Influence of Sex Role Stereotypes on Ratings of Male and Female Behavior

Constance Barclay

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INFLUENCE OF SEX ROLE STEREOTYPES
ON RATINGS OF MALE AND FEMALE BEHAVIOR

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Constance K. Barclay
July 1975
INFLUENCE OF SEX ROLE STEREOTYPES
ON RATINGS OF MALE AND FEMALE BEHAVIOR

Recommended

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Director of Thesis

Laurie E. Layne

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Date

Dean of the Graduate College
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Figure 1. Interaction Between Sex of Stimulus and Sex of Subject 19
INFLUENCE OF SEX ROLE STEREOTYPES ON RATINGS OF MALE AND FEMALE BEHAVIOR

Constance K. Barclay

July 1975

Directed by: C. Clinton Layne, R. L. Miller, and Lois E. Layne

Department of Psychology

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An attempt was made to investigate the extent to which individuals are unknowingly influenced by a sex role stereotype in their evaluations of men and women. It was hypothesized that subjects would describe a character in more potency-related, "masculine" terms if that character had been identified as a male than if the character had been identified as a female. Subjects taking part in this study were an equal number of male and female students in introductory psychology classes. The semantic differential technique was employed as a descriptive tool for the subjects' evaluations of a character they read about in a short passage. The content of the passage used was designed to include qualities usually thought of as masculine and qualities usually thought of as feminine. A 2 x 2 factorial analysis of variance procedure was performed. The results indicated no significant differences either for Factor A, sex of the stimulus figure, or Factor B, sex of the subject. This suggests that both males and females described the character equally in terms of potency and that the sex of the character portrayed did not significantly influence the subjects' perceptions or evaluations. However, the interaction effects of the two factors did approach significance. Male subjects tended to produce a lower mean potency score when evaluating a female character than when evaluating a male character. On the other hand, female subjects showed the opposite tendency of evaluating a female character with a higher potency rating than they gave to a male character.
In our society women and men are thought to have different basic personalities. The literature indicates the commonly-held assumption that certain traits are characteristic of men, while other traits are characteristic of women (Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz & Vogel, 1970; Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Elman, Press & Rosenkrantz, 1970; McKee & Sherriffs, 1956; Reece, 1964; Rosenkrantz, Vogel, Bee, Broverman & Broverman, 1968; Spence, Helmerich & Stapp, 1974). The subjects involved in these studies, who were predominantly college students, seemed to picture the masculine personality as having the characteristics of strength, independence, and as in general exhibiting a coping kind of behavior; Reece (1964) found these attributes to be related to what he termed a potency factor. Perceived characteristics of the feminine personality were found to be centered around an emotional warmth and expressiveness, a concern for others, and a generally nurturant kind of behavior. These attributes Reece found to be related to a social behavior factor.

The studies cited have indicated that a negative, or at least a less positive, image of women exists in our culture. It seems that females are seen as having a lower status (Brown, 1958) and fewer desirable characteristics (Broverman et al., 1972; McKee & Sherriffs, 1956; Rosenkrantz et al., 1968). In addition, women have been found to be judged by lower standards of mental health than men (Broverman et al., 1970). Individuals were judged to be less competent when they had been identified as women in studies done by Rosen and Jerdee (1973, 1974), Greenberger and Sorensen (1971), and Goldberg (1968).
It has been hypothesized by Bem and Bem (1970) that sex role stereotyping is a "nonconscious ideology." People are not aware that they are employing sex stereotypes when they make evaluations about another individual. In discussing this ideology Zimbardo and Meadow (1974) say that sex role differences are learned from observing cultural sources of information such as parents, textbooks, television, newspapers and magazines. If the message given out through all of these channels of communication is consistent, then there is no reason for a child to doubt the assumptions; the sex role differences perceived are regarded as fact, not as opinion. Having been accepted as a reality, these ideas go unchallenged through adulthood, while playing a large part in the selective processing of information, thus distorting perception.

