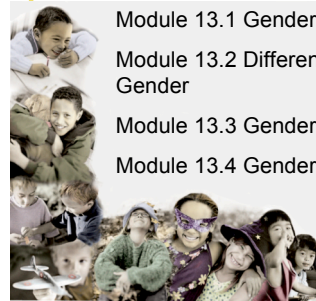


Gender

IIE 366: Developmental
Psychology
Greg Francis
Lecture 30

Chapter 13: Gender and Development



Module 13.1 Gender Stereotypes
Module 13.2 Differences Related to Gender
Module 13.3 Gender Identity
Module 13.4 Gender Roles in Transition

Children and Their Development, 4/e by Robert Kail

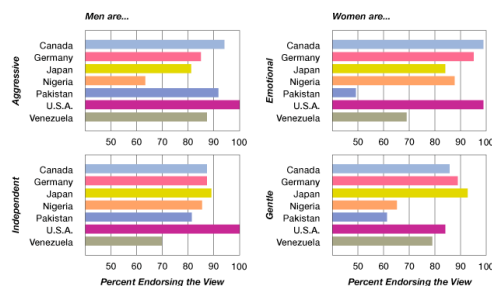
13.1 Gender Stereotypes

How Do We View Men and Women?
Learning Gender Stereotypes

13.1 How Do We View Men and Women?

- **Gender Stereotypes:** beliefs about how males and females differ in personality traits, interests, and behaviors
- Most adults associate different traits with men and women
- In the US, males are seen as *instrumental* (act on the world and influence it), women as *expressive* (emotional functioning and valuing interpersonal relationships)
- Not shared worldwide: US views on gender are extreme

Cultural Differences in Gender Stereotypes



13.1: How Do We View Men and Women?

13.1 Learning Gender Stereotypes

- By age 5, US children judge 1/3 of traits as stereotypically as adults do; by age 11, 90%
- During elementary-school years, children learn that traits and occupations associated with males have higher status
 - Males: lawyers and engineers
 - Females: social workers and flight attendants
 - Unfamiliar job (chandler-makes candles): rated more prestigious if told performed by a man
- Older children see stereotypes as general guidelines that are not necessarily binding
- Girls tend to be more flexible about stereotypes
- African American children have more flexible ideas about gender
 - Perhaps because many African American women work outside the home

13.2 Differences Related to Gender

Differences in Physical Development and Behavior

Differences in Intellectual Abilities and Achievement

Differences in Personality and Social Behavior

Frank Talk about Gender Differences

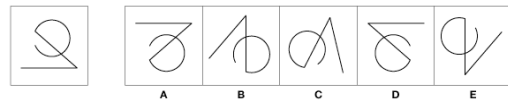
13.2 Differences in Physical Development and Behavior

- Obvious differences in primary and secondary sexual characteristics
- Boys are bigger, stronger, faster, and more active
- Girls are healthier and better on tasks requiring fine-motor coordination
 - Boys are more prone to a variety of diseases and dysfunctions

13.2 Differences in Intellectual Abilities and Achievement

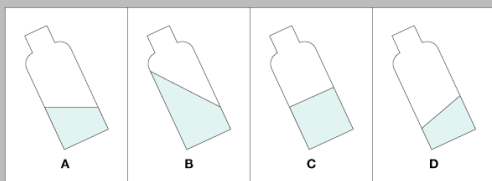
- Verbal ability: girls excel at reading, spelling, and writing, and are less likely to have language-related difficulties
- Spatial ability: boys surpass girls at mental rotation and determining relations between objects in space

Test of Mental Rotation



13.2: Differences in Intellectual Abilities and Achievement

Test of Spatial Relations



13.2: Differences in Intellectual Abilities and Achievement

13.2 Differences in Intellectual Abilities and Achievement

- Verbal ability: girls excel at reading, spelling, and writing, and are less likely to have language-related difficulties
- Spatial ability: boys surpass girls at mental rotation and determining relations between objects in space
- Math: girls often get better grades and are better at computational skills, but boys excel in math problem solving
 - Boys get higher scores on standardized tests
 - Girls get better grades in class (stereotype threat?)

