

## INTRODUCTION

# FEMINISM AND/IN/AS PSYCHOLOGY The Public Sciences of Sex and Gender

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In our introduction to this special issue on the histories of feminism, gender, sexuality, and the psy-disciplines, we propose the tripartite framework of “feminism and/in/as psychology” to conceptualize the dynamics of their conjoined trajectories and relationship to gender and sexuality from the late 19th through the late 20th centuries. “Feminism and psychology” highlights the tensions between a political movement and a scientific discipline and the efforts of participants in each to problematize the other. “Feminism in psychology” refers to those historical moments when self-identified feminists intervened in psychology to alter its content, methodologies, and populations. We propose, as have others, that these interventions predate the 1970s, the period most commonly associated with the “founding” of feminist psychology. Finally, “feminism as psychology/psychology as feminism” explores the shared ground between psychology and feminism—the conceptual, methodological, and (more rarely) epistemological moments when psychology and feminism made common cause. We suggest that the traffic between feminism and psychology has been persistent, continuous, and productive, despite taking different historically and geographically contingent forms.

*Keywords:* feminism, feminist psychology, gender, sexuality, expertise

This introduction to our special issue of *History of Psychology* is dedicated to excavating the vexed historical pairings of feminism and psychology. These pairings have been multifarious, complex, and intimately conjoined to fluctuating discourses of gender and sexuality since at least the mid- to late 19th century, as readers will encounter in the following articles. Both psychology and feminism, often in mutually constitutive ways, have been involved in changes to women’s and men’s social and professional status, to gender ideals, and to the embodiment of sexuality. However, it has never been an easy or straightforward pairing (Squire, 1989). At times, feminism and psychology have operated in tension with one another, seemingly committed to different, even contradictory,

epistemological and political projects. At other moments, they have been understood as coproductive, if not identical. Working in tandem, they have changed the ways gender is both theorized and experienced. The contributors to this issue ask, “How have feminism and psychology interacted to affect scientific and public discourses and lived experiences of gender and sexuality? How have diverse actors and publics been engaged in these endeavors?”

Several contemporary feminist scholars have noted the contentious relationship between feminism and psychology (e.g., Burman, 1998; Morawski, 1994), but few have delved deeply into the intricate history of this relationship to help unpack it more fully. How, when, and why has psychology defined the limits and possibilities of its relationship with feminism, and with what repercussions for how psychologists have theorized gender and sexuality? Despite the centrality of gender as both a descriptive and analytic category in the psychological disciplines, we do not yet have a comprehensive synthetic history that places gender (as an analytic category) *or* feminism at the center of the

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story. That is, we do not have an overarching treatment of how psychologists, since the discipline's inception in the late 1800s, have participated in constructing gender and the impact the various feminist movements have had on their work.<sup>1</sup>

Ten years ago, United States historian of psychology Elizabeth Scarborough suggested some directions for such a future project: "When and how did women's changing status affect the social values and operations of psychology, the science as well as the professional discipline. . . . How is it that later women . . . came to invest so heavily in women's issues and changing women's status? What difference have they made?" (Scarborough, 2005, p. 6). Other questions flow from her suggestions: How has psychology itself affected women's changing status? How have feminisms influenced women and men working within the psychological disciplines, as both consumers of and contributors to gender ideologies? When and how has psychology channeled feminism, and feminism channeled psychology?

As central as these questions are to the history of psychology, the history of feminism, and to gender analysis, it is understandable that they have not yet received sustained attention. It has only been since the 1970s that "feminist psychology" was invented as an institutionally and conceptually distinct entity in the United States (Chrisler & Smith, 2004; Stewart & Dottolo, 2006) and Canada (Radtke, 2011). In many other parts of the world, it was established comparatively later, if at all (see Rutherford, Capdevila, Undurti, & Palmary, 2011). Indeed, attending to the histories that are specific to different local and geopolitical contexts reveals the complex and sometimes diverse ends to which "feminist" agendas are applied, and to the contested meanings and deployments of "feminism" itself (e.g., Briggs, 2002).

