Feminism and Psychology:

Analysis of a Half-Century of Research on Women and Gender

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Abstract

Starting in the 1960s, feminists argued that the discipline of psychology had neglected the study

of women and gender and misrepresented women in its research and theories. Feminists also

posed many questions worthy of being addressed by psychological science. This call for research

preceded the emergence of a new and influential body of research on gender and women that

grew especially rapidly during the period of greatest feminist activism. The descriptions of this

research presented in this article derive from searches of the journal articles cataloged by

PsycINFO for 1960-2009.  These explorations revealed (a) a concentration of studies in basic

research areas investigating social behavior and individual dispositions and in many applied

areas, (b) differing trajectories of research on prototypical topics, and (c) diverse theoretical

orientations that authors have not typically labeled as feminist. The considerable dissemination

of this research is evident in its dispersion beyond gender-specialty journals into a wide range of

other journals, including psychology's core review and theory journals, as well as in its coverage

in introductory psychology textbooks.  In this formidable body of research, psychological

science has reflected the profound changes in the status of women during the last half-century

and addressed numerous questions that these changes have posed.  Feminism served to catalyze

this research area, which grew beyond the bounds of feminist psychology to incorporate a very

large array of theories, methods, and topics.


Keywords: gender, women, psychological science, feminism

Feminism and Psychology: Analysis of a Half-Century of Research on Women and Gender

The dawning of the 20th century's second wave of feminist activism in the 1960s brought exceptional attention to the discipline of psychology. In *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), an opening salvo of the new social movement, Friedan laid some of the blame for women's disadvantaged status on the influence of Freud and his followers. Although Friedan did not analyze the specifics of the wider content of psychological science, she condemned the entire social science endeavor: "Instead of destroying the old prejudices that restricted women's lives, social science in America merely gave them new authority" (Friedan, 1963, p. 117). As Friedan and other feminists denounced the limits that society had placed on women's lives, they not only critiqued the discipline of psychology as part of the problem but also raised a host of issues that could potentially be addressed by psychological research. In this article, we examine the extent to which psychological research has addressed many of these issues.

Feminist psychologists soon extended Friedan's analysis by arguing that psychology had contributed to women's disadvantage by failing to study women and gender and by producing biased science in the sparse efforts that it had put forth. The first widely read indictment of psychology's understanding of women written by a psychologist was Weisstein's (1968, 1971) cogent, much-reprinted essay that ridiculed prominent psychologists' characterizations of women as childlike, dependent, unassertive, and interested only in finding a husband and bearing children. Weisstein's examples included, for example, Bettelheim's (1965, p. 15) statement that "We must start with the realization that, as much as we want women to be good scientists or engineers, they want first and foremost to be womanly companions of men and to be mothers." In such analyses, women's motivations did not extend beyond marriage and childrearing. Other feminist voices soon joined Weisstein—for example, Shields (1975) wrote about the "social

myths" such as maternal instinct that psychologists had promulgated.

The crux of the 1960s and 1970s feminist criticisms of the content of scientific psychology was that researchers had committed errors of omission and commission. Specifically, feminists argued that the neglect of women and gender had produced largely "womanless" knowledge (Crawford & Marecek, 1989, p. 147), and that sexism plagued much of the theory and research that had been produced (e.g., McHugh, Koeske, & Frieze, 1986; Sherif, 1979). Many feminists argued that this bias followed in large part from psychology's neglect of the social context of women's lives in favor of emphasis on women's intrinsic nature, thus implying that women's deficits of societal power and status are inevitable. In Weisstein's (1968, p. 75) words, "One must understand the social conditions under which women live if one is going to attempt to explain the behavior of women.  And to understand the social conditions under which women live, one must be cognizant of the social expectations about women."

Feminists did acknowledge a few bright spots in psychology's history, especially research by two early 20th century feminists, Woolley (1910) and Hollingworth (1914), whose research challenged common assumptions about women's intellectual inferiority (see Shields, 1975).  In the period between this first wave of feminist activism and its second wave of mid-to-late 20th century activism, research was sparse. The rare reviews that appeared (e.g., Maccoby, 1966; Miles, 1935) revealed few theoretical developments and left enormous room for speculation about gender-relevant phenomena and their causes.

The criticisms by second-wave feminist psychologists reverberated throughout scientific psychology, calling for efforts to fill in the missing science and to develop theories and methods that would be free of the biases that feminists maintained had compromised most of the earlier efforts (for review, see Chrisler & McHugh, 2011; Marecek, Kimmel, Crawford, & Hare-Mustin,

2003; Rutherford & Granek, 2010). Therefore, our task is to evaluate the changes in scientific psychology that are relevant to this feminist critique. We consider the extent to which the content of psychological science has changed to incorporate research on gender and women and in this article do not address issues of methodology and epistemology raised by feminists.

As we demonstrate in this article, much has changed in psychology since the 1960s. Not only has a distinctively feminist psychology developed, but also a large and diverse research concentration on the psychology of women and gender has emerged. These research efforts are varied and certainly not always guided by feminism even though the emergence of such a research field is generally consistent with feminist goals. Research regarded as feminist directly or indirectly reflects endorsement of the goal of achieving equality between women and men. Indeed, the concept of gender equality is the core of common-language definitions of feminism as "Belief in the social, political, and economic equality of the sexes" and "the movement organized around this belief" (Feminism, 2007). In most of the research that we discuss, authors have not explicitly addressed this gender equality goal, nor have they labeled their research as feminist. Nonetheless, the gender-equality goals of feminism have no doubt led many researchers to investigate topics such as sexism, sexual harassment, and violence against women that implicitly or explicitly relate to feminist goals. Such value-directed choices do not invalidate the research, given that all scientific research stands or falls according to the replicability of its findings and the critical scrutiny of communities of researchers.

This article first catalogs the growth of this research on gender and women, its distribution across the various areas of psychology, and its attention to social categories in addition to gender. Next, we illustrate some of the unique contributions of this research by describing investigations of six prototypical topics. Finally, we discuss the theoretical

orientations accompanying this research and examine its spread across psychology journals and into popular introductory psychology textbooks. To foreshadow our findings, these analyses reveal, not only the considerable growth of this research area, but also its movement from the periphery of the discipline toward its center, where it now exists as one of the many methodologically and theoretically diverse content emphases of contemporary psychological science.

### Growth and Focus of Research on Women and Gender

As this article will demonstrate, the study of women and gender has become a major focus of psychological science, rising dramatically from receiving almost no attention to a position of considerable popularity. Even superficial observation of the content of psychological research of the last half-century reveals, not only disciplinary shifts of focus (e.g., the cognitive revolution; Proctor & Vu, 2006), but the intertwining of psychology with societal changes including the feminist and civil rights movements.  Under the influence of these social movements, some researchers took note of the issues raised and deployed the methods of psychological science to address them. Although the increase in empirical research on gender and women cannot in simple fashion be ascribed to feminism, its initial rise coincided with feminist activism in the societies in which this research emerged. This activism accompanied the broad socioeconomic changes that propelled large numbers of women into the labor force in the United States and other Western industrialized nations in the second half of the 20th century.

To demonstrate the overall growth of research on women and gender, we have engaged in the straightforward exercise of counting relevant journal articles.  All of these data derive from the PsycINFO database accessed on the PsycNET platform of the American Psychological Association.  This database is very broad, encompassing approximately 2500 journals, 32% of

which are published in the United States and 68% in other nations (PsycINFO staff, personal

communication, February 14, 2011).  Psychology journals are typically indexed cover-to-cover,

and articles in journals from neighboring fields such as medicine and sociology are indexed only

if deemed to have psychological relevance or importance to psychology.  Our various analyses

counted journal articles from 1960, which predated all but a small amount of relevant research,

through the end of 2009, the most recent year for which complete data were available in

PsycINFO when we conducted our analyses.  Our efforts thereby encompass exactly a half-

century of psychological literature.

**Quantity of Research**

To reflect the ambiguities of the boundaries of research on gender and women, we

implemented three different criteria for selecting relevant journal articles. Our search method

used PsycINFO thesaurus index terms because of their greater consistency in identifying articles'

major themes, compared with authors' own keywords and titles (American Psychological

Association, 2011).  Index terms are applied to each article by a staff that has been trained to

assign these terms in a consistent manner. Index terms were joined by the OR Boolean operator

so that articles classified by more than one of the relevant index terms were counted only once.

These searches were limited to studies with *human* population groups reported in *journal articles*

(excluding case histories, reprinted articles, and articles announcing awards). Articles in all

languages were accepted, as were articles in all journals.

Because PsycINFO staff classify all research that focuses on comparisons of women and

men or girls and boys under the index term *human sex differences*, our first count selected only

articles identified by this index term.  These articles, which concern female-male comparison as

one theme but not necessarily the only one, are embedded in a great range of specific research

topics.  Many investigations pertain to cognitive abilities and personality traits, and others to

attitudes, socialization, sexual behavior, health, and interpersonal processes and behaviors.

These articles may report sex-related differences or similarities or focus on moderators that

produce variability in the results of sex comparisons.

