

might provide an interesting control for understanding the true plight of women.

There is, then, more to the scandal of The Double Helix than either James Watson's defective character or Rosalind Franklin's mistreatment as a woman excluded by her colleagues. Science is not a pure and rational search for objective truth, unsullied by the mundane facts of power and money. It is instead a social activity which, like any other, reflects the values of the society of which it is a part. The position of women within the microcosm of the scientific professions is a product of these wider social values. Ruthless competitiveness, hierarchical institutions and at best ambivalent attitudes about the suitability of women for the life of science pervade the scientific arena as they do society at large. Viewed in its historical context, the case of Rosalind Franklin takes on its proper significance.

#### NOTES

1. Atlantis, Fall 1976, vol. 2, number 1, pp. 107-113.
2. Ibid., p. 107.
3. Margaret W. Rossiter, "Women Scientists in America before 1920," American Scientist, 1974, vol. 62, pp. 312-323.
4. Harriet Zuckerman and Jonathan R. Cole, "Women in American Science," Minerva, 1975, vol. 13, pp. 82-102.
5. Thelma McCormack, p. 112.
6. Cynthia Epstein, Woman's Place: Options and Limits in Professional Careers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), p. 7.
7. Anne Sayre, Rosalind Franklin and DNA (New York: Norton and Company, 1975), pp. 70-71.
8. In 1973, Dr. William Summerlin of the Sloan-Kettering Institute of New York reported that "tissue culture" could make a skin or corneal graft that would otherwise be rejected acceptable to an organism of the same or even different species. His claims aroused considerable interest because of their implications for surgical practice. When other scientists failed to duplicate his results, Summerlin resorted to faking his data. He touched up his grafts with a felt pen so that it would appear that he had grafted dark skin onto white mice. He also reported experiments that had never been performed. See P.B. Medawar, "The Strange Case of the Spotted Mice," New York Review of Books, vol. 23, number 6, April 15, 1976, pp. 6-11.

## **Elinor J. Burwell** A COMMENT ON PATRICK O'NEILL'S REVIEW OF HALF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

A book review should, as a minimum, inform the reader about the contents of the book. Patrick O'Neill's review in the Fall 1976 issue of Atlantis(1) of Half the Human Experience, by Hyde and Rosenberg,(2) fails to accomplish this minimum. O'Neill has focussed almost exclusively on the book's presentation of Freud's theory of the female personality, a section which covers only seven of the book's 306 pages.

The academic psychologist who teaches a course on the psychology of women wants information on how this book compares with previously published texts. The fact that there are good chapters on lesbianism and on cross-cultural aspects of sex roles is of interest, since these topics are absent in both the Bardwick(3) and Sherman(4) texts. The new and exciting concept of androgyny is discussed. There is a good section on methodological problems in research on sex differences. There is even a chapter on sex differences in animal behaviour for those who are "into" comparative psychology. Following an account of the psychology of black women, the concept of women as a minority group is introduced. The chapters on biological influences on female behaviour and on female sexuality give the main points on these topics clearly and concisely. One might complain that Hyde and Rosenberg stick too closely to

the words of the author whose work they describe (e.g. their account of Mary Parlee's review of research on the premenstrual syndrome). Nevertheless, the material is there for the undergraduate student to think about.

As O'Neill says, just about everybody is an interactionist on the issue of the relative influence of nature and nurture in the development of sex differences. But O'Neill might have pointed out that Hyde and Rosenberg are much more on the side of nurture than is Bardwick, whose frank preference for a biologically based psychology of women made her book unacceptable (even nauseating) to many students.

While one can agree with O'Neill that the material on the psychology of sex differences is inadequately presented, in all fairness it should be noted that this is an area where the findings seem to change each year. Even the encyclopedic work by Maccoby and Jacklin(5) has been shown to contain a host of omissions, errors and misinterpretations. (6) Writers of texts on the psychology of women must be hard pressed to know what material is sufficiently well established to merit inclusion in a new book, and one can imagine them wishing to make changes in the section on sex differences right up to the time the book goes to press!

And that brings me to my last criticism of O'Neill's review. He writes as if the book were about sex differences.

In fact, it is about "the female experience:" the roles the female plays throughout her life cycle, her needs and motives, her desires and frustrations, her experience of her body and her sexuality. The psychology of sex differences is only a small part of that story.

All in all, this book is a vast improvement on anything that has been available in the past. Your readers should be made aware of this.

#### NOTES

1. Patrick O'Neill, Book review of Janet S. Hyde and B.G. Rosenberg, Half the Human Experience: The Psychology of Women. In Atlantis, Vol. 2, 1976, pp. 132-135.
2. Janet S. Hyde and B.G. Rosenberg, Half the Human Experience: The Psychology of Women (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1976).
3. Judith M. Bardwick, Psychology of Women: A Study of Bio-Cultural Conflicts (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).
4. Julia A. Sherman, On the Psychology of Women: A Survey of Empirical Studies (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1971).
5. Eleanor E. Maccoby and Carol N. Jacklin, The Psychology of Sex Differences (Stanford University Press, 1974).
6. Jeanne H. Block, Debatable conclusions about sex differences, in Contemporary Psychology, Vol. 21, 1976, pp. 517-522.