Although we (and others) use the term *feminist psychology* to refer to the field as it developed in the United States and Canada, naming was not a straightforward exercise. "Psychology of women" was (and is) intentionally adopted in many contexts as the less threatening and more institutionally acceptable name for the new field (for the debate over naming in the British context, see Wilkinson & Burns, 1990). As Jenifer Dodd reminds us in her contribution to this issue, on the labeling of rape as "paraphilic

coercive disorder" (Dodd, 2015, pp. 312–323), the "name game" reveals crucial assumptions about the nature of the phenomenon being named. Even the relatively apolitical term "psychology of women" had its pitfalls in that it singled out the psychology of women as somehow different from, and less central to, the rest of (invisibly male/masculine) psychology. In 1975, psychologist Mary Parlee discussed the multiple problems with the term "psychology of women" and broke down her review of the field into studies that she categorized as "psychology 'of' women," "psychology against women," and "psychology for women," with the latter comprising what we might think of as feminist psychology (Parlee, 1975). But as the psychology of women—especially in the United States—came to be seen as increasingly depoliticized over the late 20th century, "feminist psychology" has been reclaimed to differentiate its more explicitly political social change agenda (for a discussion, see Burman, 1998). Here we vacillate between the two terms, generally using "psychology of women" to refer to the body of research and scientific/social beliefs that concern women's minds, natures, and experiences, and "feminist psychology" to refer to endeavors that bring feminist values, theories, and practices directly to bear on psychological inquiry, noting that this is an imperfect distinction.

<sup>1</sup> Edited volumes, such as Helene Silverberg's (1998) *Gender and American Social Science*, and Angela Creager, Elizabeth Lunbeck, and Londa Schiebinger's *Feminism in Twentieth-Century Science, Technology, and Medicine* (Creager, Lunbeck, & Schiebinger, 2001), pay little or no attention to psychology. Marie Jo Buhle (1998) charts the relationship between feminism and psychoanalysis in her influential work *Feminism and its Discontents: A Century of Struggle with Psychoanalysis*. Elizabeth Lunbeck's (1994) *The Psychiatric Persuasion: Knowledge, Gender, and Power in Modern America* examines early 20th-century psychiatry and its constructions of gender and sexuality. In her book *Practicing Feminisms, Reconstructing Psychology* (Morawski, 1994), Jill Morawski shows how feminist psychology has redrawn the boundaries around scientific objectivity, subjectivity, and validity. Although she draws strategically on historical examples, her goal is not a synthetic history of the "longue durée" of feminism and psychology.

## Bringing Feminism and Psychology Together

The women's liberation movement affected academia profoundly, and psychology was no exception. As part of feminism's influence on the field, unprecedented attention to excavating women's experiences of and contributions to earlier periods in psychology's disciplinary history emerged in the United States (e.g., Bernstein & Russo, 1974; O'Connell & Russo, 1980; Shields, 1975). Initially, much of this historiography was made up of valuable autobiographical and biographical accounts of "women worthies" as a corrective to the "womanless" history that preceded it (Crawford & Marecek, 1989). This scholarship has given way to more nuanced and contextualized collective portraits (e.g., Gul et al., 2013; Johnston & Johnson, 2008; Morawski, 1994; Scarborough & Furumoto, 1987), musings on how replacing women in psychology's history propels a critical analysis of the field (Bohan, 1990), and how attending to gender changes traditional historical narratives—sometimes radically (e.g., Hegarty, 2013; Nicholson, 2001, 2011; Rutherford, *in press*). Indeed, one important product of the pairing of feminism and psychology was the creation of a vibrant women's and gender history, which includes active and ongoing efforts to preserve and disseminate women's contributions and the life narratives of feminist psychologists (e.g., [www.feministvoices.com](http://www.feministvoices.com)). The articles in this volume are contributions to this endeavor and push it forward by engaging with the history of feminist activism in psychology and psychiatry more explicitly.

As the disciplinary project of the 1970s-born psychology of women unfolded, however, it quickly became contested by feminist psychologists themselves. By the early 1990s, many feminists working within the discipline, especially in the United States and Britain, suggested that the relationship between feminism and psychology was on the verge of disintegrating. They argued that psychology had successfully resisted critical feminist interventions and that the resulting science of gender had effectively subdued any political project (see Rutherford, 2012a; Rutherford, Vaughn-Blount, & Ball, 2010). Feminist psychologist Jeanne Marecek (1995) posed the provocative question, "Psychology and feminism: Can this relationship be saved?" Her answer—that

feminists loosen the bonds of their relationship with psychology and look elsewhere for sources of transformative innovation—reflected the frustration of a community of critical feminist scholars who were attempting to operate within a field harboring longstanding and tenacious commitments to individualism, essentialism, and some of the lingering tenets of positivism (Fine & Gordon, 1992; Kahn & Yoder, 1989; Llombart, 1998; Parlee, 1992; Wilkinson, 1991, 1997).

