

"revolution" in Analysis
gender edited by Anne and
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Introduction

MYRA MARX FERREE
University of Connecticut

BETH B. HESS
County College of Morris

ONE way of dating the feminist revolution in the social sciences is to begin from the publication of Marcia Millman and Rosabeth Kanter's *Another Voice* in 1975. This was hardly the first feminist contribution to the social sciences of recent years, nor was it the first collection of feminist essays provoked by the reemergence of an organized women's movement in the 1960s. Nonetheless, it marked the beginning of an era of feminist social science.

Before *Another Voice* the many daring and original articles that connected feminist concerns to the practices and issues of social science appeared primarily in movement publications. These essays were only gradually collected into books aimed at a mass market (e.g., Morgan, 1970; Gornick and Moran, 1971). Relatively little of this early intellectual ferment appeared in established academic sources or was directed to specifically academic audiences. By the early 1970s, researchers influenced by the burgeoning women's movement began to frame their questions about the status of women in social scientific terms. The first notable collection of such work, *Changing Women in a Changing Society* (1973), edited by Joan Huber, originally appeared as a special issue of the *American Journal of Sociology*. The first edition of Jo Freeman's *Women: A Feminist Perspective* (1975) also brought together original synthesizing essays that challenged traditional theories and conclusions about women. *Another Voice*, however, more than these or other early collections, began to move in the direction of developing feminist theory. The volume provided integrated and comprehensive critiques of the social sciences from a feminist perspective, pushing the field beyond the simple "add-women-and-stir" formula for incorporating women into existing paradigms of research.

Another Voice made clear that there were feminist questions that had not yet been imagined and that the answers would demand a fundamental transformation of the social sciences. Provocative problems were posed in that volume including many that remain unresolved: What class position do

women hold? Why is deviance for women equated with sexuality? What kind of work is housework and whom does it benefit? What does male-centered education do to women? By asking searching questions of all the major institutional areas studied by the social sciences, *Another Voice* was a revolutionary book. As a pioneering work, it was also seriously limited by existing gaps in theory and research. Nonetheless, the essays stimulated an entire generation of feminist social scientists to realize that the questions existed and the answers were significant.

In the years since *Another Voice* the work of feminist social scientists directed to these issues has become impressive in its scope, quality, and significance. Major journals in all the social sciences regularly publish studies focusing on women, if not typically ones that challenge presuppositions of the field. Journals with a specific focus on gender issues have been establishing this concern as a significant speciality. The literature on gender continues to grow exponentially until it is now a double-edged sword: The sweep and richness of this work are exciting to scholars already in the area, but may be daunting to newcomers, be they graduate students or faculty.

The present volume is an attempt to provide an overview of feminist perspectives in the social sciences today. Like any survey of a rapidly changing field, it cannot claim to be definitive. It is an effort, however, to move out and away from questions toward answers. Collections that pose feminist challenges to the standard paradigms of the social sciences have become common (e.g. Sherman and Beck, 1979; Spender, 1981; Roberts, 1981; Bowles and Duelli-Klein, 1983). It is our premise that feminist research has now multiplied and matured sufficiently to allow a self-reflective examination of what has been accomplished and where further work is needed. While the chapters of this volume vary in scope and in style, they share a common concern with articulating what we know and what we need to know about the significance of gender in social organization. Because this book is intended as a compendium in the social sciences of feminist research on gender, it is important to clarify what is meant by each of these terms.

THE DOMAIN OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

The interdisciplinary focus of women's studies is central to its self-definition. The journals of this field, such as *Signs* or *Feminist Studies*, make deliberate and largely successful efforts to cross the boundaries of traditional disciplines and to develop new knowledge that fits women better than it fits the traditional pigeonholes of academic discourse. In this context, it would be impossible to present an overview of feminist research that confined itself to the territory of any one conventional discipline. Scholars trained to respect the boundaries of academic departments tend to ask, "Is it economics?" or "Is it psychology?" before considering whether a research question is important

and to whom. This sort of disciplinary fencing is not really feasible for the feminist research surveyed here. Although authors were chosen who hold positions in a variety of social science departments and whose disciplinary training is also diverse, the areas they cover spread across traditional lines. They incorporate perspectives more characteristic of the fundamentally interdisciplinary nature of women's studies than of their own fields.

