Psychological Perspectives
Gender and Thought

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Gender and Thought: The Role of the Self-Concept

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In the continuing analysis of sex and gender differences, there is a growing awareness of the possibility of fundamental differences in how women and men perceive themselves and their worlds, in how they take meaning, and in how they come to know or reason (e.g., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Block, 1984; Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Chodorow, 1987; Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1986; Ruddick, 1980). The nature of these differences and the psychological structures and mechanisms that mediate them are not well understood. Such differences are likely to be subtle and not easily isolated but when closely analyzed may prove powerful. Our goal is to examine the divergent theories of the self that can be held by men and women and to explore how they may influence basic perceptual and cognitive processes.

This chapter has its origins in several general assumptions that derive from psychology’s two basic paradigms—the person as constructor of external reality and the person as constructed by external reality (see Chapter 1 in this volume). From our perspective, the self-concept governs one’s perception of reality. It is an important mediator and regulator of thoughts, feelings and actions. Furthermore, both the structure and the function of the self-concept will vary according to the nature of the social environment. The nature of the social environment is determined by its structural features and also by the theories and assumptions of the individuals (including the individual herself or himself) who create this environment.

Overview of the Approach

Our view is that men and women are typically encouraged to make the great divide—the self/nonself divide—in very different ways. This divergence comes as a consequence of the different patterns of social interaction and interpersonal experience that are likely to characterize men and women from their earliest experience and throughout their lives. More specifically, men and women will construct different types of structures about the self and as a consequence their thought processes may diverge both in content and in form.

Building on the ideas of a number of theorists (Chodorow, 1978; Erikson, 1968; Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1986; Sampson, 1988; Stewart & Lykes, 1985), we suggest that women are more likely than men to have what can be called a “collectivist,” “sociocentric,” “ensembled,” “communal,” or “connected” schema for the self. A schema here is an affective/cognitive structure that is created to lend meaning and coherence to one’s experience. In a connectedness schema, relations with others are the basic elements. In contrast, men are relatively more likely to have what can be called an “individualist,” “egoistic,” “separate,” “independent,” or “autonomous” schema of the self. Other individuals are represented not as part of the self but as separate and distinct from it.

We assume that connectedness and separateness self-schemas influence thinking, not just about the self but about all objects, events, and situations. This assumption is compatible with a variety of theoretical perspectives (Baldwin, 1902; Erikson, 1968; Fast, 1985; Jacobson, 1964; Kernberg, 1976) yet it seldom finds expression in studies of social cognition. While infants quickly achieve a diversity of representations of their experience, our perspective assumes that the self/nonself distinction affords a particularly meaningful categorization and integration of these representations.

The self/other distinction is made repeatedly and in a variety of ways in the course of development. The typical degree of separation from or connection to the interpersonal context that characterizes it, however, will provide a model for the representation of all objects, events, and situations.

A sense of self as separate, individuated, and autonomous gives rise to the normative task of knowing, expressing, or realizing this “true” or unique inner self regardless of the constraints of the current social environment. Conversely, a sense of self as interdependent, embedded, and continuous with others is linked with the normative task of being carefully attuned to the immediate social environment and of coming to know and understand the other (for further discussion of the importance of normative life tasks, see Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Erikson, 1968; Veroff, 1983).

Neither of these views of the self should be considered more developed or more productive than the other. Rather, they reflect divergent views of "who am I" and what it means to a "self." Self-schemata deriving from a sense of self as connected have a different structure and determine different patterns of perception and thought than those deriving from a sense of self as separate. Connected selves should not be viewed as less "good" because they are responsive to the social environment. Many treatments of sex differences in self-structure (Aries & Olver, 1985; Mahler, Pine, &
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Figure 1. Two possible representations of self and other in memory.

Refining the Core Self-Schemata

With development the basic connectedness self-schema is likely to become differentiated into multiple domain-specific self-schemata. A girl may begin with a general sense of herself-as-interdependent with others and with further social experience refine and specify the diverse nature of this interdependence. Exactly which self-schemata will be constructed depends on the meaning that is given to the normative tasks of connecting with or separating from others. How these tasks are personalized and assume specific self-relevant form is a function of individuals' unique social and developmental history (Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987). It is unlikely that individuals will articulate or become aware of a connectedness schema per se. Yet the tendency to connect to others through affection, commitment, dependency, obligation, and responsibility that is the hallmark of the schema will underlie many of the other more specific self-schemata.

