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The Oppositional Structure of Implicit Theories of Masculinity and Femininity, Identity, and Attitudes Toward Women

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Abstract

Implicit theories of masculinity and femininity were proposed to contain both oppositional and non-oppositional inferential relations between attributes. Across two studies, it was the oppositional attributes, i.e., power-dominance for males and deference-submissiveness for females, which as a part of a person's identity, correlated positively with oppositional belief, an identification with a sex-typed masculine or feminine identity, and a pattern of oppositional attitudes toward social equality for women. For the non-oppositional attributes, agency and empathy, the pattern of inter-correlation was in the reverse direction to that of the oppositional attributes indicating a transcendence of oppositional belief structure and support for social equality for women.

It is time for a reconceptualization of the concepts of femininity and masculinity as they are currently being measured and written about by psychologists and other social scientists. While significant changes have occurred over the last two decades, it is our contention that the concepts of masculinity and femininity are still oversimplified and in constant danger of reification (Eichler, 1980). We propose an alternative approach which is explicitly constructionist (c.f., trait theory) and multidimensional. We contend that femininity and masculinity are constructions based on inferential relations between gender and other personal attributes and furthermore, that these constructions contain within them structural dimensions defined by oppositional and non-oppositional relations between attributes. Following a brief historical

review, we will describe existing approaches, their relationship to theory, and then elaborate our approach and present empirical evidence to support it.

Social scientists' understanding of the concepts of femininity and masculinity, as reflected in the scales used to measure self-concepts (gender identity) has progressed from oversimplified unidimensional scales measuring masculinity-femininity as bipolar opposites (see Constantinople, 1973, for a more thorough critique), to two-dimensional measures with separate femininity and masculinity scales which appear to be orthogonal (see, for example, Bem, 1974). Factor analytic studies (see, for example, Gadreau, 1977; Feather, 1978) and multidimensional psychometric trait approaches (for example, Spence and Helmreich, 1978) suggest the possibility that two dimensions may be inadequate. Thus the Extended Personal Attributes Questionnaire or EPAQ (Spence, Helmreich, and Holahan, 1979) incorporates orthogonal F- and M-scales but also an MF scale made up of bipolar opposites along with negative M- and negative F-scales. Significantly, however, the implications of the MF scale and the negative scales have received scant attention.

An alternative to trait theories is found in the developmental approaches of Kohlberg (1966), Ullian (1976), and Percival (1985), and the constructionist approach of gender schema theory (Bem, 1981). The developmental approaches are based on the fact that children acquire gender labels at an early age and then formulate constructs as to what those labels mean. Bem (1981) used the term gender schema for the cognitive structure composed of the inferential relationships between gender and other personal attributes as constructed by the individual. She proposed that the self-concept would be assimilated into this gender schema. In other words, the gender schema will influence the way one construes oneself as well as the way one construes others. The greater the gender salience, i.e., the greater the extent to which an individual uses gender schematic processing, the greater the tendency toward a one-sidedly masculine or feminine sex-typed identity. Ironically, despite this constructionist approach, she continues to use a measure based on psychometric trait dimensions.

In addition to a constructionist approach, we take a multidimensional approach, asserting that there are structural dimensions within gender constructs. And we are proposing specific structural dimensions. These dimensions are defined by grouping attributes according to oppositional and non-oppositional inferential relations. We argue that constructions of masculinity, for example, include inferential relations of the type, "if A, then not B" (e.g., "if male, then not female" or "if tall, then not short"). Inferential relations may also, of course, take a positive form as in "if A, then B" or there may be no relation perceived between attributes A and B; both of these forms we term "non-oppositional".

Several sources of information point explicitly to the likelihood of both oppositional and non-oppositional components of constructs of femininity and masculinity, we will discuss the evidence separately.