These nonconscious beliefs are hidden prejudices about what women's natural personality and capabilities consist of, and they exert a powerful negative influence on the way women see themselves, as well as the way others see them. Since the "feminine" attributes are less highly valued in our society, women who identify with the traditional role are likely to suffer from personal feelings of inadequacy and lowered self-esteem. Some evidence for this assumption was indicated when Gump (1972) found that ego strength was inversely related to the adoption of the traditional female sex role. Those women who do not behave in a traditionally feminine manner are also handicapped because any "masculine" attributes they exhibit are simply not recognized, distorted in order to fit the stereotype, or viewed as abnormal. Thus sex role stereotypes can seriously limit the potential for women to develop the full range of their capabilities.

In investigating sex role stereotypes the previous studies have been of two major types. The first type of study was a relatively straightforward request for descriptions of a typical male and female
Broverman et al., 1970; Broverman et al., 1972; Elman et al., 1970; McKee & Sherriffs, 1956; McKee & Sherriffs, 1959; Rosenkrantz et al., 1968; Spence et al., 1974). These studies yielded a rather stable picture of what the sex role stereotypes are, and indicated a less favorable image of women than of men. The second type of study conducted involved a less obvious measure in which subjects were not aware of the nature of the study. These studies attempted to determine how sex stereotypes influence perceptions or evaluations of women (Alper & Korchin, 1952; Baruch, 1972; Goldberg, 1968; Greenberger & Sorensen, 1971; Rosen & Jerdee, 1973, 1974). More research of this kind remains to be done. Studies involving a covert measurement of the influence of sex role stereotypes have generally used a stimulus in which the character to be evaluated exhibited only "masculine" traits, such as job competency. In the present investigation both traditionally masculine and feminine qualities were included in the description of the character to be evaluated. The hypothesis to be tested was whether subjects would perceptually distort the information they received, focusing predominantly on those qualities that fit the traditional stereotype, while playing down the ones that did not.
Literature Review

It appears that when sex stereotyping occurs it usually results in a position of lower status being accorded to women. For example, Brown (1958) questioned college students concerning their preference for the sex of their offspring, providing circumstances allowed them to have only one child. He found that college students generally expressed preference for a male child; in fact, 91% of the men and 66% of the women expressed this preference. In response to the question, "Have you ever wished that you belonged to the opposite sex?" only 2 - 4% of the adult men as compared to 20 - 31% of the adult women said that they recalled being aware of the desire to be of the opposite sex.

McKee and Sherriffs (1956) have found evidence that personality traits usually ascribed to women are seen as less socially desirable than those usually ascribed to men. College students were asked to choose characteristics which they thought to be typical of men, and those they thought to be typical of women. Several methods were used for the students' evaluations, including rating scales, adjective checklists and open-end procedures. Those traits which had been characterized by a previous sample of students to be desirable without regard to sex were the ones most often attributed to men in this sample. In using the open-end procedure, and allowing for more freedom of expression, it was found that the partiality for males did not imply an unfavorable opinion of females as much as it did a less favorable opinion.

In another study McKee and Sherriffs (1956) provided college students with an adjective checklist and asked them to describe positive and
negative traits that were characteristic of men or women. The adjectives which were ascribed significantly more often to men were related to being frank and straightforward in social relations, intellectually rational and competent, and bold and effective in dealing with their environment. Men's undesirable characteristics were usually limited to excesses of these traits. Adjectives ascribed significantly more often to women than to men were related to emotional warmth and a concern for things other than the material. Women's undesirable traits were a tendency to be snobbish and to exhibit an excess of unpleasant emotionality. The male subjects questioned tended to emphasize men's desirable characteristics; the females emphasized women's neuroticism. When a second group of students was given the list and asked to check the adjectives that most described themselves, there was a marked reduction in the number of adjectives ascribed significantly more often to one sex or the other. However, the degree to which the women described themselves as similar to the feminine stereotype was significantly greater than the degree to which the men described themselves as similar to the masculine stereotype.

