

THE DEVELOPMENTAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF GENDER

EDITED BY

THOMAS ECKES
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The Developmental Social Psychology of Gender

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Preface

Gender research is currently one of the most active and dynamic areas in developmental and social psychology. Since the early 1970s there has been a tremendous increase in the understanding of gender and gender-related phenomena. The advances that have been made in theory and methodology, as well as the insights gained from myriads of empirical studies, are undoubtedly impressive. Yet, from its inception, the field has remained fragmented, making developmental and social psychological approaches to gender look like artificial divisions of a common subject matter. What's even worse, the relation between both psychological subdisciplines at times resembles well-documented effects of in-group/out-group differentiation: New approaches, concepts, and findings presented by in-group members are received with approval, whereas similarly important contributions to the same topic made by out-group members are largely ignored or overlooked. This volume is intended to overcome this unfortunate situation.

The time has come to strive for a synthesis of developmental and social psychology in pursuit of a common goal—the study of gender as a social category. In order to better understand the multifaceted and multi-dimensional nature of gender it seems necessary to take up and analyze issues at the intersection of both psychological disciplines, highlighting the interrelationships between developmental and social processes rather than looking at either kind of process in isolation. The objective of this book, then, is to provide a forum for setting out and elaborating an integrative perspective on gender and to offer a coherent counterpoint to the time-honored separation of gender research along disciplinary lines. Each chapter is intended to bring together relevant research and theory from both social and developmental psychology, thus attesting to the versatility of crossing disciplinary lines and, at the same time, providing fertile grounds for future cross-disciplinary research.

Because this is the first volume to advance an integration of both disciplines' perspectives on gender, there is a high degree of diversity. First of all, the contributions to this volume emerged from either a social psychological or a developmental background, promoting diversity in the conceptual approaches taken, the kinds of questions asked, and the methodology employed. Furthermore, some chapters focus on theoretical issues, whereas others present original pieces of empirical research. As stated more explicitly in the introductory chapter, the existence of multiple vantage points is particularly beneficial at this point in that it fosters cross-fertilization of ideas and allows freedom to choose from equally promising directions of gender research. In order to lend structure to this diversity, however, the approaches and findings covered in the various chapters are organized by means of a general conceptual framework rooted in a multidimensional view of gender.

Laying the groundwork for a developmental social psychology of gender appeared to be a task both overdue and challenging. Hence, we were extremely pleased at the response that our invitations to contribute to the volume received. As editors, we would like to thank the authors of the individual chapters for accepting this challenge. We are also grateful for their patience and willingness to respond to our questions and suggestions at all stages of the project. The commitment by the contributors to the integrative effort is reflected in the creativity and scholarship with which they set about answering the intriguing, and often highly intricate, issues emerging at the intersection of developmental and social psychological research on gender.

In terms of the writing level and complexity of material presented, the book is targeted at advanced undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals in social psychology, developmental psychology, and interdisciplinary gender studies. Due to the richness and diversity of topics covered in the chapters, this volume is also of direct interest to readers in neighboring disciplines such as educational psychology, sociology, and anthropology.

We hope that the integrative approach advanced in this volume will stimulate much innovative research concerned with the joint analysis of developmental change and social influence. The time is ripe for social psychologists and developmentalists to recategorize their perceptions of group boundaries and to develop a common in-group identity—that of a developmental social psychology of gender.

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I

INTRODUCTION

1

Developmental Social Psychology of Gender: An Integrative Framework

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Gender is one of the most important categories, if not the most important category, in human social life. Though at first sight distinguishing between female and male may seem straightforward, a closer look readily reveals that this fundamental categorization is fairly complex—it is imbued with a host of cultural meanings and practices pervading each and every aspect of individual, interpersonal, group, and societal processes. Thus, all known cultures provide rich and well-differentiated sets of concepts and terms to categorize and characterize boys and girls, men and women, to separate between female and male roles, rights, and responsibilities. In all known cultures, females and males meet with distinct sets of gender-related beliefs and expectations exerting powerful, and often subtle, influence on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

For some time now, the construct of gender has figured prominently in psychological theory and research, attracting the attention of an ever-increasing number of researchers, in particular researchers from developmental and social psychology. Commenting on this research trend, Swann, Langlois, and Gilbert (1999) wrote: “Once the province of a small group of theorists and researchers operating on the periphery of psychological science, gender research has charged into the psychological mainstream during the last 2 decades” (p. 3). In a similar vein, Fiske (1998)

identified gender as one of the top three categories (along with race and age) that form the primary foci of contemporary social psychological research on stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. The significance of the gender construct is also highlighted by the fact that the latest editions of both subdisciplines' standard references, *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (Gilbert, Fiske, & Lindzey, 1998) and the *Handbook of Child Psychology* (Damon, 1998), once more each include a chapter featuring gender phenomena—Deaux and LaFrance (1998) presented a social psychological view of gender, Ruble and Martin (1998) examined gender from a developmental perspective.

Given the importance of gender in human social life, the high level of research activities in the field does not come as a surprise. However, these activities are only very loosely, if at all, interconnected. Particularly, developmental and social psychological paradigms of research remain juxtaposed, and no attempt at integration is made. Unfortunately enough, developmental and social psychological approaches to gender do not seem to have very much in common. Thus, only a cursory look at Deaux and LaFrance's and Ruble and Martin's *Handbook* chapters suggests that gender in developmental perspective is something quite different from gender in social psychological perspective. How far these perspectives have evolved into separate spheres is quite easily illustrated: Of all the citations provided by Deaux and LaFrance (309 references) and those provided by Ruble and Martin (612 references), no more than 29 are common to both chapters.

The startlingly small degree of overlap between the sets of developmental and social psychological studies referred to in each subdiscipline's most representative current review is indicative of a long-standing compartmentalization in the field. As a result, the corresponding portrayals of gender phenomena often remain fragmentary in many respects, with several relevant issues simply failing to appear on the respective research agenda. Eisenberg (1995a) put it this way: "Findings in social psychology frequently raise important questions for developmentalists, or vice versa—questions that often are not recognized by investigators due to their lack of knowledge of work and ideas outside of their own perspectives" (p. vii).

The present volume aims at overcoming this highly unsatisfactory status quo. We believe that developmentalists and social psychologists can profit substantially from each other by exchanging insights, concepts, and theories. Understanding the multifaceted nature of gender, by this account, necessitates taking up and analyzing issues at the intersection of both psychological disciplines, highlighting the close and often complex interrelations between developmental and social processes.

Over the last two decades there have been several approaches crossing the boundaries between developmental and social psychology. Some of these works addressed fairly broad or heterogeneous sets of topics (see, e.g.,

Brehm, Kassin, & Gibbons, 1981; Durkin, 1995; Wozniak & Fischer, 1993); others undertook concerted efforts in the field of social development (Eisenberg, 1995b; Ruble & Goodnow, 1998); still others chose to adopt an integrative approach to more circumscribed issues like social cognition (Flavell & Ross, 1981b; Higgins, Ruble, & Hartup, 1983), cognitive development (Rogoff, 1990), aging (Blank, 1982; Pratt & Norris, 1994), the self (Staudinger & Greve, 1997), intelligence (Doise & Mugny, 1984), juvenile problem behavior (Silbereisen, Eyferth, & Rudinger, 1986), and cultural practices (Goodnow, Miller, & Kessel, 1995).