Implicit Theories of Masculinity

There is sufficient evidence to predict that the content of the oppositional masculine attributes will express power and dominance, e.g., *strong, forceful, aggressive,* and *dominant.* Young children define gender using observable physical attributes and behaviours. They emphasize size-strength and do not differentiate physical strength and toughness from psychological strength and toughness (Kohlberg, 1966; Ullian, 1976). Kohlberg and Ullian argue that these constructs are due to the children's perception of differences in the body images of males and females. Others, such as Bem (1981) emphasize enculturation, e.g., children learn the cultural stereotype that "men are tough" and infer that "men have

tough skin". Despite differences in interpretation, researchers agree that children construe men as "big-strong-tough" and women as weak and fragile. These constructs are bipolar, categorical, and therefore oppositional.

Other research also points to the importance of power-dominance as a crucial dimension of masculinity. Ashmore and Tumia (1980) found a strong inferential relationship between gender and a bipolar potency dimension on which men were construed as hard and dominating and women as soft and submissive. Furthermore, the bipolar MF Scale of the Spence, Helmreich and Stapp (1974) Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) contains the attributes *aggressive* and *dominant* at the masculine pole. There is good reason to predict that power-dominance attributes will be construed as strongly related to maleness and in oppositional relation to feminine attributes.

Another dimension of masculinity may be termed "agency", i.e., instrumental competence, mastery, and independence. Attributes indicative of agency, as instrumenal competence, include *has leadership ability, makes decisions easily,* and *does not give up easily.* Indicators of independence include *independent,* and *self-sufficient.* While these may be construed as masculine, we predicted that they would not be construed as being in oppositional relation to feminine attributes.

Implicit Theories of Feminity

The predictions for oppositional femininity are not quite as straight-forward as those for masculinity. While women are generally construed as more empathic, e.g., *understanding, sensitive to the needs of others,* and *sympathetic,* than males (Spence and Helmreich, 1978), there is little indication that these positive feminine attributes are construed as highly oppositional to masculinity. What we propose is that feminine attributes construed as oppositional are a negative antithesis of masculinity. That is, given oppositional belief, men will be construed as strong, tough and dominant, and women, as the opposite, will be construed as weak, vulnerable, submissive. The soft-submissive dimension of the Ashmore and Tumia (1980) study and the attributes from the feminine pole of the MF Scale of the PAQ, e.g., *cries easily, feelings easily hurt,* suggest just such an antithesis as an oppositional component of femininity.

The research also indicates that although power-dominance attributes are an integral component of masculinity scales, submissiveness and emotional vulnerability do not correlate highly with other feminine attributes. For example, factor analyses (e.g., Gadreau, 1977; Feather, 1978; Waters, Waters and Pincus, 1977) of the Bem (1974) Sex-Role Inventory found power-dominance attributes to have high loadings on the masculinity factor, but these same studies have identified several feminine attributes, i.e., *yielding, shy, soft-spoken,* and *does not use harsh language,* which do not have high loadings on the feminine factor but which tend to load in a negative direction on the masculine factor. It seems that although the proposed oppositional feminine attributes are clearly "not-masculine", it is uncertain whether or not they should be considered feminine.

Implicit Theories Summarized

Based on the evidence, our predictions about the oppositional and non-oppositional components of gender constructs are as follows. First, we propose that there is a thesis in both masculinity and femininity which is positive and non-oppositional, i.e., that both femininity and masculinity contain within them a positive cluster of attributes typically associated with the gender but not construed as being in oppositional relation to the other gender. The clusters are positive because they are positively valued, and attributes within a cluster are also linked together by a network of positive inferential relations. In fem-

ininity this is empathy/nurturance or communion, to use Bakan's (1966) term, while in masculinity it is agency. We also propose that both femininity and masculinity contain within them a negative/oppositional cluster containing the more extreme attributes typically associated with the gender, attributes which are construed as being in oppositional relation to the other gender. Agency in the extreme becomes power-dominance. Bakan talks of unmitigated agency in this manner and Adler (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1973), in a similar vein, suggested that agency (striving for perfection) without social concern (*gemeinschaftsgefuhl*) becomes an overcompensating striving for power. The proposed negative/oppositional component of femininity is submissiveness/emotional vulnerability which would seem to be the opposite of power-dominance. These constructions, when applied to others, are one's implicit personality theory; when applied to the self, they become a part of one's identity.