This frustration continues and has perhaps intensified in the 20 years since Marecek's proposal. There has been a resurgence in unreflective biological reductionism, genetic determinism, and evolutionary perspectives within psychology and beyond, with findings often invoked to buttress the inherent "truth" of archaic sex roles and provide incontrovertible evidence for theories of biologically based sex differences (for critiques of these developments, see Fine, 2010; Jordan-Young, 2010). Poststructuralism, although heavily influential in the feminist academy generally, has been largely sidelined by American psychologists who have gravitated toward feminist empiricism as their preferred epistemological and methodological stance (see Eagly & Riger, 2014). Inasmuch as the kinds of questions that have predominated in this research tradition have tended to uncritically accept many of the basic categories and assumptions of Western psychology (e.g., the primacy of the autonomous, agentic, individual; language as reflective rather than constitutive of experience), one U.S.-based feminist psychologist was led to remark, "The version of feminist psychology that has become so successfully assimilated in the USA is, in short, a thoroughly unthreatening enterprise" (Crawford, 1998, p. 62).

But has psychology as a helping profession and academic discipline truly remained unthreatened by feminism?<sup>2</sup> Conversely, has feminism been influenced by psychology? Here we propose a slight reformulation of these questions to reflect a different set of concerns and

<sup>2</sup> For a recent empirical assessment of the impact of feminism on psychological research see Eagly, Eaton, Rose, Riger, and McHugh (2012). For an assessment of the impact of feminist epistemologies on psychology, see Eagly and Riger (2014). The latter article concludes that "alternative" feminist epistemologies, that is, those other than feminist empiricism (or "feminist postpositivism," as they call it), have not gained substantial influence in the United States.

assumptions. Given that psychology and feminism have been prominent forces in the social, cultural, and political life of North America and Western Europe over the course of the 20th century, the question is not whether but *how*—through what processes, and to what effects—have feminism and psychology related to one another? This is one of the foci of this special issue.

Since at least the 1980s, scholars have debated the so-called feminization of psychology as the demographics of the discipline's membership and leadership have changed dramatically (Ostertag & McNamara, 1991; Pion et al., 1996). Psychological concepts such as microaggression, stereotype threat, and implicit bias have profoundly shaped contemporary understandings of gendered prejudice and discrimination. Social psychologists have mobilized their research so as to serve as key expert witnesses on behalf of the struggle for marriage equality (e.g., Herek, 2006), and the struggle against sex discrimination in the workplace (e.g., Fiske, Bersoff, Borgida, Deaux, & Heilman, 1991). Research on the distinctiveness and fluidity of female sexual orientation, attraction, and desire has received unprecedented public attention (Diamond, 2008). However, psychologists who hold feminist values have had to employ myriad strategies to navigate a relationship characterized by a strict policing of what counts as knowledge, who counts as a knowledge producer, and what methods count as legitimate. Their efforts, historically and to this day, have demonstrated their concern for how gender is and has been constructed by psychology, and thus for how women and men experience themselves and their social worlds.

The articles in this special issue help build a longer and somewhat more cosmopolitan history of the relationship between feminism and psychology. Although several of the articles focus on how second-wave feminist activists altered the development of feminist psychology and the projects they undertook (Dodd, 2015; Kim & Rutherford, 2015, pp. 312–323; Ruck, 2015, pp. 297–311), these articles are juxtaposed with those that offer a longer look back to the early 20th century and through the midcentury years of supposed feminist “silence” (Chettiar, 2015, pp. 270–282; Johnson & Johnston, 2015, pp. 252–269; Leng, 2015, pp. 238–251). This extended historical itinerary raises ques-

tions about the dynamics of continuity versus progress or, as historian Judith Bennett (2006) has put it, “patriarchal equilibrium”<sup>3</sup> in the encounters between feminism and psychology. It also raises questions about the contextual constraints that have regulated feminist expressions and their subsequent historical interpretations (Johnson & Johnston, 2010; Rutherford, *in press*). Indeed, we are reminded that definitions, and thus enactments, of feminism have been diverse and historically and geographically contingent (see Offen, 1988).