Our second count broadened our definition by supplementing the *human sex differences*

index term by adding index terms that PsycINFO uses to classify articles on gender topics, which

do not necessarily have comparison of the sexes as a major theme: *sex discrimination, sex role*

*attitudes, sex roles, sexism, gender identity, gender identity disorder, femininity, masculinity,* and

*androgyny.*  Our third count broadened the definition further by including women-oriented index

terms, which encompassed many studies of women only. This expansion added all index terms

pertaining to (a) women (*psychology of women, working women, human females, female*

*attitudes, female criminals, female delinquency*); (b) mothers (*mothers, adolescent mothers,*

*expectant mothers, mother absence, mother child communication, mother child relations,*

*schizophrenogenic mothers, single mothers, unwed mothers*); and (c) feminism (*feminism,*

*womens liberation movement, feminist psychology, feminist therapy*).  In summary of these three

definitions of the psychology of women and gender, the first encompassed articles classified by

the index term *human sex differences*, the second added index terms pertaining to the psychology

of gender, and the third added women-oriented index terms pertaining to women, mothers, and

feminism. Figures 1 and 2 display articles classified by these three definitions. In this article, we

use the term *psychology of women and gender* to refer to the research area defined by third, or

broadest, of these three definitions.

Although our search strategies were not expected to locate every article that addressed

the psychology of women and gender, they captured the great majority of these articles.  For

example, our third and broadest definition identified 89% of the articles that have been published in the *Psychology of Women Quarterly* and *Sex Roles.* More complex research strategies that added authors' own keywords and titles encompassed more articles, but more of these did not have gender and women as central themes. Nevertheless, all of the several alternative search strategies that we tried out produced trends closely resembling those shown in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1, displaying the yearly frequencies of articles, shows growth in the amount of research on gender and women, with our third, or broadest, definition yielding the steepest rise. These results suggest that psychological research is no longer womanless.  To provide more direct evidence of this generalization, we performed a simpler analysis by counting the numbers of articles classified in PsycINFO by the index terms *human females* compared with *human males.* These index terms are defined, not merely by studies' sex of participants but also by their content emphasis on understanding the psychology of one sex or the other, specifically, "when sex is pertinent to the focus of the study" (American Psychological Association, 2011). Excluding articles classified by both of these index terms, the female-to-male ratio of articles' content focus for 1960-2009 was 3.14.  This difference in favor of women was present in the 1970s (ratio of 2.27) and has increased over time (ratio of 3.59 for the 2000s). Thus, in contemporary psychology, when there is an explicit content focus on the psychology of one sex, that sex much more commonly is females than males. Yet, this analysis would underestimate the attention to men if, as some feminists have argued, the psychology of men sometimes masquerades as the general psychology of humans in articles that do not explicitly focus on men (e.g., McHugh et al., 1986; Riger, 1992).

Part of the growth of research on gender and women displayed in Figure 1 reflects the increase in the total amount of research and publication in psychology.  To account for this

expansion of psychology, Figure 2 displays articles indexed relative to the total number of

articles on human psychology appearing yearly in PsycINFO.  The difference between the sheer

number of articles on women and gender and the number relative all article production in

psychology can be seen by comparing Figures 1 and 2.  The relative trends of Figure 2 thus

reveal a peak in 1979, toward the end of the period of greatest feminist activism in the United

States. The defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1982 brought an ebbing of feminist protest

(Mansbridge, 1986) and coincided with the ebbing of research.  Nonetheless, the scientific

interest in women and gender had taken root in psychology and continued to flourish.  Thus, the

early-1980s decline in this research was followed by a subsequent rise or stabilization, and a

decline in the 2000s (see Figure 2).

Research on women and gender, relative to all psychological research cataloged by

PsycINFO, appears to be somewhat less popular in the most recent years. This shift in part

reflects the enlargement and changes in the composition of PsycINFO, given that the database

has added 1206 journals since 2000 (PsycINFO staff, personal communication, February 22,

2011).  In particular, more journals not published in the United States have been added.  In

addition, more neuroscience and physiological psychology journals have been added, and, as the

next subsection of this article shows, this area of psychology has a smaller concentration of

gender research than many other areas.  Moreover, because of the sheer increase in PsycINFO

coverage, some other research areas also have decreased in relative size, especially the area

identified by PsycINFO as *human experimental psychology*.  In addition, sociopolitical factors

that may have dampened research interest in gender and women include the postmillennial

stalling of gender-egalitarian social change (Blau, Brinton, & Grusky, 2006; England, 2010) and

a degree of backlash against some of the changes that have occurred (e.g., Okimoto & Brescoll,

2010; Rudman & Fairchild, 2004).  Nevertheless, the area remains active by our narrow, broader, and broadest definition—in 2009, 24, 31, and 65 articles per 1,000, respectively.  However, this initial look at the considerable investment of researchers in the psychology of women and gender does not reveal much about its content. We therefore examine this content in more detail.

**Distribution of Research Across the Areas of Psychology**

One straightforward way to reveal the broad contours of research on gender and women is to examine its distribution across the areas into which psychology is commonly organized both within universities and in its journals.  Facilitating this analysis, the Content Classification Codes of PsycINFO provide a set of 22 general categories (e.g., developmental psychology, physiological psychology and neuroscience), each of which has 1 to 27 subcategories (American Psychological Association, n.d.).  We classified the entire group of gender articles from 1960 onward, as defined by the broadest of our three definitions, into the 22 general categories, each of which encompassed its subcategories.

Figure 3 displays these data as the percentage of all articles on women and gender that appear in each of the major areas of psychology. The area with the largest percentage of these articles is *social processes and social issues* (e.g., social structure and organization, marriage and family, political processes and issues).  Given that one of this area's subcategories is *sex roles and women's issues* (e.g., gender roles, masculinity, femininity, feminist ideology), it is not surprising that this area ranks first.  Ranking next in order of decreasing concentration of research on women and gender are *developmental psychology, personality psychology, social psychology, sport psychology and leisure, psychological and physical disorders, industrial and organizational psychology,* and *military psychology.*

These data show that the psychology of women and gender is distributed across many

areas of psychology and has attained at least moderate representation in several specialty areas.

Yet, some areas offer little relevant content, including *psychometrics, statistics, and methodology; human experimental psychology; general psychology*; and *intelligent systems.* Instead, research on women and gender is most concentrated in the basic research areas concerned with development, social behavior, and individual personality dispositions, as well as in numerous applied areas.

The existence of these Classification Codes within PsycINFO yields some power to gauge the magnitude of article production on the psychology of women and gender, which by our broadest definition, is 52,824 articles in 2000-2009.  We compare this output of articles to the entire output in each of several other fields.  Specifically, for 2000-2009 with fields defined by their Classification Codes, *developmental psychology* yields 31,147 articles, *personality psychology* yields 17,428 articles, *social psychology* yields 11, 226 articles, and *industrial and organizational psychology* yields 29,223.  In fact, for 2000-2009 the article count for the psychology women and gender exceeds that for all Classification Code areas except for *psychological and physical disorders*, which yields 147,870 articles, and *health and mental health treatment and prevention*, which yields 128,027 articles. Therefore, even though the psychology of women and gender accounts for a (small) percentage of article production within each of these fields of psychology (see Figure 3), the conclusion is inescapable that the total gender/women research field, which is dispersed across many areas of psychology, has a relatively large total production of articles.

**Representation of the Diversity of Gender**

Another way to examine the content of research on women and gender is to assess its representation of other social category memberships along with female and male, an issue

labeled by the term *intersectionality* in feminist writing (Cole, 2009; Landrine & Russo, 2010;

Shields, 2008).  Although Black feminists raised this issue in the 1970s (e.g., Torrey, 1979), it

has become a particular focus of attention during the contemporary phase of feminism

sometimes identified as its *third wave*, which followed the second wave of the 1960s through the

early 1980s (see Gillis, Howie, & Munford, 2007).  Third-wave feminists criticized

psychologists' emphasis on women as a social category because it did not take account of the

heterogeneity of women within this category.  As Fine and Gordon (1989, p. 147) wrote,

"Gender always braids with social class, race/ethnicity, age, disability (or not), and sexual

orientation, as well as social context to produce *socially and historically constituted*

*subjectivities.*" Moreover, research on gender and women, like other psychological research,

disproportionately represents educated members of Western, industrialized, rich, and democratic

societies (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010).

To examine researchers' attention to the heterogeneity of gender, we identified articles on

gender and women by our broadest definition and counted within this category the articles that

also addressed race or ethnicity, social class or poverty, or sexual orientation.  These articles

were identified by index terms denoting race or ethnicity (e.g., *Asians, Blacks, Latinos/Latinas,*

*racial and ethnic attitudes*); social class or poverty (e.g., *income level, middle class, poverty,*

*socioeconomic status*); or sexual orientation (e.g., *homosexuality, transsexualism, lesbianism,*

*sexual orientation, bisexuality*).

These three analyses appear in Figure 4 in articles per 1,000 within our broadest

definition of the psychology of gender and women. These findings suggest that only a minority

of these articles have included the diversity of gender as a salient theme. The strongest temporal

increase is for articles combining gender with race or ethnicity, with the gain in 1990-2003 likely

reflecting the emphasis on intersectionality in feminism's third wave.  Consistent with critiques

of psychological research as neglecting social class and poverty (Lott & Bullock, 2007; Reid,

1993), this emphasis has so far remained relatively uncommon. Although gender research that

includes sexual orientation displays a weak upward trend, attention to this form of

intersectionality has been quite limited (see Lee & Crawford, 2007).  Intersectionality thus

remains a theme deserving greater attention.

## Research on Prototypical Topics

To probe the substance of research on women and gender, we examined themes and

historical trends for several topics that illustrate the types of investigations that emerged

subsequent to the feminist call for research. Although our choices of topics are to some extent

arbitrary, we selected six topics with an eye to distributing them across relevant areas of

psychology.  Also, to illustrate variability in the relationship of research on women and gender to

what might be considered psychology's "mainstream," we chose some topics that fit readily into

traditional research areas and some that did not.  Three topics thus emerged within broader

research areas that were well established prior to second-wave feminism: gender stereotypes and

sex role attitudes, gender and depression, and work-family issues. To analyze these topics,

researchers initially deployed concepts already present within relevant areas, thus easing the

initiation of research. As contrasts to these three topics, we chose an additional three topics that

were not positioned within traditional areas and that reflect feminists' activist agenda for social

change: intimate partner violence, abortion, and sexual harassment.