Oppositional and Non-oppositional Identities

Given such an oppositional belief structure within implicit theories of femininity and masculinity, people who construe themselves as strongly characterized by oppositional attributes (e.g., power-dominance), would not construe oppositional attributes associated with the other gender (e.g., submissive, weak) as part of their identity. This oppositional structure may generalize to other attributes associated with the opposite gender. In such cases, oppositional belief would become an inner dynamic in the service of maintaining this one-sided identity. We expected that individuals would differ in the extent to which such an oppositional belief structure is a part of their identity.

In contrast to those with masculine or feminine indentities constructed on the basis of oppositional belief, a person with low oppositional belief would be free to actualize positive masculine and feminine attributes without consideration of their inferential relationship to gender. The proposed transcendence of oppositional structure is similar to the sex-role transcendence theory of Hefner, Rebecca, and Oleshansky (1975) and low gender salience of Bem's (1981) gender schema theory. All of these approaches recognize the value of the positive feminine and masculine attributes for both sexes and regard a sex-typed masculine or feminine identity as limiting human potential.

Our conception differs from the above in that we propose that it is specifically the oppositional attributes as a part of one's identity which militate against the development of positive opposite gender potentials. On the positive side, we argue that it is specifically the non-oppositional components of agency and empathy which, apart from any connection to gender, correlate positively with the transcendence of this inner-oppositional belief structure.

The Research

Two studies were conducted to examine these propositions. In Study 1 we looked at people's implicit theories of gender and their perceptions of the oppositionality between masculine and feminine attributes. We also examined the relationship between gender identity and oppositional belief. In Study 2, we replicated the gender identity and oppositional belief relationship, and related self-concepts to social attitudes. Attempts to link self-concepts, as masculine or feminine gender identity, to social attitudes, especially attitudes toward women and feminism, have been only moderately successful at best (McCormack, 1983). While it may be that there is actually little, if any relationship, it is also possible that the failure to identify clear patterns have resulted from an oversimplified view of feminine and masculine identity.

Study 1

This study was designed to examine the dimensions of masculinity and femininity, primarily to confirm what appeared to be true from a review of the literature. We examined implicit theories of femininity and masculinity first to confirm that there are oppositional and non-oppositional components of each. Next we examined individual differences in oppositional belief, and their relationship to self-concepts. People with high self-concept ratings on oppositional attributes were predicted to score higher on oppositional belief in general, that is, to perceive more opposition between feminine and masculine attributes than those who did not rate themselves high on oppositional attributes.

Method

The Bem (1974) Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) and the Oppositional Belief Questionnaire were administered to 44 male and 59 female undergraduate psychology students. The Oppositional Belief Questionnaire was composed of all paired comparisons of a list of nine masculine and nine feminine attributes. It was necessary to limit the number of attributes to keep the number of paired comparisons to a manageable length. The items were constructed to include as much of the content of the BSRI and the PAQ (Spence *et al.*, 1978) as possible. The subjects first decided whether a person's having either one of the attributes in each pair would make it more likely or less likely that the person would have the other. They then indicated how much more likely or less likely on an 11-point scale ranging from +5 ("almost certain") to -5 ("almost impossible"), including a midpoint of 0 ("neither more or less likely because the two characteristics are completely unrelated to one another").

Results

Identifying the Oppositional Attributes within Implicit Theories of Masculinity and Feminity

The first objective was to demonstrate the predicted oppositional structure of gender constructs. On the Oppositional Belief Questionnaire, the mean rating for each masculine attribute paired with all feminine attributes and the mean rating for each feminine attribute paired with all masculine attributes were calculated. These provided an index which indicated whether each feminine and masculine attribute was considered to be oppositional or non-oppositional to attributes on the other gender scale, i.e., a negative mean indicated oppositionality while a positive mean indicated positive inferential relations.