Ours is also a move toward a polycentric history (Danziger, 2006), one that crisscrosses the Atlantic, although it is not a truly international one (cf. Rutherford et al., 2011). The articles here focus exclusively on the global north and the experiences of White women. Moreover, the histories of gay and lesbian, trans, and intersex individuals remain out of focus (cf. Pettit & Hegarty, 2014). More positively, the articles make a concerted effort to foreground the agency of (albeit largely White) women—their ideas, methods, and networks—in this history. As well, we underscore how the politics of reproduction have long been at the center of this field and its role in the making of self-consciously liberal heterosexual subjects (Carter, 2007; Hegarty, 2007; Hustak, 2013)

We propose the formulation “feminism and/in/as psychology” to better comprehend these varied and multiple historical engagements. Historian Michelle Murphy (2012) has proposed a similar formulation (“feminism in/as biopolitics”) to draw attention to how “feminist health projects can be historicized with the same critical analytics used to consider any other instance of technoscience or governance” (p. 3). The psychology of women deserves equal scrutiny as a scientific field that has had real world effects on the lives of ordinary women and men.

<sup>3</sup> “Patriarchal equilibrium” refers to the observation that despite many changes in women’s experiences throughout history, their status in relation to men has remained relatively unchanged. Interestingly, in the late 1980s, Bennett bemoaned the disintegrating relationship between feminism and women’s history in a move that paralleled some feminist psychologist’s concerns about the relationship between feminism and the psychology of women—that feminism had ceased to inform the critical projects of women’s history or psychology of women.

*Feminism and psychology* captures the tensions between a political movement and a scientific discipline. It encompasses the history of both feminist critiques of the heterosexist and androcentric assumptions made by psychologists and attempts by scientists to problematize feminist activism (see Teo, 2005). It scrutinizes why the distinction between the two was so salient for certain historical actors while also charting seepages across these domains. *Feminism in psychology* points to those historical moments when self-identified feminists entered into psychology to alter its favored topics, populations, and research designs (for overviews, see Rutherford & Granek, 2010; Rutherford, Marecek, & Sheese, 2012). Often understood as a uniquely post-1970s phenomenon, the articles here offer a more complex picture going back to late 19th-century feminism. *Feminism as psychology/psychology as feminism* explores what some commentators see as the special affinities between psychology and feminism. Under this heading, we examine whether modern feminism offers a particularly *psychologized* understanding of self, body, and society through the uptake of psychological theories and methods in the broader women's movement (e.g., Friedan, 1963; Millett, 1970). This affinity includes the ways in which liberal feminism and psychology both foreground issues of personal choice and empowerment, a shared emphasis that many have found problematic.<sup>4</sup> In parsing the relationship into a tripartite scheme, we acknowledge that these divisions are porous. Indeed, charting the intricate circuits that animate feminism in/and/as psychology is one of the aspirational goals of this, and future, projects.

### Feminism and Psychology

There is an extensive literature on aspects of the historical interrelationship between feminist activism and scientific accounts of sex and gender. In her influential account of the Victorian sexual sciences, Cynthia Russett (1989) suggests a dialectic between early feminist activism seeking to place women in the public sphere and the articulation of naturalized accounts of human difference. Historians have documented growing skepticism

among late 19th-century feminists about the naturalization of women's minds and bodies, especially as manifested in the menstrual debility (Bittel, 2009) and the mental variability debates (Shields, 1982). Indeed, Rosalind Rosenberg (1982) contends that the central intervention among the first generation of female social scientists was the institutionalization of constructivist and sociological accounts of human difference. Compared with their male peers, they were much less inclined toward hereditary arguments and consistently invoked socialization and environment as inescapable—and even causal—influences on supposed male–female differences. In other words, the *social* sciences in and of themselves could be framed as a feminist legacy, even though this is often erased given the visibility of prominent “fathers” of disciplines (e.g., Wundt, Durkheim, Weber, Boas).

Conversely, other historiography has analyzed how early feminist thought was embedded in and mobilized 19th-century evolutionist, racist (or at least racialist), and eugenic accounts of human minds to advance their goals (Newman, 1999; Ware, 1992). As Linda Gordon (1976) argued, reproductive politics was not simply about individual choice but about forms of social reproduction as the “race suicide” debate over the declining birthrate among college-educated women demonstrated. Although first-wave feminist intellectuals were keen to dismantle evolutionary theory's gender biases (see Gianquitto, 2013), they largely replicated its racial hierarchies, even if they were now couched in social and cultural terms. Indeed, these largely Protestant feminists appropriated notions of white women as the apex of cultural evolution and as the gentler sex leading the race's civilizing mission.

