

Masculine/feminine: A personological perspective

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Abstract

How might our expanding knowledge of *gender* contribute to a deeper understanding of *personality*? This paper offers a personological perspective for considering the import of contemporary work, and focuses on the ten substantive papers included in this issue of the *Journal of Personality*. An agenda for our future inquiry is proposed that includes (a) revising our ideology of science in a postpositivist era, (b) recognizing the complexity of personality as a domain distinguished from "human being theory," (c) developing richer and more comprehensive personality theory, and (d) studying persons over time. The papers reported in this issue contribute in various ways to the enrichment of personological understanding.

Prologue

Imagine a symbolic drama portraying a group of intrepid explorers seeking to map the unknown terrain of gender and personality. This is a drama in five acts, three of which precede the opening of my paper.

Act I Our explorers meet, circa 1950, to review ancient literature, travelers' anecdotes, and artistic depictions of the fabled continent. They have every reason to believe the quest will prove exciting and fruitful, for there has always been documented knowledge of the importance of gender in human society. However, the object of this investigation is to discover how such knowledge bears upon an understanding of *personality*. The most important directives come from psychodynamic theories of Freud and Jung, and these are now supplemented with a few promising empirical studies. "Identification," "socialization," and "bisexuality" offer the most significant landmarks.

Act II Nearly 20 years later, our explorers are huddled together, weary and discouraged, ready to abandon their provisional maps. Landmarks have disappeared, only bare desert surrounds them.

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Consulting the most authoritative of new works, the 5-volume *Handbook of Social Psychology* (Lindzey & Aronson, 1969), they recognize that the quest is hopeless. The sole indexed reference to "femininity" turns out to be a paragraph about hypomascularity in preadolescent boys. Clearly there is no such psychological territory as gender or personality. They are about to abandon the project until they hear a good deal of murmuring and shouting from unidentified sources. So they decide to press on longer.

Act III Ten years later (now it's the late 1970s) our explorers stumble onto our current civilization, and are totally unprepared for the experience. They have come from the desert into a neon jungle. Gender is everything: androgyny, sex roles, gender-identity counseling, feminist therapy, gay liberation, politics of reproduction, alternative life-styles. Above all, there is now a vast psychological industry newly created to harvest the fruits of the women's movement of the 1960s and early 1970s. Initially beguiled by all of these riches and distractions, our explorers cling to their original goal. They ask: What does all of this tell us about *personality*?

Act IV takes place (partially) in this issue of the *Journal of Personality*, and *Act V* somewhere in the future. This paper is an attempt to draw new and better maps for our explorers by aligning our new knowledge of gender with the neglected task of studying personality.

A Personological Perspective

The drama sketched above is not wholly imaginary, for it describes some of my own explorations of the gender-and-personality terrain. A quarter-century ago (Carlson & Carlson, 1960) I noted that women were rarely included (and their absence unnoted) in personality research of that era. Later studies suggested that masculine/feminine qualities in personality could be discerned, if approached as a theoretical problem (Carlson, 1965, 1971a), but that the scientific ideology and methodological preoccupations of the field precluded any thoughtful study of the issues (Carlson, 1971b, 1984). Welcoming the rise of feminist scholarship, I urged that its greatest potential contribution would be that of enriching our impoverished conceptions of personality, but I worried that the early fruits of our raised consciousness (in the angry phase of feminism) were leading women psychologists to adopt the very constructs and methods of the "oppressive" scientific establishment (Carlson, 1972). Essentially, I was pleading for a personological perspective, one that would accept the challenge of taking *personality* seriously, as against mere accretion

of “significant differences” on one or another currently fashionable personality variable

Thus the occasion of a special issue of the *Journal of Personality* devoted to exploring gender and personality is a happy one. As a framework for discussion of the papers included in this issue, I propose a few key ideas that may help in identifying their import for personality study, as contrasted with their contributions to “group differences,” “psychology of women,” or social criticism.