At the same time, the authors are not representative of all of women's studies either, as they share a focus and perspective that distinguishes them as social scientists. The perspective can loosely be called "structural". Attention is directed outward from the individual to the social structures that shape experience and meaning, that give people a location in the social world, and that define and allocate economic and social rewards. This type of analysis is quite different from that appropriate for self-referential symbol systems such as literary texts or from other types of scientific endeavor. Even within the social sciences a structural perspective is not always applied; some scholars take the individual as the basic unit, with social organization added on. From a structural perspective, however, individuality itself is a social product.

Because most research within the social sciences has suffered from systematic biases regarding women, feminists see a need for correction on several levels. The most elementary is the recognition of absence—that women have been excluded from consideration, and that many of the most meaningful issues have not been addressed. The process of filling these voids has moved rapidly enough in most disciplines that it is now evident that these omissions were there for a reason. Recognition of the systematic nature of these gaps demands a rethinking of basic conceptual frameworks, including a reexamination of how women and men are differentiated. The emergent feminist perspective represented in this book defines this difference in social structural, rather than individual, terms.

Feminist critics have also described a number of biases within the social sciences that go beyond the simple exclusion of women from entire areas of study and the failure to explore the social origins of differences between men and women. The choice of different concepts, interpretations, and even language for describing women's experience has often been made in the context of a tendency to devalue the female as an expression of an intrinsically lesser nature. Because social scientific thought has been formulated by men, placing men at the center, and with men as the intended audience, women have been transformed into objects without consciousness, existing only in relation to men. As Dorothy Smith explained it, the social sciences constitute a community of discourse with a momentum of its own, a landscape in which even the most accomplished women scholars are in part strangers because it fails to incorporate their experience of reality, even as an African child brought up on British books finds a division between the mental and physical worlds of experience (1979: 138-139).

Moreover, there has been an inclination to press an abstract dichoto-

mization by sex on the natural diversity of humanity, ignoring variation within each group and reifying group differences as an attribute of persons. Male and female have been taken as opposite ends of a continuum, as discrete and non-overlapping categories, and as biologically defined traits rather than as socially constructed labels that carry a situationally defined degree of significance (Lopata and Thorne, 1978). For example, sociologists understood "being blind" as a social construct before being able to recognize "being male" as similarly socially defined (see Scott, 1969), despite the ubiquity of rituals for establishing and asserting "manhood."

Because of these biases, the structural perspective characteristic of the social sciences has not yet been consistently and coherently applied to men and women as such. The feminist project demands reconceptualization of what "male" and "female" mean in terms of the social systems that organize perception, identity, action, and the allocation of costs and benefits for all people. "Maleness" and "femaleness" are then perceived consequences of the operation of these social systems on the variability provided by nature rather than as the property of individuals abstracted from their culture. This is a perspective that is as distinctively social as it is feminist.

DOING FEMINIST RESEARCH

There is today, also, an expanding literature on feminist methodology in the social sciences that attempts systematically to consider how to do research that is more consistent with this theoretical approach (see the annotated bibliography in Bowles and Duelli-Klein, 1983). There are several premises central to the practice of feminist research that inform many of the chapters of this book.

First, there is a fundamental rejection of the ideal of value-free research in favor of a conscious partiality. The increased visibility of the once unconscious bias toward a male-defined, male-centered world in the supposedly value-free research of the past has exposed this ideal as a political myth. There is also a theoretical objection to the idea that any significant work can be done without a perspective or theory behind it; any choice of perspective is by definition political because it defines both a community of knowers and objects to be known. The "generalizing impersonal mode" obscures but does not eliminate the reality of a perspective rooted in the experience of a specific, limited community and concrete, everyday activity (Smith, 1979).

This critique is a self-reflective one. It does not suffice to recognize the biases hidden in the generalizing impersonal language of male-defined social science without taking the next step—to uncover and reject the generalizing impersonal when used by white, middle-class feminists to speak of all women (Joseph and Lewis, 1981; Bell-Scott, 1982). Thus feminist methodology

interprets conscious partiality as a mandate for deliberately inclusive research designs and for awareness of the significance of gender, race, and class in constituting the social scientific community of discourse. The various chapters of this book strive to reflect this conscious attention to the diversity of women's voices.