For all six topics, we located relevant research by searching PsycINFO from 1960

through 2009 with appropriate index terms. Figures 5 and 6 present these data.

**Adding Gender to Existing Research Areas**

Research on the three topics that added gender to existing research areas shows a trend of increasing popularity, but with a dramatic early rise and fall in research on gender stereotypes and sex role attitudes (see Figure 5). In contrast, gender and depression and work-life issues show more consistent, but gradual increases. Each of these three research topics has a unique history.

**Gender stereotypes and sex role attitudes** (Index terms = *sex role attitudes, sexism*[1]). Given the traditional emphasis of social psychology on attitudes and stereotypes as causes of behavior, gender research using these concepts fit smoothly into the field (Biernat & Deaux, in press), speeding the topic's rapid early rise in popularity.  In research on the cultural stereotypes that people commonly hold about women and men in general, two dimensions, one masculine and the other feminine, consistently emerged (e.g., Broverman et al., 1972; Williams & Best, 1990), with researchers often applying Bakan's (1966) agency and communion terms to describe their content (see review by Wood & Eagly, 2010).  Despite decline in the amount of gender stereotyping research, recent experiments on stereotype threat have attracted attention by revealing that stereotypes portraying one's own sex unfavorably can lower performance on stereotype-relevant tasks (see Nguyen & Ryan, 2008; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002).

In an attitudinal context, gender prejudice became known as *sexism.* Innovative measures emerged (Spence & Helmreich, 1972; Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995; see review by McHugh & Frieze, 1997).  Research revealed that attitudes toward women are both positive, or *benevolent*, and negative, or *hostile* (Glick & Fiske, 2001).  Implicit measures have become

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[1] Because these index terms did not select for most research on stereotype threat, we departed from our exclusive use of index terms by adding: Index term = *human sex differences* AND keywords = "*stereotype threat*." Most gender stereotype research is indexed with "*sex roles attitudes*."

increasingly popular and further established the pervasiveness of sexism and gender stereotyping

(e.g., Rudman, Greenwald, & McGhee, 2001).

**Gender and depression** (Index terms = 13 terms containing the word *depression* such as

*major depression, postpartum depression, recurrent depression, Beck Depression Inventory*;

also, *dysthymic disorder*)**.**  Initial forays into this topic suggested that women's life situations,

especially the homemaker role, created vulnerability to mental illness (e.g., Gove & Tudor,

1973).  As subsequent research found that the higher incidence of depression in women begins in

adolescence and is not confined to homemakers (Radloff, 1975), researchers turned to more

proximal variables. Among these more fine-grained analyses were studies examining the learned

helplessness that can be associated with women's life situations (Seligman, 1975).

Efforts to integrate existing findings ensued (e.g., Nolen-Hoeksema, 1987), followed by

an increase in the number of articles.  Some of this research implicated individual factors such as

genes (Eley et al., 2004), hormones (Cyranowski, Frank, Young, & Shear, 2000), ruminative

cognitive style (Nolen-Hoeksema & Girgus, 1994), and personality variables relevant to

emotional processes (Kendler, Neale, Kessler, Heath, & Eaves, 1993). Depression in women was

also related to negative life experiences such as sexual abuse and peer harassment (Kendler,

Kuhn, & Prescott, 2004), troubled interpersonal relationships (Shih, Eberhart, Hammen, &

Brennan, 2006), body image dissatisfaction and objectification (Grabe, Hyde, & Lindberg,

2007), and the stresses that can follow from caregiving (Cyranowski & Frank, 2006).  Given the

many variables that predict depression's higher incidence in women, researchers proposed broad

theories in which affective, biological, and cognitive proclivities of individuals interact with

negative life events to produce greater female vulnerability (e.g., Hankin & Abramson, 2001;

Hyde, Mezulis, & Abramson, 2008).

**Work-family issues** (Index terms = *family work relationships, dual careers*[2])**.**  With the

growth of the labor force participation of women, especially of mothers, in the 1970s and 1980s

(U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010), psychologists initiated research on employed mothers

and dual-earner couples (e.g., T. W. Martin, Berry, & Jacobsen, 1975).  Studies monitored the

division of labor within the family (e.g., Benin & Edwards, 1990), along with family members'

perceptions of its fairness (e.g., Sanchez, 1994).  Many investigations centered on the effects of

maternal employment on marriages (e.g., Chassin, Zeiss, Cooper, & Reaven, 1985), on

children's adjustment and academic achievement (e.g., Goldberg, Prause, Lucas-Thompson, &

Himsel, 2008; Vandell & Ramanan, 1992), and on women themselves, including their stress and

well being (e.g., Raver, 2003).

This research area also includes studies of the health consequences of work-family stress

(van Steenbergen, & Ellemers, 2009) and of organizational policies that can influence this stress

(Galinsky & Stein, 1990).  Workplace discrimination against mothers also received attention

(Crosby, Williams, & Biernat, 2004).  In addition, an earlier focus on work-family conflict (e.g.,

Loerch, Russell, & Rush, 1989) has given way to a more positive focus on work-family

facilitation (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

In summary of these three prototypical topics, the especially rapid growth of research on

gender stereotypes and attitudes is notable. This topic caught the wave not only of feminism but

also of the growing interest in stereotyping among social cognition researchers.  In contrast,

research on gender and depression and work-family issues grew more slowly, reflecting the

complexity of understanding gender within these traditions.  Beginning in the mid-1990s, gender

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[2] In a departure from our usual strategy, identifying most articles on work-family issues required the addition of some paired index terms: *division of labor* AND *employment status*; *mothers* AND *employment status*; *family relations* AND *working women*; *husbands* AND *wives* AND *occupations*; *employee benefits* AND *family*; *role conflicts* AND *working women*.

and depression became the most popular of these three research topics.

**Addressing Feminism's Activist Agenda**

Feminist activists drew attention to the multiple ways in which women's disadvantage is maintained. This activism centered on ameliorating these problems through legislation (e.g., forbidding sexual harassment), judicial decisions (e.g., legalizing abortion), community organizing (e.g., establishing shelters for battered women), and individual skills training (e.g., self-defense classes, assertiveness training). To represent such topics, which did not fit easily into pre-existing frameworks, we examined research on intimate partner violence, abortion, and sexual harassment. Feminists intended that such research not only contribute to knowledge but also inform and support activists and foster progressive social change through legislation and other means.

As shown in Figure 6, these three areas, especially intimate partner violence, have shown growth. This increase appeared earlier for abortion, with activity peaking around the time of the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision. Research on intimate partner violence and sexual harassment was rare until the 1980s, with sexual harassment peaking in the 1990s and intimate partner violence in the late 1990s and the 2000s. Each of these research topics has a distinctive history.

**Intimate partner violence** (Index terms = *battered females, partner abuse, domestic violence, intimate partner violence*)**.** After early research exposed the prevalence of physical aggression in marriages (e.g., D. Martin, 1976), researchers focused mainly on *battered women*—that is, the victims of unilateral, severe physical aggression perpetrated by husbands against their wives. Studies investigated cyclical patterns of violence (Walker, 1979), the characteristics of batterers (e.g., Gondolf, 1988), and the coping of female victims of male

violence (e.g., Koss, Bailey, Yuan, Herrera, & Lichter, 2003). The research broadened to

include physical and psychological abuse in other relationships, including those of dating teens

and gay and lesbian individuals (e.g., Tjaden, Thoennes, & Allison, 1999; Wekerle & Wolfe,

1999).

Some researchers emphasized the similar overall incidence of aggression by female and

male partners (e.g., Archer, 2000; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). Feminist researchers have

debated the meaning of these incidence data and suggested that different models may be needed

to understand female and male intimate partner violence (Frieze, 2008; McHugh, Livingston, &

Ford, 2005). In one approach, Johnson (1995) distinguished between *patriarchal terrorism* and

*common couple* violence. Recent reviews (e.g., McHugh, 2005) indicate a lack of theoretical

consensus but substantial progress in understanding the forms and interpersonal contexts of

intimate partner violence.

**Abortion** (Index terms = *abortion {attitudes toward}, induced abortion*)**.** The

legalization of abortion was an important goal of the second-wave feminist movement, which

emphasized the importance of reproductive freedom (Smyth, 2002). Early studies focused on

understanding emotions, cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors related to abortion (e.g., Adler &

Tschann, 1993; Rosen, Werley, Ager, & Shea, 1974) and its psychiatric antecedents and

consequences (e.g., Pfeiffer, 1970). Later research has reflected the goal of improving women's

lives through interventions that support their reproductive decisions (e.g., Littman, Zarcadoolas,

& Jacobs, 2009) and insure their access to reproductive choices and safe abortions (Baiden,

2009; Jones & Weitz, 2009).

A review evaluating the mental health implications of abortion compared to completion

of an unwanted pregnancy concluded that the majority of women who terminate pregnancies do

not experience negative mental health consequences (Major et al., 2009).  Although these authors

called for research on the antecedents of unwanted pregnancy and abortion, this research area has

never received more than modest attention in psychological research.  Given the continuing

political conflict about abortion, future research will no doubt reflect multiple perspectives on

individual rights, gender issues, social relationships, and human life (e.g., Shrage, 1994).