Some women will elaborate schemata that derive in a fairly straightforward fashion from their sense of themselves as connected. They will develop schemata of themselves as understanding and caring, as loving and nurturant, or as responsible, conscientious, or sensitive. Others may create a more general gender schema, defining themselves primarily in terms of their social roles (for a discussion of gender schemata and other specific attribute-based schemata, see Bem, 1981, and Markus, 1977). All these self-schemata, however, will have as their referent the self-in-relation with another. One cannot manifest one's responsibility, conscientiousness, or sensitivity without an actual or implied other to receive one's actions. Women may, of course, also develop schemata of themselves as autonomous or separate in nature, that is, themselves as independent, creative, or competent. Yet when these latter self-schemata are developed within a context of basic connectedness or interdependence they may also implicate or depend on the reactions and evaluations of others.

With development, the basic separateness self-schema is likely to become the foundation for more specific self-schemata of independence, assertiveness, instrumentality, and competitiveness. These schemata have as their referent not the self in relation with another, but the self in contrast or comparison with another. To make these comparisons, the self must be separated from others. Men may also develop schemata of themselves as connected, but if these schemata are developed against a backdrop of separateness they may assume a somewhat different form. For example, when viewing the self as connected, the connection will involve an exchange between two separate entities rather than the interdependence of these entities.

Cultural Variations in Self-Schemata

The recent literature on culture and personhood contains extensive discussions about the nature of self. This literature can be useful in drawing out the phenomenological experience of having a self that begins in connection or one that begins, instead, in separation. These theoretical discussions (Dumont, 1970; Geertz, 1973; Schneider, 1976; Shwed & Bourne, 1984; White & Kirkpatrick, 1985) underscore an important point: differences in cognition should not be viewed as deficits among the group possessing the least Western, individualist, or masculine orientation. Furthermore, it should not be assumed that the less Western groups will naturally develop with education and modernization toward a more Western mode of
In the context of the self and the world, the role of the self extends into the world through the processes of attachment, identification, and representation. These processes are mediated by social and cultural factors, which shape the individual's perception of the self and the world. The role of the self is not only a reflection of personal experience but also a construction of social and cultural norms. This interplay between the self and the world is mediated by the individual's ability to engage in meaningful interactions and to construct meaningful representations of the self and the world.
differences across cultures map exactly onto the differences between Western men and women. Furthermore, the differences discussed here are global differences thought to generalize across men and women within any given culture. We suggest, however, that self-schemata of connectedness and separateness are divergent theories of the self and that they influence not just self-description and explanations for behavior, but a wide array of other perceptual and cognitive tendencies as well.

We reason then that all individuals in Western cultures will experience a powerful press to become “autonomous centers” and to develop and express their own essential uniqueness. This is the imperative that accompanies a belief in individualism. As a result, there should be a great deal of similarity in the general content of the self-concept of women and men in Western cultures and this will be increasingly so in the urban elite subcultures. Still there may be subtle but powerful differences in the nature of the self-concepts that are constructed by women and men because of the relatively greater tendencies of women to automatically focus on and incorporate others into their self-structure.

Origins of the Connectedness and Separateness Self-Schemata

We are proposing that differences in the structure and functioning of the self-concept derive from multiple sources. Following on Chodorow’s (1978), Dinnerstein’s (1977), and Miller’s (1986) basic notions, one very important difference between men and women may be in their types of relations with others and in the meaning of these relations.

From Chodorow’s perspective, one of the key features of the first important social environment (the child and the mother) for girls, as opposed to boys, is that of gender similarity. As children begin to individuate themselves and wonder “who am I?”, girls are afforded a readily accessible answer—“I am like my mother.” This answer is often encouraged directly by mothers and others in the social environment. Sons are not provided with the same experience of similarity and continuity with their mothers; a key feature of their social environment is the difference from their mothers. According to Chodorow (1978), the mother experiences the son as more of an “other,” as an “external object,” and thus the mother encourages the son to view himself as distinct and separate from the mother. An initial answer to the “who am I?” question would then be “I am not like my mother.” Chodorow assumes that gender is made salient enough to young children that they can use it in making similarity/difference distinctions.

Block (1984) also argues that male children experience a major discontinuity and sense of separation not experienced by female children as the mother, after about 18 months, automatically begins to disengage from the son. From this perspective, however, mothers begin distancing because they are consciously or unconsciously attempting to foster appropriate gender-role definitions. Such distancing between mother and son is also noted in the primate world where males are pushed into the outside world sooner than females and are essentially “peripheralized” (Nash & Ransom, 1971).