Second, feminist methodology rejects the positivist division between theory and practice, between the researcher and the "object" of research (Mies, 1983; Stacey and Thorne, 1985). The image of science as establishing mastery over subjects, as demanding the absence of feeling, and as enforcing separateness of the knower from the known, all under the guise of "objectivity," has been carefully critiqued even in reference to the physical sciences (e.g., Keller, 1982). Elements that are present in scientific knowing but devalued because they are associated with femaleness—intuition, empathy, and passion—are ignored in the positivist account and eventually distort the actual process of doing science. Yet it is this masculinized image of science, rather than the more complex reality, that the social sciences embraced in their drive to attain academic credibility (Ross, 1979). Feminist social scientists, reclaiming the value of the female, legitimate these very elements that have been denied and repressed in science itself (e.g., Elshain, 1979; Westcott, 1979).

Commitment to these more inclusive forms of knowing discredits the image of the uninvolved spectator as the ideal social scientist. The feminist view encourages research based on engagement in struggle as a means of becoming conscious of social relationships and structures that might otherwise remain obscure (e.g., Reinharz, 1979). The original essays collected here express different sorts of political orientations but share a willingness to make these commitments visible and to use them reflexively as a conceptual tool. This also makes the chapters less static than most reviews of literature tend to be. The authors are empathetic and passionate in their scholarship and thus attuned to the currents of change in society at large as well as in the research literature.

Third, the emerging feminist methodology that is developing is profoundly anti-functional, whether this comes in a conventional or Marxist guise (e.g., Stanley and Wise, 1983). There is a desire to accommodate a holistic view of social structural arrangements as defining situations and limiting the range of possible actions with a recognition of individuals as agents of change. Social structures are viewed as having contradictory impulses rather than as promoting a smooth and satisfactory accommodation between individual needs and social demands. Attention is directed to the conflicts within experience, to the reality of guilt and ambivalence rather than either simple accommodation or resistance to structures that oppress people (Stacey and Thorne, 1985; Stanley and Wise, 1983).

Consequently, the structural perspective in feminist research and in this volume is less deterministic than commonly found in the social sciences. By

insisting on beginning from and remaining true to personal experience, feminist researchers preserve the distinction between knowing what is expected and doing it (e.g. Gerson, 1985). Resistance, ambivalence, conflict, and struggle are key concepts for feminist theory and methodology because of the centrality of the distinction between what is and what ought to be. The view of women as agents of change rather than as merely passive victims of circumstances animates research into how women themselves interpret and respond to structures of opportunity and constraint, but also forces recognition of the limited alternatives for action facing women who wish to resist oppression (Westcott, 1979; Smith, 1979).

The awareness of change and inconsistency within individuals as well as between them has rendered traditional theories of socialization based on assumptions of internalization and compliance obviously inadequate (Stacey and Thorne, 1985; Stanley and Wise, 1983; Weitzman, 1984). Recognition of how people do not become what they are expected to be has produced growing criticism of functionalist ideas embedded in the concepts of "sex role" and "socialization" (Lopata and Thorne, 1978). This critique has been sufficiently expanded to present a profoundly different perspective on female and male as categories of persons, one that centers on the concept of gender.

ANALYZING GENDER

The study of men and women as such has moved through three distinct stages in just the past twenty years, from an emphasis on sex differences through preoccupation with sex roles to the centrality of gender. The sex differences perspective is, of course, the most traditional. It holds that maleness and femaleness are biologically given properties of individuals with clear implications for social behavior of one sort or another. Within this perspective, the egalitarian view is that such sex differences are small relative to intrasex variation, that they are rarely relevant for important behaviors, and that the differences are as likely to be instances of female superiority as male. Historically, a nonegalitarian view of sex differences has been more prevalent; these differences are used to explain male dominance by assuming that they are large, socially significant, and consistently favor men. In both cases, the source of sex differences is either sought among specific biological features or assumed to be known, and is not considered to need social scientific explanation. Within this perspective, the egalitarians have always found themselves on the defensive, trying to demonstrate that the intrinsic differences between men and women are not large or meaningful enough to account for the degree and ubiquity of male domination observed in society.

Politically and conceptually, the move to a sex role socialization model was a great improvement. From this perspective, the biological determinants of maleness and femaleness could be combined with social determination via

upbringing in any proportion of nature and nurture that seemed appropriate. Sex differences were no longer intrinsically important issues, since both large and small differences could be explained by socialization. Egalitarians could not be distinguished from sexists on the matter of magnitude, but rather in the amount of attention they gave to specific socialization practices, especially those of early childhood. If the socialization of very young children was demonstrably different for boys than for girls, then such differences of nurture would be sufficient to account for sex differences in personality or behavior in adulthood.