Personality as a Field of Inquiry

Personality is so daunting in its complexity that psychologists have made their task easier via convenient simplifications. Personal dispositions become summarized as “traits” that can be further reduced to “individual differences” amenable to nomothetic, quantitative analyses of data from any convenient sample. A person’s intrinsic embeddedness in some socio-historical milieu invites the economy of looking *only* at social directives (e.g., “sex roles”) for explanatory constructs. Wary of positing biological bases of personality, but attracted all the same, we alternate between celebrating and denouncing organic determinants. Individual development is hard to conceptualize and extremely expensive to study, thus we posit “stages” of development, and opt for group snapshots for verification, rather than taking sound-movies of persons over time. Above all, our scientific superegos have required us to produce empirical data to support—or challenge—any proposition, and here we have been more anxious to demonstrate the uncontaminated *purity* of our variables than to consider the explanatory *power* of our theoretical formulations.

Assumptions of our “normal science” have proven so unhelpful in arriving at a deeper understanding of personality that major revisions are now underway. Not all of the new developments seem equally promising for our future. (For example, much of “critical theory” tends to dismiss personality as an intellectual tool of capitalistic oppression, elsewhere, sophisticated techniques for analysis of “narrative structure” render ever more abstract and ephemeral the concrete reality of an individual life.) Rediscovering the personological perspective originally advanced by Murray and his colleagues in *Explorations in Personality* (Murray, 1938, White, 1981) offers a refreshing sense of the importance and vitality of *persons* that we have missed for a long time (Carlson, 1984).

From the rich framework suggested by a personological perspec-

tive, a few central ideas seem especially useful in discussing the papers offered in this issue

Revising our ideology of science Psychology has been overripe for alternatives to its failed paradigms and positivistic heritage. Feminist scholarship has been helpful, in a somewhat indirect way, by focusing on the incredible neglect of women's experience as an agenda for psychological inquiry. But our task is more general than either making a special place for a psychology of women or adopting any of the various "contextualist," "dialectical," "ethogenic," "interactional," or "transactional" approaches that are currently advocated (An important contribution—but one that I cannot develop here—may be found in Tomkins' [1965, 1984] formulation of ideological scripts. This personological approach to the psychology of knowledge invokes personality theory to account for broad trends of social thought as well as an investigator's resonance to "humanistic" or "normative" worldviews that are independent of specific intellectual content. Dominant trends in psychology—its insistence on large samples, quantitative data, and relentless pursuit of error at the expense of increments in knowledge—are clearly normative, as I have suggested elsewhere—Carlson, 1984a.)

Human being theory vs personality theory Personologists' strongest criticism of mainstream research in personality is only superficially based on traditional nomothetic method or positivistic ideology of science. A more fundamental issue is a failure at the heart of our theorizing, the failure to distinguish between "human being theory" (an account of shared endowments of all human beings) and "personality theory" (an account of ways in which common ingredients result in highly individual recipes for living). This confusion underlies our allegiance to nomothetic method. Personologists recognize as "given" that the individual person is an active, intentional agent—an evolutionary emergent for whom biology and culture are *ground* and individual life the *figure* of our inquiry. Personologists hold themselves responsible for mastering our expanding knowledge of both biological and cultural directives, but this is a prelude to the study of individual lives. There is an implicit division of labor often obscured. What all human beings share is largely the province of general psychology, how these endowments are channeled by socio-cultural forces is the province of social scientists. But the intersection of biology and culture, as managed (or mismanaged) by the individual person is central to our work.

Some important clarifications follow. Too much of our published research deals only with the nomothetic boundaries of human being theory. It relies too heavily on aggregate data, inappropriate metrics

from the “individual differences” perspective (Lamiell, 1981), investigator-imposed categories, and deliberate “control” of unwelcome variance stemming from the person’s activity and intentionality. A more appropriate use of human being theory would be that of focusing on the most *human* of our evolutionary endowments—our capacities for differentiated feeling and thought—as the starting-point for personological inquiry.