In a recent appraisal of sex-role stereotypes Broverman et al. (1972) also found that characteristics ascribed to men were positively valued more often than those ascribed to women. The traits judged as masculine formed a cluster including competence, rationality and assertiveness; feminine traits formed a cluster reflecting the qualities of warmth and expressiveness.

Rosenkrantz et al. (1968) developed a stereotype questionnaire. College students were asked to imagine a situation in which they were meeting a person for the first time, and then to rate the person on a bipolar scale for various personality traits. In the first situation the only information given about the person was that he was a male,
and in the second situation the only information given was that the person was a female. Finally, the subjects were asked to use the same scale to mark traits that described themselves.

As in the studies of McKee and Sherriffs (1956), the results indicated that stereotypically masculine characteristics were perceived as socially desirable more often than stereotypically feminine characteristics. The greater value was a function of more male than female traits being positively valued, rather than a greater value per se of individual masculine traits. The imagined men were described as aggressive, independent, unemotional, objective and not easily influenced; men also were predicted to be able to make decisions easily and to weather crises without becoming emotional. Women were imagined as being gentle, aware of the feelings of others, expressive of tender feelings, and possessing a strong need for security. It was found that the self-concepts of men and women as determined by self-ratings were less extreme than their stereotypic responses for their own sex.

Spence et al. (1974) used the sex stereotype questionnaire developed by Rosenkrantz et al. (1968) in a more recent study. They found that college students perceived sex differences to be less in their peers than in a generalized group of adults. But even with their peers a significant sex role stereotype existed for a substantial majority of items.

In an effort to discover the nature of discrepancies between the real self and the ideal self in relation to sex roles, McKee and Sherriffs (1959) again provided college students with an adjective checklist with which to rate characteristics. The subjects went through the list four times: describing their ideal self, describing their real self, describing the ideal member of the opposite sex, and finally describing the ideal of their own sex. The results were that the women were less
sex-typed in describing their ideal self; in other words, they desired
more allegedly male characteristics more often than the men desired allegedly
female characteristics. However, when it came to describing the real self,
the women were judged to be more sex-typed because they chose feminine
traits almost exclusively. This discrepancy between the real and ideal
selves described by the female subjects suggests feelings of inadequacy.

In another study concerning perceived characteristics of the real and
ideal selves Elman et al. (1970) administered a stereotype questionnaire
with sixty bipolar items given to college students. The subjects rated
these items for the typical male, typical female, themselves, and then
for the ideal female, male, and selves. The mean ideal male and ideal
female turned out to be significantly closer to one another than the typi-
cal male and typical female, and the students saw themselves as being less
extreme than the stereotype for their sex, as in an earlier study (McKee
& Sherriff, 1959). The authors concluded that sexual stereotypes exert
a stronger influence on a person's actual self concept than on their own
ideals.

Alper and Korchin (1952) studied the differential reactions of men
and women to a passage dealing with the relative merits of male and female
students in a university setting. When asked to recall the material, men
remembered a larger percentage of items that had been judged as pro-male.
Women remembered a smaller proportion of all types of items, including
those that had been judged to be pro-female. Alper and Korchin noted that
the women tended to exaggerate and to sharpen the contrast between the
sexes, being self-abrasive in the process. They surmised from their
findings that women seem to be more prone to acceptance of cultural stereo-
types than men.
The differences between the sexes in adherence to a stereotype might be due to a real difference between them in heterogeneity of personality, a greater general tendency for women to conform to social expectations, or to women's more effective indoctrination in role acceptance (McKee & Sherriff, 1956). In her discussion of the differential socialization of boys and girls in our society, Bardwick (1971) suggested why women might be more prone to conform to the traditional stereotype. She noted that the dependency, passivity, and affection-seeking behavior considered normal for all young children are traits usually defined as feminine, and that girls are allowed to remain dependent for a longer period than are boys. Because of this continued dependency, a girl may continue to rely on others for support and approval, while a boy is being pushed to develop internal, independent sources. Bardwick also stated that unless something intervenes, the woman may continue to carry a great need for approval with her throughout womanhood. When social approval is of major importance to an individual she is more likely to stay within the accepted norms, fearing rejection and loss of love if she does not conform. Since the evidence indicates a somewhat greater acceptance of the stereotypes by women, their effects on the self concept would be even more likely.