Considering first the mean rating across all subjects for each masculine attribute, the order from most to least oppositional was as follows:

(1) aggressive (forceful, boldly assertive), M = -1.79,
(2) dominant (maintains influence or authority over others), M = -1.36,
(3) adventurous (willing to take risks), M = -.97,
(4) persistent (never gives up easily, stands up under pressure), M = -.58,
(5) acts as a leader, M = -.47,
(6) masculine, M = -.46,
(7) independent (self-reliant, self-sufficient), M = -.43,
(8) decisive (makes decisions easily), M = -.25, and
(9) self-confident, M = .33.

Considering the mean rating for the feminine attributes, the order was:
(1) feelings easily hurt, M = -2.05,
(2) excitable in a crisis situation, M = -1.79,
(3) home-oriented, M = -.93,
(4) eager to soothe hurt feelings, M = -.50,
(5) sympathetic, M = -.23,

(6) warm, M = -.21,
(7) feminine, M = -.20,
(8) able to express tender feelings, M = -.08, and
(9) able to devote oneself to others, M = -.04.

The predicted oppositional structure was confirmed. The two most oppositional masculine attributes were power-dominance attributes and the three most oppositional feminine attributes were from the MF scale of the PAQ. The negative mean ratings for these items were highly significant; for all *t*'s for the mean difference from zero, $p < .01$. At the other end of the continuum, the remaining less oppositional masculine and feminine attributes (ranks four through nine) were not construed as significantly oppositional to each other.

Oppositional Identity and Oppositional Belief

Males with high self-concept ratings on power-dominance attributes were predicted to have high scores on oppositional belief. Oppositional belief scores were obtained for each subject by summing all of the oppositional ratings (i.e., the negative ratings) for all paired feminine and masculine attributes on the Oppositional Belief Questionnaire. The scores were a function of the number and the magnitude of the oppositional ratings. The sum of the ratings for the BSRI attributes *dominant, aggressive,* and *forceful* were used as a measure of power-dominance. Subjects were divided into high, moderate and low on oppositional belief (using 1/3 splits) and high, moderate and low power-dominance (using 1/3 splits). Seven of 14 high power-dominant males were high on oppositional belief compared to only seven of the 30 remaining subjects. A 2 x 2 chi square, high vs. medium-low power-dominance by high vs. medium-low oppositional belief, was significant, χ^2 (1) = 3.128, $p < .05$, one-tailed. Actually, both the high and low power-dominant males were high on oppositional belief in comparison to those with moderate power-dominance scores. To test this, a quadratic transformation converted each score by computing its squared deviation from the subscale mean. Quadratic power-dominance was positively correlated with oppositional belief, $r(44) = .303$, $p < .01$, one-tailed. For females, the correlation between oppositional belief and power-dominance was in the negative direction, $r(59) = -.173$, but not significant.

The sum of four non-masculine feminine attributes, *yielding, shy, soft-spoken,* and *does not use harsh language,* correlated positively with oppositional belief for females and males, $r(59) = .231$ and $r(44) = .368$, $p < .05$ and .01, one-tailed, respectively.

Non-oppositional identity and oppositional belief

Agency and empathy attributes were predicted to correlate in a negative direction with oppositional belief. The correlation for agency as instrumental competence, i.e., the sum of *acts as a leader, makes decisions easily, willing to take a stand, defends own beliefs,* and *strong personality,* was significant for males and females, $r(44) = -.250$ and $r(59) = -.256$, respectively, $p < .05$, one-tailed. The correlation for independence (*independent, self-sufficient* and *self-reliant*) was not significant for males. The entire masculinity scale of the BSRI was negatively correlated with oppositional belief for females, $r(59) = -.240$, $p < .05$.