**Sexual harassment** (Index term = *sexual harassment*)**.** It was not until the 1970s that

unwanted sexual behavior was labeled *sexual harassment* and became a focus of feminist

activism. Researchers have examined the prevalence, organizational context, and impact on

victims of sexual harassment, as well as policies designed to prevent it (Fitzgerald, 1993; Riger,

1991). Research initially focused on men abusing positions of power and broadened to examine

harassment from peers and subordinates as well as superiors. Large-scale surveys of the federal

workforce provided data on the incidence of harassment (e.g., U.S. Merit Systems Protection

Board, 1995), and other studies examined harassment in educational settings (Hill & Silva,

2005).

The handling of sexual harassment in the legal system has been another focus of research

(e.g., Wright & Fitzgerald, 2009). The codification of sexual harassment in law and

organizational guidelines appears to have lessened agitation for prohibitions against harassment

and in turn probably accounts for the some of the decline of research activity.

Multiple theoretical perspectives have framed sexual harassment research (O'Leary-

Kelly, Bowes-Sperry, Bates, & Lean, 2009; Tangri, Burt, & Johnson, 1982), ranging from a

focus on individual differences (Pryor, 1987) to organizational dynamics and culture (Gutek &

Morasch, 1982; Timmerman & Bajema, 2000).  In general, the research supports the view that

harassment is best understood in terms of a confluence of psychological and social determinants.

In summary, these three research topics illustrate efforts to understand phenomena that feminists regarded as barriers to gender equality. None of these topics became extremely popular in psychological research, and in recent years only intimate partner violence retains substantial research productivity.

## Theoretical Orientations of Research on Women and Gender

Despite the rise of psychological research on women and gender along with the second-wave feminist movement, this research is often not recognizably feminist in theoretical orientation. The women's movement awakened interest in gender issues, spawned feminist psychology, and originated numerous concepts that guided some psychological research (e.g., sexism, sexual harassment). As illustrated in the prior section of this article, some of this research has explicitly supported feminism's activist goals, but most research on women and gender cannot be so identified. Consistent with this spreading of interest in gender and women well beyond feminist psychology, a large and diverse assortment of theories underlie this research.

### Explicitly Feminist Orientation

One consideration is the extent to which research on women and gender has been feminist in the sense of invoking ideas or theories inspired by or consistent with feminist ideology.  Capturing such articles is difficult, given the fuzzy boundaries of theoretical orientations and, in the case of feminist theory, its internal diversity in terms of approaches and assumptions (Chrisler & McHugh, 2011; Gergen, 2000).  Moreover, authors who consider their work feminist often do not explicitly apply this label to it.

In an admittedly highly imperfect approach to estimating the prevalence of explicitly feminist theory, we counted feminist articles within the psychology of women and gender.  The

index terms of *feminism, feminist psychology*, *feminist therapy,* or *women's liberation movement*

identified only 3.4% of the articles within our broadest definition of the psychology of women

and gender for the years 1960-2009, with an increasing trend from 1969 onward.  Overtly

feminist identification of journal articles in psychology is thus relatively rare and remained so

even with an alternative, maximally inclusive search encompassing keywords, titles, and

abstracts.

**Multiple Theories of Gender**

Because articles on gender and women are extremely diverse in theoretical orientation, it

is not in general feasible to classify them by theory.  Many authors refer descriptively to

variables as causal but do not frame their analyses in terms of a distinct psychological theory.

Within specific research topics such as sexual harassment, a wide range of phenomenon-specific

theories have flourished to account for the complexity of the phenomenon (see O'Leary et al.,

2009).  Many authors considered more than one general or phenomenon-specific theory within a

single article.

Theories most easily recognized as feminist feature situational factors that produce

female disadvantage—for example, sexist attitudes, salient gender role norms, and power

structures that subordinate women.  Although some of these theories have a strong social

constructionist emphasis (e.g., West & Zimmerman, 1987), others capture the interactions of

situational and individual causes (e.g., Deaux & Major, 1987), and still others blend situational,

personality, and biological causes (Hyde et al., 2008; for review, see Wood & Eagly, 2010).

Because the overriding theme of social psychology is the power of the situation to

produce psychological phenomena, it is not surprising that many social psychological theories

not mainly concerned with gender have been effectively applied to understand gender in the

situationalist terms preferred by many feminist psychologists (e.g., Weisstein, 1968). Social

psychology has provided theoretical vocabularies for analyzing situational influences. For

example, social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978) has yielded a useful framework for understanding

sex discrimination (Schmitt, Spoor, Danaher, & Branscombe, 2009) and feminist collective

action (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). Expectation states theory (Correll & Ridgeway,

2003) has spawned considerable research that focuses on the implications of men's generally

higher status for the behavior of women and men (Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004). System

justification theory (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004) has provided insight into gender stereotyping

and ideology and its effects on behavior (Jost & Kay, 2005). In other subfields of psychology as

well, general theories have been applied to gender issues. For example, developmental research

has featured the social cognitive theory of development (Bussey & Bandura, 2004), stage

theories of development (e.g., Torges, Stewart, & Duncan, 2008), and many other theories (see

review by Blakemore, Berenbaum, & Liben, 2009). Personality theories examining gender have

included the five-factor model of personality (Costa, Terracciano, & McCrae, 2001), models of

emotional intelligence (Joseph & Newman, 2010), and theory based on schematic information-

processing (Bem, 1981),

Evolutionary psychology emerged in the 1980s, thereby bringing a new group of

psychologists to the study of gender. The roots of this research lie, not in feminism, but in

sociobiological theorizing (Wilson, 1975), which in turn emerged from earlier Darwinian theory

(Darwin, 1871). The perspective has gained visibility, especially as a theory of sex differences in

dispositions and behaviors (Buss, 1999). To gauge the imprint of evolutionary psychology on the

psychology of sex differences, we used two methods to determine the percentage of evolutionary

psychology articles among all of the articles cataloged by PsycINFO as addressing human sex

differences.  The first method, which counted articles by all index terms containing evolutionary

concepts (e.g., *evolutionary psychology, theory of evolution, natural selection*), identified only

0.71% of the articles classified by the index term *human sex differences* in the prior decade,

2000-2009. A second method supplemented these index terms by including all of the articles on

human sex differences published in journals containing evolutionary terms in their titles (e.g.,

*Evolution and Human Behavior; Sexualities, Evolution, and Gender*), regardless of whether

PsycINFO had classified the articles by evolutionary index terms. Even this more inclusive

method identified only 1.25% of all articles classified by the *human sex differences* index term,

2000-2009. It is thus clear that evolutionary psychology does not dominate the production of

research that considers human sex differences.

Although a feminist contingent exists within the evolutionary science of human behavior

(e.g., Gowaty, 2003; Hrdy, 2009; Vandermassen, 2010), many feminist psychologists have

remained critics of evolutionary psychology because of its emphasis on the differing innate

natures of men and women and its lack of attention to active, constructive cultural processes

(e.g., Eagly & Wood, 1999, 2011; Travis, 2003).  Despite such criticisms, evolutionary

psychology has considerable visibility and has spawned intense debates about how nature and

nurture combine in producing the phenomena of gender observed in contemporary societies

(Gangestad & Simpson, 2007). For example, the journal *Sex Roles* devoted an entire 2011

special issue to evolutionary psychology (Smith & Konik, 2011).

### Diffusion of Research on the Psychology of Gender and Women

Gender research would be more influential and central to psychology to the extent that it

has diffused throughout psychological science. In describing the content of this research, we

have already indicated that it is concentrated in the basic research areas that address social

behavior and individual dispositions (developmental, personality, and social) as well as in health-related and other applied areas of psychology. This dissemination within these areas might nonetheless have been limited by a concentration of publication in journals specializing in gender research. Alternatively, most research on gender and women instead might have been published in a wide range of journals defined by the traditional areas of psychology (e.g., clinical, social, industrial-organizational, educational) as well as in gender-specialty journals. Also, regardless of where gender research is published, it may or may not be well represented in psychology's core review and theory journals. Furthermore, one route for the dissemination of psychological science to the broader public is through psychology textbooks, especially those written for the large introductory psychology market. We surveyed all of these forms of the diffusion of research on gender and women.

**Diffusion Across Journals**

We first examined the extent to which research on the psychology of women and gender might be relegated to specialty journals that limit their content to gender research. Therefore, the journals in which the articles on women and gender have appeared were classified into two categories: *gender specialty* and *all others*. The specialty journals consist of the 52 journals listed in PsycINFO that have sex, gender, or feminism terms in their titles (e.g., *Feminism & Psychology; Gender, Work, and Organizations; Psychology of Women Quarterly; Sex Roles; Women's Studies International Forum*). According to our broadest definition of research on women and gender, only 9.1% of the articles selected by this definition appeared in gender-specialty journals. Because the number of such journals increased over the years, it also notable that only 11.5% of these articles appeared in these specialty journals in 2000-2009. Also, the wide dispersion of research on gender and women across a great range of journals in psychology

and related fields is consistent with our determination that the 10 nonspecialty journals

publishing the largest number of these articles (e.g., *Psychological Reports*, *Child Development*)

together accounted for only 9.0% of the articles on women and gender appearing in nonspecialty

journals. Therefore, research on the psychology of women and gender is not strongly

concentrated in journals devoted to women and gender topics nor in a narrow range of

nonspecialty journals.