Tangri (1972) studied the characteristics of "role innovators," who were defined as those women who chose occupations with less than 30% female employment. Data were obtained from an extensive senior year questionnaire and from projective measures of need achievement. The innovators were found to be motivated by internally imposed demands to perform to capacity; these women would be in direct contrast to women who have a high need for approval from others as a motivating force. Of course, by definition, these role innovators are in the minority.
It has been noted by Horn (1972) that internalization of the traditional feminine role can cause psychological pressures on behavior of which women may be frequently unaware. It can cause a great deal of conflict, because if the traditional role is accepted as a way of life and it is also known to encompass less socially desirable attributes, then the woman is forced to accept second-class status in order to be considered normal in her culture. In actuality, clinicians' judgments have been found to reflect the sex role stereotypes prevalent in our society.

Qualities that are held to be desirable in a society are usually positively related to the clinical judgments of normality or adjustment in that society. Broverman et al. (1970) hypothesized that judgments about traits that characterize a healthy, mature individual would differ as a function of the sex of the person judged, and that these differences would parallel the stereotyped sex roles that have been previously reported. In their study clinicians were asked to describe a healthy, mature, socially competent adult, sex unspecified, and then to describe a psychologically healthy man and a psychologically healthy woman. The authors found that a double standard of mental health did exist; apparently the standards were meant primarily for men. With this double standard there is a powerful negative assessment of women, because healthy women are perceived as significantly less healthy by adult standards than are healthy men (Broverman et al., 1970). This mental health model may stem from an adjustment notion of health, considering the fact that in our society men and women are trained to fill different social roles. However, since the traditional feminine role represents a lower status position, if a woman accepts this position she will be likely to have lower self esteem. This presents a double-bind situation for many women; they must either accept an inferior status, or exhibit the positive characteristics of a
healthy adult and put themselves in the position of being considered deviant in terms of being a woman.

In a comparison of college women's sex role attitudes and their psychological well-being, Cump (1972) used an inventory which assessed attitudes according to a self- or other-orientation. She measured the ego strength of the women with the Ego Strength Scale, consisting of MMPI items which had successfully discriminated patients who improved in therapy from those who did not. Awareness of needs, capacity to plan realistically in terms of themselves, and clarity of goals were qualities that differentiated high from low ego strength scorers. The data suggested that ego strength was inversely related to adoption of the female traditional sex role, and that more purposive, resourceful women were less traditional in their sex role orientation.

If women are the lower status sex, and are judged by lower standards of mental health, are they then generally assumed to be less competent? Greenberger and Sorensen (1971), in studying how individuals make choices to consult, respect or like their colleagues, used as subjects a junior high school faculty. The subjects were asked which three persons they would be most likely to go to for advice with a particular classroom problem, whom they regarded most highly for teaching skills, and whom they most liked. A strong differentiating effect was found, with both men and women showing a disproportionate preference for men as advisors on classroom problems; 91% of the men, and 69% of the women chose men. Even when organizational status was controlled, sex had a differentiating effect on the choices for advice. Men were chosen for respect more often than would be expected if choices had been random with regard to sex. The authors suggest that the women's hesitate to consult other women over teaching difficulties might have reflected a belief in the men's superior
ability to solve certain kinds of problems. The fact that these evaluations were made in an occupational setting that is dominated by women makes the discrimination even more obvious.

