## Chapter 2 Gender Stereotypes and Other Gender Biases

## Stereotypes

Prejudice

Discrimination

Gender Bias—general term—all 3

Androcentric—masculine nouns/pronouns for men/women

Normative Male--

## Gender Biases Throughout History

### The Invisibility of Women in Historical Accounts

#### Look for missing information about women

#### life activities—What were women doing?

#### arts—Examine the more fragile and anonymous forms

#### philosophy and religion

### Philosophers’ Representation of Women

#### Aristotle—bio based inferiority

#### Jean-Jacques Rousseau—please and be useful to men

#### John Stuart Mill & Harriet Taylor Mill--=rights

### Images of Women in Religion and Mythology

#### Women are evil

#### Women are terrifying sorceresses

#### Women are virtuous

## Gender Biases in Language

##### How gender is represented in English language---

Male as normative---impacts language practices.

Masculine language: chairman vs chairwoman

### Terms Used for Women

Non-parallel terms---negative terms for females:

Bachelor vs spinster

#### infantilizing terms—baby

Childlike terms---girl, babe, little gal

Diminuative suffixes for female terms

Animal and food terms—chick, cookie

Sexualization of women---use of slang--50% terms for females were sexual

Guy, dude=male bitch, slut=female

Spotlighting---the practice of emphasizing an individual’s gender

“Female basketball team”

### The Masculine Generic

#### masculine generic terms are not gender neutral

#### research on mental images

#### shifting to nonsexist language

Significance of differential treatment in language

Whorfian hypothesis: idea that language influences our thought. Way we think is affected by words we use

Gender stereotypes: widely shared beliefs about attributes of females & males. Consists of beliefs about the psychological traits & characteristics of and activities appropriate to men & women

Beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and femininity. Leads people to expect different roles for men than women

Gender stereotypes persist throughout life---provide descriptions of how people think about men and women.

Provide prescriptions about what men and women should be like—places limits on what traits & behaviors are allowed.

## Gender Biases in the Media: Stereotyped Representations

#### Women are relatively invisible

#### Women are relatively inaudible

#### Although most women are employed, they are seldom shown working outside the home

#### Women are shown doing housework.

#### Women and men are represented differently.

#### Women’s bodies are used differently from men’s bodies.

#### Women of color are underrepresented, and they are often shown in a particularly biased way.

#### Lower-social-class women are underrepresented, and they are often shown in a particularly biased way.

# People’s Beliefs About Women and Men

Content of Stereotypes: characteristics of Agency and Communion

Communion: sympathy, warmth; concern for other people. Personality characteristics linked with women

Gentle, understanding, devoted to others, helpful to others, aware of others’ feelings, and emotional

Agency: achievement orientation & ambitiousness; concern for accomplishing tasks. Linked with men

Independent, competitive, decisive, active, self-confident, stands up to pressure, and never gives up

### Stereotypes About Women and Men From Different Ethnic Groups

### Factors Influencing Stereotypes—complex influences

#### Gender—men’s more traditional

#### Ethnicity—southern black men strongest

#### Culture—share similar gender stereotypes

More consistency than differences found in gender stereotypes

### The Effects of Stereotyped Representations

#### Reflecting and Influencing Reality

#### Behaviors and Beliefs

#### Gender Role Attitudes

#### Violence against Women

#### Judgments of abilities

Which gender’s attributes viewed in higher regard? Why?

Social Status Hypothesis: because male gender role is more highly valued than female, male seen as lowering his social status by engaging in female-stereotypic behaviors. Females raise own status when performing stereotypic male behavior.

Gender stereotypes 1st indication of power imbalance

Current stereotypes influenced by historical views of men and women---reflect beliefs that appeared during the 19th century—Victorian era

Linked with changes in society from industrial revolution

Doctrine of Two Spheres—interests diverse—have separate areas of influence

## The Complexity of Contemporary Sexism

### Attitudes Toward Women’s Competence

Beyer study: GPA estimations overestimated for males

Haley: college application—white males received more money by male subjects, slightly larger scholarship for females by females

#### Bias against women is most likely

#### when little information is available about a person’s qualifications

#### when experts are doing the evaluating

#### when males are doing the evaluating

#### Bias may be strongest when a woman is acting in a stereotypically masculine fashion. Example of Ann Hopkins, discrimination suit—firm: lacked interpersonal skills, hard driving manager—“macho”, while top producer in company, not promoted

#### Double bind—feminine traits, not productive/persuasive

Sexism—stereotypes and/or discriminatory behaviors that serve to restrict women’s roles and maintain male dominance

“women are dependent and passive”

Ambivalent Sexism

##### Hostile sexism—obvious, women subservient, negative stereotypes

#### Benevolent sexism: more subtle; positive characterizations such as “women should be protected. Women different from and weaker than men

#### Changes in sexism over time modern sexism: less overt sexism. Decrease may be due to legislation or to less acceptance of obvious sexism

Studies from other countries: both types sexism found, larger hostile sexism. Gender equality in country related to scores on scale,

### Discrimination in Interpersonal Interactions

#### Laboratory research vs Real-life sexist encounters

#### traditional gender-stereotyped remarks

#### demeaning comments and behaviors

#### sexual comments and behaviors

## Heterosexism

### Heterosexism--bias against lesbians, gay males, and bisexuals—or any group that is not exclusively heterosexual

### Sexual prejudice—a negative attitude toward someone because of her or his sexual orientation

### Examples of Heterosexism

### Factors Correlated with Heterosexism

Bases for gender stereotypes:

Process of gender stereotyping: Social categorization: shortcut in making sense of new information. Simplify social perceptions by sorting ind. into categories.

Sort into groups based on shared characteristics—use easily identified characteristics ---ethnicity, gender, age. Usually first thing noticed

Why people associate specific traits with female vs male?

Social role theory: that people observe the types of behaviors typically performed in social roles.

Stereotypes of women and men come from associating women with domestic role, men with employee role.

Assume women are nurturing—see them more often in nurturing role.

### The Social Cognitive Approach to Gender Stereotypes

### Social Cognitive Approach—stereotypes are belief systems that guide the way we process information

### Stereotypes help us simplify and organize the world

### Categorization

### Errors

#### Exaggerating the Contrast Between Women and Men (Gender Polarization)

#### The Normative Male

**Biological Approach**

Evolutionary Personality Theory and Mate Selection

The finding that men in this country tend to marry younger women and women tend to marry older men might be used to support the evolutionary personality theory. This theory suggests that men prefer physically attractive women because the attributes we call beautiful are associated with youth and fertility.

Evolutionary personality theory predicts that men and women look for different features when selecting a potential partner. men and women base their choice of romantic partners in part on concerns for "parental investment”-- means mates are selected who are likely to contribute to successful reproduction and child-raising. Parental investment is that males of many species are free to mate with as many females as they can.

According to the parental investment model, women prefer men who are capable of achieving financial security, and prefer to mate with men who will be able to provide for their offspring

Research shows that men are more likely to consider physical attractiveness when selecting a dating partner or spouse. In addition, men are more likely to prefer a younger partner. Cross-cultural studies find similar patterns of what men and women look for in their spouses across many different cultures. These findings support evolutionary personality theory because they suggest that mate preferences do not merely reflect differences in social learning patterns.