That is, within each culture and country, behaviors and roles

have different meanings. Consider gender-based violence, where we see differences across cultures and countries in the types of gender-based violence and the meaning of specific violent acts. A man in Sri Lanka might throw a shoe at his wife to punish her for cooking a meal he did not like. Even if the woman was not physically injured, such an act is considered humiliating and degrading (Marecek, 2012). In most Western countries, however, such a behavior might seem simply strange or rude and probably wouldn't be identified in a screening or survey of gender-based violence. Thus, transnational feminists point out that we need to carefully consider women's and girls' experiences not only across countries, but also within them.

Transnational feminists such as Chandra Mohanty (2003, p. 503) advocate for "noncolonizing feminist solidarity across borders," cautioning that we should avoid viewing girls' and women's experiences through a Western lens and imposing Western standards on other cultures. What can we do to empower girls and women around the world without dictating that they should adopt Western ways? Can gender equality be universalized to every country? If so, what do you think it would look like?

Today, we still see the theme of feminine evil. For example, people who hold hostile sexist attitudes, as discussed earlier in this chapter, believe that women use their sexuality to ensnare helpless men (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

Male as Normative

Male as normative: A model in which the male is seen as the norm for all humans and the female is seen as a deviation from the norm.

Androcentrism: Male-centeredness; the belief that the male is the norm.

Gender differences: Differences between genders.

Gender similarities: Similarities among genders.

Another enduring historical theme is the **male as normative**. Throughout mythology the male is seen as normative, and the female is seen as a variant or deviation. In other words, the male is the important one, the major representative of the species, the "normal" one, and the female is a variation on him. As Simone de Beauvoir (1952) expressed it, woman is the Other.

In the biblical creation story (Genesis 2), Adam, the man, is created first; Eve, the woman, is later fashioned out of his rib, almost as an afterthought. In this and many other creation myths, man is created first; he is the major, important part of the species. Woman comes second and is only a variant on the man, the normative. There are even myths in which a woman is created by castrating a man.

Perhaps the clearest example of the male-as-normative theme is in our language. The word *man* is used to refer not only to a male person but to people in general. When the gender of a person is unknown, the pronoun *he* is used to refer to "him." The species as a whole is man; woman is merely a subset. We return to this topic in detail in Chapter 5.

A closely related concept is **androcentrism** (Bem, 1993). It means, literally, male-centeredness, or the belief that men are the standard or norm. This concept crops up in a number of places in modern psychology, including some of the theories discussed in Chapter 2.

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PHOTO 1.3 The male as normative is a theme throughout history. An example is the Adam and Eve story, in which Adam is created first and Eve is later made from his rib.

To be the deviation from the norm is, often, to be marginalized, ignored, or devalued (Nettles & Balter, 2012). Thus, embedded within the theme of male as normative and androcentrism is the lower social status of women relative to men. Throughout the world, women do not enjoy the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities as men (UNDP, 2019). Focus 1.1 describes gender equity around the world, demonstrating that we still have a way to go before men and women are treated as equals. For this reason, our book is about the psychology of gender and focuses especially on the experiences of women.

Gender Differences and Similarities

There is a paradox in trying to understand the psychology of women and gender: Women and men are both different and similar. Although **gender differences** are important in the psychology of gender, **gender similarities** are equally important. Both scientific and nonscientific views of women have concentrated on how they differ from men; this lopsided emphasis on gender differences has led to a distorted understanding of the psychology of women and gender. The study of psychological gender similarities is essential to a comprehensive and unbiased psychology of women and gender (Hyde, 2005a, 2018). This paradoxical

tension between gender differences and gender similarities will be a continuing theme throughout this book.

Historically, the overemphasis on gender differences combined with male-as-normative thinking have promoted female deficit models. That is, we spend so much time and energy demonstrating that men and women are different and that men are the norm or the standard, we end up concluding that women are abnormal or deficient. In the 19th century, scientists found that women had slightly smaller brains than men and interpreted this as a sure reason why women were not as intelligent as men (Shields, 1975). Today some researchers continue to argue that girls are not as good at math as boys are. No matter the century, researchers always seem to try to find female deficits. In Chapter 3, we will delve into the study of psychological gender differences and similarities in detail.

Critiquing the Gender Binary

The overemphasis on gender differences and neglect of gender similarities is deeply rooted in the gender binary. There are many problems with the gender binary, which, with only the categories of male and female, is very narrow and restrictive in its range. According to the gender binary, gender is based on biological characteristics (such as sex chromosomes, hormones, and external genitalia), which are assumed to be consistent with one another. The binary also assumes that our gender category is apparent at birth, stable over time, and meaningful to our own self-perceptions. Thus, the binary is essentialist and assumes that our gender identities stem from these physical characteristics. In turn, the gender binary also assumes that everyone is cisgender.

Because of these faulty assumptions, the most glaring problems with the binary are that it excludes anyone who is transgender, **intersex**, nonbinary, or gender-fluid. Many people do not fit within the gender binary; there is *gender diversity* beyond two rigid gender categories.

Critiquing the gender binary requires thinking differently about gender and asking difficult questions. For example, should we think of gender as having distinct categories or groups? Or should we think of it as being a spectrum? If there are distinct genders, how many are there? Can gender change, or is it stable and permanent? Critiquing the gender binary—and exploring the implications of that critique for research—is a pervasive theme in the psychology of women and gender and is important for psychology more broadly (Hyde et al., 2019).

Intersex: A variety of conditions in which a person is born with genitals or reproductive anatomy that is not typical of females or males. Also termed *disorders of sex development* in the DSM-5 and *differences of sex development* or *genital diversity*.

Intersectionality of Gender

A recurring theme in the psychology of women, rooted in Black feminism, is intersectionality. **Intersectionality** can be defined as an approach or perspective that simultaneously considers the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of identity, difference, and disadvantage (E. R. Cole, 2009; Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016). That is, according to this approach, we should not consider the effects of gender in isolation. Instead, we should consider the experience and effects of gender, race, social class, and sexual orientation simultaneously. When we talk about the category "women," we are talking about a diverse group that differs along many dimensions and categories, including ethnicity, social class, and sexual orientation.

The Black abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth described the essence of intersectionality in a speech at the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in 1851.

Intersectionality: A feminist approach that simultaneously considers the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of identity, difference, and disadvantage.

One of 12 children born to James and Elizabeth Baumfree, Truth (a self-given name) was born into slavery sometime around 1797 and sold to four different slave owners before walking to freedom in 1826. Though she never learned to read or write, she traveled and preached on abolition, women's suffrage, and prison reform.

At the Ohio Women's Rights Convention, Truth spoke extemporaneously about the importance of women's rights for all women, not just White women. Though her exact words were not recorded, an excerpt of the speech attributed to her at the Convention reflects a need for intersectionality in the feminist movement:

> That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man—when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne 13 children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman?

Critical theory: A theoretical perspective that seeks to redress power inequalities and achieve equity and equality.

PHOTO 1.4 Black abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth.

By Randall Studio - National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Public Domain.

Several themes are evident in her speech and continue to be described within intersectionality writings. One theme is that femininity and womanhood have often been defined with White, middle- and upper-class women in mind, and thus the experiences of poor women and women of color have often been marginalized or made invisible. Intersectionality recognizes that gender may be constructed differently by racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups. The issues that are important to White women may not be relevant to women of color, and vice versa.

Recognizing that diversity and giving voice to everyone—but especially to those who lack power—is central to intersectionality. Another theme in her speech is that, despite the different needs and issues that matter to diverse groups of women, there are also commonalities. Truth was speaking about the importance of all women's voices being heard. All women in the United States, regardless of race, were disenfranchised at that time. In sum, intersectionality holds both the diversity and commonality of experiences of people who are oppressed. As a **critical theory**, intersectionality is focused on power and inequality, how they are maintained, and how to achieve equity and equality.

Within this perspective, it becomes clear that some groups experience multiple disadvantages, such as poor Black women or lesbian women of color. Others may be part of a disadvantaged group but also part of a privileged group, such as White women with

disabilities. The experience of gender differs for the women at each of these intersections, but there are also similarities. Transgender women and cisgender women may experience their gender in some ways that are different and some ways that are similar.

We will consider intersectionality throughout this book. Yet, it's important to acknowledge that the overreliance on middle-class White college students as research participants makes it difficult to find an intersectional approach in much of psychology. As a brief example here, women's attitudes about gender roles vary as a function of their race or ethnicity (E. R. Cole & Zucker, 2007). Feminists of any race or ethnicity, for instance, have readily recognized that White men oppress White women. Black feminists, on the other hand, have emphasized that the oppression of Black women by Black men can be understood only in the context of the fact that Black men themselves are oppressed by White persons. Gender intersects with a number of other social categories, and understanding the psychology of women and gender requires examining and understanding those many intersections.