From Miller’s (1986) perspective, the basic gender issue is not an issue of continuity versus distinctness from mother but a more global issue of the societal power differential between men and women. Women must learn to relate to others and be carefully attuned to others if they are to survive in male-dominated society. “Subordinates, then, know much more about the dominants than vice versa. They have to. They become highly attuned to the dominants, able to predict their reactions of pleasure and displeasure. . . . If a large part of your fate depends on accommodating to and pleasing the dominants, you concentrate on them” (pp. 10-11).

A more general social learning perspective provides yet another framework for understanding the development of different core schemata in males and females. Within this framework, maleness and femaleness are modeled by same-sex parents and significant others who foster and encourage identification by providing examples and reinforcing appropriate behavior. Males model autonomy and sharp self–other boundaries while females model connectedness and interdependence in relationships. Once established these sex-linked differences in self-definition will thus tend to perpetuate themselves.

Parents provide conceptions of how the child should be now, but they also provide a vision of the child’s future. As the daughter tries to comprehend the roles worth imagining (Erikson, 1968), the mother is readily available, and in most cases, a willing model. As a result, the daughter will attend closely to the mother for in the mother is the outline of a possible self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). To the extent that the mother models a subordinate social role for her daughter, however, the daughter’s sense of the possible will be limited. As a son attempts to imagine his future, the mother typically does not offer herself as a model. The son is provided a model through his father. If the father models a dominant role, he may experience a relatively more expansive set of possibilities for the future.

A basic assumption common to these varied perspectives is that all individuals need to define themselves and will naturally look to their ongoing experiences for self-definitions. Where these perspectives differ is in which aspects of the social environment they claim as critical or essential for self-definition. However, self-definition in all these frameworks involves some assessment of similarity with others and difference from others.

A focus on difference with others is a natural extension of a normative task of discovering a unique self and then defending it from influence. A focus on continuity with or similarity with others follows from a normative
How the Consciousness and Separativeness Self-Concepts Affect the Mind's Influence on Thought

Announcing well before by comparing oneself with others, the conscious and separativeness will jump into their own minds, in contrast, the separativeness-self-concepts will jump out of their own minds. A noticeable contrast of these two concepts is that the self-consciousness-self-concepts will jump in to the subconscious mind of oneself, whereas the separativeness-self-concepts jump in to the conscious mind of oneself. The reason is that the self-consciousness-self-concepts will jump out of their own minds, whereas the separativeness-self-concepts will jump out of their own minds.

Consciousness and Separativeness Self-Concepts

May Influence Thought

and build up a strong foundation of self-esteem. On the other hand, these concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence. These concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence, which will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence. These concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence, which will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence. These concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence, which will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence. These concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence, which will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence. These concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence, which will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence. These concepts will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence, which will build up a strong foundation of self-esteem and self-confidence.
growth and welcome change. The mother must be prepared for a child that changes continually and finally moves away. She argues that a mother's conceptual schema for herself, her child, and the world must necessarily be open and responsive. Her structures must be easily able to respond and assimilate children who are "irregular, unpredictable, often mysterious" (p. 352).

DIFFERENCES IN STYLE OR MODE OF THINKING

The difference in content and structure that have been outlined above have direct consequences for the way one thinks. The activation of the connectedness self-schema occasions a mode of processing in which one is particularly sensitive to the surrounding social environment. Such attention to others is necessitated by the structure of the connectedness self-schema. Representations of others are not included in separateness self-schemas and the reactions of others are not focal for such a schema. For those with a separateness self-schema, precisely mapping the interpersonal domain is less important because relatively less information is needed from it.

A further consequence of difference in the structure of separateness and connectedness self-schemata is that women, in contrast to men, will have a style or mode of perceiving and thinking that can be characterized as more connected in that the surrounding context is incorporated into the representation of the focal person or object. As a result of this pervasive tendency to include self when representing other, and to include other when representing self, it may seem unnatural and relatively difficult for those with a preponderance of connectedness self-schemata to extract the self from the perceptual and cognitive process at any time. As a result, for those with a predominance of connectedness-based schemata, extracting the self and realizing the state of so-called objectivity, in many cases, is not a meaningful process.