However, an explicitly integrative look focused on gender has been seriously lacking. This is all the more surprising as the widely acknowledged multifaceted nature of gender phenomena literally calls for bringing together relevant research and theory from both developmental and social psychology, perhaps even more so than applies to many other fields of study. Failing to meet the challenge of an integrative gender research would bear the risk of ending up like the blind wise men in the old Hindu fable cited by Constantinople (1979). Confronted with an elephant and asked to decide what it was, each of the men assumed that the object under study was best described by the part he happened to feel (a snake when feeling the tail, a tree when feeling the leg, etc.).

In the rest of this chapter, we first discuss potential benefits of integrating developmental and social psychological approaches to the study of gender. As it turns out, many of the strengths of one of these approaches are mirrored by weaknesses of the other, and vice versa, making it all the more worthwhile to work toward an integration highlighting the merits of both. We then present a conceptual framework lending structure to the large variety of possible research questions in the emerging field of a developmental social psychology of gender. At its heart is a multidimensional conceptualization of gender development (Huston, 1983; Ruble & Martin, 1998), extended by incorporating multiple levels of social psychological analysis (Doise, 1986). Finally, we give a preview of this volume's chapters, pointing to the ways in which they contribute to the integrative effort.

BENEFITS OF INTEGRATING DEVELOPMENTAL AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER

Contributions of the Developmental Perspective

Looking at the typical way of doing research in social psychology, a severe limitation immediately becomes obvious, a limitation that is characteristic of most, if not all, nondevelopmental psychological disciplines: a profound

neglect of issues and variables referring to *change over time*. Social psychological studies commonly do not allow for analysis of the developmental processes involved in the social phenomena under consideration. Put differently, change over time represents a “blind spot” of social psychology. It is as if gender attitudes or gender stereotypes, to take just two prominent topics studied extensively by social psychologists, would “arise out of nowhere, forming miraculously just before their subjects come to university” (Durkin, 1995, p. 3).

The point is that social processes in general, and gender-related processes in particular, have developmental histories necessitating a time course or life-span perspective for a fuller understanding. Although developmental studies can themselves be criticized for focusing on some particular age spans (Ruble & Goodnow, 1998, pp. 743–745), the vast majority of subjects in social psychological studies typically fall into a fairly narrow age group, that of young adults. Whereas in the 1940s and 1950s social psychologists often employed subject samples from a wide range of age groups, since the 1960s (and continuing to the present) social psychologists have almost exclusively conducted research with college-age students—an age group that is peculiar in many respects (Sears, 1986; see also Flavell & Ross, 1981a). For example, compared with older adults, college students typically have less crystallized attitudes, less well-formulated senses of self, and more unstable peer-group relationships. Even more substantial differences can be assumed to exist with respect to younger adolescents or children.

Clearly, working on such a narrow database restricts the set of research questions that can be asked and poses difficulties for the conclusions that can be drawn from research findings. With a focus on college-age students as the primary subject population, social psychology is generally ill-equipped to address processes of change over time, and it risks leaving out of account sources and consequences of variability in social, contextual, and cultural influences across the life span. It is precisely here that a developmental analysis can contribute substantially in gaining a more complete understanding of gender. In a thoughtful discussion of the general relation between developmental and social psychological research, Ruble and Goodnow (1998) outlined points of overlap between the two disciplines, as well as several distinctive features of a developmental analysis. These features are of particular interest here because they refer to potential benefits of a developmental perspective.

First, the developmental approach provides a time-course perspective that draws attention to the dynamic or temporal qualities of behavior; that is, gender-related behavior is seen as affected by the individual's place in history and ontogeny. Accordingly, a developmental approach entails looking for conditions influencing behavior within the history of the

individual. The typical research design allows comparisons based on age differences, either cross-sectionally or longitudinally.

Second, in a developmental analysis much weight is given to the effects of early experience. Whereas social psychologists typically focus on proximal sources of influence on behavior, lending high importance to recency and frequency effects, developmentalists often study ontogenetically more remote, distal sources of influence (Costanzo, 1992). In a similar vein, developmentalists are prone to investigate periods of heightened sensitivity in an individual's life span. For example, life transitions such as reaching puberty, becoming a parent, or retiring can be conceptualized as sensitive periods systematically influencing an individual's self-construal, his or her social attitudes, interpersonal relationships, and so forth (Ruble, 1994).

Third, a developmental perspective highlights the pace and direction of change. This feature is immediately evident in research with children. Childhood is a period of rapid developmental change, leading to questions concerning the specifics of the processes involved. Thus, for example, children's acquisition of gender stereotypes, differentiation of gender-related self-knowledge, or adoption of gender roles can be analyzed with respect to issues of acceleration or deceleration. Similarly, studies of the direction of changes typically focus on content, structure, and flexibility of gender stereotypes; the relative proportion of feminine, masculine, or androgynous features contained within a child's self-concept; and the adoption of traditional versus nontraditional gender roles.

Finally, developmental analyses draw attention to the course or trajectory of change processes. Different kinds of social knowledge or behavior may be characterized by distinctly different developmental patterns, some forming part of a linear progression, others following a more curvilinear trend (e.g., U-shaped or reverse U-shaped) or an irregular decline. Taking account of the trajectory of change can help social psychologists to decide when to take dependent measures, to find out about the extent to which change processes are short-lived or tend to stabilize, and to comparatively analyze developmental trends in different domains of social cognition and behavior.

Taken together, analyzing the temporal qualities of behavior, looking at distal sources of influence, examining the pace and direction of change processes, and studying the trajectory of change represent distinctive and intriguing features of a developmental analysis. It is in these respects that the social psychological perspective on gender could profit most from a developmental approach.

Contributions of the Social Psychological Perspective

Many developmentalists, especially those working in the area of cognitive development (and adopting a Piagetian or a Kohlberg approach), have often failed to pay sufficient attention to overt and covert variants of social influence on the processes under consideration. Formation and change of gender-typed cognitions, preferences, and behaviors, in their view, can (or even should) be analyzed as instances or consequences of more general cognitive-developmental processes, thus leaving aside, or abstracting from, the social context in which the individual is acting. In sharp contrast, social, contextual, and cultural factors influencing an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are of critical importance to a social psychological analysis; actually, it is social influence that defines the field (see, e.g., Allport, 1985). Hence, what constitutes a "blind spot" of the developmental perspective forms the focus of a social psychological approach to gender. Therefore, in principle, there similarly is a high potential for the developmental approach to benefit from gender research in social psychology.

Within contemporary social psychology "gender is considered a dynamic construct that draws on and impinges upon processes at the individual, interactional, group, institutional, and cultural levels" (Deaux & LaFrance, 1998, p. 788). At the core of this approach is the view of *gender as a social category* (Deaux, 1984; Sherif, 1982; see also Deaux, 1999). As Sherif (1982) put it: "Gender is a scheme for social categorization of individuals, and every known human society has some gender scheme. Every gender scheme recognizes biological differentiation while also creating social differentiations" (p. 376). A basic tenet of this view is that an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are heavily influenced by a host of intertwined multilevel social and cultural factors associated with the categorical distinction between female and male. These factors include the division of labor between the sexes, descriptive and prescriptive beliefs about women and men, and attitudes toward the sexes and toward gender-related issues (see, e.g., Ashmore, 1990; Eckes, 1997).