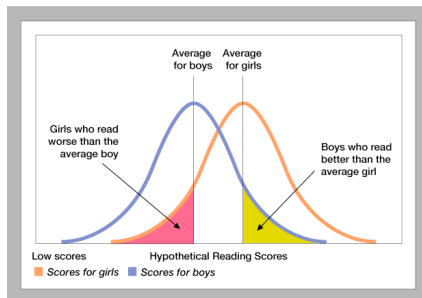
13.2 Differences in Personality and Social Behavior

- Aggression: boys are more likely to be *physically* aggressive and girls more likely to be *relationally* aggressive
 - Boys tend to focus aggression on other boys
 - Seems to be true for all cultures (and many species)
- Emotional sensitivity: girls are better able to express emotions and interpret others' emotions
 - Better identify facial expression during infancy, childhood, and adolescence
- Social influence: girls are more compliant and girls and women are more likely to be influenced by persuasive messages and group pressure
 - may come from females valuing group harmony
- Depression: adolescent girls more likely to be depressed
 - Girls may experience more negative life events (e.g., dissatisfaction with appearance after puberty)
 - Girls tend to interpret such events more negatively than boys

13.2 Frank Talk About Gender Differences

- Gender differences represent differences in *average* scores for groups of males and females; differences are relatively **small**
- Distributions of scores have considerable overlap

Hypothetical Gender Difference



13.2: Frank Talk About Gender Differences

13.2 Frank Talk About Gender Differences

- Gender differences represent differences in *average* scores for groups of males and females; differences are relatively small
- Distributions of scores have considerable overlap
- There are *lots* of abilities, behaviors, and traits where there is no evidence of a gender difference
 - Cognitive processing
 - Memory
 - Understanding people

13.3 Gender Identity

The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

Cognitive Theories of Gender Identity

Biological Influences

13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

- Parents treat sons and daughters alike except for gender-related behavior
- Fathers more likely to treat sons and daughters differently
 - Tend to encourage gender-related play
- Teachers make gender salient and spend more time interacting with boys
 - Refer to one group (e.g., girls were quiet)
 - Call on boys more often in class discussions
 - Praise them more for schoolwork
 - Scold them more for behavior

13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

- Gender stereotypes influence play by 3 years of age
- Peers critical of cross-gender play
 - Especially for boys who like feminine toys or activities

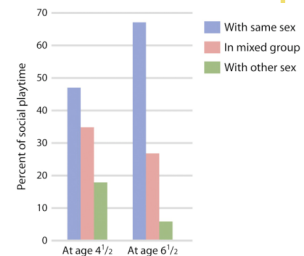


13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

- Same-sex play is universal

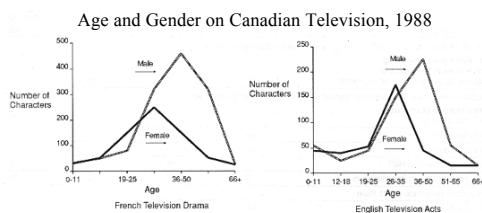
- 2-3 year olds start to prefer playing with same-sex peers
- Increasing during childhood (peaks at age 10-11)
- Even for gender-neutral activities (playing tag or doing puzzles)

- Contrasting play styles
 - Girls: collaborative
 - Boys: competitive



13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

- TV depicts stereotyped views of gender
 - 70-85% of the characters in children shows are male
 - Women are younger