Another index of diffusion considers the extent to which articles on gender and women

have appeared in psychology's most influential review and theory journals. We therefore

identified 15 such journals, defined as the highest impact journals not presenting mainly primary

research or methodological articles. With Five-Year Impact Factors[3] ranging from 23.5 to 4.6

(Thomson Reuters, 2011), these journals, in descending order, are *Behavioral and Brain*

*Sciences, Annual Review of Psychology, Psychological Bulletin, Trends in Cognitive Science,*

*Psychological Review, Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, Advances in Experimental Social*

*Psychology, American Psychologist, Perspectives on Psychological Science, Personality and*

*Social Psychology Review, Psychological Inquiry, Clinical Psychology Review,*

*Neuropsychology Review, Educational Psychology Review,* and *Current Directions in*

*Psychological Science.*

By our broadest definition of the psychology of women and gender, articles in this area

accounted for 3.5% (1960-2009) and 3.6% (2000-2009) of all articles in these prominent theory

and review journals. The highest representation in any of these journals in this most recent

decade is 5.4% in *Psychological Bulletin,* psychology's most elite review journal.  Among these

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[3] The Five-Year Impact Factor is "the average number of times articles from the journal published in the last five years have been cited" in a given year (Thomson Reuters, 2009).

articles 37.9% are meta-analyses classified by the index term *human sex differences.*

It is useful to place these values for representation in elite journals in the context of the total article production in the psychology of women and gender, which by our broadest definition is 7.5% (1960-2009) and 7.6% (2000-2009) of all articles with human populations cataloged by PsycINFO.  Despite the smaller representation in these elite journals than in all journals, it seems fair to conclude that the psychology of gender and women has become moderately represented in psychology's most influential theory and review journals.

**Representation in Introductory Psychology Textbooks**

Introductory psychology textbooks are important for communicating psychological science to the broader public. Psychology is a very popular undergraduate major, yielding 94,271 bachelor's degrees in 2008-09 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). The introductory course is also taken by many students who have other college majors. Therefore, if gender research is to reach a broader public, introductory psychology textbooks constitute one of the important routes. Therefore, we examined the extent to which the psychology of gender and women is included in the current textbooks.

Table 1 portrays the inclusion of research on women and gender in the ten top-selling introductory psychology textbooks (Bowker, 2010), examined in their longer version for those books published in a shorter and longer edition.  To produce these data, two of the authors of this article independently inspected all pages of a printed copy of each book.  To avoid counting the same content more than once, these coders excluded material outside of the core textbook content, including prefaces, chapter outlines, chapter and section summaries or recaps, epilogues, quizzes and post-chapter exercises, appendixes, references, and glossaries. Material elaborating core content but placed in "boxes" was coded.

In a first phase, the two coders independently noted the pages containing any instance of the basic gender and women terms: *gender, sex, women/woman, mother(s), girl(s), female(s)*, and *feminine* as well as synonyms for these terms.  The coders also noted terms pertaining to the six topics discussed in the section "Research on Prototypical Topics."  Intercoder agreement was high (Cohen's kappa = .96), and (the few) errors were corrected in comparing the two sets of codings.

In a second phase, the two coders independently decided which of the pages noted as containing one or more relevant terms should be included in the final count. Their rule was that pages were retained only if the textbook authors used the terms in the context of research or theory on gender or women in humans, including male-female comparisons and information about particular groups of women (i.e., working mothers). Statements pertaining only to sexuality (e.g., sexual intercourse) were excluded unless they were explicitly connected to gender issues such as male-female comparisons of sexual behavior or attitudes toward sexuality. Terms used in a manner unrelated to research on gender and women were not counted—for example, "Some get by with 3 or 4 hours of sleep, and one healthy 70-year-old woman slept only about 1 hour per night" (Kalat, 2008, p. 355).  Statements possibly implying gender stereotypes such as "In 1966, a young man names Charles Whitman killed his wife and mother and then climbed to the top of a tower at the University of Texas and shot 38 people" (Myers, 2010, p. 501) were not counted unless the authors explicitly associated them with information about gender issues. Intercoder agreement for this second phase of the coding was high (Cohen's kappa = .87), and disagreements were resolved by discussion.

As shown in Table 1, our count of pages containing basic concepts related to the psychology of gender and women, as appearing in the context of research or theory on gender or

women, indicated variable representation across the texts. The mean representation across the ten

books was 20.9% of pages containing at least some material on gender or women. In the four

textbooks with separate chapter on sex and gender issues, this content was concentrated in that

chapter.

Our counts of the number of pages addressing each of the six topics that we chose as

prototypical of research on gender and women also appear in Table 1. The textbooks' coverage

varied from 4 to 6 of these topics.  The topic given by far the most emphasis was gender

stereotypes and sex role attitudes, covered in all books, with the number of pages mentioning this

issue ranging from 4 to 23.  Material related to gender and depression and to intimate partner

violence was also covered in every book, although on fewer pages.  The least popular topics

were sexual harassment and abortion. Each of these two topics appeared in only 4 of the 10

books, typically with their relevance to womens' rights noted. For example, King (2011) noted,

"In the United States, sexual harassment is an illegal form of sexual discrimination that violates

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964" (p. 479). Wade and Tavris (2011) wrote about attitudes

towards abortion reflecting "your premises about when meaningful human life begins, what

rights an embryo has, and what rights a woman has to control her own body" (p. 315).

In summary, it is clear that research on the psychology of women and gender is being

conveyed to the broader public through these popular introductory psychology textbooks. The

amount of attention in some texts (e.g., Myers, 2010; Wade & Tavris, 2011) is seemingly

generous, in view of the great range of topics covered in such textbooks. Within this

considerable coverage, textbook authors sometimes presented sex-related differences with little

attention to causal interpretations. Because more than one interpretation is often plausible, this

engaging area of science offers textbook authors the opportunity to contrast relevant theories in

ways that can inspire students to think critically.

**Conclusion**

Psychological science has been continually transformed, not only in response to its

internal dynamics of discovery and theory development, but also in reaction to the questions

posed by social changes ongoing in society.  Feminism as a social movement thus posed

psychological questions about a myriad of aspects of gender, and activists called for research to

support social action and legislative and other reforms.  Researchers in psychology then rapidly

escalated their commitment to research on gender and women.  Viewed in raw counts of articles

(Figure1), this growth has continued unabated.  Viewed relative to the growth in all research on

human psychology (Figure 2), gender research peaked in the late 1970s, reflecting the period of

maximum feminist activism and peaked again around 2000.  This second peak and the

continuing popularity of gender research suggest that, although feminism planted the seeds of

this research by asking provocative questions, these seeds took root and yielded long-term

scientific investment.  This attention on the part of many researchers effectively transformed the

content of psychological research in a half-century that saw momentous social change affecting

gender relations.  Moreover, consistent with greater change in the social roles of women than

men, the psychology of women has received a greater amount of explicit scientific attention than

the psychology of men.

As our analyses show, the psychology of gender and women has been investigated within

many specific research areas and is not especially concentrated into gender-specialty journals.  It

has attained at least moderate representation in psychology's core research journals as well as

variable amounts of inclusion in introductory psychology textbooks. This scholarship has thus

moved from its tentative beginnings on the margins of psychology in the 1960s to its secure

place among other central emphases of contemporary psychological science.

Most of the analyses that we present in this article are dependent on the superb shared

resource of PsycNET, which is maintained by an expert staff employed by the American

Psychological Association. Therefore, the classifications of articles that we have reported and

cumulated are at root the product of human judgments by these individuals, who inspect each

document that appears in PsycINFO. Human judgment is of course subject to biases, but we find

it difficult to develop hypotheses about biases of the PsycINFO staff, who are highly motivated

to be accurate. Moreover, the results of their classification decisions are public and can be

inspected at any moment by authors and anyone else with access to the database. Also, in

contrast to most other research based on coding, these classifications are independent of the

authors of this article.

To summarize our views about the history of research on gender and women, we believe

that this research gained from feminist ideology but has escaped its boundaries. In this garden,

many flowers have bloomed, producing some flowers not widely admired by some feminist

psychologists. Many, if not most, psychologists who self-identify as feminist researchers

continue to endorse a focus on situational causation, as Weisstein (1968) advocated. For

example, Greene (2010, p. 445) wrote, "In feminist psychology . . . there is an explicit mandate

to situate behavior in a social context of power differentials and to not treat it as an entity that

occurs in isolation or as a defect in the person." However, often without necessarily abandoning

this emphasis, the psychology of gender and women has broadened to include a wide range of

variables that are not situational, although they can of course be influenced by situational factors.

Popular emphases now include hormonal processes, encompassing their organizational and

activational effects (Haselton, Mortezaie, Pillsworth, Bleske-Rechek, & Frederick, 2007; Hines, 2009; Taylor & Master, 2011; Jordan-Young, 2010); cognitive and affective processes (e.g., Roberts & Pennebaker, 1995; Shields, 2005); temperament and personality (e.g., Costa et al., 2001; Else-Quest, Hyde, Goldsmith, & VanHulle, 2006); and cognitive and other abilities (Else-Quest, Hyde, & Linn, 2010; Halpern et al., 2007).  Increasingly, gender researchers have realized that understanding the intertwining of nature and nurture through which gender phenomena emerge requires a large tool kit of psychological and biological variables (Wood & Eagly, 2010).

Although some feminist researchers continue to be ambivalent about research that compares the sexes (e.g., Marecek, 2001), many have come to appreciate the effect-size continua that have largely replaced traditional difference-similarity labeling and to understand the scientific yield of this research (e.g., Hyde, 2005; Hyde & Grabe, 2008).  Other feminists have called for framing this research in terms of the traditional feminist emphasis on social context, considered at the interpersonal, organizational, and societal levels of analysis (Yoder & Kahn, 2003).  Furthering interest in the comparative method are the 299 meta-analyses pertaining to sex comparisons (1978-2009) that are cataloged in PsycINFO.  In addition, heightened enthusiasm for sex-comparison research has emerged among feminist advocates for women's health who argue that sex differences have been wrongly ignored in medical research, treatment, and social policy (Epstein, 2009), including research on mental health (Sigmon et al., 2007).  In response to this neglect, the Society for Women's Health Research founded the Organization for the Study of Sex Differences, which "works to enhance the knowledge of sex/gender differences by facilitating interdisciplinary communication and collaboration among scientists and clinicians of diverse backgrounds" (Organization for the Study of Sex Differences, 2010).