The personological perspective poses a special problem for research on gender and personality. Insofar as we define gender in terms of *differences* between males and females (or masculine/feminine qualities in either sex), we risk losing important insights. Ask yourself twin questions: How important is gender? How is gender important? The first question could be answered by citing abundant data reminding us that gender differences are routinely found when sought. The second question asks us to explore the significance of gender in individual lives, a question that we rarely pose.

Gender surely plays a significant part in any life, but it is not always the same part. To take an extreme example, Jan Morris (1974) has given us a poignant portrayal of a life in which gender-identity of a transsexual was magnified into a major script. Her account is rich with theoretical implications, as well as insightful reflections on experience in both masculine and feminine identities. For most of us, gender-identity rarely occupies so much of our life-space. There are probably particular points in development when gender is figural as a conscious concern—Oedipal conflict, the conformist stage of ego development (Loevinger, 1976), certain of the psychosocial crises that Erikson (1950) has discussed. Most often gender is a silent, unnoticed correlate of other matters that we care about, reflected perhaps in our styles of dealing with experience. Studying gender effects in aggregate data, we may be tapping only habitual, social scripts (though these are not trivial) without recognizing the highly individual ways in which gender may signify something of importance in an individual life.

Developing personality theory. For nearly a half-century, serious theoretical work in personality has been moribund. Between the introduction of Kelly’s (1955) personal construct theory and Tomkins’ (1979, 1984) script theory, no comprehensive new personality theory has been advanced. We “make do” with fragments of psychodynamic theories (and even nontheories of personality) in the burgeoning field of textbook writing. Unready to tackle the enormous complexity of the personality domain, psychologists have generated a host of “midlevel theories” in which great ingenuity is

expended in constructing formal models of pet variables. The intellectual cost of such endeavors has been trenchantly accounted by Maddi (1984)

Yet the scene may not be so dismal as now appears. Psychologists have come to appreciate the activity and intentionality of persons—and thus to accept Tyler's (1959) urging that we focus on "choice" and "organization" as basic issues in the study of personality. Some of the liveliest new work comes from contemporary psychoanalysts whose traditional concern for detailed study of the individual is joined by freedom from some of the constraints of Freudian metapsychology and openness to more personological modes of inquiry.

Whatever the specific premises of tomorrow's theory of personality, such work must recognize the complexity and heterogeneity of intrapsychic structures as well as the diversity of personalities. Meanwhile, theoretical development may proceed by "making connections" among previously isolated facts, and by "making corrections" of dominant theories. Two papers in this issue, to be discussed below, exemplify these helpful trends.

Studying lives over time. While we know that an intellectual account of personality depends on an understanding of individual lives, our psychological literature is nearly devoid of such inquiry (Carlson, 1971b, 1984b). Psychobiographical studies hold great potential promise, but these are rarely cited (much less developed) in our research literature. At least three problems may be identified, beyond the fact that historians, literary scholars, and political scientists are doing "our" work. First, by concentrating on "eminent" people, such studies necessarily leave unexplored a great variety of personality patterns to be found among ordinary people. Second, psychobiographical work has relied almost exclusively on psychoanalytic theory as a conceptual framework that is assumed, rather than tested. Third, and quite appropriately, most psychobiographies are intended to illumine a life-history as an end in itself, rather than to contribute to a larger and more systematic understanding of personality.

"Studying personality the long way" (White, 1981) is difficult, expensive, rarely fundable, and unlikely to lead to academic tenure. Conceivably such constraints account for the poverty of personological work. Yet I think that ideological commitments (welcomed or enforced) play a larger part. Happily, a shift in our *zeitgeist* is now discernible. The life span emphasis in developmental psychology encourages longitudinal study. Methodological directives (Runyan, 1982) are newly available, as are demonstrations of idiographic approaches to the study of identities (Rosenberg & Gara, 1985).