The Social Construction of Gender

Many of these themes in the psychology of women and gender reflect the social construction of gender. Feminist theorists view gender not as a biologically created fact or truth, but as a socially constructed phenomenon (Crawford & Kaufman, 2005; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988; Marecek et al., 2004). **Social constructionism** is an epistemology (or theory of knowledge) that holds that people—including scientists—do not discover reality; rather, they construct or invent it (Watzlawick, 1984). That is, we actively construct meanings for events in the environment based on our own prior experiences, social interactions, and predispositions. Thus, concepts like the gender binary are a product of social interactions and culture and are not objective truths.

> **Social constructionism:** A theoretical viewpoint that humans do not discover reality directly; rather, they construct meanings for events in the environment based on their own prior experiences and beliefs.

The extent to which we socially construct gender becomes clearer if we view how gender is constructed within other cultures. In European American cultures, the gender binary is assumed by most people. To them, it is perfectly obvious—a clear reality—that there are two genders, male and female. However, among many American Indian tribes, including the Cherokee, Shoshone, Navajo, Lakota, and Zuni, there is another category of gender, known generally as **Two Spirit** (however, each tribe has a unique name for this category). Two Spirits are people who feel they possess both male and female spirits, so they may dress as and adopt roles traditional for both men and women or for a gender that contrasts with the gender they were assigned at birth. Some indigenous tribes consider the Two Spirit to be a third or fourth gender, and it is perfectly clear in their culture that there are more than two genders (M. T. Garrett & Barret, 2003; S.-E. Jacobs et al., 1997; S. J. Kessler & McKenna, 1985). What seems like an obvious reality to European Americans, that there are only two genders, turns out to be a social construction, which becomes clear when we see that other cultures have constructed the categories differently.

> **Two Spirit:** Among some American Indian tribes, a gender category for individuals who feel they possess both male and female spirits.

Processes closely related to gender are also socially constructed. For example, Americans are quite sure of the reality that women typically feel tired after giving birth, because they have gone through a physically exhausting process. Other societies, though, have the couvade, which is practiced among the Ainu of Japan and the Timbira of Brazil (Gregersen, 1996). The couvade consists of elaborate rituals that are based on the assumption that the father, not the mother, is the main contributor of effort in childbirth. After the mother gives birth, the baby is given to the father, and he rests for several days to overcome his fatigue, whereas the mother returns to work immediately because

PHOTO 1.5 We'wha was a Two Spirit person from the Zuni tribe. She was born with a male body but adopted traditionally feminine traits. We'wha was often misgendered by White Americans, who understood gender only as a binary system and assumed she was a cisgender woman.

By Unknown—The Library at The College of Staten Island of the City University of New York, PD-US.

she is believed not to need rest. The contribution of the father to childbirth, and his fatigue following it, is a clear reality to people in these cultures. Again, European American notions of women's contributions to childbirth are challenged, and we see the extent to which such events are socially constructed.

Feminist psychologists have noted that gender is not only a person variable (as traditional psychology has maintained) but also a stimulus variable (e.g., Grady, 1979). By saying that gender is a *person variable*, we mean that it is a characteristic of the individual; this point of view leads to the study of gender differences, a pursuit that has occupied some traditional psychologists and some feminist psychologists (see Chapter 3). By saying that gender is also a *stimulus variable*, we mean that a person's gender has a profound impact on the way others react to that person. Our understanding of an individual—that is, our social construction of that individual—is in part determined by our knowledge of that individual's gender. This point of view stimulated an area of research in which participants are led to believe that a particular piece of work was done by a man or a woman, or that a particular infant is male or female; their responses to the work or the infant can then be studied as a function of the gender they believe it to be (see Chapters 7 and 9 for examples). Therefore, gender is both a personal characteristic and a stimulus variable.

Social constructionism, then, argues that these processes occur in at least three areas: (1) The individual engages in social constructions, for example, reacting to another person differently depending on whether that person is male or female; (2) the society or culture provides a set of social constructions of gender, for example, whether there are two genders or more; and (3) scientists socially construct gender by the way they construct their research. Among other things, this view that gender is socially constructed challenges the belief that science is fundamentally objective (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988). Scientific knowledge, like all other knowledge, is shaped by the values and assumptions of the perceiver—in this case, the scientist. If scientists think of themselves as objective, they won't consider how androcentric or sexist bias may shape their research, and the result will be science that further marginalizes women and nonbinary people (Chrisler & McHugh, 2018).

Continuing Topics in Psychology

You will also notice other topics or issues that return throughout this book, which are present throughout psychology. For example, you will learn about theories of women's behavior, some of which have solid data (empirical evidence) backing them, some of which do not. Not every theory is true, nor is every theory a good description or explanation of behavior. Just because Freud said something does not make it true (or false). Readers need to become critical thinkers about the difference between statements based on theory and statements based on empirical evidence.

Another important topic in psychology is the distinction between internal and external determinants of behavior. Is human behavior determined more by internal factors,

such as a person's enduring personality traits, or more by external factors, such as the particular situation the person is in. Advocates of the latter position point out how inconsistent people's behavior can be from one situation to another—for example, a man may be aggressive toward a business competitor, but passive or nurturant toward his spouse. This suggests that his behavior is not determined by an enduring personality trait (aggressiveness), but rather by the particular situation he is in. This distinction also has practical implications for improving people's lives, which is the primary goal of psychology.

Sources of Bias in Psychological Research

Research in the psychology of women and gender is progressing at a rapid pace. Certainly we will be able to provide you with much important information about the psychology of women and gender in this book, but there are still more questions yet to be answered. With research on the psychology of women and gender expanding so rapidly, many important discoveries will be made in the next 10 to 20 years. Therefore, someone who takes a course on the psychology of women and gender should do more than just learn what is currently known about women and gender. It is even more valuable to gain the skills to become a "sophisticated consumer" of psychological research. That is, it is very important that you be able to evaluate future studies about gender that you may find in newspapers, magazines, blogs, websites, or scholarly journals. To do this, you need to develop at least three skills: (1) Know how psychologists go about doing research, (2) be aware of ways in which gender bias may affect research, and (3) be aware of problems that may exist in research on gender roles or the psychology of women. In general, one of the most valuable things you can get from a college education is the development of *critical thinking skills*. The feminist perspective encourages critical thinking about research and theory. The following discussion is designed to help you develop these skills in psychology.

How Psychologists Do Research

Figure 1.1 is a diagram of the process that psychologists go through in doing research, shown in rectangles. The diagram also indicates points at which gender bias may enter, shown in ovals.

The process, in brief, is generally this: The scientist starts with some theoretical model, whether a formal model, such as gender schema theory (see Chapter 2), or merely a set of personal assumptions. Based on the model or assumptions, the scientist then formulates a question. The purpose of the research is to answer that question. Next, they design the research, which involves several substeps: A behavior must be selected, a way to measure the behavior must be devised, a group of appropriate participants must be chosen, and a research design must be developed. One of these substeps—finding a way to measure the behavior—is probably the most fundamental aspect of quantitative psychological research. The next step is for the scientist to collect the data. The data are then analyzed (often, but not always, using statistics) and the results are interpreted. Next, the scientist publishes the results, which are read by other scientists and incorporated into the body of scientific knowledge (and also put into textbooks). Finally, the system comes full circle, because the results are fed into the theoretical models that other scientists will use in formulating new research.

Now let us consider some of the ways in which gender bias—bias that may affect our understanding of the psychology of women or gender—may enter into each stage of this process (Caplan & Caplan, 2009).

FIGURE 1.1   **Ways that gender bias may enter each of the stages of the research process.**

Theory ← Biased model
Theory ← Biased questions

Design Research ← Biased measures
Design Research ← Biased sample

Collect Data ← Experimenter effects
Collect Data ← Observer effects

Analyze Data

Interpret Results ← Biased interpretation

Publish Findings ← Only significant results published

Findings Read by Scientists ← Biased reading of studies
Findings Read by Scientists ← Bias against female scientists

Source: Created by the authors.