The gender-as-a-social-category view contrasts with two other research paradigms in the psychology of gender (Ashmore, 1990; Deaux, 1984; Trautner, 1993). The first is the *sex differences* (or *gender-as-a-subject-variable*) approach. In its most elementary form, this approach seeks to answer the seemingly simple question of whether, and to what degree, the sexes differ in a number of psychological measures referring to mental abilities, personality traits, social behaviors, and so forth. The sex differences approach was the earliest to be taken up, and it continues to attract a lot of attention (see, e.g., Eagly, 1995; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Merz, 1979). In the second paradigm, gender is construed as a personality variable, that is, as one or a small number of stable, internal (i.e., traitlike)

qualities. Key concepts of the *gender-as-a-personality-variable* approach are “masculinity,” “femininity,” and their derivative “androgyny.” Here, a major attraction for theorizing and research concerns measurement issues and the concepts’ explanatory power with respect to individual differences in mental health, social adjustment, and a variety of gender-related behaviors (see, e.g., Bem, 1974, 1993; Bierhoff-Alfermann, 1989; Morawski, 1987).

An important characteristic common to the sex differences and the *gender-as-a-personality-variable* paradigms is their almost exclusive focus on the individual level. Both emphasize the person rather than the situation, and both refer primarily to biological distinctions or prior socialization as explanatory principles (Deaux & Kite, 1987). The typical study carried out within either approach features static individual dispositions, leaving out of account the complex social dynamics underlying gender phenomena. Unlike these individual-centered approaches, the *gender-as-a-social-category* perspective focuses on fluctuating patterns of gender-typed behavior in social contexts. We do not argue here against sex differences research in general, mainly because significant insights into the context-bound and culturally transmitted nature of sex-differentiated behaviors presuppose a fine-grained analysis of their very occurrence, possibly inspired by theoretical assumptions derived from the *gender-as-a-social-category* view (discussed later). However, we do think that merely documenting and cataloging observed sex differences remains an incomplete, if not misguided, account of gender.

To illustrate, consider the following hypothetical example of a mixed-sex group of persons working on a particular task. The simple sex differences approach typically would compare the average performance score of the female group members to the corresponding score of the male group members, noting which sex outperforms the other if significant sex differences were found. In the *gender-as-a-personality-variable* approach, sex-typed group members (i.e., feminine women or masculine men) would similarly be compared to non-sex-typed or androgynous group members, identified as those persons scoring equally high on the femininity and masculinity subscales of some gender-role orientation questionnaire.

In contrast, issues exemplifying the *gender-as-a-social-category* view would include perceivers’ categorizations and evaluations of the female and male group members’ performance; the extent to which gender-typed behavior is displayed depending on the sex composition of the group; the short-term and long-term cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences of having solo status (i.e., being the only female or male group member); the degree to which females’ and males’ task-relevant behavior is influenced by the sex of the addressee; the nature of the task, particularly with respect to its feminine or masculine content; and the pattern of communication and influence between and within female and male subgroups.

In other words, researchers working within the gender-as-a-social-category paradigm would not ask whether, and to what degree, the sexes (or, alternatively, feminine, masculine, and androgynous persons) differ in a specific trait, skill, or task performance. Rather, they would ask *how*, *when*, and *why* it makes a difference to be male or female.

The Multifaceted Nature of Gender

Several theoretical proposals have been advanced exactly addressing the how, when, and why of sex differences. Among the most prominent ones are Ashmore's (1990) multiplicity model of gender identity, Deaux and Major's (1987) gender-in-context model (see also Deaux & LaFrance, 1998), Eagly's (1987) social role theory of sex-differentiated behavior (see also Eagly, Wood, & Diekmann, chap. 5, this volume), Eccles (Parsons) et al.'s (1983) model of achievement-related choices (see also Eccles, Freedman-Doan, Frome, Jacobs, & Yoon, chap. 11, this volume), and Spence's (1993) multifactorial gender identity theory (see also Spence, 1999). Though differing from each other in many respects, these models share a set of core assumptions about the nature of social influence and about the way females and males relate to social contexts. These assumptions can be summarized as follows (see, for more detailed accounts, Ashmore, 1990; Ashmore & Sewell, 1998; Deaux & LaFrance, 1998).

First, it is argued that social influence can, and should be, studied at *multiple levels*. At any point in time, an individual's gender-related thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are being determined by multiple factors ranging from the broad societal level to specific interpersonal encounters and intraindividual processes. For instance, how someone cognizes, and acts toward, other people is dependent on his or her cognitive apparatus (e.g., self-concept, stereotypic beliefs, implicit or explicit attitudes), kind of interpersonal orientation (e.g., self-oriented vs. other-oriented), membership in particular social groups, as well as on the broader system of culturally shared conceptions, ideologies, or social representations concerning categories of people and their mutual relations. Second, social influence is conceived of as *heterogeneous*; that is, social influence originates from multiple sources. At any level of influence, and across levels as well, factors vary not only in their intensity, but also with respect to their origin and the direction of influence they exert. Put differently, interpersonal, group, or cultural environments, respectively, do not present homogeneous sets of neatly converging, clear-cut messages about gender. This typically leaves to the individual the formidable task of making sense out of vague and often conflicting socially transmitted gender-related information. Third, gender is construed as *multidimensional*. That is, gender is not viewed as some kind of

unitary essence manifesting itself in a stable set of tightly interconnected gender-related thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Rather, gender has many dimensions or facets that are related to each other in multiple ways, ranging from tightly knit associations among subsets of dimensions to only loose connections or even independence. In addition, the links between facets of gender are conceived of as highly variable among people, as well as across contexts and points in time (see also Martin, chap. 4, this volume).

The mutual relations between gender, individual, and social context are highlighted by three more specific, yet closely interconnected construals of gender. These refer to the conceptualizations of *gender-as-stimulus*, *gender-as-process*, and *gender-as-product*. That is, gender is considered a complex social stimulus that influences people's perceptions, judgments, and behaviors. At the same time, gender is given concrete meaning by individuals acting in a particular social setting or cultural context, with changes in meaning possibly occurring each time people move from one interactional setting to the next. Finally, gender can be viewed as a construct that materializes in social encounters; in other words, gender is not an essential quality of an individual's psychological makeup—rather, it is an inherently *relational* category.

This general notion was expressed most clearly in Deaux and Major's (1987) gender-in-context model, according to which variability in gender-related behaviors is the rule rather than the exception. The basic components of the model are: (a) the perceiver, bringing a set of beliefs and expectations about gender to the situation (e.g., gender stereotypes and gender-related attitudes); (b) the target person, entering the situation with particular self-conceptions and interaction goals (e.g., self-presentation or self-verification concerns); and (c) features of the situation, making gender more or less salient (e.g., the proportion of women and men in the situation or cues for the appropriateness of gender-typed behavior). Whether a person will display gender-typed behavior or not depends on a complex interplay between all three components. For example, the display of gender-typed behavior of the (female) target is highly likely when the (male) perceiver holds a traditional view of the female gender role and categorizes the target as a typical female, the target conceives of herself in a feminine way, and the interaction situation is construed by both the target and the perceiver as demanding assertive behavior from the male and submissive behavior from the female.

Basic Propositions of a Developmental Social Psychology of Gender

In sum, we argue that research on gender drawing solely on either a developmental or a social psychological approach will definitely fail to yield a sufficient account of the phenomena under study. Social psychologists typically ignore processes of change over time involved in the development of gender concepts, gender identity, preferences, and gender-role behavior. Developmentalists often are not interested in the way individual change varies with social or contextual factors such as self-presentation concerns, interpersonal expectations, or gender-related attitudes, nor are they prone to address the outcome of developmental processes in adulthood.