In part, such historiographical differences reflect the disjuncture between how second- and third-wave feminists interpreted the legacy of the first wave. Many second-wave feminists were looking for foremothers who anticipated their concerns and interventions, whereas the third wave has expressed concerns about the silencing of different and subaltern voices

<sup>4</sup> For a critique of empowerment as it has been used in psychology, see Riger (1993).

within the supposed community of universal “sisterhood.”<sup>5</sup> What these debates revealed was that women, especially feminist intellectuals, were not passive recipients of gendered ideologies but also acted historically as its producers. Various feminist movements have been central to the history of gender as a cultural construct. This led to calls to apply critical analysis to feminist thought and feminist history itself to consider how it operated a knowledge-producing regime that articulated influential accounts of gender, sexuality, race, empire, and the social body (see [Calvini-Lefebvre et al., 2010](#)).

Thinking about the duality of psychology and feminism as separate endeavors has also been useful for understanding the work of midcentury female psychologists, later identified as “silent” feminists” ([Johnston & Johnson, 2008, 2010](#); [Morawski & Agronick, 1991](#)). For these women, keeping their feminism and psychology, and their politics and their science, in separate realms was crucial to their self-understanding and, at times, even their professional respectability. Similarly, [Henry Minton \(2002\)](#) documented the collaborative ventures between sex researchers and homophile communities, while showing efforts on the part of both parties to keep these in separate domains. In such cases, the historian’s task has been to excavate the subterranean traffic between science and culture, a circulation often denied or downplayed by the historical actors involved. [Adele Clarke \(1998\)](#) has shown that although women were not always present inside the laboratory, they often served as these sciences’ “implicated actors,” or the targets of intervention whose interest and dispositions shaped the research.

In sum, how did these women and men understand, deploy, and reify notions of sex and gender? Feminist historians have done considerable work elucidating the gender norms and ideologies in marriage counseling, parenting advice, assertiveness training, women’s mental health, and other therapeutic interventions (e.g., [Crawford, 1998](#); [Held & Rutherford, 2012](#); [Lewin, 1984](#); [Morawski, 1984, 1985](#)). The contributors to this special issue offer a number of insights into the workings of sex and gender within psychology before the advent of a recognizable psychology of women in the early 1970s. [Kirsten Leng \(2015\)](#) explores women’s situated knowledges and feminisms in the production of sexological knowledge in Germany

and Austria in the early 20th century. [Teri Chetiar \(2015\)](#) applies a gender analysis to recent interest in the midcentury psychologization of marital relations and family life. She highlights the importance of the dyadic relationship in mid-20th-century psychology as a shift from a strictly individualist monism. She demonstrates how such dyads were uneven and unequal in terms of their duties. In the postwar British world of marital guidance, compatibility in the companionate marriage had a distinct, gendered division of labor in which the wife had the greater responsibility to maintain harmony and happiness. This intensification of women’s wifely duties helped set the stage for many of the feminist critiques of marriage during the post-1960s era. Conversely, [Ann Johnson and Elizabeth Johnston](#) interpret the companionate marriage ideal as a historical bridge between the 1920s and 1960s as eras of sexual liberation ([Johnson & Johnston, 2015](#)). They chart how the ideas of Greenwich Village sex reformers gently percolated through a popular psychology radio show dealing with family guidance. The University of Minnesota female psychologist-educators they highlight were more dedicated to disrupting traditional gender roles than the received view of this generation female psychologists’ political quietism would grant.

### Feminism in Psychology

Psychology and feminism have not always been held apart historically. At different historical moments, self-identified (even militant) feminists entered into the scientific discipline and profession to challenge its core assumptions. There have been numerous retrospective evaluations of the nature and extent of the changes made by feminists within psychology (for first-person accounts, see [Austin, Rutherford, & Pyke, 2006](#); [Unger, 1998](#)). Beginning in the late 1960s, there was a renewed wave of critiques from psychologists themselves of the ways in which psychological theory and practice had served to oppress women (e.g., [Chesler,](#)

<sup>5</sup> For an analysis of the political deployment of “sisterhood” as a form of public address in U.S. feminist grassroots publications, see [Beins \(2010\)](#). For a complication of the concept of waves of U.S. feminism and its historical and political occlusions (especially of race, class, and sexuality), see [Hewitt \(2010\)](#).

1972), misunderstood women altogether (e.g., Weisstein, 1971), or simply failed to acknowledge women's experiences as worthy of study at all (e.g., Grady, 1981). Many psychologists protested the sex discrimination rampant in the institutional workings of the discipline itself. These critiques were expressions of the larger feminist movement and emanated from psychologists who were either already politicized by second-wave feminism or were soon to become so.