Feminist psychologists generally maintain that research should contribute to social action and social justice as well as to knowledge (e.g., Riger, 1992). From this perspective, the discipline of psychology would potentially transform society to produce gender equality (Kahn & Yoder, 1989). Although imagining a single academic discipline as the critical engine of social change suggests a certain hubris concerning the power of this one branch of knowledge, psychological science has surely contributed to gender equality on many fronts. An analysis of these effects is beyond the scope of this article, but we note a few examples.

Consider the successful use of psychological research on gender stereotypes in court cases on employment discrimination (e.g., Fiske, Bersoff, Borgida, Deaux, & Heilman, 1993). Research on work-family issues has served as the basis for progressive changes in organizational personnel policies (e.g., Bailyn, 2006). Also, psychological research has been the lynchpin in several U.S. Supreme Court cases regarding reproductive rights. For instance, in the case of Thornburgh v. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (1986), a research-based amicus brief by the American Psychological Association (Bersoff, Malson, & Ennis, 1985) helped to overturn the Pennsylvania state law that required physicians to inform women contemplating an abortion of potential detrimental physical and psychological effects. Similarly, research on sexual harassment has been influential in a variety of contexts, including court cases and the formulation of government regulations (see Greathouse, Levett, & Kovera, 2009). Research establishing women's progressive and effective leadership styles has been widely distributed in advocacy efforts to improve women's access to corporate leadership positions (e.g., Desvaux, Devillard-Hoellinger, & Baumgarten, 2007).

Providing context for the changes in the content of psychological science documented in this article is the spectacular change in the sex composition of psychology in the United States.

In 1960, women constituted 17.5% of PhDs awarded in psychology (Burrelli, 2008) and in 2009,

75.4% of PhDs and 78.8% of PsyDs (Michalski, Kohout, Wicherski, & Hart, 2011). Also, in

1977, the earliest year for which faculty data are available, women constituted 20.5% of full-time

tenured or tenure-track psychology faculty in colleges or universities, as compared to 46.2% of

these faculty in 2006 (Burrelli, 2008), including 44.8% of faculty in graduate departments of

psychology in 2009 (Wicherski, Mulvey, Hart, & Kohout,  2011).  Although the women who

now populate psychology have not necessarily achieved equality with their male counterparts in

status and monetary compensation (see Kite et al., 2001), the demographic change in the

discipline is very great. Just as feminists have accused the men who once dominated

psychological research of ignoring gender and studying "topics of interest to themselves"

(Chrisler & McHugh, 2011, p. 37), a portion of the women who are now very well represented in

research not surprisingly have favored, among their many interests, topics of special importance

to women (Eagly, in press).  The result is a psychology that encompasses understanding of the

mind and behavior of both sexes, clearly a major advance for psychological science.

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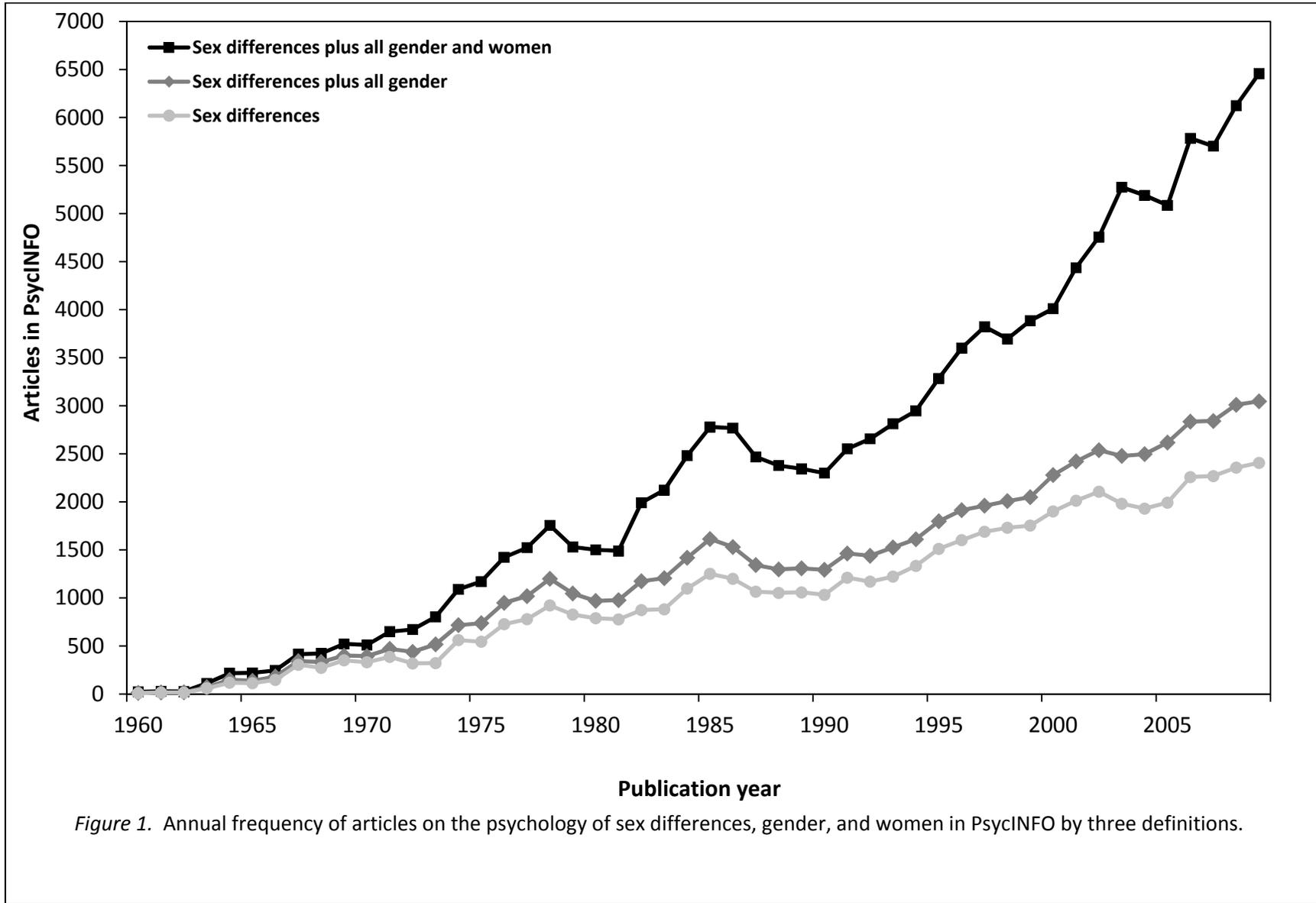Wood, W., & Eagly, A. H. (2010). Gender. In S. T. Fiske, D. T. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey (Eds.),

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Table 1

*Representation of the Psychology of Gender and Women and Six Prototypical Topics in Popular Introductory Psychology Textbooks*

| Authors and date | Chapter on gender | Number/total pages (percentage) containing basic gender or women concepts | Number of pages containing the six prototypical topics | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | Gender stereotypes and sex role attitudes | Gender and depression | Work-family issues | Intimate partner violence | Abortion | Sexual harassment |
| Coon & Mitterer (2010) | Yes | 119/571 (20.8) | 17 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Feldman (2011) | Yes | 105/547 (19.2) | 14 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Hockenbury & Hockenbury (2010) | Yes | 132/608 (21.7) | 19 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Huffman (2008) | Yes | 107/532 (20.1) | 20 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Kalat (2011) | No | 109/538 (20.3) | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

| Authors and date | Chapter on gender | Number/total pages (percentage) containing basic gender or women concepts | Number of pages containing the six prototypical topics | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Gender stereotypes and sex role attitudes | Gender and depression | Work-family issues | Intimate partner violence | Abortion | Sexual harassment |
| King (2011) | No | 120/523 (22.9) | 14 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Myers (2010) | No | 180/656 (27.4) | 18 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Schacter, Gilbert, & Wegner (2011) | No | 79/594 (13.3) | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Wade & Tavris (2011) | No | 131/572 (22.9) | 23 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 1 |
| Weiten (2010) | No | 131/659 (19.9) | 8 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| *M* | | 20.9 | 14.2 | 3.8 | 1.7 | 3.1 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| *(SD)* | | (3.6) | (6.5) | (2.4) | (1.7) | (2.1) | (1.1) | (1.1) |