Longitudinal study per se is no panacea. When such work is

variable-centered (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1980) it yields abundant evidence of the consistency and stability of selected personality dimensions, but tells us little about more fundamental issues. Elegant longitudinal studies, informed by theory and expert use of appropriate methods (e.g., Block, 1971; Helson, Mitchell, & Moane, 1984) are rare, and uniquely valuable. Yet more modest projects are worth pursuing. Even short-term single-case studies (Carlson, 1981) are capable of illuminating theoretical issues. Resources available to investigators could be greatly expanded by the use of rich materials available in published work (e.g., Lewis' *The Children of Sanchez*). We need only to recognize the potentialities of personological study of lives over time.

Looking ahead, there are reasons to hope for more consequential personality study in our future. Feminist scholarship will surely contribute to this trend. For, stereotype or not, "feminine" styles of inquiry have typically shown the engagement in complexities, the patience required to track development, and the willingness to challenge received wisdom, that are much needed in the field.

On Reading and Enjoying This Issue

Packed within these pages are some of the best efforts to comprehend issues of gender and personality to be found in contemporary psychology. Invited to provide a conceptual framework, I have been somewhat fierce in asserting the value of a personological perspective. Readers who disparage personology (few, I hope!) will also learn much from the work presented here.

Revising Our Ideology of Science

The decline of positivism, the ascendance of new models of inquiry, and the power of feminist thought are by now familiar. Two papers in this issue accept such revisions of our former ways of construing inquiry and go beyond familiar critiques to pose more challenging questions.

Morawski (this issue) leads us on an historical tour of the gender-and-personality domain since the turn of the century, revealing implications that most of us missed. Underlying our "progress" over the past 90 years there runs a constant thread: the search for evidence supporting the "real" gender differences given in our cultural categories. Equally constant are the unspoken constraints on our scientific inquiry: assumptions of our "expert" status, the need to disguise measures of masculinity/femininity as "too hot" for

ordinary people to confront directly, and a rather flexible faith in our measures and quantitative analyses

Our recent preoccupation with "androgyny," as Morawski demonstrates, reproduced rather faithfully the core assumptions of the intellectual tradition that it meant to replace. Why did so many feminists seem to adopt the notion of androgyny as a breakthrough? Largely because it appeared to liberate women from the negative implications of passivity and weakness associated with "appropriate sex roles." More subtly, androgyny research may have been self-serving for young professional women who found in it a model and a rationale for their own aspirations in the male-dominated world of psychology, and an affirmation of the positivistic values interiorized in their scientific socialization. Morawski asks us to consider our scientific work reflexively, to confront our history, and to devise more thoughtful ways of examining gender and personality.

Perhaps it is misleading to comment on Lykes' paper (this issue) in terms of ideology, for it contains substantive work as well as ideological criticism. Yet I believe her message is primarily ideological. Treating the central issue of *selfhood*, Lykes goes beyond current feminist ideas to question the notion of attachment as central to woman's identity. How ought we to consider selfhood? Contextually, in the rather special sense advanced by critical theory, by examining relationships to a larger social order. This somewhat abstract approach is given concrete focus with an empirical study of community adults chosen on the basis of their experience as social activists. Lykes' concern with the disempowered members of our society provides a corrective for our usual reliance on convenience samples. Many of her respondents were *from* disempowered groups, but sought and attained "responsible" power in contributing to community life. Thus their experiences of selfhood tell us important things that we could not learn from college freshmen or from formal political leaders. Lykes' proposal of "social individuality" is a valuable focus for future inquiry.

Reassessing Our Empirical Knowledge

Much of our received knowledge of gender and personality rests on ad hoc findings of sex differences emerging from diverse empirical studies. As we begin to make gender and personality the focus of our work, a double reassessment of such knowledge is needed: first, to examine its contribution to an understanding of gender per se, and then to weigh its import for personality. Five papers in this collection attempt such clarifications.