The psychological sciences were transformed by this influx of politicized women, as were many other academic disciplines. Historians have documented how female scientists observed new patterns of social and sexual behavior in animals, including female courtship, cooperation, and infanticide (Haraway, 1989; Rees, 2009; Milam, 2010). These scientists also paid new attention to the psychological and biological significance of female–female relationships (Pettit & Vigor, 2014). Feminist activists renewed interest in social constructivist accounts of human nature (Rutherford et al., 2010) and altered the design of clinical trials to make them more inclusive (Epstein, 2007). There is considerable debate as to whether there are a distinct set of feminist research methods (Morawski, 1994; Rutherford, 2011), but many feminist researchers converged on the importance of gaining access to women's lived experience and understanding it in context as lynchpins of the feminist enterprise (Weisstein, 1971). Even if one rejects the cultural feminist notion that there is a distinctly female way of knowing and perceiving (e.g., Gilligan, 1982), recent historical work has revealed the limits of psychology's historical self-image as a primarily experimental science. We now have rich histories of female social scientists surveying (Murphy, 2006; Rutherford, Unger, & Cherry, 2011), collaborating with communities (Torre & Fine, 2011), curating (Hegarty, 2012), and counseling (Murray, 2014) to better understand both individuals and communities. Moreover, Morawski (1988) has highlighted the long history of the discipline's fascination with "impossible experiments" when it comes to gender and sex: a strain of utopian thought that imagines situations in which complete control of the social may offer the truth of human nature. Since the 1890s (Tanner, 1896), feminists working in psychology have articulated and advocated for

research designs that not only anticipated but also sought to actualize woman's liberated state rather than her state of nature or current social status.

The contributors to this special issue underscore a number of sites and strategies of intervention that were crucial for second wave feminists as they entered the ranks of psychology. The therapist's couch loomed as large a site of intervention as the experimental laboratory. These articles draw attention to the importance of sex to feminist psychology and inspire questions about how it was theorized. At the core of much of their activity was a challenge to coercive forms of male sexual behavior both within (Kim & Rutherford, 2015) and outside (Dodd, 2015) the profession. Feminists were at the forefront of theorizing rape and seduction as the exercise of power (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975; Russell, 1974) rather than the outcome of an innate yet excessive male sexual desire (cf. Foucault, 1978). Feminism entailed a reconsideration of how psychology constructs the male alongside the female.

Even before the rise of poststructuralism in the 1990s, language featured as the key site for feminist interventions, as activism often took the form of questioning the psy-disciplines' labels, ethical codes, and diagnostic manuals. Leng (2015) questions whether such activity was a uniquely post-1970s phenomenon. She documents the feminist empiricist critiques and positive research programs articulated by early female sexologists of their own field and male peers. Her article serves as a reminder of the tendency toward the historical forgetting, or agnotology, surrounding feminist interventions into scientific practice (Proctor & Schiebinger, 2008). The lack of transmission of knowledge across generations of female scientists leads to the continual restaging of debates over female sexual fluidity or the psychological effects of menstruation, from functional periodicity (Hollingworth, 1914) to premenstrual syndrome (Chrisler & Caplan, 2002; Parlee, 1973).

### **Feminism as Psychology, Psychology as Feminism**

Despite the numerous criticisms leveled by feminists against psychology, the two arenas have at times worked together in interesting ways. Here we use the conceit "feminism as

psychology/psychology as feminism” to highlight instances when feminism has productively, rather than critically, taken up psychology and psychology has organically absorbed feminist praxis. The pairing we highlight here is a symbiotic one.

Extending our historical itinerary back to the late 19th century, historian James Livingston (2001) contends that encounters with feminist concerns resided at the core of pragmatism, the preeminent American philosophy of the social sciences. This connection continued into the sexual modernism of the interwar years, with the human sciences and feminism serving as exemplars of projects dedicated to cultivating forms of individualization, interiority, expressiveness, and self-augmentation (Pettit, 2013). According to sociologist Eva Illouz (2008), both feminism and psychology involved the conversion of private experience into public speech and were governed by the competing values of nurturance and self-reliance. Self-examination became the route to freedom with liberated sexuality as a key to emotional health.<sup>6</sup>