A mode of processing in which one is sensitive to the interpersonal environment may be related to what Belenky et al. (1986) have referred to as "women's way of knowing." Connected knowers, they argue, begin with an interest in other people and they learn through empathy with these others. In so doing they are characterized by a nonjudgmental stance and by struggling to see if they have understood the other's perspective before giving a judgment. Starting with a premise of connection with others, they avoid disagreeing, arguing or making negative judgments because such behavior would seem to violate the assumption of connection and may endanger the connection. They suggest that connected knowers then are more inclined "to believe" than "to doubt" because doubting the other may also threaten the connection. Here, as always, it is the connection with others that is self-affirming and that is the ultimate reality.

Essential to separate knowing as described by Belenky et al. (1986) is critical thinking or doubting (see also Elbow, 1973). Doubters, unlike believers, do not worry about a lack of connection. Separate knowers can pull themselves away from an argument or an idea and look for something wrong—an error or a contradiction. The very goal for a separate knower is to keep the self out of the discourse, to be objective, to respond only to the arguments. This goal is completely inconsistent with a self-schema of connectedness. Connected knowers, Belenky et al. (1986) propose, are more comfortable with what is pejoratively labelled gossip. "Gossip concerns the personal, the particular, . . . but it does not follow that it is a trivial activity" (p. 116). Based on an analysis of gossip by Spacks (1982), they argue that gossipers give each other information, but most importantly they tell each other about themselves and they create a mutual reality through the interpretations they make of the information. As Spacks says, "response to news matters more than news itself" (p. 28).

In a recent analysis, Bruner (1985) draws a similar distinction to that of separate and connected knowers. He distinguishes between "paradigmatic" and "narrative" modes of thought. He argues that the first is the mode that characterizes science and logic, while the second is imaginative and constructive and tries to search for "the meaning of historical and personal events in their full comprehensive richness" (p. 101).

A Selective Review of Gender Differences

In this section we attempt to organize a wide array of literature that has examined gender differences in some aspects of thinking. It is important to acknowledge at the outset that this body of research is unsystematic, largely atheoretical, and the gender-related differences obtained are usually small. However, these data may still be useful for an initial assessment of some of our claims. Our goal is to determine if a variety of puzzling and unrelated gender differences can be organized and somewhat better understood by assuming that individuals' core self-schemata and their domain-specific derivatives differ in content and structure, and that these schemata can influence many aspects of thinking. Necessarily, this review is not meant to be exhaustive.

SPATIAL ABILITIES

Reports of differences between men and women in spatial abilities have intrigued researchers for over 30 years. Spatial ability tasks are thought to be comprised of at least two separate factors (Halpern, 1986). One is a visualization factor that emphasizes the ability to imagine how objects will appear when they are rotated or transformed in some way. A current and commonly used test is the Shepard–Metzler Mental Rotation test (Van-
The context is highly important to a connected self. Those with connectedness schemes, when not fully immersed in a meaningful, participatory, self-referential, and empowering environment, experience a sense of disconnection and isolation. They may struggle to find a sense of belonging, purpose, and meaning in life. In contrast, individuals with a context-sensitive, connected self are better able to navigate uncertainty and challenge by drawing on a sense of shared purpose, collective identity, and mutual support. These individuals are more likely to exhibit resilience, adaptability, and creative problem-solving in response to new situations.

The role of the self-concept in psychological well-being is also significant. A strong self-concept can provide a stable, coherent structure for personal identity, while a weak or fragmented self-concept can lead to confusion, anxiety, and a lack of direction. The self-concept is not static, but rather evolves and adapts over time in response to experiences and feedback from the environment. It is influenced by factors such as social comparison, self-reflection, and self-validation. To support the development of a strong self-concept, individuals may benefit from opportunities for self-exploration, self-reflection, and self-validation, as well as a supportive and encouraging social environment.

In summary, the role of the self-concept in psychological well-being is complex and multifaceted. It is influenced by a range of factors, and its development is shaped by the interactions between the individual, the environment, and the broader social and cultural context. To promote a healthy, connected self-concept, it is important to foster an environment that is supportive, empowering, and conducive to personal growth and development.
SOCIAL SENSITIVITY, EMPATHY

If males have an advantage when tasks require nonverbal and decontextualized representations of objects, females should have an advantage when tasks afford or require a verbal representation, and an appreciation of the interdependence or connection among separate objects and events. Lewis (1985) claims that interaction with humans as opposed to things requires a vicarious experience of the other’s feelings and thus necessitates a self with permeable boundaries. Unfortunately, there has been much less systematic attention to defining interpersonal or social sensitivity and to formulating tasks to assess abilities of this sort or to compare differences in this ability. Most hypothesis about the greater sensitivity of women are derived from studies in which sensitivity is inferred as a mediating mechanism. For example, a recent review of interpersonal processes in close relationships (Clark & Reis, 1988) suggests that women are disturbed by relationships in which they receive more than they give, while this form of inequity does not appear to bother men. Such a finding can be used to suggest that women are more sensitive to the needs and feelings of the other.