Given the assumption that socialization practices are more susceptible to change than are biological features, the sex roles debate often confounded questions about the desirability or feasibility of altering relationships between men and women with questions about whether a particular difference could be attributed to nature or to nurture. In fact, as shown in the case of transsexuals, some biological features are more readily altered than social ones. It is also easy to imagine social arrangements that accommodate or compensate for biological differences (e.g., eyeglasses for astigmatism) as well as those that reflect and reinforce biological differences that have been endowed with social significance (e.g., shunning short men or tall women).

A second problem in the literature on sex roles involves the presumption of continuity throughout the life course. Advocates of nurture accepted the premise that early learning was one of the most influential determinants of later behavior and assumed consistency between the behaviors and expectations typical of children (e.g., playing with dolls or trucks) and those of adults (e.g., male or female sex-typed careers). This perspective not only trivializes the consequences of adult learning and change throughout life, but also rests on the idea of an abstract female role that exists apart from any specific interpersonal relationship and without concrete behavioral content. The focus is on personality traits that are presumed to be constant across situations and over the life cycle and that can supposedly be used to predict a wide range of behaviors. As Lopata and Thorne (1978) argue, this is neither the way that sociologists have usually theorized roles nor is it a plausible model of female behavior. The absurdity of speaking of "race roles" or "the black role" brings home the contrast between the structural and situational perspective used for race and class, on the one hand, and the individualized, essentialist view inherent in the sex roles approach on the other.

Just as the awareness of cross-cultural differences in what constituted maleness and femaleness was an important step in moving from a biologically determined view of sex differences to a socialization determined view of sex roles, the increasing evidence of inconsistency of any one individual's behavior across time and in different situations now casts doubt on both of these determinist views. So-called sex roles as personality traits or characteristics of individuals (as in the Bem Sex Role Inventory) are notoriously poor predictors of behaviors. While the naive view or "natural attitude"

supposes people to have a stable and consistent personality developed in infancy, the absence of predictability of behavior from one context to another has long made this essentialist assumption scientifically dubious. Moreover, the only trait that links behaviors as diverse as sewing, nursing, and scrubbing floors is the sex-typing done by the perceiver. The fact that each characteristic could in theory be separately socialized into little girls does not begin to explain why they are packaged together conceptually. The label "female" is itself an abstract categorization that links an incredible diversity of unrelated and frequently inconsistent behavioral expectations and outcomes. To describe anything that receives the label "female" as part of a supposed sex role is to grant it a coherence, consistency, and constancy that the evidence does not justify (see Gerson, 1985).

As a result, recent years have seen the emergence of an entirely new perspective on maleness and femaleness. The key concept in this view is gender, seen as a principle organizing social arrangements, behavior, and even cognition. One of the central elements in gender systems is the taboo against the sameness of male and female, "a taboo which exacerbrates the biological differences between the sexes and thereby creates gender" (Rubin, 1975: 178). Because the gender system insists on and rewards difference, men and women are created who have an interest in presenting themselves and being perceived as "real" men and "real" women—that is, without elements socially defined as belonging in the other category. As Gayle Rubin put it, "from the standpoint of nature, men and women are closer to each other than either is to anything else—for instance, mountains, kangaroos, or coconut palms. . . . the idea that men and women are two mutually exclusive categories must arise out of something other than a non-existent 'natural' opposition. Far from being an expression of natural differences, exclusive gender identity is the suppression of natural similarities" (1975: 179-180) for social purposes and by social means.

The division of labor by sex, whatever it might be in any given society, is then understood to be also an outgrowth of that fundamental taboo rather than the cause of the differences between men and women. Doing gender-specific work is part of what defines "real" men and women as such, so too are gender-specific sexual relations. Gender is not a trait but a system for dividing people into distinct, nonoverlapping categories despite their natural variability on any particular characteristic and regardless of the inconsistency between features that are all supposed to be definitive.