Feminism has a long-standing relationship with therapeutic culture and has often drawn attention to psychological forms of trauma and oppression (see Buhle, 1998; also Herman, 1992). Historian Ellen Herman (1995) set this research agenda by suggesting that Cold War era feminism offered a particularly *psychologized* vision, focusing on self-actualization, identity, and consciousness-raising. She points out that Betty Friedan drew strategically on Abraham Maslow’s concept of self-actualization to argue for women’s right to fulfill their potentials as human beings. As she also argues, despite Erik Erikson’s ambivalence for feminists (in a 1964 article, he made a case for biologically based sex differences in men’s and women’s orientations to their inner or outer worlds), his focus on identity proved amenable to a feminist reformulation. Moving away from its use in the child development literature, feminists recast it as a political tool to signpost those who had power, those who did not, and how these dynamics played out in social context. The term *identity politics* was born (Herman, 1995, p. 292).

Feminist theorists such as Gayle Rubin (1975) took up and transformed psychologist John Money’s sex/gender distinction. More re-

cently, feminist and queer scholars have reconsidered the ethics and validity of Money’s own sexology in the wake of intersex activism (Fausto-Sterling, 2000; Goldie, 2014; Downing, Morland, & Sullivan, 2014). Indeed, gender is not only a useful category of analysis (Scott, 1986)—it also exemplifies a shared moment within the history of both feminist and social scientific thought when gender was foregrounded as potentially transformative for both (Meyerowitz, 2002, 2008).

Yet this courtship of psychological expertise and woman’s liberation is one of the few themes from Herman’s foundational text that has received scant attention in the resurgence of interest in the Cold War social sciences (Ash, 2010; Engerman, 2010; Isaac, 2007; Solovey & Cravens, 2012). With the exception of Margaret Mead (Mandler, 2013), women as intellectuals, participants, and publics have largely been written out of this recent historiography in favor of an examination of the lives of hypermasculine organization men. No wave of feminism from Hull House sociology to Betty Friedan to the Boston Women’s Health Collective receives analysis in a book surveying the relationship between (social) science and American democracy (Jewett, 2012). Those women who pursued or were denied careers through the “interstitial academy” are given scant attention (Isaac, 2012). Yet the “woman problem,” or the tensions induced by the domestication of female scientists following their wartime mobilization, was an acute matter of concern during the early Cold War period (see Johnson & Johnston, 2010; Light, 1999; Rutherford, in press). This absence of gender analysis is stark considering the Cold Warrior social scientists’ sustained commitment to intervening into human development on numerous scales, braiding together the infant with the nation (McCann, 2009). At the very least, the history of the Cold War social sciences could benefit from attending to the extent to which this was a homosocial world and the values and social assumptions that this

<sup>6</sup> Liberated sexuality, feminism, and psychology come together in a particularly fascinating amalgam in the work of psychologist William Moulton Marston, the self-proclaimed inventor of the lie detector test and creator of Wonder Woman, a 1940s feminist icon reclaimed by 1970s feminists (Bunn, 1997, 2012; Lepore, 2014).

homogeneity inculcated (Costigliola, 1997; Nicholson, 2011; Pettit, 2012).

The articles in this issue examine several symbiotic relationships between feminism and psychology. Nora Ruck (2015) examines how radical feminist ideals nurtured a particular style of psychological research among psychologists at York University in Toronto, and conversely, how Toronto-based women's movements incorporated psychological terms and social scientific methods in their work. Likewise, Susanna Kim and Alexandra Rutherford highlight the uptake of feminist praxis by psychologists working from within disciplinary structures to reform what they saw as the sexism inherent in the psychotherapeutic encounter (Kim & Rutherford, 2015). In doing so, these psychologists changed both the social and ethical valence and the terms used to describe male-therapist/female-client sexual relations.

### Final Thoughts: Interdisciplinarity, Publicity, and Expertise

This collection of articles demonstrates how attending to feminism as a historical phenomenon can recast a host of interpretive issues at the core of the historiography of the social sciences, namely, questions of interdisciplinarity, the public, and expertise. Psychologists, psychiatrists, sexologists, physicians, zoologists, and other scientists have all claimed to understand woman's nature and nurture. There has been considerable controversy and boundary work among these fields, and their practitioners have employed numerous methods ranging from experiments and surveys, to clinical observation and archival research. However, as Kirsten Leng (2015) demonstrates here, the psychology of women could be understood as exemplifying the *interdisciplinary* social sciences before their formal institutionalization in the postwar era (cf. Fontaine, 2015). We suggest that our genealogies of interdisciplinary social knowledge should pass through the salons of Heterodoxy in 1920s New York (Schwarz, 1982), the institutes of child welfare from Minnesota to California (Lomax, 1977), and the meetings of the Committee for Research in Problems of Sex that furnished Kinsey's surveys (Pettit, Serykh, & Green, 2015), just as much as they should pass through the hallowed halls of Harvard (Isaac,

2012) or the vaunted Bell Labs at Murray Hill (Gertner, 2012).