Bias in Theory

The theoretical model or set of assumptions the scientist begins with has a profound effect on the outcome of the research. Gender bias may enter if the scientist begins with a biased theoretical model. Perhaps the best example of a biased theoretical model is psychoanalytic theory as formulated by Freud (see Chapter 2). A person with a psycho-analytic orientation might design research to document the presence of penis envy or immature superego in women; someone with a different theoretical orientation wouldn't

even think to ask such questions. It is important to be sensitive to the theoretical orientation of a scientist reporting a piece of research—and sometimes the theoretical orientation isn't stated; it needs to be unearthed—because that orientation affects the rest of the research and the conclusions that are drawn.

Feminist scholars advocate an important method for overcoming the problems of biased theoretical models and stereotyped research questions: Go to the community of people to be studied and ask them about their lives and what the significant questions are. For example, research on transgender women may be limited if it is conducted by cisgender women working from theories developed by cisgender men. It is better scientific practice to begin by asking transgender women for input on the questions or issues that need to be explored. Theories can be built at a later stage, once a firm foundation has been laid beginning from the women's own experiences and perspectives.

Bias in Research Design

As shown in Figure 1.1, the next step in psychological research is designing the research. Research methods in psychology can be roughly classified into two categories: laboratory experiments and naturalistic observations. In the experiment, the research participant is brought into the psychologist's laboratory, and their behavior is manipulated in some way in order to study the phenomenon in question. In contrast, with naturalistic observations, researchers observe people's behavior as it occurs in naturalistic settings, and they do not attempt to manipulate the behavior. In practice, the distinction between these categories is not so clear-cut. For example, it is possible to conduct an experiment in a naturalistic setting, and sometimes observational research happens in laboratories. Regardless of where an experiment takes place, true experiments must always include (a) the researcher randomly assigning participants to conditions, (b) some kind of experimental control to rule out confounds, and (c) the manipulation of an independent variable.

Designs that don't meet these three criteria are known as **quasi-experimental designs** (*quasi* meaning "not quite"). For example, a quasi-experiment might compare two or more groups of participants on their response to a treatment without randomly assigning the participants to the treatment conditions. Thus, studies of gender differences are not true experiments, but rather quasi-experiments, because the researcher cannot randomly assign participants to be a particular gender.

Some scholars argue that laboratory experiments are inherently gender biased, although this point is controversial (Peplau & Conrad, 1989). This question will be considered in greater detail later in this chapter.

When psychologists study a trait or behavior, they must clearly define it for the purposes of their study; that is, they must create an *operational definition*. **Quantitative research methods** use operational definitions that involve **psychological measurement**, or the assignment of numbers to psychological characteristics. Psychological measurement may take many forms. If the researcher wants to measure aggressive behavior in preschool children, the measurement technique may involve having trained observers sit unobtrusively in a preschool classroom and make check marks on a research form every time a child engages in an aggressive act. Here, however, we will concentrate on psychological tests, some of which have been the objects of sharp criticism for problems of gender bias (Baker & Mason, 2010).

Let's consider as an example the mathematics portion of the SAT, which is taken widely by high school seniors who are planning to attend college. The SAT Math has been criticized a great deal on the grounds that it is biased against women. In 2015, for

Quasi-experimental design: A research design that compares two or more groups but is not a true experiment because participants are not randomly assigned to groups; an example is a study comparing men and women.

Quantitative research methods: Research methods that involve psychological measurement and the use of statistics to analyze data, often with the goal of generalizing from a sample to a population.

Psychological measurement: The processes of assigning numbers to people's characteristics, such as aggressiveness or intelligence; essential to quantitative methods.

example, women taking it scored an average of 496, compared with an average of 527 for men (College Board, 2015). How could such a test be biased against women? One major issue is the content and wording of questions. If the content of an item involves situations that men experience more frequently, or requires knowledge to which men have more access, then the item is gender biased. As an example, consider the following item, which actually appeared on the SAT in 1986:

> A high school basketball team has won 40% of its first 15 games. Beginning with the sixteenth game, how many games in a row does the team now have to win in order to have a 55% winning record?
>
> a. 3
> b. 5
> c. 6
> d. 11
> e. 15

Men, who tend to have more experience with team sports and computing win-loss records, have an advantage. There is a direct algebraic solution, which a woman could do if she had mastered algebra, but it is time-consuming, and the test is timed. A man might say, "I know that 11 out of 20 is a 55% record. Will that work? Yes. The answer is 5."

If women score lower than men on a particular psychological test, there often are two possible interpretations: (1) Women are not as skilled at the ability being measured, or (2) the gender difference simply indicates that the test itself contained biased items.

Another area of gender bias in research design has to do with sampling. There is a long history of gender bias in choosing participants for psychological research, with an overreliance on male participants. Even in nonhuman animal research, scientists have largely excluded female subjects, with significant consequences for public health and policy (Shansky, 2019). In research with human participants, we see that the tide is changing. For example, in 1970 in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 42% of the articles reported on male-only studies, and in 1990 the percentage was 20% (Gannon et al., 1992). By 2007, women were somewhat overrepresented as research participants in mainstream psychology journals, a pattern that may stem from the overreliance on undergraduate psychology students (who are disproportionately female) as research participants (Cundiff, 2012). The reliance on single-gender samples varies by discipline; although women are now somewhat overrepresented as participants in psychological research, they remain underrepresented as participants in biomedical and neuroscience research (Eagly & Riger, 2014).

Overgeneralization: A research error in which the results are said to apply to a broader group than the one sampled, for example, saying that results from an all-male sample are true for all people.

Researchers can make a second error that compounds the effects of using an all-male sample: **overgeneralization**. That is, having used a single-gender sample, the researchers then discuss and interpret the results as if they were true of all people, regardless of their gender.

Although psychological research has become less prone to gender bias in sampling, problems remain. Psychologists have been guilty of an overreliance on college student samples, which are typically homogeneous in several ways, including age (most participants are between 18 and 22), race/ethnicity (mostly White), and social class (mostly middle class). Feminist psychologists argue for the importance of recognizing the diversity

of human experience. Your family's ethnic group and social class influenced the environment in which you grew up and therefore influenced your development and behavior. Feminist psychologists urge researchers to use samples that will allow an exploration of gender as well as ethnic and social class diversity.

Bias in Data Collection

In the step of research in which the data are collected, two important kinds of bias may enter: experimenter effects and observer effects.

Experimenter effects occur when some characteristic of the experimenter affects the way respondents behave and thus affects the outcome of the experiment. For example, in one experiment, a sex survey was administered by either a male or female researcher; men reported more sexual partners when they had a female researcher (Fisher, 2007). In another experiment, a test of rape myth acceptance was administered by a woman who was either provocatively or conservatively dressed (Bryant et al., 2001). Answers to the questionnaire differed significantly depending on the experimenter's clothing. It is rather disturbing to realize that an experiment might have different outcomes depending on whether the experimenter was a man or a woman, White or a person of color, or dressed in one set of clothes or another.

Experimenter effects: When some characteristics of the experimenter affect the way participants behave and therefore affect the research outcome.

The problem of experimenter effects is not unsolvable. The situation can be handled by having several experimenters—for example, half of them female, half of them male—collect the data. This will minimize any experimenter effects due to the gender of the experimenter and demonstrate whether the gender of the experimenter did have an effect on the participants' behavior.

Another important bias that may enter at the stage of data collection is observer effects. **Observer effects** (sometimes also called *rater bias*) occur when the researcher's expectations for the outcome of the research influence their observations and recording of the data (Hoyt & Kerns, 1999; Lakes & Hoyt, 2009; R. Rosenthal, 1966). Scientists are no more immune than laypeople to having stereotyped expectations for the behavior of women and men. These stereotyped expectations might lead scientists to find stereotyped gender differences in behavior where there are none. As an example, consider research on gender differences in aggression among preschool children. If observers expect more aggression from boys, that may be just what they observe, even though the boys and the girls behaved identically.

Observer effects: When the researcher's expectations affect their observations and recording of the data; also called rater bias.

The technical procedure that is generally used to guard against observer effects is the blind study. It simply means that observers are kept unaware of (blind to) which experimental group participants are in so that the observers' expectations cannot affect the outcome. Unfortunately, the blind method is virtually impossible in gender research, as the gender of a person is usually obvious from appearance, and therefore the observer cannot be blind to it or unaware of it.

One exception is infants and small children, whose gender is notoriously difficult to identify when they are clothed. This fact was used in a clever study that provides some information on whether observer effects do influence gender research. The study is discussed in detail in Chapter 6, but in brief, adults rated the behavior of an infant on a videotape (Condry & Condry, 1976). The infant was dressed in clothing that didn't signal their gender. Half the observers were told the infant was male and half were told the infant was female. When the infant showed a negative emotional response, those who thought the infant was male tended to rate the emotion as anger, whereas those who thought the infant was female rated "her" as showing fear. The observers rated behavior

PHOTO 1.6 If all researchers look like him, experimenter effects are likely.