Emotional development in males and females As we attempt to sort out what we know about people-in-general from what we know about personality, few areas of inquiry are more important than the study of affect and affective-cognitive complexes Brody (this issue) offers a review and synthesis of a vast literature on emotional development in terms of gender differences in defense and display rules, emotional expressiveness, emotional recognition, affect experience, and the socialization of affect

Brody is appropriately critical of much existing work, noting that research has been constrained by both theoretical and methodological limitations Her heroic work in organizing the literature and proposing directions for future work will be helpful to many investigators I would like to add comments on three problems that arise from the tendency to confuse human being theory with personality theory

There is now wide agreement that the affect system, along with our cognitive systems, is uniquely important among our evolutionary endowments The conjunction of affect with cognition gives rise to the individual's freedom from "instinctual" directives and extraordinary capacity for constructing a truly personal life Personality theory *begins* with acceptance of such universal potentialities, and proceeds to study their deployment in generating the diversity of personality structures that we intuitively recognize What, then, are the difficulties?

First, there is considerable confusion in "defining" emotions Important clarifications are possible, I believe, if we respect the affect system as a biological given (Tomkins, 1962, 1963) in which discrete affects with intrinsically rewarding/punishing qualities are evolutionarily endowed Affects are endlessly combinable with cognitions, these give rise to affective-cognitive complexes often misidentified as "basic emotions " Now we are approaching the level of personality theory Tomkins (1981 a and b) has portrayed the historical mix-up that generated so much confusion in defining emotions and has clarified the distinction between our basic endowments and what we make of these

Second, most of our knowledge of the affect domain rests on aggregate data Nomothetic data are useful in affording clues to sex typical differences in temperament and culture-specific ways in which socialization of affect occurs Such knowledge is important base-line data When we go beyond recording gender-typical responses to standard stimuli and ask people to *construct* affect-laden scenes, we come closer to an appreciation of how affect is handled

in personally meaningful ways (See Carlson & Carlson, 1984 for one example of such a study)

Third, there is a more pervasive and subtle consequence of our habitual ways of studying emotions. Affect is far more ubiquitous than we have recognized in our conceptualizations, or than our research designs enable us to learn. Studying affective processes in isolation, we are not alerted to the specific affects that power such culturally valued qualities as "achievement," "competence," "creativity," and the like—in these cases the affects of excitement and anger that are traditionally encouraged in masculine development and discouraged in feminine socialization. (To consider this issue reflexively, as Morawski recommends, the present paper may serve as an example. I am suddenly conscious of the *excitement* imagery—where I speak of "exploring" unknown terrain, of "taking off" for new lines of inquiry, of "illuminating" puzzles—and of *anger* in the milder form of impatience with psychologists' long neglect of feminine experience and their continuing neglect of personality as the central intellectual problem of the field)

Abundant evidence tells us that our tradition of Western thought imposes (or builds upon) affect-specialization, such that the masculine affects of excitement, anger, contempt, and disgust are culturally acceptable, while feminine joy, distress, fear, and shame are more likely to be recognized as "emotional." Thus the very language of our social science tends to perpetuate the ideas that emotions (*a*) depend on prior cognitive appraisals (thus confusing affect and affective-cognitive complexes), (*b*) are the special domain of women, and (*c*) are somewhat irrational intrusions into competent performances. Such parochialism seems to be changing in recent years, but has yet to be fully understood in our academic circles.

Victimized women. Our knowledge of "battered women," reassessed by Walker and Browne (this issue), deals with a more pervasive problem than we have fully appreciated. Epidemiological studies, the authors tell us, estimate that one in four women will be raped and/or battered by their mates. Where earlier work sought to identify masochistic personality patterns that invite such victimization, Walker and Browne examined data on patterns of interaction with violent men (and abusing families) that result in such pathology and sometimes lead to desperate acts of homicide.

This problem is surely gender-related, and surely has profound implications for the study of personality. Yet the conceptual tools of "learned helplessness" and "modeling" scarcely seem adequate to organize the poignant data presented in the paper. (Mindful of Morawski's advice to examine our science reflexively, one wonders

whether the exclusive use of these limited constructs may not *exemplify* the learned-helplessness and modeling behavior of investigators caught in the grip of an academically powerful research ideology?)

