CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Central Concepts in the Psychology of Women

*Sex and Gender*
  - sex
  - gender
  - “doing gender”

*The Scope of Social Biases*
  - sexism
  - racism
  - classism
  - ableism
  - heterosexism
  - ageism

*Feminist Approaches*
  - Liberal feminism
  - Cultural feminism
  - Radical feminism
  - Women-of-color feminism

*Psychological Approaches to Gender Similarity and Difference*
  - The Similarities Perspective
    - social constructionism
  - The Differences Perspective
    - essentialism
A Brief History of the Psychology of Women

Early Studies of Gender Comparisons

The Emergence of the Psychology of Women as a Discipline

1930s
1970s
Problems with the 1970s Framework

The Current Status of the Psychology of Women

Complex answers
Interactions of gender and other factors
Interdisciplinary studies
Conflicting research findings
Change

Women and Ethnicity

The White-as-Normative Concept
Peggy McIntosh

Women of Color
Demographics
Terms of reference
Latina women
border crossing
Black women
Asian American women
stereotypes and challenges
Native American and First Nations women
Within-group diversity

U.S.-Centered Nationalism

Problems and Biases in Current Research

Formulating the Hypothesis
Using a biased theory
Formulating a hypothesis on the basis of unrelated research
Asking questions only from certain content areas

Designing the Study
Selecting the operational definitions
Choosing the participants
Choosing the researcher
Including confounding variables

Conducting the Study
Influencing the outcome through researcher expectancy
Influencing the outcome through participants’ expectancies

Interpreting the Data
Emphasizing statistical significance rather than practical significance
Ignoring alternate explanations
Making inappropriate generalizations

Communicating the Findings
Leaving out analyses that show gender similarities
Choosing a title that focuses on gender differences
Journal editors rejecting studies that show gender similarities
Secondary sources emphasizing gender differences instead of gender similarities

Critical Thinking and the Psychology of Women
Ask thoughtful questions about what you see or hear
Determine whether conclusions are supported by the evidence that has been presented
Suggest alternative interpretations of the evidence

About This Textbook
Themes of the Book
Psychological Gender Differences Are Typically Small and Inconsistent
gender as a subject variable
People React Differently to Men and Women
gender as a stimulus variable
Women Are Less Visible Than Men in Many Important Areas
Women Vary Widely From One Another