Although in the predicted direction, the correlation between oppositional belief and empathy attributes, i.e., *understanding, sensitive to the needs of others, sympathetic, compassionate,* and *eager to soothe hurt feelings* did not reach significance. Neither were the supportive attributes, *warm, gentle,* and *tender* significant.

Study 2

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between attitudes toward women and the oppositional and non-oppositional com-

ponents of masculine and feminine identity. We hoped that this more detailed understanding of gender identity, based on the multidimensional structures of gender constructs, would allow for better predictors of social attitudes. The model we suggest is as follows: oppositional belief tends to be correlated with an oppositional masculine or feminine identity and these, in turn, are related to oppositional attitudes, especially opposition to social change and equality for women. This total pattern of interrelated belief, identity, and attitudes we refer to as an oppositional attitude structure. Study 1 demonstrated the belief and identity relationship; in Study 2 we examined the hypothesis that persons who construct a feminine or masculine identity using oppositional attributes would oppose changes in social attitudes if these changes were inconsistent with their oppositional belief structure. In particular, power-dominant males would oppose changes in traditional male dominated relationships between the sexes. Percival and Percival (1982) reported that sex-typed males had high self-concept ratings on power-dominance attributes, devalued femininity for an ideal person, and opposed social equality for women. The females as a group valued androgyny and social equality more than males, but the measures of that study did not differentiate among female subjects. The identification of oppositional and non-oppositional attributes within implicit theories of femininity was expected to be more successful.

Self-concept ratings were correlated with an extended version of the Sex-Role Attitudes and Values Questionnaire (SRAVQ) of the Percival and Percival study. Several subscales were selected to measure the oppositional attitude structure as follows: high oppositional belief, high stereotypic belief, high sex-typed identification, opposition to female assertiveness, and opposition to social equality for women. The self-concept measures were tested as predictors of these variables with oppositional and non-oppositional components predicted to correlate in opposite directions.

Method

The MF Self-Concept Questionnaire and the Sex-Role Attitudes and Values Questionnaire were administered to 72 male and 77 female grade eleven students.

The MF Self-Concept Questionnaire

The questionnaire contained a list of 62 attributes. Included were masculine and feminine attributes from the BSRI and the PAQ plus additional power-dominant and submissive-unassertive attributes. The subjects rated themselves on each attribute using a five-point scale ranging from "seldom true" to "almost always true".

In a pilot study we administered the list of attributes to two samples of 149 and 68 undergraduate psychology students. The subjects rated the probability that a person having an attribute would be a male or a female. Attributes could be ordered from most masculine to most feminine on the basis of mean ratings. There was substantial agreement on this order between samples, Spearman $r(47) = .976$, $p < .001$.

The masculine attributes most highly related to gender were all power-dominance attributes. The first ten masculine attributes in order were (1) tough, (2) aggressive, (3) asserts authority, (4) forceful, (5) powerful, (6) dominant, (7) domineering, (8) sees self running show, (9) takes command, and (10) asserts self over others. The first seven attributes above formed a cluster, mean intercorrelation between attributes = .33, and were used as the power-dominance subscale. The agency subscale consisted of the remaining moderately gender-related attributes as follows: (11) stands up under pressure, (12) independent, (13) has leadership ability, (14) makes decisions easily, (15) does not give up easily, (16) willing to take a stand, (17) self-sufficient, (18) self-reliant, and (19) defends own beliefs.

The picture for the feminine attributes was not quite as clear-cut. The order of gender relatedness was: (1) cries very easily, (2) soft-spoken, (3) does not use harsh language, (4) eager to soothe hurt feelings, (5) home-oriented, (6) strong need for security, (7) gentle, (8) tender, (9) feelings easily hurt, (10) excitable in a crisis, (11) very aware of others' feelings, (12) sensitive to the needs of others, (13) sympathetic, (14) submissive, (15) meek, (16) compassionate, (17) devotes self to others, (18) warm, (19) tries to please others, (20) yielding, (21) understanding, (22) subdued, (23) unassertive, (24) shy, (25) strong need for approval, (26) considerate, (27) gullible, (28) subservient, and (29) subordinates self to others. Of the top ten ranks, the attributes ranked 1, 5, 6, 9, and 10 were from the MF Scale of the PAQ, including those same items found to be highly oppositional in Study 1. The items selected for the Empathy subscale, ranks 4, 11, 12, 13, 16, and 21, were with one exception (#4) only moderately gender-related.