Furthermore, it is important to note that an integrative approach to the study of gender must not confine itself to simply adding to the first perspective what the second has to offer and vice versa. Quite the contrary, at the intersection of developmental and social psychology many issues will emerge that pose new kinds of challenges for theorizing and research. Thus, for example, contexts do not stay the same over an individual's life course; instead, they are continually changing in terms of strength of influence, direction of influence, range of opportunities for satisfying individual needs, and threats to personal growth. What at one point in time may be a perfect or near-perfect match between females' or males' needs and the opportunities afforded them by their social environments, at some later point in time can become the cause of stressful or maladaptive behavior patterns (see, e.g., Eccles et al., 1993). In short, contextual and individual dynamics interrelate in complex ways. Hence, both perspectives on gender, the developmental and the social psychological, can benefit greatly from each other. This reciprocation of benefits seems to be a promising starting point for an integrative endeavor.

As suggested here, the basic propositions of a developmental social psychology of gender are:

1. Gender is subject to developmental processes throughout an individual's life span; that is, each type and each process of social influence on gender-based cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors has a developmental history and dynamics.

2. Gender is subject to social influence at any point in time; that is, each type and each process of change in gender-based cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors is dependent on the social or cultural context.

3. Developmental processes and social influence are closely linked to each other; that is, gender development cannot be adequately studied without considering social processes; analogously, the social psychological analysis of gender must not be restricted to a particular age group (i.e., young adults).

In his general critique of the traditional boundaries between developmental and social psychology, Durkin (1995) aptly concluded: “the preserve of the developmentalist is not some period prior to the point at which the social psychologist takes over. Instead, developmental change is one of life’s few constants” (p. 4). Taking up this conclusion we would like to add that the preserve of the developmentalist is not the process of change over time, leaving the variety of ways in which an individual relates to, and is influenced by, other individuals, groups, or cultures to the social psychologist. Indeed, social influence is another one of life’s few constants.

In the next section we present a conceptual framework for addressing issues of developmental change and issues of social influence simultaneously. It is intended to serve as a kind of guideline on the way toward a developmental social psychology of gender.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR AN INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

Ruble and Martin’s (1998) Revision of the “Huston Matrix”

The developmental literature of the 1960s and 1970s was characterized by a lot of blurring conceptual distinctions concerning dimensions or features of sex typing (sex-role identity, sex-role orientation, sex-role adoption, etc.). Based on a multidimensional view, Huston (1983) was the first to advance a more principled, taxonomic approach to the developmental analysis of gender. She distinguished between *constructs*—concepts or beliefs, identity or self-perception, preferences or attitudes, and behavioral enactment—and *content areas*—biological gender, activities and interests, personal-social attributes, gender-based social relationships, and stylistic and symbolic characteristics. Arranging constructs and content areas in a matrix yielded 20 distinct kinds of issues relevant to sex-typing research.

Recently, Ruble and Martin (1998) presented a modified version of the so-called Huston matrix. Herein, the four constructs remained essentially the same, but one more content area was added—values. From a social psychological point of view, this addition is highly welcome since values (or, more generally, attitudes) are of central importance for a comprehensive analysis of gender as a social category. In the following, we first present a short outline of content areas and constructs using Ruble and Martin’s terminology. Then we extend the two-dimensional taxonomic scheme by a third dimension representing the different levels at which gender as a social category can be analyzed.

The six content areas can be characterized as follows.

1. *Biological/categorical sex*: biological attributes (e.g., gonadal, hormonal, or morphological distinctions), as well as physical and material attributes that need not have a clear biological basis (e.g., bodily features of one's gender such as clothing or hair style).
2. *Activities and interests*: toys, play and leisure activities, occupations and work, household roles, tasks.
3. *Personal-social attributes*: personality traits, social behaviors, and abilities.
4. *Gender-based social relationships*: sex of peers, friends, lovers, preferred parent or attachment figure, and models (i.e., persons he or she wants to imitate or identify with).
5. *Styles and symbols*: nonverbal behaviors (e.g., facial expressions, gestures, body positions and movement), speech patterns (e.g., tempo, pitch), play styles, fantasy.
6. *Gender-related values*: evaluations of sex categories, valuing masculine and feminine attributes, gender-role attitudes, in-group favoritism and out-group derogation.

These content areas are combined with four constructs yielding 24 classes of issues potentially relevant to sex-typing research. The constructs within this scheme are:

1. *Concepts or beliefs*: an individual's gender-related knowledge or knowledge structures (i.e., gender stereotypes). In the order of the aforementioned content areas, this construct refers to (a) gender labeling and constancy; (b) knowledge of gender-typed toys, activities, and so forth; (c) knowledge of gender-typed traits or role-behaviors; (d) beliefs about gender-appropriate social relations; (e) awareness of gender-typed nonverbal behaviors and symbols; and (f) knowledge of different values attached to the sexes and to gender-related issues.
2. *Identity or self-perception*: an individual's perception of him- or herself as masculine or feminine or as possessing gender-typed attributes. Relevant topics are (a) inner sense of maleness or femaleness; (b) self-perception of activities and interests; (c) perceptions of own traits, abilities, and behaviors; (d) perception of self as relating to others (peers, friends, parents, etc.); (e) self-perception of nonverbal, stylistic, and symbolic features; and (f) perception of self in terms of one's membership in positively or negatively valued social groups.
3. *Preferences*: an individual's desire to possess gender-related attributes. The topics falling into this construct category are (a) wish to be male or female; (b) preference for toys, activities, occupations; (c)

preference for particular traits, abilities, and behaviors; (d) preference for particular others to relate with on the basis of gender; (e) preference for stylistic or symbolic objects; and (f) in-group or out-group biases, gender-related attitudes, sexist prejudice.

4. *Behavioral enactment*: an individual's pattern of gender-typed behavioral display. The topics exemplifying the content areas pertaining to this construct are (a) displaying gender-typed bodily attributes; (b) engaging in gender-typed play or leisure activities, occupations, or achievement tasks; (c) displaying gender-typed traits and abilities; (d) building, maintaining, or ending social relationships on the basis of gender; (e) displaying gender-typed stylistic or symbolic features and fantasy; and (f) discriminating against others on the basis of gender.

From a developmental point of view, at least three questions have to be addressed within each and every cell of the matrix. First, how do children acquire the respective developmental attributes (e.g., gender constancy, toy preferences, awareness of gender-typed symbols)? Second, when does the acquisition process start, and which course does it take? And, third, what is the relationship between developmental changes across content areas and constructs? The multidimensional nature of gender-typing processes implied by these research questions marks an important point of overlap with the social psychological view of gender. Moreover, in the Ruble and Martin (1998) revision of the Huston matrix there are some important cross-references to recent research and theorizing in social psychology. This particularly applies to gender stereotypes and gender-related attitudes, though the authors' review of developmental research explicitly focuses on developmental changes in children and adolescents.