Female deficit model: A theory or interpretation of research in which women's behavior is seen as deficient.

differently depending on whether they thought they were observing a male or female infant.

Bias in Interpretation of Results

Once the scientist has collected the data and analyzed them statistically, the results must be interpreted. Sometimes the interpretation a scientist makes is at best a large leap of faith away from the results. Therefore, this is also a stage at which gender bias may enter (Hegarty & Pratto, 2010).

As an example, let us consider a fairly well-documented phenomenon of psychological gender differences. A class of students takes its first exam in Introductory Psychology. Immediately after taking the exam, but before getting the results back, the students are asked to estimate how many points (out of a possible 100) they got on the exam. On average, men will estimate that they got higher scores than women will estimate they got (see Chapter 3). At this point, the data have been collected and analyzed statistically. It can be stated (neutrally) that there are statistically significant gender differences, with men estimating more points than women. The next question is this: How do we interpret that result? The standard interpretation is that the result indicates that women lack self-confidence or have low confidence in their abilities. The interpretation that is not made, although it is just as logical, is that men have unrealistically high expectations for their own performance.

The point is that, given a statistically significant gender difference, such a result can often be interpreted in two opposite ways, one of which is favorable to men and one of which is favorable to women. A persistent tendency has existed in psychology to make interpretations that are favorable to men; these interpretations are based on a **female deficit model**.

Sometimes there is no way of verifying which interpretation is right. As it happens in the example above, there is a way, because we can find out how the students actually did on the exam. Those results indicate that women and girls underestimate their scores by about as much as men and boys overestimate theirs (D. Cole et al., 1999; Mednick & Thomas, 1993). Thus, the second interpretation is as accurate as the first.

Becoming sensitive to the point at which scientists go beyond their data to interpret them, and becoming aware of when those interpretations may be biased, is extremely important. Another example of bias in interpretations occurs in research on gender differences in language (Chapter 5).

Bias in Publishing Findings

Once the data have been analyzed and interpreted, the next step is to publish the findings. There is a strong tendency in psychological research to publish significant results only. This does not necessarily mean significant in the sense of important; it means significant in the sense of being the result of a statistical test that reaches the .05 level of significance. In other words, it means that if the study were repeated, there would be a less than 5% chance that the results would be different.

Why does it matter if we publish only significant findings in the psychology of gender? It means that there is a tendency to report statistically significant gender differences

and to omit mention of gender similarities and nonsignificant gender differences. That is, we tend to hear about it when men and women differ, but we tend not to hear about it when men and women are the same. As a result, there would be a bias toward emphasizing gender differences and ignoring gender similarities.

This bias may also enter into psychology of women and gender research when results are inconsistent with gender stereotypes or gender roles, for example, research on menstrual cycle mood fluctuations (a point to be discussed in detail in Chapter 11).

Bias Against Female Scientists

If there is a tendency for reports by female scientists to be considered less authoritative than reports by male scientists, this would also introduce bias. Evidence of such a gender bias might include the underrepresentation of women as lead authors of scientific journal articles and conference presentations. Research on the extent of this problem has produced mixed results (Hegarty & Buechel, 2006; Meredith, 2013; Swim et al., 1989), suggesting that bias against female scientists happens, but not uniformly or consistently over time or across disciplines. One analysis of more than 8 million journal articles published across the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities examined the representation of women as authors. The representation of women varied by fields: Math and philosophy had the lowest percentage of women authors while demography, sociology, and education had the highest (J. D. West et al., 2013). In addition, the analysis found that the representation of women has been improving over time: From 1965 to 1989, only 15% of authors were women, but from 1990 to 2012, 27% of authors were women. Does a similar publication gap appear in the science of psychology? An analysis of 125 psychology journals found that women are underrepresented as authors, despite being overrepresented among psychology graduate students (Odic & Wojcik, 2020). Over time, change in this publication gap has narrowed, but journals in some subdisciplines (e.g., developmental psychology) have shown more progress toward gender equality than in others (e.g., neuroscience).

Having their research published is important for scientists' career advancement, and so is having their research cited or referenced by other authors. Female scientists have their research cited less often than male scientists do (Larivière et al., 2013; Odic & Wojcik, 2020). This gender difference isn't a result of men doing better science, however. Instead, the difference appears related to self-citation rates. That is, men are more likely than women to cite their own articles in their publications (King et al., 2017). As a result, research conducted by men ultimately garners more attention, another form of gender bias in the research process.

Other Kinds of Gender Biases

Another kind of bias is introduced if scientists tend to remember and use in their work only the studies that conform to their own biases or ideas and to ignore the studies that do not. This tendency would allow for dominant biases (such as bias against women and people of color) to be perpetuated in scientific research. Gender bias and cisgenderism in the language used in reports of psychological research are also a concern. We will address these forms of bias in language in depth in Chapter 5. In addition, research on women has long been considered a specialty or fringe topic, a perception that reflects the male as normative theme. Today, this bias has shifted such that mainstream research includes psychology of women (Eagly et al., 2012) but marginalizes research on people outside the gender binary.

Feminist Alternatives to Biased Research

We have discussed several problems with psychological research that may affect our understanding of women and men. Of course, these problems are not present in every study in the area, and certainly we don't mean to suggest that all psychological research is worthless. The point is to learn to think critically about biases that may or may not be present when you are reading reports of research. Thinking critically about the theoretical orientation of a scientist and about biased interpretations of results is important.

A more general point emerges from this whole discussion of gender bias in research methods in psychology. Traditional psychology has historically viewed itself as an objective and value-free science. Today, many psychologists, feminist psychologists among them, question whether psychological research can be objective and value-free (Peplau & Conrad, 1989). They point out that psychological research might more appropriately be viewed as an interaction between researcher and research participant that occurs in a particular context. The researcher brings to that interaction certain values that may influence the questions asked, the methods used, the results found, and the interpretations made. In short, psychological research cannot be totally objective. Acknowledging our values and reflecting on how they may shape the research process, then, is crucial.

Psychology, of course, is not the only science that has erroneously claimed to be objective and value-free. Another example is physics and its groundbreaking discoveries of ways to generate nuclear power. These discoveries can be used to manufacture weapons capable of annihilating thousands, or they can be used to generate electricity for cities. Values are closely connected with science.

Feminist psychologists would say that although the preceding criticisms of the research process are important and you should be aware of them, we need to go beyond those criticisms to offer some constructive alternatives. In doing so, we can think about gender-fair research and feminist research.

Gender-Fair and Feminist Research

Gender-fair research:
Research that is free of gender bias.

Gender-fair research is research that is not guilty of any of the gender biases discussed in the previous sections (Denmark et al., 1988; McHugh et al., 1986). Characteristics of gender-fair research are as follows:

1. Single-gender research should rarely, if ever, be done. In some situations where a single-gender design might seem justified, the demands for gender fairness and inclusiveness might lead to better understandings. For example, a study exclusively examining women's mood fluctuations over the menstrual cycle would fail to identify systematic fluctuations in men's moods.

2. Theoretical models, underlying assumptions, and the kinds of questions asked should always be examined for gender fairness. For example, the minute someone proposes to do research on the effects of mothers' depression on their children, it also should be asked whether fathers' depression has an effect on their children. Otherwise, we assume that only mothers influence children and that fathers have no influence, which is unfair to both mothers and fathers.

3. Research teams should be diverse with regard to gender—as well as other social characteristics such as race or ethnicity—to limit experimenter effects.

4. Interpretations of data should always be examined carefully for gender fairness, and possibly several interpretations should be offered. For example, if there is a significant gender difference in the number of points students estimate they will get on an exam, two interpretations should be offered: that women underestimate and lack self-confidence and that men overestimate and have inflated expectations for their performance. In a sense, then, gender-fair research proposes that we continue to play the research game by the same set of rules it has always had—tight controls, careful interpretations, and so on—but that we improve procedures so that the rules are observed fairly.

Feminist researchers might argue that we need to go even further in reforming psychological research. There really is no single, comprehensive, definitive statement of the principles of **feminist research**, but many scholars have made contributions (e.g., Crawford & Kimmel, 1999; Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016; E. B. Kimmel & Crawford, 2001; Rabinowitz & Sechzer, 1993; Reinharz, 1992), and we present some of those ideas here.