*Figure 1.* Annual frequency of articles on the psychology of sex differences, gender, and women in PsycINFO by three definitions.
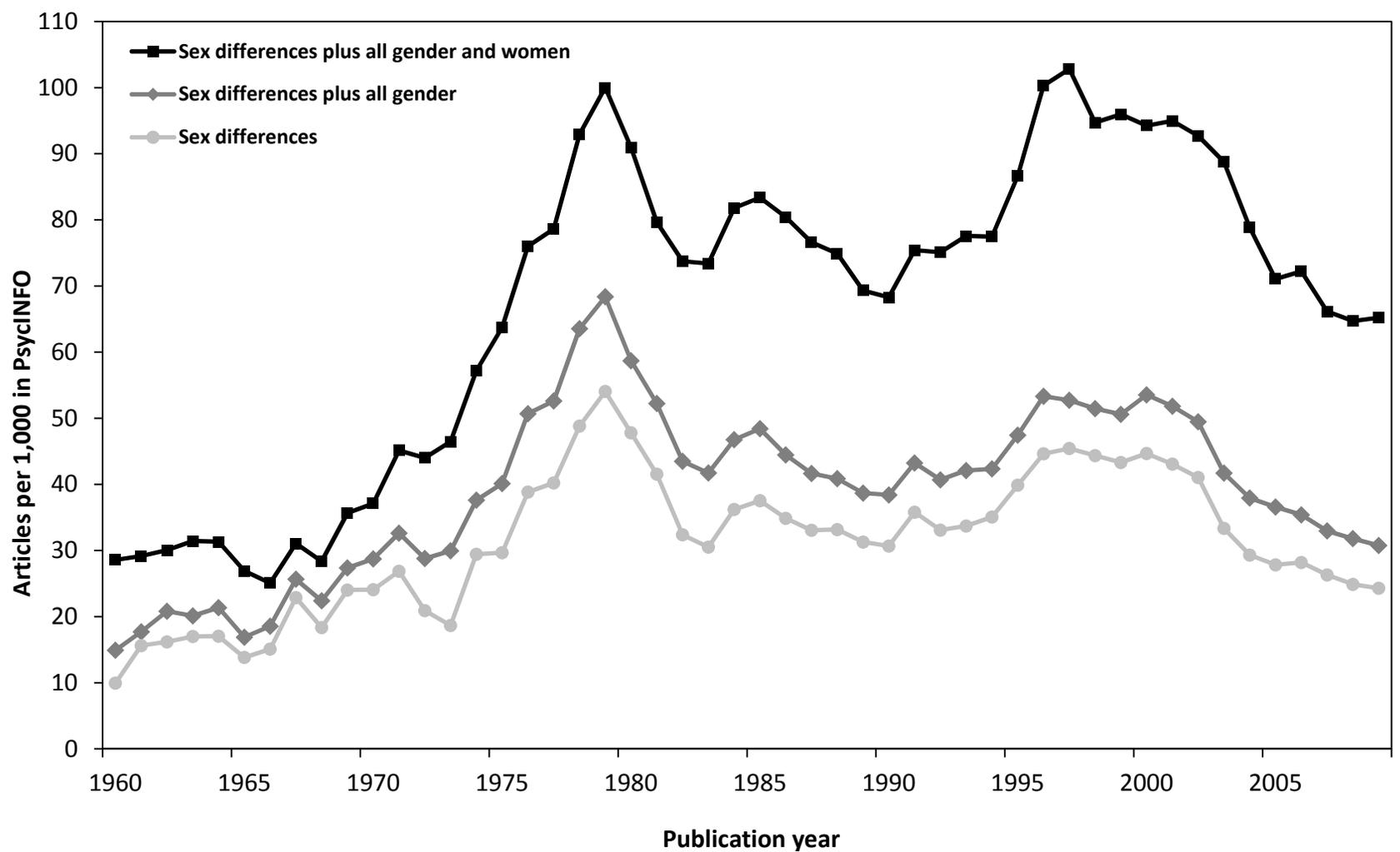
*Figure 2.* Annual frequency of articles on the psychology of sex differences, gender, and women by three definitions, relative to all human psychology articles in PsycINFO.
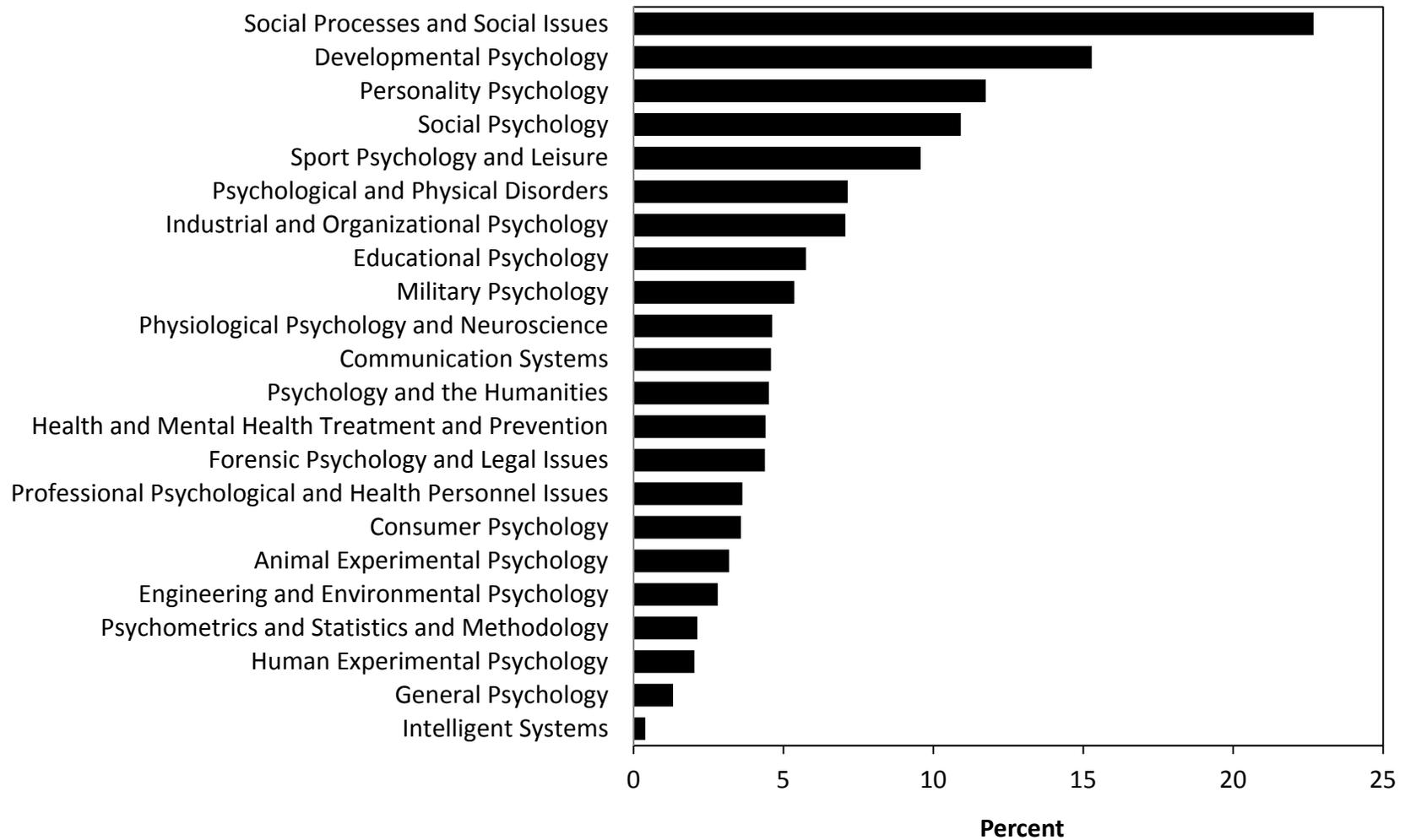
*Figure 3.* Percent of all articles on the psychology of sex differences, gender, and women in PsycINFO Content Code Classifications (1960-2009).