How might battered women be understood in more personological terms? One formulation might suggest that (1) their lives are dominated by negative affect scripts in which positive moments are mainly 'relief affect' from transient reductions of distress and terror, (2) their earlier socialization experiences afforded little opportunity to experience the self as capable of commanding rewarding relationships, (3) their commitments to abusive mates are at once a kind of "faithfulness" and an acceptance of shame and fear as the natural conditions of connectedness, (4) their inconsistent ways of dealing with their own children both replay and attempt to counteract their own childhood experience, and (5) the "solution" of homicide represents an heroic counteraction of intolerable terror and disgust. Such a formulation does not "explain" the life situation of battered women, but may offer a rich way of studying it.

Power, achievement, and morality reconsidered A trio of empirical papers—all based on nomothetic inquiry, offer clarification of gender effects on major variables of personality.

Folk wisdom holds that males more "naturally" seek power—a notion that has been supported in empirical research. Here Winter and Barenbaum (this issue) offer new evidence that "what seemed to be a *gender* difference was really a *socialization* difference." How so? Because a refined measure of "responsibility" tells us that gender effects in empirical correlates of TAT measures of power motivation disappear when a person's experience of responsibility (for younger siblings, for own children) is considered. Such findings require us to examine more closely the texture of individual lives, rather than assimilating data to preconceived notions of sex roles. If "profligate" power still appears to be a masculine domain, "responsible" power is now seen as gender-neutral, the sheer experience of responsibility (chosen or not) seems to alter the construction of one's life.

Psychologists' concern with achievement motivation at once reflects a dominant cultural value, a concern in the careers of investigators, and a chronic empirical puzzle (Why can't a woman be more like a man?) Gaeddert's examination of gender and sex effects (this issue) employed a study of college students in which the "domain" of personal achievement episodes was crossed with "process of evaluation." Although the findings were a bit cloudy (neither sex nor gender identity accounted for any main effects), the implications may be clear enough. Serious inquiry into the experience and/or the

evaluation of "achievement" must weight the importance of success or failure episodes in a differentiated (and more personological) fashion

For at least two decades the nature of moral development has preoccupied developmental psychologists. Far from being a neutral matter, the nature of moral conduct and moral judgement has profound implications for personality, such concerns are amplified by the centrality of morality as a concern in current political and social life. Lifton's paper (this issue) attempts to sort out the conflicting messages about sex and gender differences in our literature with an exhaustive review of published work, new empirical data, and a conceptual clarification of alternative theoretical formulations. What do we learn? Both much and little. The facts are clear enough when significant gender effects are found, these seem to be based on the Kohlberg cognitive developmental model in which "rational" principles of moral judgement are criterial, and thus give the edge to males. Alternative models such as Gilligan's or a "personological" (actually, an individual-differences) model proposed by the author yield little evidence of gender differences. Lifton has accomplished a thoughtful review of massive empirical literature that will be useful to many investigators. Yet the fundamental issues remain elusive because linkages between morality and other facets of personality development rest on aggregation of nomothetic data. This is a promising start in the sense of clarifying some misconceptions and broadening our view of moral implications of personal life.

The variable-centered inquiry that informed five major papers in this issue will be illuminating and useful to some readers, dispiriting to others. For further meaning to emerge from such inquiry, we will need broader theoretical directives, an issue pursued in the next section of this paper.

Developing personality theory The "midlevel" theorizing (Maddi, 1984) familiar in contemporary psychology is simply incapable of guiding personological inquiry, so that our most useful frameworks still rest on the more comprehensive vision of psychoanalytic theory. Two papers in this issue begin with the premises of Freudian or Eriksonian thought and go on to offer searching appraisals of what is needed for making connections or corrections.