Multiple Levels of Analysis

In order to broaden the perspective, it seems crucial to specify the *levels* at which research questions are being raised and explanations of gender phenomena sought. The general levels-of-analysis notion has been around in social psychology at least since the 1980s (see, e.g., Ashmore & Del Boca, 1986; Doise, 1984, 1986, 1997; Lorenzi-Cioldi & Doise, 1990; Ragsin & Sundstrom, 1989). Following these converging proposals, and adapting the specifics to the present context, we want to suggest that the sexes relate to each other at four different but interconnected levels. These are the individual level, the interpersonal (or interactional) level, the group (or role) level, and the cultural (or societal) level. It should be noted that no single level, nor single set of factors located at a given level, is adequate to account for the full range of gender phenomena. In addition, each level can be ordered along

a dimension of inclusiveness or generality, with the individual level as the most specific and the cultural level as the most general or inclusive one. In the following a short characterization of each level is provided:

At the *individual level* the focus is on the way individuals organize their experience of the social environment. The intraindividual processes studied include cognitive, affective, and motivational functions. It is at this level that the developmental and the social psychological analysis of gender traditionally have the highest degree of overlap. Cognitive functions include the use of categorization schemes like gender stereotypes in impression formation and social judgment. Affective functions refer to the influence of feelings or moods on formation and change of gender stereotypes and gender-related attitudes. Finally, motivational functions comprise the need to identify with positively valued social groups or cultures, as well as the desire to reduce the complexity of the social world by the use of a small set of fairly simple and familiar cognitive categories.

The second, and more inclusive, *interpersonal level* concerns dyadic (i.e., two-person) relationships and corresponding interactional processes. A typical example of explanatory principles involved at this level are behavioral confirmation processes or self-fulfilling prophecies. Thus stereotypes induce certain kinds of expectations about the traits or abilities of other persons, and these expectations may lead to confirmatory perception–interaction sequences producing the very behavior or trait that the perceiver had originally expected. Further pertinent topics concern the display of gender-typed behavior in the presence of an attractive partner holding traditional gender-role attitudes; the activation and use of interactional scripts (e.g., dating scripts); and discriminatory behavior toward another person, for example, overtly distancing verbal or nonverbal behavior based on the interactant's membership in social categories such as gender, age, race, or a combination of these.

The *group level* deals with the relation between females and males as group members or as occupants of different social positions. At this level commonalities, as well as differences, between female–male relations and other forms of intergroup relations come to the fore. Particularly important here are power and status differences between females and males and the consequences these differences have for stability and change in gender-role distributions. A closely related group-level issue concerns the traditional division of labor between the sexes and its influence on the emergence and perpetuation of gender stereotypes, as well as on the acquisition of gender-typed skills and attitudes. Further intriguing research questions exemplifying this level address antecedents and consequences of the salience of an individual's sex-category membership, effects of holding power over others on the activation and use of stereotypes and prejudices, and gender roles as determinants of gender-segregated play behavior in children.

At the most inclusive level of analysis, the *cultural level*, gender is studied in relation to systems of socially shared beliefs, representations, norms, and values. These systems are cultural products that not only help to define an individual's place within society but also serve to maintain or foster social differentiations between females and males. Among relevant research areas are social constructions of gender showing up in stereotypic portrayals of females and males in the media, subtle forms and practices of institutional or organizational gender discrimination, as well as social support for public policies that aim at reducing prejudiced beliefs and behaviors within society. Also, studies of the content, structure, and acquisition of gender-typed beliefs and ideologies across cultures or nations become relevant at this level of analysis.

An Extended Multidimensional Matrix of Gender Issues

The combination of content areas, constructs, and levels of analysis yields a three-dimensional matrix that forms the basis for studying gender from a developmental social psychological perspective. This 96-cell matrix is visually displayed in [Fig. 1.1](#). For ease of presentation, the *time* axis, actually constituting a fourth dimension needed to account for processes of developmental change, is only symbolically shown as a sequence of discrete measurement points within a single arbitrary cell. Note that each cell in this matrix refers to a distinct set of research issues emerging at the intersection of a particular content area with a particular construct and level of analysis.

Making use of such a taxonomy that tries to capture the gist of developmental and social psychological approaches, as well as their interconnections, has several advantages. Among the most important features of the present framework are (a) providing a broad, general conceptual scheme for undertaking a concerted effort in gender research; (b) identifying topics that have been largely neglected or less intensely researched than others; (c) highlighting the multilevel, multidimensional nature of developmental change; (d) allowing for divergent and convergent developmental courses or trajectories within and across cells; and (e) drawing attention to the relations existing between various dimensions of the matrix, that is, identifying not only main effects, but also two- or multiway interactions between content areas, constructs, levels of analysis, and time.

Though at first glance the taxonomic organization of the field presented in [Fig. 1.1](#) may seem bewildering, it is well worth dwelling on, thinking about the kinds of research issues associated with various cells of the matrix. To illustrate, consider the content area "gender-related values" combined with the constructs and levels-of-analysis dimensions. The resulting set of 16 cells (i.e., the bottom layer of the matrix depicted in [Fig. 1.1](#)) refers to

various manifestations and representations of attitudes toward the sexes and toward gender-related issues. Although this topic is one that has been largely neglected by developmentalists (with some notable exceptions, see e.g., Lutz & Ruble, 1995), it has been at the fore of social psychological research over the last 20 years or so. Since gender-related attitudes will be dealt with by Glick and Hilt (chap. 8, this volume), in the remainder of this section the values area is picked out solely to exemplify the rich set of research questions emerging at the intersection of the developmental and social psychological perspectives embodied in our multidimensional framework. Some of these issues have already begun to be studied, whereas others are still awaiting attention.

A first set of issues concerns the *concepts* involved in the development of gender-related values. At the individual level of analysis it may be asked when and how children acquire knowledge about “better” or higher valued gender-typed traits, symbols, and activities. Regarding the interpersonal level, the structure of evaluative beliefs about same-sex and cross-sex interactions, romantic attractions, or close relationships would be studied, including the cognitive representation of the typical event sequences in face-to-face interaction (e.g., beliefs about “good” and “bad” dates). At the group level, illustrative research issues concern the evaluation and attribution of feminine or masculine behavior as it relates to the sex composition of a particular social group or to the power difference existing between female and male group members. Analyzing knowledge about gender-related values at the cultural level would include studies of stereotypic images of females and males as conveyed in the mass media, as well as studies of these images’ functions in confirming or justifying shared beliefs about the sexes and traditional gender roles.

Concerning *gender identity* (or gendered self-perception), pertinent issues studied at the individual level relate to the changes in a person’s self-esteem depending on his or her perception of differential evaluations of gender roles within society. In social interactions, self-evaluations may covary with the perceived gender-role orientation of the interaction partner, the partner’s behavioral expectations, and the gender-typed nature of the interactional context. At the group level of analysis, theories of social identification provide a wealth of hypotheses about the dynamic evaluation of feminine and masculine components of the self; that is, membership in low- or high-valued groups is predicted to have systematic short-term and long-term effects on the kind of gendered identities that boys and girls, men and women develop or strive for. Looking at the cultural forces that may exert influence on gender-related self-evaluations, research issues refer to a given culture’s view of femininity and masculinity, including comparisons between the attitudes toward gender roles in collectivistic and individualistic societies.