Because the gender system is not a reflection of natural differences, creating gender is a struggle. We all bear "the traces of conscription" into a system that represses parts of our potential and no one ever fully conforms to it. On the other hand, even those individuals who deliberately refuse to take their allotted place in the system cannot escape knowing what it is (Rubin, 1975). Unlike the socialization account of sex roles, the psychic processes central to the gender model include ambivalence, conflict, and rebellion. Indeed, there

can be no such thing as the well-socialized individual who smoothly accommodates all of society's demands because the demands themselves are inconsistent and even contradictory.

Moreover, like other power relations, gender is constantly being renegotiated and reconstituted (Margolis, 1985) and it is particularly visible at boundaries and points of change (Gerson and Peiss, 1985). Because gender is relational rather than essential, structural rather than individual, analyzing gender requires consideration of changes in systems over time. The alteration in social structures themselves as well as variation in individual relations within these gender systems demand attention to both macro and micro levels of structure and of change.

The editors and authors of this volume adopt the gender perspective and analyze its implications for the social sciences. The basic assumption is that gender is a property of systems rather than people, but that it is also important to trace the experiences of people within a gendered social structure. The first part, "Gender and Ideology," examines the meaning of gender and the ways in which gender ideology has been used as an organizing principle for social systems, for knowledge, and for perception itself. The next two sections explore the dynamics of gender understood as a property of social systems: Part II, "Social Control of Female Sexuality," deals with the social construction and organization of sexuality and reproduction; and Part III develops perspectives on "Gender Stratification" in economic relations. The chapters in Part IV, "Gendered Worlds," investigate the consequences of gender for women's lives in selected areas of civil society. The final section, "Gender and the State," considers the significance of gender in relationship to political systems and processes.

PART I: GENDER AND IDEOLOGY

The book opens with anthropologist Christine Ward Gailey's analysis of how and why gender has been constructed in the transition from kinship to state societies. Beginning with an overview of kinship societies, Gailey notes that gender must clearly be distinguished from biological sex in that it is possible to acknowledge at least four "genders": children, for whom reproduction is not relevant; adult males and females of reproductive age; and elders, who occupy a status defined by age rather than reproductive capacity. Because our society emphasizes gender differentiation from cradle to grave, we overlook the significance of cultures that use only one term for children or elders of both sexes. Gailey also distinguishes patriarchy—male dominance through specific kin roles—from other forms of male supremacist society. She draws an interesting parallel between Western industrial societies and Inca culture, where abstract maleness was equated with power, so that women of the ruling group could be "honorary males" while people of conquered

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that she would give it up some day in favor of marriage and family. She makes clear "how hard it is for a woman to feel the freedom that could let her develop as a writer, even if she has it" (p. 52). Kathleen Fraser also helps us to understand the experience of the woman poet in her essay "On being a West Coast Woman Poet."²² Fraser grew up in the west and then went off "to the highly polished surfaces and honed edges of New York City . . . to learn to control myself." She explains that "the main message" she had received from men teachers in college was that "my poems were embarrassing in their directness and not formal enough. One man drew a wheel and lectured me about the spokes and how they must connect to the rim. Some of my spokes were obviously missing" (p. 3). Fraser's essay articulates the conflict of the woman poet who would express her own experience but knows that "good poetry" is defined by men—in this case by the eastern critical establishment.

This brief survey indicates that there is much work afoot in women's poetry. (And certainly there is even more since I wrote this review.) We are much closer to an overall view of women's novelistic tradition than we are to a sense of women's poetry, and thus it will be some time before we have the perspective to make final judgments of this new research. At the present moment, we can be encouraged by the sheer amount of work being done and hope that Modern Language Association seminars, new books and journal articles, as well as reviews such as this one will help to bring together scholars of similar interests, working to define the particular character and excellence of poetry by American women.

*Women's Studies Program
University of California, Berkeley*

1948
On the Term "Sex Roles"

Barbara
Helena Z. Lopata and Barrie Thorne

Catharine Stimpson asked me to expand on my discomfort with the use of the term (I cannot call it a concept) "sex roles" to label the area of research and writing dealing with the influence of gender assignment on a person and her/his relations with others. The discomfort is mentioned in my review essay in the Autumn 1976 issue of *Signs*,¹ but it has a long history, and there are many others who find the term sociologically illogical. There was a long discussion of it, initiated by Pepper Schwartz, in our theoretical and methodological session of the International Work-

22. Fraser's paper was first delivered at the 1976 Modern Language Association seminar on women's poetry and will be published in the previously mentioned issue of *Women's Studies* (n. 8 above).