The psychology of women has always been a public science, one that has never been easily contained within academic or disciplinary limits. In contrast to the image of the midcentury social and cognitive sciences constituting themselves as a "closed world" (Edwards, 1996), the psychology of women has long been open to a host of claimants. Attending to feminist concerns offers a way to trace the leakages between the academy and its publics. Debates over the nature and nurture of women's minds often take place in the contentious public sphere rather than the insulated ivory tower because they have real implications for policy and everyday life. As Ann Johnson and Elizabeth Johnston point out (Johnson & Johnston, 2015), moving outside the laboratory to attend to the "local geographies" where women have enacted scientific knowledge reveals both the public impact of psychology and its gendered dimensions more clearly.

Additionally, women's historically precarious position within the university system has necessitated that they look beyond its walls to pursue applied projects and to cultivate new publics. The work of the community of women reformers at Hull House is a prime example (Sklar, 1985). In psychology, women resourcefully developed new roles and sites for the use of their expertise, from Amy Tanner's pursuit of ethnographic work (Pettit, 2008), to the creation of centers serving children and families (e.g., Milar, 1999, on Helen Thompson Woolley; Rutherford, 2012b, on Mamie Phipps Clark). University-trained female psychologists have often been at the forefront of popularizing the field in mass culture. For example, from the 1920s through the 1940s, Columbia-trained psychologist and feminist Lorine Pruette wrote frequently on psychological topics for the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*, focusing especially on issues related to women and work (Young, 2013). In the 1950s and 1960s, Louise Bates Ames wrote a syndicated newspaper column and developed a weekly half-hour TV program called *Child Behavior* (Ames, 1954) that meted out advice to parents based on her scientific work on child development (the column was renamed "Parents Ask" in the 1960s). The iconic Joyce Brothers became the "psychologist

of suburban America” with her long-running advice columns and popular programs on national TV and radio (Heinze, 2004).<sup>7</sup> In this issue, Ann Johnson and Elizabeth Johnston direct our attention to the radio airwaves of Minnesota in the 1930s to analyze how three Institute of Child Welfare parent educators embedded psychological expertise into the child-rearing advice on their public radio program (Johnson & Johnston, 2015). They show how the scripts subtly but discernibly reflected the unconventional stance of the three producers vis à vis the era’s typical gender roles and norms.

Yet the very fluidity and openness of the psychology of women as a field has led to acrimony when it comes to the definition of expertise and evidence. Historian Theodore Porter (2006) has noted that when operating in the contentious public sphere, social scientists have typically resorted to precise quantification to emphasize their objectivity and assert their authority. Feminists have attempted to mobilize forms of evidence for policy ends with mixed results. The repressed memory controversy of the 1980s was a flashpoint. Feminist therapists like Judith Herman sought to capture the evidence of experience for traumatic effects of sexual abuse in counseling sessions, but these therapists were then often accused of embedding false memories and personalities in suggestible clients (Hacking, 1995; Satter, 2003). Feminist psychologist Mary Koss’s work surveying the prevalence of date rape on college campuses, which brought both the concept of date rape and the “1 in 4” statistic into wide circulation, was vociferously challenged on both scientific and political grounds (Rutherford, 2014).

The dynamics of interdisciplinarity, publicity, and expertise have posed serious challenges for the psychology of women as it has sought to engage its publics and have broader social influence. Feminist epistemologies are often antagonistic to generating the kind of reductionist but portable “immutable mobiles” (Latour, 1990) that social scientists usually rely upon when engaging the public or policy science. This is a history of the difficulty in translating partial knowledge and critical reflexivity into a simplistic message fit for mass consumption. Notwithstanding this difficulty, the articles presented here suggest that—if one looks in the right places—the traffic between feminism and psychology has been persistent, continuous, and productive. Moreover, it offers up

rich potential for reconfiguring the historiography of both.

<sup>7</sup> Her relationship to feminism was complicated. As historian Andrew Heinze has written, “Joyce Brothers did more than anyone else to advance a practical feminism for the average American, but she also went awry by idolizing the ‘modern marriage,’ which became her Golden Calf” (Heinze, 2004, p. 296).

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