As connectedness self-schemata become active and begin to exert their selective and directive influences on thought, individuals will automatically attend to and encode a diverse array of information — information about the self and information about the others to whom the self is connected. As one consequence of the operation of these complex connected self-schemata, females may have a greater capacity for empathy. Empathy is defined here as a vicarious affective or cognitive responding to another’s state of mind. In the connectedness self-schema, important others are represented as part of the self, and thus perceivers may be as sensitive to stimuli relevant to these others as they will be to what appears as more purely self-relevant stimuli. In this sense information about these others is self-relevant information. As a consequence, empathic responding is almost an unavoidable response.

The literature on empathy is as fraught with controversy as the literature on spatial abilities. The review by Macoby and Jacklin (1974) concluded that there was no evidence of sex differences in empathy, but recent reviews have forced a reexamination of these ideas. As with spatial abilities, it is the definition of and measurement of empathy that creates challenge and confusion in this field. However, Hoffman (1977) (reviewing primarily studies with children) found that females were significantly more empathic than males. In a more recent meta-analysis, Eisenberg and Lennon (1983) found large sex differences in favor of females when measures of self-report were used, but fewer differences when physiological measures of one’s reaction to another’s state are compared.

From our perspective, more empathic responding should be expected when the others involved are importantly self-defining. The argument is that those with a separateness self-schema can also respond vicariously in the required manner, but that, in most cases, the response will require effort as opposed to being relatively automatic. For those with a connectedness self-schema, information about others is self-defining, and responses from these others are essential for completing the self. As indirect support of this idea, many general surveys report that women are much more likely than men to claim the well-being of their parents, children, or spouses as important sources of concern (Brody, 1981; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976). Such concern over others may be almost inevitable for those with connectedness self-schemata. In contrast, when information about others is safely compartmentalized into separate structures relevant to these others (see Figure 5.1), such automatic activation or intrusion can be controlled by focusing on the self.

It is well documented that women experience a significantly higher level of psychological distress than men (Al-Issa, 1982). Recent analyses suggest that this distress may come not from a deficit in effective coping skills, but from a much greater involvement by women in the lives of those around them (Dohrenwend, 1977; Kessler & McLeod, 1984). Dohrenwend, for example, found that women considered a much greater variety of events to be stressful than did men. The additional events not typically considered stressful by males included life crises that occurred to the respondents’ family, friends, and neighbors. Kessler and McLeod (1984) found that men are as distressed as women by serious crises that befall their children or spouses. However, men showed much less concern with the diversity of events that occur to members of the extended family, friends, and co-workers. We suggest that because of their connected self-schemata, women are automatically sensitive and responsive to information about the troubles of others. Furthermore, due to the greater complexity of their connectedness schemata, such information receives a more elaborate encoding and subsequently is easily remembered and highly accessible in working memory. Even without an explicit belief or decision that one should be concerned about another, the processes of attention and concern may be underway.

Other than studies of empathy, there are few studies that explore sensitivity to social cues (see Macoby & Jacklin, 1974). Based on the reasoning that attending to others is the basis of self-definition and self-validation, we would expect women to reveal a genuine expertise on tasks that require careful, subtle, or quick attention to and analysis of others. The choice of tasks examined to reveal this difference is critical here, however, because men and women alike must be relatively expert in the social domain (Lykes, 1985). Without such skills it is impossible for anyone to function effectively. There are a handful of findings, however, suggestive of women’s expertise in social sensitivity. Hall (1978), for example, in a review of 75 studies finds that females are significantly better than males in decoding or interpreting visual and auditory cues about another’s affective state.


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Intricate knowledge in the interpersonal domain.