Some feminist researchers have argued that the classic form of psychological research—the tightly controlled laboratory experiment—needs to be revised. They maintain that it is manipulative, intended to determine how manipulations of the independent variable cause changes in the dependent variable. It objectifies and dehumanizes the people it studies, calling them "subjects." It strips away the context of behavior, taking people out of their natural environments in order to control all those things the experimenter considers irrelevant. In all these senses—the manipulativeness, the objectification, the context stripping—traditional psychological experimentation might be accused of being masculine or patriarchal.

Feminist research includes several recommendations:

1. Do not manipulate people, but rather observe them in their natural environments and try to determine how they experience their natural lives and worlds.

2. Do not call the people who are studied "subjects," but rather "participants." This reaffirms their personhood and agency.

3. When determining the gender of research participants, it is best to follow this two-step method: First, ask participants what gender they were assigned at birth. Next, ask them to designate their gender identity using their own words. This two-step method is more inclusive and more accurate than asking participants to check a box indicating either "male" or "female" as their gender (dickey, Hendricks, & Bockting, 2016).

4. Devote specific research attention to the special concerns of women and members of marginalized groups.

5. Do not think in simple terms of variable A causing effects on variable B, but rather in terms of complex, interactive relationships in which A and B mutually influence each other. Complexity is emphasized.

6. Conduct critical research. That is, conduct research aimed at empowering members of marginalized or oppressed groups (such as women and transgender persons) and eliminating power inequities.

Feminist research: Research growing out of feminist theory, which seeks radical reform of traditional research methods.

7. Consider diverse and innovative methods for studying human behavior (Crawford, 2013).

8. Keep in mind that scientific research and political activism are not necessarily contradictory activities (Wittig, 1985).

Values affect the scientific theories that are proposed and the research methods that are used (Rabinowitz & Sechzer, 1993). In particular, they affect the way research is interpreted, as we discussed earlier. Readers need to become sensitive to the values expressed by a particular scientific position. At the same time, high-quality research that documents oppressive or harmful conditions and provides a prescription for eliminating inequities can facilitate social change. Psychologists who are engaged in political activism and have social justice as their goal can still do good research; such researchers are obligated to articulate their values, but clearly that is a good rule for all scientists!

Qualitative research methods: Research methods that do not use numbers or statistics, but may analyze text, in-depth interviews, participant observations, or focus groups for themes and meaning.

Mixed methods: Research methods that involve both quantitative and qualitative methods.

One example of innovative methods is the use of **qualitative research methods** or the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, known as **mixed methods** (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Traditional psychological research has largely relied on quantitative methods (Eagly & Riger, 2014)—that is, behavior is studied by converting it to numbers, whether IQ scores or individuals' ratings of their attitudes toward legal abortion on a scale from 1 (strongly disapprove) to 7 (strongly approve). With qualitative methods, the data are often text, talk, or images. For example, an interviewer may pose open-ended questions in an interview or focus group, record and transcribe the respondent's answers, and then analyze the answers for themes. In one such study, Watson and her colleagues (2012) interviewed African American women about their experiences of sexual objectification, finding that their experiences were the result of bias based on gender, race, and class. The researchers argued that, since most of the research on sexual objectification had been with White women, African American women's experiences were marginalized and should be a focus of study. The possibilities of feminist research—using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods—are limitless and exciting, especially because they can address social inequality.

Both gender-fair research and feminist research can make valuable contributions. While the traditional psychological experiment needs reform, we shouldn't throw it out entirely. It is most effective when it is combined with naturalistic research examining complex mutual influences. Gender-fair research and feminist research may diverge on some issues, though. For example, feminist researchers would value the investigation of intimate partner violence against women as an issue of special importance. Gender-fair researchers may point out that intimate partner violence may be perpetrated by men and women alike, and that both should be studied. Feminist researchers might reply that intimate partner violence—which is disproportionately perpetrated by men against women and nonbinary people—is a gender-based crime and that feminist research should be especially concerned with this systematic form of gender-based oppression. We will revisit this issue in Chapter 14.

Are We Making Progress?

Feminist psychologists began to publish their critiques of traditional research methods more than 45 years ago. Has there been any progress? Have psychologists changed their methods to respond to these criticisms?

Feminism has positively influenced psychology in a number of ways (Eagly & Riger, 2014; Hegarty & Buechel, 2006). Substantial shifts have been made toward nonsexist methods in psychological research. There are more women researchers and more equal representation of women among participants. However, other forms of bias—such as bias against transgender persons and those outside the gender binary—remain. It is critical that we continue monitoring our methods and commit to reducing all forms of bias in our discipline.

Chapter Previews

In the next chapter we will look at the contributions to the understanding of the psychology of women and gender that have been made by some of the major theoretical systems of psychology—psychoanalytic theory, social learning theory, and cognitive-developmental theory. A controversial theory, sociobiology, is examined, as are gender schema theory and feminist theories.

Following these theoretical views, later chapters will focus on research in content areas of the psychology of women and gender. Chapter 3 reviews evidence on gender stereotypes and gender differences to see the ways in which women and men differ and the ways in which they are similar. Chapter 4 examines the scholarship in psychology at the intersection of gender and ethnicity, focusing especially on women of color. Because feminist scholars have emphasized the importance of language, Chapter 5 is about gender and communication—whether there are gender differences in verbal and nonverbal communication and how women and trans or nonbinary people are treated in language. Chapter 6 presents the important research on gender and emotion. In Chapter 7 we discuss gender development across the lifespan from birth to old age. We look at gender and achievement in Chapter 8 by considering research on gender differences in intellectual abilities and research on achievement in women. Chapter 9 is about gender and work, including discrimination and wage inequity as well as issues involved in balancing work and family roles.

Chapter 10 explores biological influences on gender and behavior, including research on nonbinary persons. Chapter 11 discusses psychological research on several key women's health issues, including menstruation, abortion, and breast cancer, as well as transgender health issues. Chapter 12 explores gender and sexuality, including research on the physiology of sexual response and research on gender similarities and differences in sexuality.

Chapter 13 is about the intersection of gender and sexual orientation. Chapter 14 centers on gender-based violence as seen in rape, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, and human trafficking, including the victimization of transgender persons. Chapter 15 considers mental health concerns that show gender disparities (such as depression and eating disorders) and feminist therapies.

In Chapter 16 we examine the psychology of men and masculinity from a feminist perspective. We end with Chapter 17, in which we discuss historical shifts and trends in the conceptualization of gender within psychology and social backlash against feminist progress.

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PHOTO 1.7 Today, scholarly journals such as *Psychology of Women Quarterly* publish empirical research on the psychology of women and gender.

EXPERIENCE THE RESEARCH

UNDERSTANDING GENDER BIAS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Design an experiment to determine whether an adult is more likely to help a 4-year-old child who is crying and apparently lost if the adult is alone and there are no other adults close by (no bystander condition) or if there are other adults present (bystander condition). Design two versions of the experiment.

First, create the experiment as a traditional, pre-feminist psychologist might have done. Then, using Figure 1.1, make a list of all the examples of gender bias in the research. Finally, re-create the experiment to correct all the elements of gender bias so that it will meet the standards for gender-fair research.

The psychology of women and gender is an exciting and constantly evolving field. Similarly, language on gender continues to evolve. Terms such as *sex, gender, transgender, cisgender, gender binary,* and *nonbinary* are important and used throughout this book. Table 1.1 clarifies many of these terms.

A chief concern in the psychology of women and gender is sexism or gender bias. Sexism and its variations have changed over time, from old-fashioned sexism to modern sexism. Psychologists study sexism and its impact on psychological phenomena. A feminist is a person who favors political, economic, and social equality of all people, regardless of gender, and therefore favors the legal and social changes necessary to achieve gender equality.

There are several pervasive themes in the psychology of women and gender. The male-as-normative theme results in women and nonbinary people being marginalized, ignored, or devalued. Androcentrism also fuels a lopsided emphasis on gender differences, despite evidence that women and men are both different and similar. In addition, critiquing the gender binary and analyzing gender with an intersectional approach are contemporary themes that challenge traditional approaches in psychology. We revisit these themes throughout this book.

Gender bias can shape the design of research, including the type of methods, measures, and sample used. Experimenter effects and observer effects can alter the outcome of research, and results may be interpreted with a female deficit model. There are many feminist alternatives to sexist research, and nonsexist research methods are now more commonly used.

Ahmed, Sara. (2017). *Living a feminist life.* Duke University Press. In accessible and engaging prose, Ahmed describes key tenets of feminist theory and how to apply them in everyday life, working toward gender equality and caring for oneself and one's community.