13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

- The numbers lead to other properties

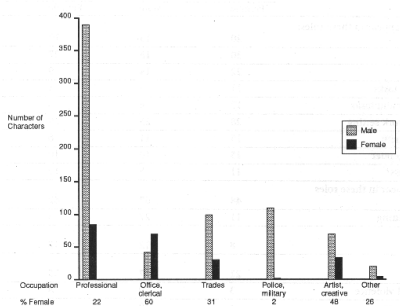
"When the numbers of people in any group are restricted, the roles that they portray can be limited as a direct consequence. As an extreme example of a common situation, consider *The Bubbles*, an animated British children's program broadcast by TVOntario. The cast of a typical episode consists of four to six male characters who speak and act like regular "plain folk", and a single female, Melody Gwen. She is everything that the regular fellows are not. She enters by sliding down from the heavens on a rainbow to the sound of tinkling music. She inclines her golden head gently and radiates what passes for charm. "Boys!" she intones, "They always play silly games!" As the lone female character, she is made to embody all that is wise and good, and to contrast with the bumbling, down-to-earth Bubbles.

13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

- In general, portrayals follow stereotypes
- Women
 - Romantic
 - Marital or family roles
 - Emotional
 - Passive
 - Weak
- Men
 - Leaders
 - Professional roles
 - Rational
 - Active
 - strong

13.3 The Socializing Influences of People and the Media

Paid occupations of Adult Characters in French Drama CBC 1989



13.3 Cognitive Theories of Gender Identity

- Gender identity develops gradually:
 - gender labeling*: by age 2-3 children understand they are either boys or girls
 - Stability*: during preschool years children understand that boys become men and girls become women (although they misunderstand why)
 - Consistency*: between ages 4-7 most children understand that gender does not change according to situations or preferences
 - Constancy*: all of the above
- By 4 years, children understand gender constancy and know gender-typical and gender-atypical activities
- According to *gender-schema* theory, once children learn their gender, they pay more attention to objects and activities that are gender appropriate

13.3 Biological Influences

- Evolutionary adaptation to male and female roles may influence gender differences
 - Women: child-rearing
 - Men: providing food and protection
- Girls who are affected by congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) are exposed to large amounts of androgen during prenatal development
 - Physical appearance: enlarged clitoris resembles a penis
 - prefer masculine activities and male playmates
- Biology, socializing influence of others and media, and child's own efforts to understand gender all interact

13.4 Gender Roles in Transition

Emerging Gender Roles
Beyond Traditional Gender Roles

13.4 Emerging Gender Roles

- Old approach to gender studies
 - Measure masculine and feminine traits
 - Individual falls on scales of masculinity and femininity
- New approach
 - Instrumentality and expressiveness
- Traditional ratings become
 - Male: high instrumentality, low expressiveness
 - Female: low instrumentality, high expressiveness
- But there can be other combinations

13.4 Emerging Gender Roles

- Androgynous people are high in both expressive and instrumental traits
- Androgynous children often better adjusted than when gender roles are highly stereotyped
- Being androgynous benefits girls' self-esteem more than boys'
- A balance of instrumentality and expressiveness may be especially adaptive

13.4 Beyond Traditional Gender Roles

- Gender is overemphasized to children



13.4 Beyond Traditional Gender Roles

- Children can be taught to have fewer stereotyped views of occupations and household activities in the short-term
- Family Lifestyles Project shows that some aspects of gender learning are more easily influenced than others.
 - Parents in the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s rejected many traditional stereotypes
 - Boys and girls equally likely to use an iron, shovel, needle, hammer
 - Still, same sex friends were the norm, boys enjoyed physical play, girls enjoyed reading
- Accomplishing change over long term in natural setting more challenging due to evolutionary imperatives

13.4 Beyond Traditional Gender Roles

- Parents may influence children by not being gender bound themselves
 - E.g., work around the house, cooking meals, cleaning
- Parents should base decisions about toys, activities, and chores on individual child, not child's sex
 - Age, ability, interest all matter
- Children can't be sheltered from forces outside the home that shape gender roles, but parents can encourage critical thinking about gender-based choices of others

Next time

- Gender
- Children's beliefs