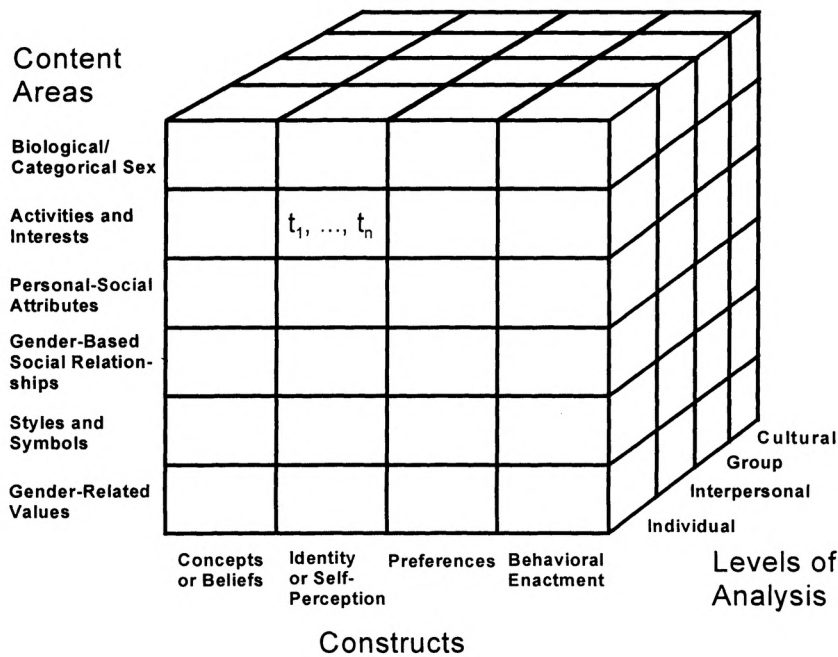


FIG. 1.1 Multidimensional matrix of research issues in a developmental social psychology of gender. (t_1, \dots, t_n = Measurement points indicating the time axis.)

The *preferences* construct directs attention to the analysis of prejudiced beliefs about the sexes and gender-related issues. At the individual level, relevant questions include the cognitive, affective, and motivational processes (e.g., the need to evaluate other persons' behavior on the basis of gender) that are involved in the formation, elaboration, and, possibly, reduction of gender biases. An interpersonal analysis would highlight the influence of evaluative beliefs on the course and outcome of social interactions, the deliberate choice of interaction partners adopting traditional or egalitarian gender-role behavior, and the thoughts and feelings of the target person when being confronted with an actor's prejudiced gender beliefs. From a group-level point of view research issues include the development of in-group biases, stability and change of attitudes toward traditional gender roles, and the degree of favor or disfavor with which gender segregation in various contexts (e.g., at school, in the family, or in the workforce) is evaluated. A cultural-level analysis would address the cultural specifics and universals of valuing feminine and masculine traits, activities, interests, and so forth.

When combined with values, *behavioral enactment* in the present scheme refers to the behavioral or conative component of gender attitudes. Here, the prime issue at all four levels of analysis is the antecedents, symptoms, and consequences of discrimination, that is, of any behavior toward members of a group that denies these persons the equal treatment they desire. Focusing on the individual level, studies may analyze factors governing distancing, overtly negative responses or, alternatively, subjectively positive or benevolent responses toward the other sex, each serving to promote or maintain an actor's status or power. In social interactions, attitudes, besides their impact on discriminatory behavior, also function as guiding schemes or heuristics for planning and regulating interpersonal behaviors, such as matching one's self-presentational style to the perceived traditionality of an interactant's gender-role attitude. A group-level perspective would draw attention to various forms of structural sexism, for example, the selection and identification of leaders on the sole basis of gender. Finally, analyzing the enactment of gender-related values at the cultural, most inclusive level points to the general social practices that serve to create and foster gender hierarchies within society.

The chapters in this volume flesh out various parts of the conceptual framework and thus demonstrate the versatility of a developmental social psychological perspective on gender. Using the multidimensional matrix shown in Fig. 1.1 as a general ordering system, the issues dealt with in each chapter can be located within a frame of reference binding issues of developmental change and social influence. It should be noted, however, that this scheme is by no means intended to exhaust the set of research questions that could possibly be asked in the field; it is all too common in the social and behavioral sciences that the set of questions in a given area of research is virtually infinite. Nor is our scheme meant to be prescriptive, telling researchers what they should put on top of their agenda and what to dismiss as irrelevant or uninteresting. Our multidimensional matrix is basically meant to serve as a guideline or heuristic that stimulates research in as many and diverse fields as possible and draws attention to their interconnections. In other words, developmental social psychological research on gender will not be finished as soon as each and every cell in our matrix has been filled with some kind of answers. Each answer given to a concrete question will by necessity produce new ones, expanding this framework in directions that are presently difficult, if not impossible, to foresee.

THEMES AND ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

As explained previously, the central theme of this book is the fundamental interrelatedness of developmental change and social influence in producing

the rich variety of gender phenomena. In order to present a coherent view of the complex issues involved, this volume is organized into three main parts (parts II through IV) with four chapters each, complemented by the present introductory chapter (part I) and a concluding chapter (part V).

Part II, Theoretical Approaches, comprises currently influential, yet still somewhat disparate, perspectives on gender. When viewed together, however, these theories promise to contribute substantially to a fuller understanding of gender phenomena. It would be highly counterproductive at this stage of the integrative endeavor to focus on a single theoretical position or school of thought. Eclecticism has much to recommend it when consensually accepted criteria for preferring one theory over the other are out of reach. Furthermore, narrowing down the spectrum of theoretical foci would almost inevitably bear the risk of neglecting important processes and hence lead to a severely impoverished look at the field. Only by widening the analytical lens will it be possible to account for the complex, multilevel, multidimensional nature of gender (see Maccoby, 1998, for a similar point). Consequently, the theories included in part II postulate a broad range of powerful explanatory principles that should eventually prove to complement each other. The major concepts addressed in these chapters refer to evolutionary life history, sex-differentiated socialization practices, cognitive schemas, and social roles.

Thinking about gender in evolutionary terms, as is done in chapter 2, provides an intriguing look at long-standing controversies in the field. Specifically, Kenrick and Luce advance an evolutionary life-history model of gender development, accounting for phenomena as diverse as mate choice, aggression, sexuality, and child care. The model's focus is on the developmental trajectories of an organism in terms of the differential allocation of energy to survival, growth, and reproduction across the life span. The authors show that life-history theory provides a dynamic evolutionary framework that can help unravel some of the mysteries in the realm of human sex differences and similarities, for example, those that exist in each of the behavioral domains mentioned earlier. Throughout the chapter, special emphasis is given to the interconnections between evolutionary constraints, human culture, and cognition. Kenrick and Luce particularly reject attempts to pit evolutionary, cultural, and cognitive accounts of gender against each other. Indeed, these diverse perspectives should not be construed as conflicting, nor as competing. Rather, they are interdependent, needing each other for a complete understanding of gender-typed social behaviors and their change across developmental stages (see Kenrick & Simpson, 1997, for a principled statement of this view). The concept of preparedness is a case in point. Building on the general assumption of complex gene–environment interactions, this concept implies that the sexes are biologically predisposed to experience slightly different events. Human

cultures, in turn, tend to foster or accentuate these differential learning experiences in multiple and possibly highly specific ways.

Focusing on the environmental influences of family, school, and peer group, Fagot, Rodgers, and Leinbach ([chap. 3](#)) address the question of differential socialization of boys and girls. The authors consider gender development from infants' earliest recognition of sex-related differences through the acquisition of gender knowledge and gender-typed behavior during early and middle childhood. Following a careful examination of extant research and reviewing their own program of research, Fagot et al. argue that the socialization pressures and environmental input to which boys and girls are subjected are often more subtle and, at the same time, more powerful than has been asserted. It is shown how parents, teachers, and peers provide information about the importance of gender, through their reactions to the child, but also in terms of family organization, structuring of school activities, and peer group pressure for gender segregation, respectively. These environmental factors have differential effects on boys and girls at different ages, possibly coinciding with changes in cognitive development. The chapter also presents more recent evidence on the functions of metaphorical cues in gender socialization, showing that there is more to children's stereotyping than accumulating knowledge about who has or does what. Fagot et al. conclude that the child's inherent capacities and the multiple forms of environmental input interact dynamically. They agree with current cognitive developmental theory that children construct their own understanding of the world, but they also stress that gender-related environmental input provided by socializing agents and cultural practices are among the building blocks used in this construction.