Goldberg (1968) noted that anti-feminism, like any other prejudice, distorts perception and experience. He hypothesized that even when the work was identical, women would value the professional work of a man more highly than that of a woman, but that in areas traditionally reserved for women this would be reversed or greatly diminished. Goldberg used one article in each of six fields: art history, dietetics, education, city planning, linguistics and law; the same article bore a male name in one booklet and a female name in another booklet, so that women read six articles, three presented as being written by men and three presented as being written by women. The subjects, who were female college students, were told to read the articles and to answer nine questions on each article, rating it for value, persuasiveness, profundity, writing style, professional competence, professional status and its ability to sway the reader. Goldberg reported that women found an article more valuable and its author more competent in the areas of city planning, linguistics and law when the article bore a male name.

In adapting Goldberg's methods, Baruch (1972) used articles from eight professional fields combined in booklets; for any one article, half of the booklets bore female author's names and half male author's names. Questions following each article involved grading it for value to both a professional and a nonprofessional reader, rating its logic, originality and persuasiveness, and estimating the author's status and professional competence. There was a repeated mentioning of the author's name in the phrasing of these questions. Results concerning a general tendency to devalue feminine articles were not consistent with that of Goldberg (1968),
since the college women in Baruch's study as a whole did not devalue the articles. However, women with nonworking mothers tended to devalue the articles bearing a feminine name in the areas of linguistics, city planning, nutrition, psychology, law, and sociology.

Rosen and Jerdee (1973) defined sex role stereotypes as perceptions and expectations of what is acceptable and appropriate behavior for males and females. They examined the way these stereotypes influenced evaluations of male and female supervisory behavior. Subjects for the experiment were college students and bank supervisors who were presented with a situation requiring action by a supervisor in dealing with his subordinates; both the sex of the supervisor and subordinates were varied. The subjects were not aware that a comparison of male-female supervisors was involved. Instead, the task seemed to be an evaluation of the appropriateness and potential effectiveness of different supervisory approaches that were being considered. The authors found that evaluations of the efficiency of certain supervisory styles were influenced by the interaction effects of sex of the supervisor and sex of the subordinates. The results show clear evidence of the impact of sex role stereotypes on expectations in employer-employee relations.

In another study Rosen and Jerdee (1974) examined sex stereotypes and their influence on personnel decisions. The subjects were male bank supervisors who were asked to make choices of action using only written information. This information was a description of a situation calling for a supervisory decision; the sex of the employee was varied. In a situation involving promotion to branch manager, subjects were more willing to promote a male than a female. Although described identically, female employees were discriminated against in promotion recommendations, the bias holding across two conditions of job complexity. Rosen and Jerdee
Concluded that in a situation where the desirability or appropriateness of an administrative action is ambiguous and only partial information is available, subjects appear to fall back on preconceived attitudes. In the practice of hiring and promoting where there often is only limited information given to the decision-maker the sex role stereotype and the expectations connected with it can seriously limit the opportunities of someone who may or may not fit into the mold of the "traditional" woman.

Statement of the Problem

This study was an attempt to investigate the extent to which individuals are unknowingly influenced by a sex role stereotype in their evaluations of men and women. It was hypothesized that subjects would describe a character in more potency-related, "masculine" terms if that character had been identified as a male than if the character had been identified as a female. It was predicted that the "masculine" attributes included in the character description would not be as strongly recognized if that character was assumed to be a woman.
Method

Subjects

Subjects who were asked to participate in this study were students in introductory psychology classes at Western Kentucky University, ranging from 18 to 24 years of age. Out of those who voluntarily chose to participate in the experiment an equal number of males and females was obtained by randomly discarding excess subjects. Seventy-two total subjects were used, with 18 subjects in each condition.

Apparatus

The semantic differential technique was employed as a descriptive tool for the subjects' evaluations of the character in the description. Snider and Osgood (1969) describe the semantic differential as a combining of controlled associations and scaling procedures. It provides the subject with a set of bipolar adjective scales with which he can indicate direction and intensity of his associations on a seven-step continuum.