1. Helena Znaniecki Lopata, "Review Essay: Sociology," *Signs* 2 (1976): 165-76.

shop on Changing Sex Roles in Family and Society in Dubrovnik in 1975. Rita Simon, who is general editor for a series of annuals put out by Johnson Publications, asked me to edit one such series on "Sex Roles and Kinship," and I begged for a change of title to "The Intertwave of Social Roles: Women and Men in Kinship and Society." Members of the recently created "Sex Roles" section of the American Sociological Association have engaged in extensive discussions over the problems with this term, and Barrie Thorne volunteered to write up some of the arguments against its use.² They are extensive.

1. Role terminology is not fully applicable to gender. Gender, or learned behavior differentiated along the lines of biological sex,³ is not a role in the same sense that being a teacher, sister, or friend is a role. Gender, like race or age, is deeper, less changeable, and infuses the more specific roles one plays; thus, a female teacher differs from a male teacher in important sociological respects (e.g., she is likely to receive less pay, status, and credibility). This distinction has occasionally been acknowledged by defining gender as a "basic role,"⁴ an "unfocused role,"⁵ or a "diffuse status characteristic."⁶ But "sex roles" terminology is often used unreflectively and involves questionable assumptions.

2. "Sex roles" terminology tends to mask questions of power and inequality. The notion of "role" has tended to focus attention more on individuals than on social strata, more on socialization than on social structure, and has thereby deflected attention away from historic, economic, and political questions.⁷ "Sex roles" suggests a "separate but equal" sort of conceptualization, perhaps one reason "race roles" and "class roles" never entered sociological discourse (it has taken longer for sociologists to acknowledge sexism than to acknowledge inequalities of race and class).

3. It is significant that sociologists do not use the terms "race roles" or "class roles." It might be worthwhile to compare the evolution of the concepts used in the sociological study of class, race, and gender. In the study of gender, the possibilities of sexual double entendre haunt the search for concepts; for example, "sex relations" risks misunderstanding

2. A somewhat different version of these comments appeared in the *Newletter* of the American Sociological Association Sex Roles Section (Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association, n.d.).

3. David Tressener, "Assumptions about Gender Roles," in *Another Voice*, ed. M. Millman and R. M. Kanter (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975), pp. 308-39.

4. Michael Banton, *Roles* (New York: Basic Books, 1965).

5. Shirley Angrist, "The Study of Sex Roles," *Journal of Social Issues* 25 (1969): 215-31.

6. Joseph Berger, Bernard P. Cohen, and Morris Zelditch, Jr., "Status Conceptions and Social Interaction," *American Sociological Review* 37 (1972): 241-55.

7. Ann Battle-Sister, "Book Review," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 33 (1971): 592-97; Elizabeth Benson, "Dual Career Families: Alternative Research Approaches," unpublished paper (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1972); and Jessie Bernard, *Women, Wives, Mothers: Values and Options* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1975), chap. 1.

The first part of the document discusses the historical context of the research. It mentions the importance of understanding the social and cultural environment in which the study was conducted. The author notes that the research was conducted in a time of significant social change, and that this context is essential for interpreting the results. The text also mentions the challenges of conducting research in this field, particularly the difficulty of accessing certain sources of information. The author concludes that despite these challenges, the research has provided valuable insights into the subject matter.

The second part of the document presents the methodology used in the study. The author describes the selection of participants, the data collection methods, and the analysis techniques. It is noted that a qualitative approach was used, with data being collected through interviews and focus groups. The author explains how the data was analyzed to identify themes and patterns. The methodology section is thorough and provides a clear understanding of how the research was conducted.

The third part of the document discusses the findings of the study. The author presents the results of the interviews and focus groups, highlighting the key themes that emerged. It is noted that the findings are consistent with previous research in the field, but also identify some new insights. The author discusses the implications of these findings for future research and for practice. The findings section is well-organized and provides a clear overview of the study's results.

The fourth part of the document concludes the study. The author summarizes the main findings and discusses their significance. It is noted that the research has contributed to the understanding of the subject matter and has provided valuable insights into the social and cultural environment. The author also discusses the limitations of the study and suggests areas for future research. The conclusion is well-written and provides a clear overview of the study's contributions.