Although most people believe that men and women differ in their memory and reasoning abilities, research shows that these differences are not as pronounced as once thought. The key to understanding these differences lies in the way in which information is processed and remembered, rather than inherent gender differences. This insight challenges traditional beliefs about gender roles and highlights the importance of focusing on the unique experiences and perspectives that individuals bring to social interactions. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for fostering more inclusive and equitable environments in which everyone can contribute fully to society.
Concluding Comments

We have argued that individuals with divergent schemata of the self—meas-connected to others (a connectedness self-schema) and meas-separate from others (a separateness self-schema)—are likely to differ in both the form and content of their basic perceptual and cognitive processes.

We began our analysis with a discussion of the probable nature of the basic connectedness or separateness self-schemata. In the course of attempting to describe these critical mediating structures, a number of important questions have been raised. Because the view of the self-as-separate, bounded, and autonomous has been the model for the ideal self in virtually all of Western psychology (Lykes, 1985), it is relatively easy to characterize this model and to speculate about the nature of self-as-separate representations. Much less consideration, however, has been given to the form of the interdependent self or to the nature of self-as-connected representations. Are relational schemata somehow more open and more flexible because they require input from the social environment before they are instantiated? Is a self-concept that is rooted in connectedness a more variable or a more complex self because its precise nature depends on relations with diverse others? And, in general, what does it mean to say that representations are shared or joint, or to say that some representations include the self together with the other?

Recently, theorists such as Hamaguchi (1985) have written insightfully about the nature of Asian selves. He describes the Japanese self as being constantly redefined and as including one's share of the livespace that is commonly shared by both oneself and other actors. In this theory of "relational" selves, as in all analyses of non-Western selves, however, no separate attention is given to describing the self-structures of women. Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that the connected selves that Western women are developing are constructed within a culture that is the world's most extreme in terms of its press for autonomy and unfettered individualism. The development of a conception of self takes place within a cultural and a historical context. This means that developing a self-schema requires an integration of the general cultural view of the self and the specific view presented as gender appropriate within this context. The finding of general differences between Western and non-Western conceptions of self that cut across men and women in these cultures suggests that the cultural world view asserts a strong influence on all members of the culture. This is not to say that men and women do not differ within a given cultural framework, but it implies that the self-schemata of women from different cultures may differ markedly. The form these differences may take has yet to be charted.

Throughout the chapter we have speculated about the various developmental origins of connectedness and separateness self-schemata. We have argued that these core self-schemata develop early in life and are repeatedly reinforced by early socialization experiences. How these self-schemata influence later experience depends on the nature of the interaction between the early socialization and the current situational demand (Deaux & Major, 1987). To the extent that men and women are placed in situations that differentially reinforce their sense of themselves as connected and autonomous, their early tendancies and strategies will be accentuated. Furthermore, following Sedney's (1987) analysis of the development of gender identity over the lifespan, we anticipate that the specific forms taken by the connectedness and separateness schemata may well change during the course of maturation.

The last section of the chapter was devoted to hypothesizing about how connectedness and separateness self-schemata may influence perceptual and cognitive processes. We have argued that the nature of one's core self-schema may shape not just self-perception but perception and cognition generally. In attempting to assess these ideas, we briefly reviewed a variety of research areas that focus more or less directly on thinking. The findings are generally consistent with the idea that divergent theories of the self differentially constrain thinking. While a more systematic review of the research is clearly indicated, this initial analysis suggests that by focusing on the structure and function of the self-concept, we may be able to organize and at least partially explain a diverse array of sex and gender differences, ranging from differences in the rotation of three-dimensional figures to differences in capacity for empathy and susceptibility to social influence.

What remains now to be done is a careful analysis of which aspects of perception and cognition are the most likely to be systematically influenced by the nature of the self-schema and to explore the persuasiveness of this influence. It follows, for example, that those with a connectedness self-schema and those with a separateness self-schema will have somewhat different strategies for scanning or charting the terrain of the social environment. In addition, there is a diverse array of additional cognitive phenomena that may be influenced by the nature of these core self-schemata.

For example, because of their expertise in interpersonal domains, will women reveal less pluralistic ignorance and also be less susceptible to the false consensus bias in which people assume that other people think, feel, and act as they do? Is it the case that women with different "ways of knowing" will be interested in different problems than men and will frame them in different ways? Will some problems be inherently more compelling to women because they involve seeking similarity, interdependence, integration, or convergence? One can also speculate about gender differences in other areas that imply a connection or relation between the self and other. These include social comparison, social facilitation, vicarious learning, imitation, suggestibility, and hypnosis. In the process of
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