The word pairs used in this experiment were taken from the Concept Meaning Measure, a semantic differential of masculinity and femininity developed by Reece (1964). In Reece's study the concepts of typical masculinity and typical femininity were rated by college students, using the Concept Meaning Measure, which was constructed from six hypothesized factors. An analysis of the results showed two factors, or sets of word pairs, to be significant in differentiating between the male and female stereotypes. These sets of word pairs were the ones designated by Reece as being potency-related and those designated as being social behavior-related; it was these two sets of word pairs that were included in the
present study (see Appendix A). A total of twenty bipolar scales was arranged in random order, with the placement of the "masculine" end of the continuum on the right or left also being randomized for each word pair.

**Design**

The independent variable in this study was the sex of the character described, all other variables remained constant. The dependent variable was the mean rating of potency-related word pairs as measured by the Concept Meaning Measure. The content of the description used was designed to include qualities usually ascribed to women, as well as those usually ascribed to men as determined by the studies reviewed earlier.

**Procedure**

The subjects were told that they would be given a story to read, and that they would be asked to give their impressions of the central character. The seven-point scale for the word pairs was explained, and the subjects were asked to make a choice for every word pair listed. Booklets containing the stimulus and rating scales were handed out and background data were also obtained (see Appendix B). In all classes the same procedure was used, except that in half of them the description given contained an obviously feminine name, while in the other half an obviously masculine name was used.

**Scoring and Analysis**

The subjects' responses were scored only for the ten potency-factor word pairs. A mean potency score for each subject was derived by averaging the ten ratings to get one score to represent an overall evaluation of the central character's potency. A 2 x 2 analysis of variance procedure was performed to determine the effects of Factor A, sex of the central character, the effects of Factor B, the sex of the subject, and the interaction of the two factors.
Results

The dimensions of sex of the stimulus figure and sex of the subject were analyzed by a 2 x 2 factorial analysis. The mean potency scores for each of the four groups of subjects are shown in Table 1. Analysis revealed that there were no significant differences for any of the factors, (p > .05), as indicated in Table 2. This suggests that both males and females described the character equally in terms of potency, and that the sex of the character portrayed did not significantly influence the subjects' perceptions or evaluations. However, the interaction effects of factors A and B—sex of the stimulus and sex of the subject—did approach significance \( F (1,66)=3.496, \, p>.05 \) as can be seen in Figure 1. Male subjects tended to produce a lower mean potency score when evaluating a female character than when evaluating a male character. On the other hand, female subjects showed the opposite tendency of evaluating a female character with a higher mean potency rating than they gave to a male character.
TABLE 1

Mean Potency Scores for Each Group

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Female Stimulus, Female Subject</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>96.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Stimulus, Male Subject</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Stimulus, Female Subject</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Stimulus, Male Subject</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>95.3</td>
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### TABLE 2

Analysis of Variance for Potency Scores

(N = 72)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tr>
<td>A (sex of stimulus)</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.446 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (sex of subject)</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.258</td>
<td>1.152 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A X B</td>
<td>.783</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.783</td>
<td>3.496 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>15.259</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>.224</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16.400</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>

* nonsignificant, p > .05
FIGURE 1. Interaction between sex of stimulus and sex of subject
Discussion

In this study the subjects were not found to evaluate male and female characters significantly differently from each other in terms of potency-related, "masculine" traits. This finding is in contrast with the results of earlier studies which indicate that subjects make differential evaluations on the basis of sex only (Goldberg, 1968; Greenberger & Sorensen, 1971; Rosen & Jerdee, 1973, 1974). There are several possible reasons why the predicted differences were not found in this particular study. It may have been that the instrument used to measure the subjects' evaluations, word pairs from the Concept Meaning Measure, was not sensitive enough to register any perceived differences. Another possibility is that the stimulus passage used was too intense, and that if the description had been less detailed differences in evaluations might have surfaced more readily. This second possibility seems plausible in light of Rosen and Jerdee's (1974) conclusion that the effect of sex stereotypes on perception is most strongly evident when little information is available and the situation is rather ambiguous. Using a shorter, less-detailed description might bring sex role differences to light. Another potential study would involve having subjects read the description and evaluate the central character after several hours have gone by. This could be done in order to discover if the subjects selectively forgot or distorted information that was not consistent with the stereotyped role. Other valuable research could include using subjects other than young college students. It may be that the effect of sex role stereotyping would be found to be stronger in populations
of older subjects.