Lewis (this issue) begins with a deceptively modest introduction. How are we to understand why women are subject to depressive disorders, and men to paranoid (or schizophrenic) disorders? The empirical data are clear enough, and are not trivial. Lewis takes off from this observation for a searching exploration of the entire gender and personality domain. At the risk of fatal oversimplification, I

might capture the import of her paper with a few assertions (1) The human being is intrinsically a "social" animal, so that distortions of sociality observed in clinical work mirror the more general conditions of masculine/feminine development (2) Both constitutional and cultural directives push women toward advanced development of sociality, and men toward individualistic neglect or denial of social bonds, with consequences for distinctive patterns of ordinary life, as well as patterns of mental illness (3) Consequences of such gender specialization are found in superego structures that rest on feminine "shame" and masculine "guilt," as observed in the course of psychotherapy (4) Shame and guilt, in turn, are related to the voluminous work on field dependence/independence, these cognitive styles also clarify the nature of psychotherapeutic process (5) Contrary to stereotypes, males are actually the more vulnerable ("Women get sick, men die") They seem more vulnerable to distortions of basic human sociality, and thus to the more intractable kinds of pathology Covering a vast range of scholarship, Lewis' formulation is broad in scope, specific in detail, and will surely power more thoughtful inquiry into gender and personality

Erik Erikson's work has undoubtedly been the most influential theoretical framework invoked in the study of life span personality development Early feminist protests of the "inner space" concept were frequently based on a wholesale rejection of the psychoanalytic ("anatomy is destiny") approach rather than a careful reading of Erikson's message Yet the single pathway of development implied in Erikson's familiar epigenetic sequence *does* seem to mask distinctive differences in experiences, timing, and outcomes for males and females Franz and White (this issue) address this problem with the most meticulous examination of Eriksonian theory I have yet encountered Their solution is not simply one of rewriting the epigenetic charts for women Rather, they propose a *double helix* model "in which the two parallel but interconnected strands or pathways—the pathways of psychological individuation and attachment—ascend in a spiral representing the life cycle" for males and females alike The two-path model is offered in a chronological sequence in which the Eriksonian individuation strand is supplemented with an attachment strand provisionally adapted from Selman's work on sociocognitive development and from Mahler's object-relations approach Thus, a developmental perspective is offered that is consistent with, but may enrich, the familiar dialectical conceptions of Bakan, Jung, and others Again, we have a thoughtful piece of conceptual work that will be exciting to many readers

Studying lives over time This issue is blessed with a gem of

personological work in a report from Ravenna Helson's longitudinal study of college women. Helson and her colleagues have previously contributed several illuminating papers from this project (Helson, 1966, 1967, Helson, Mitchell, & Moane, 1984, Helson & Moane, 1984). Here Helson, Mitchell, and Hart (this issue) offer something very special—a review of the lives of the seven women (among 90) who achieved the highest levels of ego development on Loewinger's sentence completion test in terms of three major theories of personality development: Levinson's formulation of "life structures" derived from the study of adult men, Gilligan's model of female development, and Loewinger's (1976) theory of ego development. All "fit" to some degree these complex lives, but these formulations are complementary, rather than competitive.

Uniquely valuable in this paper is the combination of first-person accounts of experience from articulate women and skillful pursuit of theoretical implications on the part of the authors. We are allowed to enter "real lives" with the benefit of expert and unobtrusive guides, and we find both confirmations and surprises. Most challenging, perhaps, are the surprises. Our theories would not prepare us for the pain and difficulties that marked the development of these women, the extraordinary diversity of their personalities, or the drama of their postcollege years. Helson et al. have touched upon the ideological and theoretical issues raised by other contributors to this issue in the most intellectually satisfying way—with a richly personological account of personality development.

Epilogue

As the curtain descends on Act IV of our imaginary drama, we have an intermission. If we were simply the audience, we might enjoy brief chats with friends and then return to witness the final act. But we are the playwrights, and this is a long intermission. Act V is still to be written by our collaborative efforts.

Happily, we find that this issue of the *Journal of Personality* is so replete with insights that the next act writes itself. We are the explorers, and we have better (if still incomplete) maps of the terrain. Surely Act V will portray our liberation from methodological dogma, a more reflexive notion of our own science, more comprehensive theorizing, and if we are very lucky, a series of studies of *individual* lives to deepen and extend our knowledge of gender and personality.

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