Anderson, Kristin J. (2015). *Modern misogyny: Anti-feminism in a post-feminist era.* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Anderson, a social psychologist, lays out the evidence for feminism being is as important today as ever.

Theoretical Perspectives on Gender

> " The first thing that strikes the careless observer is that women are unlike men. They are 'the opposite sex'—(though why 'opposite' I do not know; what is the 'neighboring sex'?). But the fundamental thing is that women are more like men than anything else in the world. "

Dorothy Sayers, *Unpopular Opinions* (1946)

Gender differences have long fascinated people. In the past century, science has come to dominate intellectual thought. Thus, it is not surprising that scientific understandings of gender differences have developed. In this chapter we will examine some major psychological theories that have been formulated to explain differences between women and men and how they develop.

At the outset, we think it is important to highlight the distinction between theory and empirical evidence. In the pages that follow, we will describe many of the theories about the psychology of women and gender that have been proposed. Some have solid data (empirical evidence) backing them, whereas others do not. Not every theory is true, nor is every theory a good description or explanation of behavior. We all need to be critical thinkers about the difference between statements based on theory and statements based on empirical evidence.

Psychoanalytic Theory

Psychoanalytic theory:
A psychological theory originated by Sigmund Freud; its basic assumption is that part of the human psyche is unconscious.

One of the first scholarly explanations of differences between women and men was **psychoanalytic theory**, formulated by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939). Psychoanalytic theory has had an enormous impact on culture: It has permeated art, film, literature, and even the language and thinking of most laypeople. For these reasons alone, it is important to understand Freudian theory as a part of our history and culture.

Freud's Theory of Psychosexual Development

Erogenous zones:
Areas of the body that are particularly sensitive to sexual stimulation.

One of Freud's greatest contributions was to promote the view of human personality as being the result of development in the first 5 years of life. That is, he saw the personality of an adult as the product of previous experiences, and he believed that early childhood experiences were most critical. He proposed a stage theory of psychosexual development, each stage being characterized by a focus on one of the **erogenous zones,** parts of skin or mucous membranes highly endowed with nerve endings that are very sensitive to stimulation (e.g., the lips and mouth, the anal region, genitals). During stage 1, the oral stage, the infant derives pleasure from sucking and eating and experiences the world mainly through the mouth. Following this is the anal stage, in which pleasure is focused on defecating.

Phallic stage: The third stage of development in psychoanalytic theory, around 3 to 6 years of age, during which, for boys, the pleasure zone is the penis and sexual feelings arise toward the mother and, for girls, sexual feelings arise toward the father.

Freud proposed that boys and girls pass through the first two stages of psychosexual development, the oral and the anal, in a similar manner. However, during the **phallic stage**, around the ages of 3 to 6, the development of boys and girls diverges. As one might suspect from the name for this stage, girls will be at somewhat of a disadvantage here.

Oedipal complex: In psychoanalytic theory, a boy's sexual attraction to and intense love for his mother and his desire to do away with his father.

During the phallic stage, the boy becomes fascinated with his own penis, which is a rich source of pleasure and interest for him. At this stage boys experience the **Oedipal complex**, named for the Greek myth of Oedipus, who unknowingly killed his father and married his mother. In the Oedipal complex, the boy sexually desires his mother and has an intense attachment to her. He also wishes to rid himself of the father, who is a rival for the mother's affection. But the son views his father as a powerful opponent and fears that his father will retaliate by castrating him. This castration anxiety becomes so great that, in order to resolve the problem, he represses his sexual desire for his mother and makes the critical shift to *identify* with the father. In doing so, the boy *introjects* (takes into himself as his own) the values and ethics of society as represented by the father and thus develops a **superego**. And, in identifying with the father, he comes to acquire his gender identity, taking on the masculine qualities the father supposedly possesses—strength, power, and so on.

Superego: Freud's term for the part of the personality that contains the person's conscience.

For girls, the phallic stage is quite different. According to Freud, the first critical event is the girl's stark realization that she has no penis. Presumably she recognizes that the penis is superior to her clitoris. She feels cheated and envious of boys and thus comes to feel *penis envy*. Her penis envy can never be satisfied directly and, instead, is transformed into a desire to be impregnated by her father. Holding her mother responsible for her lack of a penis, she renounces her love for her mother and becomes intensely attracted to her father, thus forming her own version of the Oedipal complex, called the **Electra complex**. The desire to be impregnated by the father is a strong one and persists in the more general form of maternal urges, according to Freud.

Electra complex: In psychoanalytic theory, a girl's sexual attraction to and intense love for her father.

According to Freud, the resolution of the Oedipal complex is critical for the boy's development, being necessary for the formation of his gender identity and superego. He also theorized that the Electra complex is never as fully resolved for girls as the Oedipal complex is for boys. This leads the girl to lifelong feelings of inferiority, a predisposition to jealousy, and intense maternal desires. In addition, because she never fully resolves the Electra complex and introjects society's standards, her superego is immature. She is morally inferior and lacks a sense of justice, ultimately because she lacks a penis.

Criticisms of Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory

Numerous general criticisms and feminist criticisms of Freudian theory have been made. From a scientific point of view, a major problem with psychoanalytic theory is that most of its concepts cannot be evaluated scientifically to see whether they are accurate. That is, because Freud placed so much value on unconscious desires—which cannot be directly observed, measured, or tested—it is impossible to falsify or evaluate the validity of his theory.

Another criticism that is often raised is that Freud derived his ideas almost exclusively from work with patients who sought therapy. In particular, his views on women may contain some truth about women who have problems of adjustment, but they fail to describe typical or psychologically well-adjusted women. This is an example of an error of overgeneralization.

Many modern psychologists argue that Freud overemphasized biological determinants of human behavior and underemphasized social or cultural forces in shaping behavior. In particular, his views on the origin of differences between men and women, and on the nature of female personality, are heavily biological, relying mostly on anatomical differences. In relying on anatomy as an explanation, Freud ignored the enormous forces of culture acting to create gender differences.

Feminists have raised numerous criticisms of Freudian theory, including those noted above (e.g., Lerman, 1986; J. A. Sherman, 1971; Weisstein, 1971). They are particularly critical of Freud's assumption that the clitoris and vagina are inferior to the penis and have argued that Freudian theory is **phallocentric**.

Phallocentric: Male centered or, specifically, penis centered.

Feminists also note the similarities between psychoanalytic theory and some of the themes discussed in Chapter 1. In this context, Freud seems simply to be articulating age-old myths and images about women in "scientific" language. The image of women as sinful and the source of evil is translated into the scientific-sounding "immature superego." Certainly Freud's phallocentrism is a good example of a male-as-normative or androcentric model. Basically, for Freud, a girl is a castrated boy. His model of development describes male development, with female development being an inadequate variation on it.

Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge Freud's contributions in his recognition of the importance of development in shaping human behavior and personality.

PHOTO 2.1 Karen Horney made substantial contributions to psychoanalytic theory.

Womb envy: In Horney's analytic theory, the man's envy of the woman's uterus and reproductive capacity.

Karen Horney

Several of the most prominent psychoanalytic theorists were women, and not surprisingly, they made some modifications to Freud's theory. Karen Horney's (1885–1952) theoretical papers show an evolution over time in her own thinking. Originally Horney (pronounced Horn-eye) accepted Freud's ideas whole-heartedly; in a 1924 paper she eagerly documented the origins of penis envy and of the castration complex in women. However, she soon became critical of these notions, and in a 1926 paper she pointed out that Freudian theory actually articulates the childish views boys have of girls and that Freud's psychological theory of women was phallocentric.

Her chief disagreement with Freud was over his notion that penis envy was the critical factor in female development. Horney used the master's tricks against him and postulated that the critical factor was male envy of women, particularly of female reproductive potential, which she called **womb envy**. She also suggested that male achievement represents an overcompensation for feelings of anatomical inferiority (i.e., a femininity complex).

Nancy Chodorow

Nancy Chodorow's (1978) book *The Reproduction of Mothering* is a more recent addition to the psychoanalytic literature, representing second-wave feminism (L. C. Bell, 2004). Integrating psychoanalytic and feminist perspectives, Chodorow sought to answer this question: Why do women mother? That is, why is it that in all cultures women do almost all of the child care? She theorized that, when the child care is provided primarily by women, daughters and sons develop differently. That is, mothering produces daughters who want to mother—thereby reproducing mothering—and sons who dominate and devalue women.