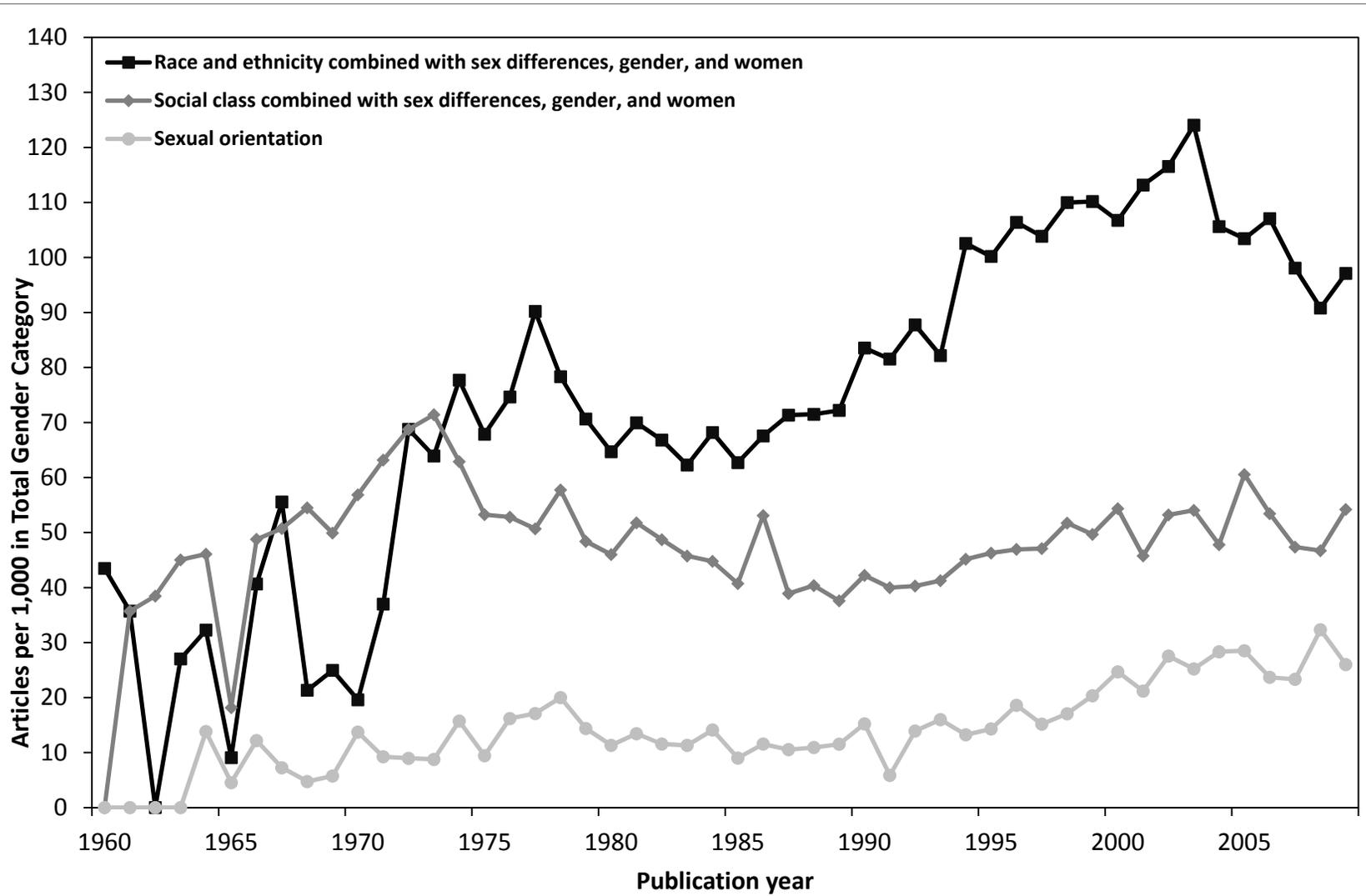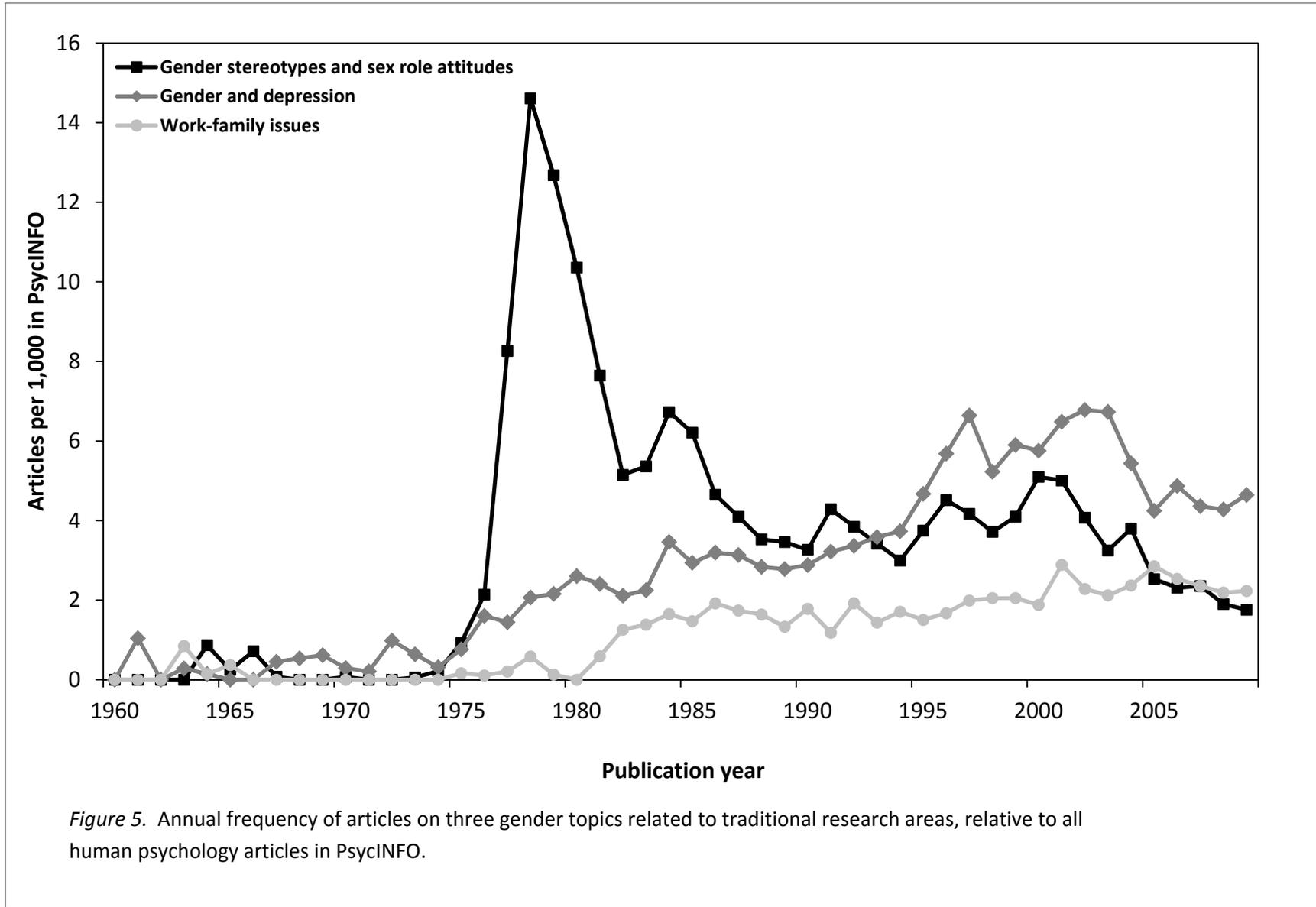
*Figure 4.* Annual frequency of articles addressing race and ethnicity, social class, or sexual orientation, relative to all articles on the psychology of sex differences, gender, and women in PsycINFO .
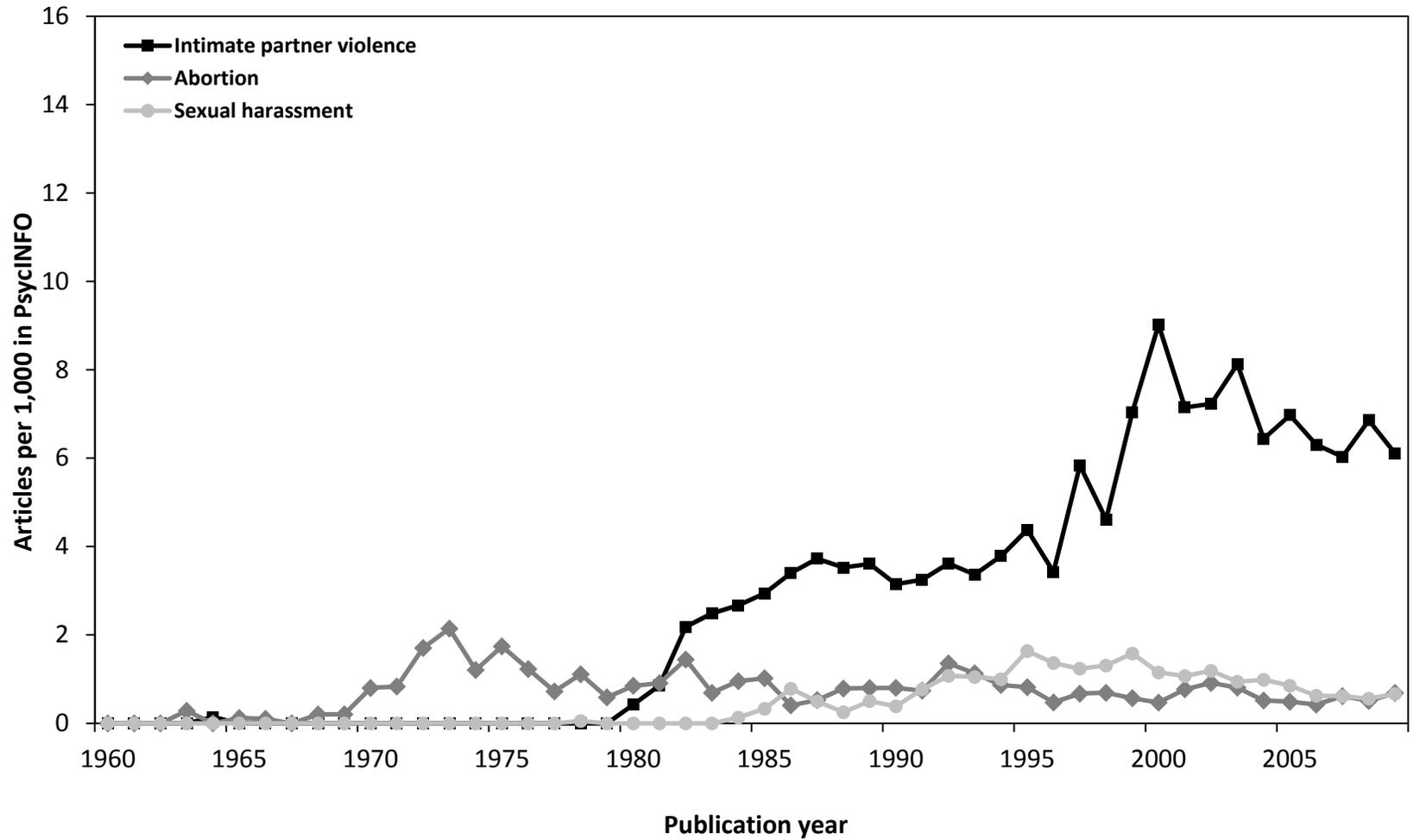
*Figure 5.* Annual frequency of articles on three gender topics related to traditional research areas, relative to all human psychology articles in PsycINFO.

*Figure 6.* Annual frequency of articles on three novel gender topics, relative to all human psychology articles in PsycINFO.