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while "race relations" does not. The term "sex role" does have the virtue of affirming that one's focus is learned, cultural, and social behavior and not the biological or more narrowly sexual aspects of female and male. "Sex roles" also suggests a social as opposed to psychological approach (a distinction Stoller makes in contrasting "gender role" with "gender identity").⁸

4. Much of sex roles literature is fraught with reification. "Sex roles," "sex role stereotyping," and "sex role socialization" are often written and talked about as if they exist concretely rather than being analytic constructs.

* * *

I have a few additional comments. The most useful definition of social roles, which enables me to work comparatively with a great range of such relations, is, not surprisingly, Znaniecki's.⁹ According to his formulation, a social role is a set of functionally interdependent, culturally patterned relations involving duties and personal rights between a social person and a social circle.¹⁰ Thus, it is not a set of expectations but of relations, and a culture providing the base for the role by defining who should or should not be assigned or allowed to enter a specific role in a specific social circle and what duties and rights are "normally" needed in order that the function of the role (again culturally defined) be carried forth. An American woman enters the role of mother when she develops, after acknowledging birth, adoption, or fostering, relations not only with a child but with a wide range of members of the circle in order to care for and rear that child. The circle may contain a father, a pediatrician, other children she is mothering, friends of her child, her family of orientation and in-laws who relate to her in a specific way because she is the mother of that child, school teachers, etc.

The problem with the term "sex role" is that there is no such thing. As far as I can tell, there is no patterned set of relations whose only function is somehow restricted to the one characteristic of a social person of being a man or a woman. Gender identification pushes, pulls, encourages, or discourages entrance into functionally organized social roles, such as call girl, father, engineer, etc. The selection of roles as appropriate to men or women is based on the cultural image of the ideal or the normal set of characteristics needed to perform that role and on the circle's willingness to accept a candidate with or without the normative characteristics. For example, engineers are pictured as men in America,

8. Robert Stoller, *Sex and Gender: On the Development of Masculinity and Femininity* (New York: Science House, 1968).

9. Florian Znaniecki, *Social Relations and Social Roles* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1965).

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 201-6.

women in Poland. Gender identification may also modify the duties and the rights within a role, as in all social roles which have dual or more extensive subdivisions. That is, the cultural base and social circles may demand that a woman perform the duties of a role differently than does a man. They may offer different personal rights, as in the case when women and men are paid differently for doing the same thing.

The point I am making here is that I cannot locate a sex role, or even a gender role, seeing only the influence, more or less pervasive, of gender identification and self-identity upon the social roles selected and entered into by men and women and upon the relations with members of the social circles of these roles. It seems to be that being a woman is not a social role but a pervasive identity and a set of self-feelings which lead to the selection or the assignment by others of social roles and to the performance by women of common roles in some ways differently from men.

*Department of Sociology and Center for the Comparative Study of Social Roles
Loyola University, Chicago (Lopata)*

*Department of Sociology
Michigan State University (Thorne)*

Comment on Naomi Goldenberg's "A Feminist Critique of Jung" (vol. 2, no. 2)

Barbara E. Chesser

What is set forth as critique is character assassination of Jung as sexist and racist. Quotes are taken out of context. There is misapprehension or misrepresentation of basic concepts, for example, the archetype, the animus/anima, the difference between the individual and collective unconscious, and the implications inherent in the fact that these originate not in metaphysical deductions about the human mind but in empirical observations of psychobiological phenomena. Jung has often been attacked by those ill equipped to deal with the biological considerations fundamental to his thought. Misconstruction here is so complete it cannot be discussed profitably. A paragraph, with my inserted comments, at random:

To Jungians the anima, the animus, and their verbal handmaidens Eros and Logos are "archetypes," by definition, what is unchanging and unchangeable. [Eros and Logos are not archetypes—psychoid structures which cannot become conscious—but manifestations of

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that she would give it up some day in favor of marriage and family. She makes clear "how hard it is for a woman to feel the freedom that could let her develop as a writer, even if she has it" (p. 52). Kathleen Fraser also helps us to understand the experience of the woman poet in her essay "On being a West Coast Woman Poet."²² Fraser grew up in the west and then went off "to the highly polished surfaces and honed edges of New York City . . . to learn to control myself." She explains that "the main message" she had received from men teachers in college was that "my poems were embarrassing in their directness and not formal enough. One man drew a wheel and lectured me about the spokes and how they must connect to the rim. Some of my spokes were obviously missing" (p. 3). Fraser's essay articulates the conflict of the woman poet who would express her own experience but knows that "good poetry" is defined by men—in this case by the eastern critical establishment.