The Sex-Role Attitudes and Values Questionnaire

The SRAVQ (Percival and Percival, 1982) contains a number of five-item subscales. Each item presents the subjects with two statements which they rate on a six-point scale from "strongly agree more with statement A" to "strongly agree more with statement B". The following is a brief description of the content of the subscales: (1) Sex-Typed Identification: the importance to the subject of being feminine but not masculine, or masculine but not feminine; (2) Stereotypic Belief: the belief that men and women have stereotypic differences vs. the belief that men and women have the ability to be both; (3) Female Initiative: male vs. female initiative in establishing relationships, dating, marriage, and intimacy; (4) Equal Opportunity: equal opportunity for women in job appointment, promotion, admission to trades or professions, etc.; (5) Family Equality: the husband is the decision maker, owner of property vs. equal participation by women; (6) Double Morality: a double standard for swearing, intoxication, loud behaviour, and cigarette smoking.

Two new subscales were added to the questionnaire: Oppositional Belief and Female Assertiveness. The oppositional belief subscale consisted of seven items; four items asked the subjects whether a person having a masculine trait would likely have a feminine trait (or vice versa), and three items explicitly asked whether a person who was "feminine" would likely also be "masculine", and whether "masculine" and "feminine" were opposites. The female assertiveness subscale asked whether a woman should be firmly assertive when confronted with an imposition from a dominating male vs. the use of some indirect or passive strategy to handle the situation.

Results

Attributes of the MF Self-Concept Questionnaire were correlated with the sex-role attitudes and values measures of the SRAVQ. The attitudes of high power-dominant males were predicted to fit the oppositional attitude pattern previously described. Each feminine attribute was correlated with the SRAVQ subscales to identify a comparable component of feminine identity.

Oppositional Masculine Identity and Sex-role Attitudes

The two masculine subscales, power-dominance and agency, were positively correlated with each other, $r(71) = .391$, $p < .01$, two-tailed, yet, they correlated in opposite directions with the subscales of the SRAVQ. Partial correlation coefficients were computed to control power-dominance for agency and vice versa, see Table 1. For male subjects, power-dominance, controlled for agency, correlated positively with sex-typed identification and oppositional belief, and negatively with female assertiveness, female initia-

tive, equal opportunity, and family equality. In contrast, agency, controlled for power-dominance, correlated negatively with oppositional belief and stereotypic belief, and positively with female assertiveness, female initiative, and family equality. Overall, the ability to use self-concept ratings to differentiate two different patterns of response was clear and convincing.

Table 1
Partial correlations for self-concept subscales and SRAVQ subscales

	Males		*Females*	
SRAVQ Subscales	Agency	Power-Dom.	Empathy	Deference
Sex-typed identification	.036	.312**	-.162	.291**
Belief structure				
Oppositional belief	-.366***	.212*	-.302**	.159
Stereotypic belief	-.254*	.141	-.282**	-.033
Relationships				
Female assertiveness	.234*	-.275**	.218*	-.068
Female initiative	.223*	-.173	.214*	-.200*
Equality				
Equal opportunity	.062	-.205*	.282*	-.244*
Family equality	.234*	-.339***	.324**	.058