Infants start life in a state of total dependency, and given the traditional division of labor (in which women care for children), those dependency needs are satisfied almost exclusively by the mother. In addition, infants are egocentric, or self-centered, and have trouble distinguishing between the primary caretaker—the mother—and themselves. Because mothers do such a good job of meeting their infants' every need, infants bliss-fully assume that mothers have no interests outside of mothering their children. As the children grow, the unpleasant reality eventually becomes clear as they come to understand that mothers do have other interests.

In her book, Chodorow theorized that the early, intensely intimate relationship with the mother affects the sense of self and attitudes toward women, for both daughters and sons. Boys and girls continue to expect women to be caring and sacrificing, and that forever shapes their attitudes toward women. The girl's sense of self is profoundly influenced because her intense relationship to her mother is never entirely broken. Therefore, girls never see themselves as separate in the way boys do, and girls and women continue to define themselves as caregivers of others.

By contrast, boys begin with the same intense attachment to the mother, but must repress that relationship in order to develop a masculine identity. Thus masculinity comes to be defined negatively, as the opposite or lack of femininity. Masculinity involves

denying feminine maternal attachment. Therefore, the boy's need to separate himself from his mother (and all women) and define a masculine identity for himself fosters his devaluation of all women. Traditionally, fathers have been essentially absent or uninvolved in child care, thereby idealizing their masculine qualities and promoting the notion of masculine superiority. At the same time, men's capacity for providing child care is limited by their denial of relatedness.

According to Chodorow, women's relational needs are greater than men's relational needs, which are satisfied by a heterosexual relationship with a woman, in which they recapture the warmth of the infant's relationship with their mother. Yet women's greater relational needs cannot entirely be satisfied by a man. And so, women have babies, their relational needs are satisfied, and the cycle repeats itself.

Chodorow's question—Why do women mother?—is not so small as it might appear. Women's mothering perpetuates the whole division of labor by gender, because once women are committed to be the exclusive caregivers, men must do the other jobs necessary for society to continue. Moreover, women's mothering promotes the devaluation of women.

What makes Chodorow's psychoanalytic theory *feminist*? First, Chodorow offers a feminist revision of some of Freud's ideas. For example, she argues that penis envy results not from a girl's recognition of the inherent superiority of the penis (as Freud said), but rather from the fact that the penis symbolizes the power men have in our society. She argues that women's mothering was taken for granted and not given the attention it deserved (Chodorow, 2013). Second, Chodorow does not stop with her analysis of the family dynamics that perpetuate the devaluation of women; she gives a prescription for social change to eliminate inequities for women. She theorizes that the only way for the cycle to be broken is for men to begin participating equally in child care:

> Any strategy for change whose goal includes liberation from the constraints of an unequal social organization of gender must take account of the need for a fundamental reorganization of parenting, so that primary parenting is shared between men and women. (Chodorow, 1978, p. 215)

Research evidence helps us evaluate some aspects of Chodorow's theory. For example, in one study researchers observed mother-child interactions in a sample of Latinx families (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2019). The team measured maternal behaviors such as sensitivity, positive regard, negative regard, detachment, and intrusiveness toward their children, as well as child behaviors such as engagement and positive and negative mood. They found that mothers behaved similarly with their sons and daughters and that boys and girls behaved similarly with their mothers. In other words, the findings don't support Chodorow's assertion that mothers and daughters are closer than mothers and sons.

Several key criticisms of Chodorow's theory should be noted (e.g., Lorber et al., 1981). First, the theory has a heterosexist and cisnormative bias. It explains in detail why children grow up heterosexual, consistent with the gender binary, assuming that all of them would, while making no attempt to understand the development of people with other sexual orientations (Rich, 1980). Second, as a feminist theory, Chodorow's theory has been criticized for lacking an intersectional approach, in that it focuses exclusively on gender and ignores race and social class (Spelman, 1988). Third, most of the evidence Chodorow cites in her book is clinical—that is, it comes from individual histories of people seeking psychotherapy. As such, Chodorow's theory is open to the same criticism that

was made of Freud's theory: The theory is based on the experiences of people who are maladjusted, and thus their experiences are not generalizable.

Social Learning Theory

Psychoanalytic approaches, with their emphasis on unconscious desires, eventually gave way to a very different set of approaches in psychology—learning theories, which instead emphasize behaviors. Social learning theory is a major theoretical system in psychology, designed to describe the processes of human development (Bandura & Walters, 1963). It emphasizes several key mechanisms in development, including reinforcement, punishment, imitation, and observational learning. Thus, an explanation for psychological gender differences is that children *learn* how to behave differently based on their gender. That is, boys and girls act appropriately for their genders because they have been rewarded for doing some things and punished for doing others. The idea is that the operant conditioning mechanisms of reinforcement and punishment explain the acquisition of gender roles. Thus, children are rewarded or reinforced for displaying gender-appropriate behaviors and punished or not rewarded for displaying gender-inappropriate behaviors. For example, little girls are rewarded for being quiet and obedient, whereas little boys are rewarded for being athletic and tough. As a result, children are more likely to repeat the behaviors that have been reinforced, and gender differences in behavior develop.

Social learning theory also emphasizes the importance of two additional mechanisms: imitation and observational learning. **Imitation,** or **modeling**, means simply that children do what they see others (termed *models*) doing. **Observational learning** refers to situations in which children learn by observing the behavior of models, even though they may not actually perform the behavior at the time, perhaps not using the information until months or years later. These three mechanisms, then—reinforcement, imitation, and observational learning—are thought to underlie the process of **gender typing**—that is, the acquisition of gender-typed behaviors and learning of gender roles—according to social learning theory.

Children's imitation is motivated partly by the power of authority figures, so they are especially likely to imitate parents, other adults, or older peers. With regard to gender typing, the theory assumes that children tend to imitate models of a similar gender more than they imitate models of a different gender. Therefore, the little girl imitates her mother and other women more than she does men. This mechanism of imitation helps to explain the acquisition of the complex and subtle aspects of gender roles that probably have not been the object of reinforcements.

Children may learn behaviors but not perform them. A behavior may become part of the child's repertoire through observational learning. Such information may be stored up for use perhaps years later, when a situation in adolescence or adulthood calls for knowledge of gender-appropriate behaviors. For example, a young girl may observe her mother caring for an infant sibling. Although the little girl may not perform any infant-care behaviors at the time, much less be rewarded for them, she nonetheless may store up the information for use when she herself is a mother. Children will also learn to anticipate the consequences of their actions. The little girl knows in

Imitation: People doing what they see others doing.

Modeling: Demonstrating gendered behavior for children; also refers to the child's imitation of the behavior.

Observational learning: Observing someone doing something and then doing it at a later time.

Gender typing: The acquisition of gender-typed behaviors and learning of gender roles.

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PHOTO 2.2 Learning gendered behavior: After the birth of a new sibling, this preschooler uses a doll to imitate her mother's breastfeeding.

advance that her attempts to join Little League will be not be reinforced, and perhaps will even be met with punishments.

According to social learning theory, then, gender typing results from differential rewards and punishments, as well as from imitation of same-gender models and observational learning.

Evidence for Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory has stimulated a great deal of research aimed at documenting the existence—or nonexistence—of the mechanisms it proposes. This research makes it possible to assess the adequacy of the social learning model for the development of gender differences.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of imitation and reinforcements in shaping children's behavior, particularly gender-typed behaviors such as aggression. A classic study by the social learning theorist Albert Bandura (1965) is a good example. In the first phase of this experiment, children were randomly assigned to view one of three films. In all of the films, an adult model was performing more than one aggressive behavior, but in one film the model was rewarded; in another, punished; and in the third, left alone without consequences. The children's aggressive behavior was then observed. As the social learning approach would predict, children who had viewed the model being punished performed the least aggressive behavior. Furthermore, and consistent with the findings of many other investigators (see Chapter 3), boys performed more aggressive behavior than girls. In the second phase of the experiment, the children were offered attractive reinforcements (pretty sticker pictures and juice treats) for performing as many of the model's aggressive responses as they could remember. Gender differences all but disappeared in this phase, and girls performed nearly as many aggressive behaviors as boys.

This experiment illustrates several important points. The first phase demonstrated that children do imitate and that they do so differentially depending on the perceived consequences of the behavior. Notice that in this phase the children themselves were not actually reinforced; they simply observed the model being reinforced. The second phase illustrated how gender differences in aggressive behavior can be influenced by reinforcements. When girls were given equal reinforcement for aggression, they were nearly as aggressive as boys. Certainly, the experiment is evidence of the power of imitation and reinforcement in shaping children's behavior.