This brief survey indicates that there is much work afoot in women's poetry. (And certainly there is even more since I wrote this review.) We are much closer to an overall view of women's novelistic tradition than we are to a sense of women's poetry, and thus it will be some time before we have the perspective to make final judgments of this new research. At the present moment, we can be encouraged by the sheer amount of work being done and hope that Modern Language Association seminars, new books and journal articles, as well as reviews such as this one will help to bring together scholars of similar interests, working to define the particular character and excellence of poetry by American women.

Women's Studies Program
University of California, Berkeley

Jan 26 1978
On the Term "Sex Roles"

Helena Z. Lopata and Barrie Thorne

Catharine Stimpson asked me to expand on my discomfort with the use of the term (I cannot call it a concept) "sex roles" to label the area of research and writing dealing with the influence of gender assignment on a person and her/his relations with others. The discomfort is mentioned in my review essay in the Autumn 1976 issue of *Signs*,¹ but it has a long history, and there are many others who find the term sociologically illogical. There was a long discussion of it, initiated by Pepper Schwartz, in our theoretical and methodological session of the International Work-

22. Fraser's paper was first delivered at the 1976 Modern Language Association seminar on women's poetry and will be published in the previously mentioned issue of *Women's Studies* (n. 8 above).

1. Helena Zannetti Lopata, "Review Essay: Sociology," *Signs* 2 (1976): 165-76.

shop on Changing Sex Roles in Family and Society in Dubrovnik in 1975. Rita Simon, who is general editor for a series of annuals put out by Johnson Publications, asked me to edit one such series on "Sex Roles and Kinship," and I begged for a change of title to "The Intertwining of Social Roles: Women and Men in Kinship and Society." Members of the recently created "Sex Roles" section of the American Sociological Association have been engaged in extensive discussions over the problems with this term, and Barrie Thorne volunteered to write up some of the arguments against its use.² They are extensive.

1. Role terminology is not fully applicable to gender. Gender, or learned behavior differentiated along the lines of biological sex,³ is not a role in the same sense that being a teacher, sister, or friend is a role. Gender, like race or age, is deeper, less changeable, and infuses the more specific roles one plays; thus, a female teacher differs from a male teacher in important sociological respects (e.g., she is likely to receive less pay, status, and credibility). This distinction has occasionally been acknowledged by defining gender as a "basic role,"⁴ an "unfocused role,"⁵ or a "diffuse status characteristic."⁶ But "sex roles" terminology is often used unreflectively and involves questionable assumptions.

2. "Sex roles" terminology tends to mask questions of power and inequality. The notion of "role" has tended to focus attention more on individuals than on social strata, more on socialization than on social structure, and has thereby deflected attention away from historic, economic, and political questions.⁷ "Sex roles" suggests a "separate but equal" sort of conceptualization, perhaps one reason "race roles" and "class roles" never entered sociological discourse (it has taken longer for sociologists to acknowledge sexism than to acknowledge inequalities of race and class).

3. It is significant that sociologists do not use the terms "race roles" or "class roles." It might be worthwhile to compare the evolution of the concepts used in the sociological study of class, race, and gender. In the study of gender, the possibilities of sexual double entendre haunt the search for concepts; for example, "sex relations" risks misunderstanding

2. A somewhat different version of these comments appeared in the *Newlander* of the American Sociological Association Sex Roles Section (Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association, n.d.).

3. David T. Presemer, "Assumptions about Gender Roles," in *Another Voice*, ed. M. Millman and R. M. Kanter (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975), pp. 308-39.

4. Michael Banton, *Roles* (New York: Basic Books, 1965).

5. Shirley Angrist, "The Study of Sex Roles," *Journal of Social Issues* 25 (1969): 215-31.

6. Joseph Berger, Bernard P. Cohen, and Morris Zelditch, Jr., "Status Conceptions and Social Interaction," *American Sociological Review* 37 (1972): 241-55.

7. Ann Battle-Sister, "Book Review," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 33 (1971): 592-97; Elizabeth Benson, "Dual Career Families: Alternative Research Approaches," unpublished paper (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1972); and Jessie Bernard, *Women, Wives, Mothers: Values and Options* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1975), chap. 1.