* $p < .05$, one-tailed
** $p < .01$, one-tailed
*** $p < .001$, one-tailed

Oppositional Feminine Identity and Sex-role Attitudes

The following list consists of each feminine attribute which correlated in the predicted direction ($p < .05$, one-tailed) with any one of the SRAVQ subscales selected to measure the oppositional attitude pattern: *devotes self to others, subordinates self to others, subservient, submissive, meak, subdued, cries easily*, and *gullible*. The content of this list is obviously one of deference and submissiveness. Surprisingly, the feminine attributes from the MF Scale of the PAQ, with the exception of *cries easily*, did not correlate significantly. Neither did the diffident attributes of Study 1, i.e., *shy, soft-spoken, does not use harsh language*. The significant attributes were sorted into separate deference and submissiveness subscales on the basis of (1) a cluster analysis, and (2) the differences in the pattern of intercorrelation with the targeted subscales. The deference subscale was composed of the *devotes self to others*, and *subordinates self to others* items plus a third item *tries to please others*. The submissiveness subscale contained the attributes *submissive, meek*, and *subservient*. Deference, but not submissiveness, was positively correlated with the sex-typed identification subscale, see Table 1, and with other feminine attributes such as the empathy subscale, $r(76) = .475$, $p < .01$, two-tailed. Deference, controlled for empathy, also correlated negatively with equal opportunity and female initiative, see Table 1. Submissiveness correlated negatively with equal opportunity, $r(76) = -.276$, $p < .05$, family equality, $r(76) = -.227$, $p < .05$, and female assertiveness, $r(76) = -.227$, $p < .01$, and positively with stereotypic belief, $r(76) = .321$, $p < .01$, all one-tailed.

Using the same SRAVQ subscales for the female sample but selecting items that correlate in the opposite direction to those above, the list was synonymous with the empathy subscale, including perspective taking attributes such as *understanding* or *sensitive to the needs of others* but not the supportive *warm, gentle* or *tender* attributes. As indicated in Table 1, the results for empathy, controlled for deference, are particularly impressive; the correlations with oppositional and stereotypic belief were significantly negative and the correlations with female assertiveness, female initiative, equal opportunity, and family equality were significantly positive.

Other Results

Although the main focus of the analysis was on the masculine identity of males and the feminine identity of females, other data were also of interest. For females, agency, controlled for power-dominance, correlated positively with equal opportunity, $r(76) = .270$, $p < .01$, and negatively with stereotypic belief, $r(76) = -.252$, $p < .05$, and oppositional belief, $r(76) = -.385$, $p < .001$, all one-tailed. For females, power-dominance, controlled for agency, correlated negatively with equal opportunity, $r(76) = -.381$, $p < .001$, female assertiveness, $r(76) = -.275$, $p < .01$, female initiative, $r(76) = -.293$, $p < .01$, and positively with oppositional belief $r(76) = .254$, $p < .05$, all one-tailed. For males, empathy correlated negatively with stereotypic belief, $r(71) = -.289$, $p < .01$, and oppositional belief, $r(71) = -.239$, $p < .05$, and positively with female initiative, $r(71) = .234$, $p < .05$, and female assertiveness, $r(71) = .207$, $p < .05$, all one-tailed. The prediction that agency and empathy would correlate negatively with oppositional belief was confirmed for both sexes.

Discussion

The results for male subjects and masculine attributes were consistent with predictions. Power-dominance attributes were construed as oppositional to feminine attributes in Study 1. The pilot study for the MF Self-Concept Questionnaire found the most highly gender-related masculine attributes to be power-dominance attributes. Males with high self-concept ratings on power-dominance attributes scored higher than other males on oppositional belief in both Study 1 and Study 2. In Study 2, high power-dominant males scored high on sex-typed identification and stereotypic belief. Power-dominant males also opposed female assertiveness in relationships with males and opposed social equality for women. Given the research reviewed in the introduction plus the present results, the nature and importance of this power-dominance dimension may be taken as well established.