Although there were no significant differences in evaluations on the basis of sex, the interaction effects of the sex of the subject and the sex of the central character approached significance. It seems that a tendency may exist for male subjects to downplay potency-related characteristics when they are found in a female, and for female subjects to emphasize them. Due to this interaction effect, the main effects of sex of the subject and sex of the stimulus figure may have canceled each other out and obscured the findings. Therefore, a need for further study is indicated, with an investigation being made of male and female populations separately to assess possible different effects of the sex role stereotype for each population.

In past studies the influence of sex role stereotypes on evaluations of individuals has resulted in a devaluation of women by both male and female subjects. The fact that in the present study only the male subjects de-emphasized the "potent" qualities of the female character while the female subjects emphasized them suggests the presence of a new atmosphere emerging in which women are exploring new roles. These new ways of living may be allowing women to identify with qualities such as assertiveness, strength and independence—qualities traditionally regarded as masculine. If men continue to see only the feminine qualities in women, then they will be restricting the women's potential for developing all of her capabilities. By discovering the effects of sex role stereotypes and making people aware of this information both men and women may gradually become less bound to the narrow range of behaviors that have been thought to be appropriate only to one sex.
References


Zimbardo, P. G., & Meadow, W. Sexism springs eternal--in The Reader's Digest.

APPENDIX A

Concept Meaning Measure
(Reese, 1964)
Phyllis Johnson recently started to work for a large company. A short time after her arrival on the job she noticed that in a certain section of the company the working conditions were poor, and that there seemed to be low morale among the workers. She decided to investigate the problem and to talk to some of these employees. The employees were surprised at Phyllis's concern about the less-than-satisfactory working conditions they faced each day. She listened to what they had to say, and expressed sympathy with their grievances.

The problem bothered Phyllis, and she began to wonder what could be done to improve the situation. She went in to discuss the matter with her supervisor. He at first seemed skeptical about whether there really was a problem, but Phyllis explained to him how the workers felt, and pointed out that unhappy workers were not likely to be very productive. Her supervisor agreed to let Phyllis work on the problem and to give her support for it.

After spending a lot of time just thinking about the possibilities for change, Phyllis came up with some approaches to the problem. But

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Background Information

age ______ classification freshman sophomore junior senior (circle one)

sex ______ major ____________________
there was great difficulty and expense in using most of them. After running over several plans in her mind, she found that all of them seemed to come to a dead end. At this point Phyllis began to wonder if she were capable of coming up with a solution.

One night, working late at the office, Phyllis became very frustrated and wanted to give up on the whole project as hopeless. But the next morning a new thought came to her, and she began to write up a proposal describing her plan for improving conditions in the company. When the proposal was completed, she took it to her supervisor, who was impressed with it and thought it should be presented at the next staff meeting. The supervisor promised Phyllis a promotion if her plan were approved by the committee members.

Presenting her ideas at the meeting, they were met with enthusiasm and approval by the majority of the members, and shortly thereafter Phyllis's plan was put into effect. Company morale began to improve, as well as production rates. But a few months passed without mention of a promotion. Phyllis went into her supervisor's office and demanded to know whether or not she was going to receive the promised promotion.

Based on what each word means to you, place an "X" on the number for each word pair that best describes the main character in the story you just read.

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APPENDIX C

Stimulus Story, Male Character
Phil Johnson recently started to work for a large company. A short time after his arrival on the job he noticed that in a certain section of the company the working conditions were poor, and that there seemed to be low morale among the workers. He decided to investigate the problem and to talk to some of these employees. The employees were surprised at Phil's concern about the less-than-satisfactory working conditions they faced each day. He listened to what they had to say, and expressed sympathy with their grievances.

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