Rather than focusing on the nature and consequences of environmental input, the cognitive perspective adopted by Martin ([chap. 4](#)) highlights mental structures and processes as critical determinants of gender-related thought and behavior. Martin starts with a review of cognitive developmental and gender schema approaches, discussing major propositions and relevant empirical research. Based on the assumption of multidimensionality among aspects of gender, the author goes on to examine the extent to which gender-related cognitions shape gender-related behavior. She argues for a domain-specific view of gender schemas that is better able to represent the flexibility of human thinking. For example, in this view gender cognitions would be expected to differ when thinking about others versus the self, when interacting with familiar versus unfamiliar persons, or when using narrow and specific versus broad and abstract gender concepts. To account for developmental changes in the structure of gender stereotypes, Martin argues in favor of a component model in which stereotypes are viewed as having a hierarchical structure, with gender labels at the top level and associated attributes at the lower levels. Going beyond the currently

dominant cognitive approaches, the author discusses the versatility of two more recent theoretical accounts, the “theory of theories” and the “dynamic systems” perspectives. Looking at the development of gender concepts from the first perspective, the focus is on individuals’ naive social psychology of gender (i.e., intuitive theories about social influence), whereas the second perspective provides a coherent way to think about conceptual change and dynamism, incorporating both long-term and short-term effects of gender concepts.

More than a decade ago, Eagly (1987) advanced a social role account of sex differences in human behavior. Since then social role theory has stimulated a large body of empirical research, the results of which have contributed to a number of refinements of the theory’s propositions. In chapter 5, Eagly, Wood, and Diekmann present a state-of-the-art review of social role theory, its major assumptions, empirical evidence concerning its explanatory and predictive power, and lines of corresponding conceptual developments. Adopting a social structural perspective, the authors argue that sex differences in social behavior arise from the contrasting distributions of men and women into social roles. These differing role assignments are described in terms of a sexual division of labor (i.e., women performing more domestic work than men and spending fewer hours in paid employment) and gender hierarchy (i.e., women having less power and status than men and controlling fewer resources). Eagly et al. postulate that the impact of sex-differentiated social roles on behavior is mediated by a variety of psychological and social processes. One set of processes concerns the formation of gender roles (i.e., the shared expectations that apply to individuals on the basis of their socially identified sex) and their impact on behavior in social interaction. Gender roles emerge from the activities carried out by members of each sex in their sex-typical occupational and family roles; that is, the characteristics required by these activities become stereotypic of women and men. Another set of processes refers to the acquisition of different skills and beliefs by men and women, mainly through their participation in relatively sex-segregated social roles across their life spans.

In part III, Gender Categorization and Interpersonal Behavior, the primary focus is on the individual and interpersonal levels of analysis (though, of course, the other levels are not precluded). It is shown how tightly interwoven developmental and social processes are in bringing about gender-related thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The chapters deal with multiple facets of gender within a person’s self-concept, the nature of gender stereotypes and their variable influences on interpersonal encounters, the development of gender prejudice and discriminatory behavior, and, finally, the acquisition and enactment of sexual scripts, including the occurrence of heterosexual aggression.

An issue of long-standing interest to developmentalists concerns how children come to view themselves in terms of femininity and masculinity. Hannover ([chap. 6](#)) presents an integrative approach to this issue drawing on recent findings and insights from developmental and social psychological studies of the self. She conceptualizes the self as an associative network that builds up under the permanent influence of two kinds of contextual factors, that is, factors inherent in the situation an individual encounters at a given moment, and cumulative experiences with social situations over extended periods of time. Hannover argues that knowledge of being male or female, as well as frequent exposure to gender-typed contexts promoting the activation of gender-congruent aspects of the self, gradually makes it more likely that individuals will incorporate gender-congruent knowledge into their selves. Thus, contextual priming is viewed as a fundamental mechanism accounting for gendered self-perception, preferences, and behaviors. To substantiate this claim, extant research is reviewed showing how contextual variables prime gender-congruent self-knowledge. For instance, the author discusses influences of the sex composition of social groups, the kinds of social interaction accentuating sex differences, the gender-typedness of tasks, and acting in gender-appropriate or gender-inappropriate ways. Referring to Ruble's (1994) phase model of transitions, Hannover is able to show that contextual priming of self-knowledge helps to account for developmental changes and individual differences in the propensity to integrate gender-incongruent information into the self.

Gender stereotypes, commonly defined as cognitive structures or schemas that contain socially shared knowledge about the characteristic features of women and men, are among the core constructs of the gender-as-a-social-category view. In chapter 7, Zemor, Fiske, and Kim examine content, change, and functioning of gender stereotypes in social interaction, with a focus on developmental change and stability. Building on recent research and theorizing in the adult stereotyping literature, the authors argue that children's persistent use of gender as a basis for social categorization eventually leads to the automatization of gender stereotypes; that is, by practicing gender stereotypes in early stages of development children ensure that activation and use of stereotypic gender knowledge will become effortless and often unconscious when reaching adulthood. Following a thorough discussion of cognitive, social role, social identity, and power-based accounts of people's pervasive reliance on stereotypic beliefs, Zemor et al. highlight several self-perpetuating functions of gender stereotypes. These functions include constraining the perceiver's acquisition of social knowledge (e.g., when encoding stimulus information or forming inferences and evaluations) as well as constraining the target person's behavior (e.g., through subtle processes involving behavioral confirmation, stereotype threat, or attributional ambiguity). The authors suggest that a developmental

social psychological account of gender stereotypes may help devise strategies for counteracting the automatization of stereotyping processes. For them, intervening at early developmental stages seems more promising than controlling well-practiced gender stereotypes in adulthood.

As mentioned earlier, the development of gender prejudice is a prime example of the great wealth of new gender issues emerging at the interface between developmental and social psychological research activities. Although developmentalists have accumulated a huge body of data dealing with the ways in which boys and girls relate to each other in different contexts, they have typically lacked the conceptual and methodological tools needed to systematize these data and to detect regularities in the developmental change of children's prejudiced beliefs, feelings, and behaviors, if they have addressed issues like these at all. Building on recent social psychological theorizing and research, Glick and Hilt ([chap. 8](#)) present an intriguing account of how gender prejudice develops from childhood to adulthood. The conceptual basis is provided by ambivalent sexism theory (Glick & Fiske, 1996). This theory suggests that sexist attitudes are inherently ambivalent, having both a hostile and a benevolent component. Whereas hostile sexism encompasses a wide range of negative affect or antipathy toward the other sex, benevolent sexism involves subjectively positive feelings and favorable stereotypic beliefs regarding the other sex. Glick and Hilt's model posits a developmental transition from predominantly hostile, as well as cognitively simple, gender prejudice exhibited by both prepubertal boys and girls toward the other sex to a complex and ambivalent form of prejudice that begins to emerge during adolescence. The model accounts for this critical transition by adolescents' tendency to reconcile their growing interests in the other sex as potential romantic partners with their well-developed hostile attitudes.