The results for females did not fit this pattern and suggest a different rationale from that used to predict the male results. Feminine attributes from the MF Scale of the PAQ, e.g., *cries easily, feelings easily hurt, excitable in a crisis,* were construed as highly oppositional to masculinity in Study 1, and were found to be highly gender-related in the pilot study for the MF Self-Concept Questionnaire, but females with high self-concept ratings on these attributes did not score higher on oppositional belief, or on any of the target variables of Study 2. In fact, considering the results for feminine items using female subjects, a set of attributes positively correlated with oppositional belief replicated across studies was not found. The predictions for oppositional belief were based on the assumption of consistency within the individual's identity between the self-concept, oppositional belief structure, and social attitudes. When you contrast the results for males and females, you must wonder to what extent this rationale is appropriate for women?

Fortunately, the research was successful in identifying a set of feminine attributes, which although not significantly related to oppositional belief, were significantly related to other target variables in Study 2. Of particular importance was the positive correlation between deference and sex-typed identification, i.e., females who said that it was very important for them to be feminine and not masculine tended to rate themselves high on the items *devotes self to others, subordinates self to others,* and *tries to please others.* Deference was also positively correlated with empathy. Most female subjects rated themselves high on empathy, but it was those who also had high ratings on deference who scored high on sex-typed identification.

Deference did not prove to be quite the same thing as the submissiveness attributes, *submissive, subservient,* and *meek.* Submissiveness was not correlated with empathy or sex-typed identification, but rather tended to be negatively cor-

related with agency. Submissiveness, by definition, implies an unequal relationship, and submissive females opposed social equality for women, female assertiveness, and female initiative.

The thematic consistency in these results is compelling. First of all there is the obvious antithetical relationship between the significant power-dominance attributes for males and the significant deference-submissive attributes for females. Both the power-dominant male and the submissive female has cognitions characterized by oppositional relations. But only the power-dominant males scored high on oppositional belief. They maintained an oppositional belief structure which was consistent with their self-concept and their social values. As indicated by the negative correlation with the equality and relationship variables, opposition for submissive females would seem to be interpersonal rather than intrapersonal, experienced in relation to males rather than in relation to their gender identity. The differences between the results for males and females were consistent with Bakan's (1966) principles of agency and communion and Gilligan's (1981) separateness and connectedness. For power-dominant males, the most important issue would seem to be that of establishing a consistent sex-typed identity. For deferent-submissive females, the most important issue would seem to be that of establishing and maintaining relationships.

Secondly, there is a compelling consistency within the content of the significant feminine subscales considered in order from least to most oppositional on the attitude variables, i.e., from empathy to deference to submissiveness. The preselected empathic perspective-taking attributes were negatively correlated with oppositional belief and positively correlated with the relationship and social equality variables of the SRAVQ. Deference, like empathy, is a pro-social orientation, but whereas acting empathically shows a willingness to defer self-interest temporarily in the interest of the welfare of others, high ratings on the deference subscale go beyond this ideal of situationally appropriate empathy. The deference items express an explicitly other-directed orientation which would make such females particularly vulnerable to unequal relationships with males. Submissiveness is a likely negative product of such unequal relationships.

In summary, our concept of an oppositional identity is a clear alternative to the concept of a sex-typed identity. While sex-typing is based simply on high scores on one scale and low scores on the other scale, our data suggest that this oversimplifies the issue. What is critical is whether or not a person scores high on the oppositional components of masculinity or femininity.

Finally, we believe that we have successfully identified a positive alternative which is significantly different from the concept of androgyny, which has received considerable criticism (see, for example, Pyke, 1980; Stark-Adamec, Graham and Pyke, 1980). Our alternative incorporates positive components of femininity and masculinity, that is, empathy and agency, which correlate with each other. But of special importance is the absence of oppositional components. It is the relative absence of oppositional belief and oppositional attributes which enables one to develop potentials regardless of gender relatedness. These positive components, in fact, correlated with social attitudes in a manner just the reverse of the oppositional components of masculinity and femininity. Our results suggest that some women and some men define themselves using a "both/and" solution to what others believe to be oppositional, i.e., their identity incorporates both connectedness to others and separateness or agency. These women and men seem to be able to transcend the oppositional dynamic of a power-dominant identity and other-directed dynamic of deference and submissiveness.

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