Many studies shed light on the questions of parents modeling gendered behaviors and children imitating their same-gender parent. For example, one study with Mexican-origin families in the U.S. found that early adolescent girls were more likely than their male peers to imitate their mother's behavior (Perez-Brena, Updegraff, & Umaña-Taylor, 2014). Yet, the researchers also found that boys were no more likely than girls to imitate their father's behavior. Of course, parents influence their children in different ways, and children who have both a mother and a father are shaped by the behaviors of both parents. For example, a study with African American families found that youths' gender-typed interests decreased when they spent more time with an other-gender parent (Skinner & McHale, 2018). Altogether, findings like these remind us that gender development is complex and shaped by many factors.

Of course, there is plenty of evidence of gender-stereotyped role models in the media. For example, in one study first and second graders were exposed to television commercials in which (a) all boys were playing with a gender-neutral toy (traditional condition), (b) all girls were playing with it (nontraditional condition), or (c) the commercial was not about

toys (control; Pike & Jennings, 2005). After the viewing, children were asked to sort six toys into those that were for boys, those that were for girls, or those that were for both boys and girls. Among the six toys was the toy children had seen in the commercial. Children in the traditional condition were more likely to say that the toy was for boys, whereas children in the nontraditional condition were more likely to say that it was for both boys and girls. These results demonstrate that even television commercials can shape children's gender typing. We return to the role of media in gender role development in Chapter 7.

Cognitive Social Learning Theory

Social learning theorists have also incorporated cognitive approaches into their theories, which are now called cognitive social learning theory or social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986; Bussey & Bandura, 1999). The emphasis on reinforcement, punishment, and imitation remains, and cognitive processes such as attention, self-regulation, and self-efficacy are added.

Every day, children observe thousands of behaviors in the complex environment surrounding them, yet they imitate or model only a few of them. Attention is the cognitive process that weeds out most of the behaviors that are irrelevant to the child and focuses on the few that are most relevant. Gender makes some behaviors relevant and others not. Once children can differentiate men and women, they pay more attention to same-gender than to other-gender models (Bussey & Bandura, 1992). As noted earlier, children tend to imitate same-gender models.

According to cognitive social learning theory, as children develop, regulation of their behavior shifts from externally imposed rewards and punishments to internalized standards and self-sanctions. As children learn to regulate themselves, they guide their own behavior (a process known as self-regulation), and as they learn the significance of gender, they monitor and regulate their own behavior according to internalized gender norms. The data show that children are more likely to monitor their behavior for gender-appropriateness when they are in mixed-gender groups than when they are in single-gender groups (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

Self-efficacy: A person's belief in their ability to accomplish a particular task.

Self-efficacy is an important concept in social cognitive theory. **Self-efficacy** refers to our beliefs about our ability to accomplish something, to produce a particular outcome. People can have a global sense of self-efficacy, but efficacy beliefs also tend to vary depending on the area or task. You may feel certain that you can earn an A in a psychology course but have no confidence that you can pass a chemistry course. Efficacy beliefs are extremely important in individuals' lives. They affect the goals we set for ourselves, how much time and effort we put into attaining a goal, and whether we persist in the face of difficulties. People with strong efficacy beliefs redouble their efforts in the face of challenges, whereas those with a low sense of efficacy give up.

Efficacy beliefs, for example, play a large role in career choice and pursuing a career, perhaps over many years of necessary education (Bandura et al., 2001). Occupations are highly gendered (see Chapter 9). As girls observe teachers and see many women successfully doing the job, their sense of self-efficacy at being a teacher increases. By contrast, when they observe few women among airline pilots, their sense of efficacy at being a pilot declines and they don't even consider it an option.

Overall, though, cognitive social learning theory is an optimistic theory for those who want to see social change in gender roles. It says that children can and will learn a very different set of gender roles if powerful others—for example, parents and the media—change which behaviors they model and reinforce.

Cognitive-Developmental Theory

In terms of impact, perhaps the closest equivalent in the second half of the 20th century to Freud's work in the first half was the developmental theory proposed by Jean Piaget, together with his colleague Bärbel Inhelder. Lawrence Kohlberg (1966) then extended Piaget and Inhelder's cognitive principles to the realm of gender development.

Much of Piaget and Inhelder's thinking arose from their observations of the errors children made in answering questions such as those asked on intelligence tests. They concluded that these errors did not indicate that the children were stupid or ignorant, but rather that they had a different cognitive organization from that of adults. Piaget and Inhelder discovered that the cognitive organizations of children change systematically over time, and they constructed a stage theory of cognitive development to describe the progression of these changes. Interestingly, concepts of gender and gender identity undergo developmental changes parallel to the development of other concepts. Piagetian perspectives on cognitive development emphasize the importance of the child in constructing their own development, or being active and internally motivated to understand the meaning of concepts.

Kohlberg theorized that **gender constancy**—the understanding that gender is a stable and consistent part of oneself—is critical to children's gender development. Put in Piagetian terms, when a child has gender constancy, they can *conserve* gender; conservation is the understanding that, even though something may change in appearance, its essence remains the same. Achieving gender constancy is a developmental process that begins with acquiring **gender identity**, or knowing their own gender. Children typically have gender identity around 2 years of age (Kohlberg, 1966; Zosuls et al., 2009). We provide a more detailed discussion of the stages of gender constancy development in Chapter 7.

Cognitive-developmental theory views gender role learning as one aspect of cognitive development. The child learns a set of rules regarding what men do and what women do, and behaves accordingly. In this theory, gender role learning is not entirely imposed by external forces, but rather is self-motivated and reflects children's engagement with their social environment. The child essentially engages in self-socialization and self-selects the behaviors to be learned and performed on the basis of rules regarding the gender appropriateness of the behavior. In Chapter 7, we revisit gender learning in childhood and discuss the self-socialization model of gender (Tobin et al., 2010).

Gender constancy: The understanding that gender is a stable and consistent part of oneself.

Gender identity: The first stage of gender constancy development, in which children can identify and label their own gender and the gender of others.

FOCUS 2.1

FEMINIST REFORMULATION OF A THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Lawrence Kohlberg made another major contribution to psychology: a theory of moral development—that is, he developed a stage theory of how our understanding of morality and moral problem solving changes from early childhood through adolescence. First, you need to know how Kohlberg studied moral development and how he determined that there are stages in the development of moral reasoning.

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Kohlberg studied moral thought by presenting children or adults with a moral dilemma, such as this one:

> In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging 10 times what the drug cost him to make. He paid $200 for the radium and charged $2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could get together only about $1,000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

Following presentation of the dilemma, the participant is asked a number of questions, such as whether Heinz should steal the drug and why. The important part is not whether the person says Heinz should or should not steal, but rather the person's answer to the question of why—which reflects the stage of development of moral reasoning.

Based on his research, Kohlberg concluded that people go through a series of three levels in their moral reasoning as they mature (in addition, each level is divided into two stages, for a total of six stages). His model is presented in Table 2.1. In Level I, *preconventional morality*, children (usually preschoolers) have little sense of rules and obey simply to avoid punishments or to obtain rewards. For example, Heinz should not steal because he might get caught and put in jail. In Level II, *conventional morality*, children (usually beginning in elementary school) are well aware of society's rules and laws and conform to them rigidly; there is a law-and-order mentality and a desire to look good in front of others. For example, Heinz should not steal because stealing is against the law. Finally, in Level III, *postconventional morality*, a person transcends the rules and laws of society and instead behaves in accordance with an internal, self-defined set of ethical principles. For example, it is acceptable for Heinz to steal because human life is more important than property. In Level III, it might be judged acceptable to violate laws in some instances in which they are unjust.

TABLE 2.1   Kohlberg's and Gilligan's models of moral development.

Kohlberg's Levels and Stages	Kohlberg's Definitions	Gilligan's Levels
Level I. Preconventional morality		Concern for the self and survival
Stage 1. Punishment orientation	Obey rules to avoid punishment	
Stage 2. Naive reward orientation	Obey rules to get rewards, share to get returns	
Level II. Conventional morality		Concern for being responsible, caring for others
Stage 3. Goodboy/good-girl orientation	Conform to rules that are defined by others' approval/disapproval	
Stage 4. Authority orientation	Rigid conformity to society's rules, law-and-order mentality, avoid censure for rule breaking	
Level III. Postconventional morality		Concern for self and others as interdependent
Stage 5. Social contract orientation	More flexible understanding that we obey rules because they are necessary for social order, but the rules could be changed if there were better alternatives	
Stage 6. Morality of individual principles and conscience	Behavior conforms to internal principles (justice, equality) to avoid self-condemnation, and sometimes may violate society's rules	