The fundamental ambivalence of gender attitudes is epitomized in the ways heterosexual romantic relationships build up in adolescence. Indeed, it can be considered a major challenge confronting young females and males to establish, and engage in, satisfying sexual relationships (see Leaper & Anderson, 1997, for an overview). Romantic attraction and positively valued sexual contacts are, however, typically only part of the story. The experience of hostility and aggression is another significant constituent of adolescent sexuality. In chapter 9, Krahé presents a fine-grained analysis of the links between the development of sexual relationships and the problem of unwanted sexual experiences and sexual aggression in adolescence. Her focus is on the role of sexual scripts, that is, on cognitive representations of event sequences characterizing particular kinds of sexual encounters. Scripts are assumed to exert significant influence on the choice and enactment of sexual behavior. Krahé reviews research on sex-differentiated scripts (e.g., the male and the female dating script, the casual sex script) and relates these

scripts to gender roles prescribing male behavior to be assertive and female behavior to be passive. Since sexual intentions are frequently communicated implicitly through nonverbal cues, misunderstandings are common in heterosexual interactions. The author thoroughly examines the influence of various types of misunderstandings, in particular the consequences of token resistance, on the likelihood of sexual victimization. Finally, Krahé discusses recent research on rape scripts, including the “real rape” script and differences in the perception of stranger versus acquaintance rape, pointing out implications for intervention and prevention.

In part IV, *Gender, Group, and Culture*, the focus is shifted away from individual and interpersonal processes so as to include accounts of gender phenomena at the role/group and sociocultural levels. The rationale underlying this is that a complete understanding of gender categories presupposes a perspective broad enough to embrace role-, group-, and societal-level forces continually impinging on the individual. Specifically, the chapters are concerned with the complex interplay between gender, communication, and influence, with processes of gender-role socialization in the context of the family, with antecedents and consequences of sex-differentiated career development, and, finally, with cross-cultural issues, highlighting cultural differences and similarities in gender development.

Though communication can be viewed as one of the primary means by which individuals influence one another, social psychologists have traditionally shown little interest in how precisely this influence occurs. As a result, they have typically failed to appreciate the particular ways in which the communication situation affects social behavior (see Krauss & Fussell, 1996, for an in-depth treatment of this issue). In recent years, increased research efforts directed at sex differences in verbal and nonverbal communication have contributed to overcoming this lacuna. Carli and Bukatko ([chap. 10](#)) present a thoughtful discussion of relevant research and theorizing in the field. Specifically, they examine those gender effects in communication that have been found to relate to sex differences in social influence. Throughout their chapter, the authors adopt a life-span perspective, addressing patterns of sex differences in communication and social influence in both children and adults. Having reviewed extant research on sex-differentiated communication styles and styles of interaction in groups, Carli and Bukatko come to the conclusion that females' communications are more other-directed, warm, and mitigated, and less dominant, status-asserting, and task-oriented than males'. When it comes to influencing others, both males and females are more successful when using a communication style that is stereotypically associated with their sex than when using a style associated with the other sex. Overall, the sex-differentiated patterns of communication and influence displayed by women and men, and by girls and boys as well, appear to be expedient and effective,

given their power, social roles, and relative position in their interactions with others.

One area in which gender stereotypes have been particularly resistant to change concerns sex differences in mathematics and verbal ability. Yet, meta-analytic syntheses of the relevant research literatures clearly show that sex differences in both domains are so small as to be negligible (see Hyde & Frost, 1993, for a review). At the same time, participation in high-level, intensive math and English courses as well as applied fields has remained highly gender segregated. Eccles, Freedman-Doan, Frome, Jacobs, and Yoon ([chap. 11](#)) closely examine the factors contributing to children's sex-differentiated self-perceptions, interests, and performance in these and other activity domains, highlighting parents' gender-related beliefs and stereotypes. Consequently, the chapter focuses on the mechanisms of gender-role socialization in the context of the family. Mainly drawing on data from two large-scale longitudinal studies, Eccles et al. present evidence that parents' perceptions of their children's competence in math, reading/English, and sports are influenced by the children's sex, independently of their actual performance in these domains. In addition to overt performance, two factors seem to influence the formation of these sex-differentiated perceptions: (a) parents' causal attributions for their children's successes, and (b) parents' stereotypic beliefs about which sex is naturally more talented in these domains. Furthermore, it is suggested that the media strengthen parents' stereotypic views of their children's ability. Finally, the authors address the question of how parents' gender-stereotypic beliefs influence their children's self- and task-perceptions, building on a self-fulfilling prophecy framework. They conclude that one promising route to intervention is to change parents' beliefs and perceptions.

In chapter 12, Abele takes a closer look at the antecedents and consequences of the traditionally high degree of gender segregation in the workforce and in career development. In order to elucidate the psychological mechanisms responsible for the status quo, she presents a dual-impact model of gender and career-related processes. According to this model, men's and women's gendered self-conceptualization (or gender-role orientation) influences a number of career-related psychological variables (e.g., career motivation, self-efficacy) that, in turn, have impact on career-related behaviors and outcomes (e.g., income, occupational status); at the same time, being female or male elicits gender-related expectations or stereotypes, leading to differential career opportunities for women and men. In addition, it is hypothesized that career development has a reciprocal impact on females' and males' gender-role orientation. Abele reports on a series of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies aimed at testing these assumptions. Findings from large-sample studies, including student samples from Germany and the United States, reveal that gender-role orientation is a more

important determinant of career-related psychological variables than respondents' sex, whereas respondents' sex is a more powerful predictor of career-related outcomes (i.e., career success) than gender-role orientation. Moreover, career progress or stagnation influences individuals' gender-role orientation, with differential effects for women and men; that is, career progress more strongly enhances instrumentality in women than in men, whereas failing to progress reduces instrumentality in men but not in women.

In recent years it has become increasingly clear that in order to understand an individual's place and functioning in the social world it is necessary to look closely at the complex interplay between cultural systems and psychological processes: Cultural practices and meanings complement and inform individual and interpersonal processes, which in turn feed back on cultural meanings and practices (see Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998, for a detailed analysis). The social category of gender is a case in point. Cultural images, ideologies, and models of gender pervade each and every aspect of social life; at the same time, individual beliefs and behaviors, as well as social interactions and group life constrain, reproduce, and transform gender at the cultural level. In chapter 13, Gibbons explores the potential of cross-cultural and cross-national studies to advance our knowledge about gender development. Throughout the chapter the author stresses the importance of doing cross-cultural research on gender development that incorporates conceptual clarity and methodological rigor. She reviews three areas of research showing that there are both pancultural commonalities and culture-specific findings in each of them. First, gender constancy appears to develop in the same sequence cross-culturally, yet the age of attaining each stage varies. Second, stereotype knowledge increases with age cross-culturally, but the content of stereotypic beliefs has both culture-general and culture-specific components. Third, adolescents from different cultures share an ideal that women and men should possess prosocial qualities, but their endorsement of nontraditional gender roles in the ideal person varies systematically with other cultural values.

Finally, part V summarizes major advances, arguments, and perspectives presented in the preceding chapters and points to directions for future research. It deals with theoretical and conceptual progress that has been made and with difficulties still facing researchers who try to study gender issues at the intersection of developmental and social psychology. Two main themes are discussed in some detail. First, the striking convergence of evolutionary constraints, environmental input, cognitive processes, and social-structural variables in producing gender-typed thought and behavior, and, second, the fundamental interdependence of developmental change and social dynamics in processes of gender differentiation. It is concluded that much further progress can be made when social psychologists and

developmentalists cross disciplinary boundaries and cooperate even more closely to tackle the intricate nature of issues involved in the study of gender.

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II

THEORETICAL APPROACHES

