

**A GENDERED SELF OR A GENDERED CONTEXT?  
A SOCIAL IDENTITY APPROACH TO GENDER DIFFERENCES**

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## **Declaration**

The research reported in this thesis is my own  
and has not been submitted for a higher degree  
at any other institution.

Michelle Kim Ryan

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## Summary

This thesis examines the way in which traditional accounts of gender differences in the self-concept have relied on distal explanatory factors, and have thus conceptualised the gendered self as stable across both time and situation. This notion of a stable, gendered self has been implicated as underlying of a range of psychological gender differences (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997), such as those in moral reasoning (e.g., Gillian, 1982) and ways of knowing (e.g., Belenky et al., 1989). As a result, these behaviours are also seen to be stable across time and context.

An alternative perspective is investigated, which looks to social identity theory and self-categorisation theory for a conceptualisation of both gender and the self-concept as being malleable and context-dependent (e.g., Turner et al., 1987). The social identity perspective describes the way in which proximal aspects of the social context affect the *expression* of gender-related behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs. In this way, the social identity perspective provides an analysis of group membership, group norms, and social influence which can not only account for the differences that are observed between men and women, but can also offer an analysis of the context-dependence of these difference and an approach by which gender differences can be mollified.

A series of nine empirical studies are reported, investigating the way in which individuals (a) define themselves, (b) approach moral reasoning, and (c) approach knowledge and learning, across a number of different social contexts. Together, the results suggest that the self-concept, moral orientation, and ways of knowing are neither stable nor inherently gendered, but are malleable and dependent on the nature of the self-other relationship as defined by the proximal aspects of the social context. The implications for traditional theories of gender differences are discussed, as are the broader implications for feminism and social change.

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# CHAPTER 1

## **A Gendered Self or a Gendered Context:**

### **An Introduction and Overview of the Research**

Every aspect of an individual's life...(is) deeply intertwined with questions of gender...Matters of gender actively engage virtually every concern in the United States at this time, and those in many other societies across the planet as well.

Beall and Sternberg, 1993, *The Psychology of Gender*

#### **Introduction**

If you were asked to select 20 words to describe yourself, it would be reasonably safe to suppose that you would include reference to your gender somewhere within the description, either as an outright descriptor (e.g., male or female) or as an integral part of another descriptor (e.g., mother, brother, daughter). When a child is born, the first question usually asked is 'is it a boy or a girl?', as children we are quick to differentiate ourselves and others as boys or girls, and as adults we clearly make the distinction between what it means to be either a man or a woman. The centrality of the concept of gender within and across societies has resulted in a substantial and expanding body of research on gender and gender differences emerging from such divergent fields as psychology, biology, anthropology, sociology, and neurology.

One of the broad purposes of this thesis is to investigate, from a psychological perspective, what it is about gender that makes it such an important factor in determining our behaviour and how it comes to have such an impact on our lives. In particular, we ask if gender is in some way special, working in psychologically unique ways; or if gender is just one of many social categories that can influence our perceptions, behaviours, and

attitudes? And is the centrality of gender in our lives an innate psychological imperative, or does it reflect a socially constructed norm?

### **The Differences Between Men and Women**

What is most striking when we look at the anatomical, biological, and psychological make-up of men and women is the vast number of things that we have in common. It is clear that the similarities that exist between men and women far outweigh the differences, however, it is gender differences and not gender similarities that capture people's attention and spark their interest. The popular media abounds in books, articles, and programs designed to help us bridge the gulf between men and women, to help us communicate with each other (Tannen, 1990), understand each other's behaviour (Gray, 1992), and explain where these gender differences come from (Moir & Jessel, 1989). Similarly, within the scientific literature it is findings of gender difference that excite opinion and spark debate, not a null finding of gender similarity (e.g., Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974).

Looking at the society in which we live it is self-evident that there are differences between boys and girls and between men and women. There are visible differences in our appearance, both in the way we look physically, with obvious differences in body shape, height, and degree of hairiness, and in the way in which we present ourselves, such as differences in dress, hair length, and make-up. There are also consistent behavioural differences reported between males and women in such diverse areas as academic ability (e.g., Eccles, 1987; Halpern, 1997; Hyde & Linn, 1988; Lubinski & Benbow, 1992), communication (e.g., Hall, 1978, 1984; Tannen, 1990), conformity (e.g., Eagly & Carli, 1981; Cooper, 1979), aggression (e.g., Eagly & Steffen, 1986; Hyde, 1984), and suicide (e.g., Andrews & Lewinsohn, 1992; Canetto, 1997; Simons & Murphy, 1985; Vannatta, 1996). Gender differences are also reflected by the way in which men and women are differently represented within diverse roles in society, with visible

differences in social status, power, and wealth. Much statistical evidence can be cited to illustrate these differences: while women make up almost half of the workforce, they are conspicuously under-represented in management and decision-making roles with only 2 of the top 500 American companies having women CEOs (Fortune.COM, 2003); in Australia working women currently receive only 66% of men's total average weekly earnings (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003) while men make up 93% of the Australian prisoner population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003).

### **The Study of Gender Differences**

Investigation into the nature of these gender differences in behaviour, roles, and status has become a central focus of enquiry for psychologists. Descriptions, measurement, and explanations of gender differences permeate all areas of psychology including social, clinical, organisational, developmental, forensic, educational, cognitive, sport, health, physiological, and neuro- psychology (e.g., Deaux, 1985). Results from investigations into these gender differences are represented in all prestigious psychology journals, and in addition, there exist numerous journals that are exclusively devoted to the study of women and gender (e.g., Sex Roles, Psychology of Women Quarterly) and dedicated divisions within prominent psychological associations, such as the American Psychological Association through the Society for the Psychology of Women and the Australian Psychological Society, through the Women and Psychology Interest Group.

The study of the psychological differences between men and women has always had very important implications as it both informs and is informed by political gender issues (e.g., Eagly, 1995; Lips & Colwill, 1978; Marecek, 1995, see also Eisenberg, 1972). Interest in gender and gender differences has risen and fallen throughout the history of psychology, with fluctuations in attention towards gender as an academic subject corresponding with broader political changes in attitudes towards gender, and in particular in attitudes towards women. For example, it has been noted that there was an

increased scientific interest in gender issues at the time of the women's suffrage movement (Wooley, 1914) and the feminist movement of the 1960s (Anastasi, 1981).

Indeed, it is not only interest in gender that is linked to political attitudes, but such attitudes also inform the direction that gender research takes at any given time. For example, the publication of Maccoby and Jacklin's (1974) influential book *The Psychology of Sex Differences*, which reported that gender differences were exceedingly small and limited to a few distinct areas, coincided with a political and research zeitgeist that encouraged the minimisation of gender differences, and psychological evidence into the malleability of gender differences being the basis for many legal reforms in the 60s and 70s (Lips & Colwill, 1978).

Increasingly, the study of gender-related differences in psychology is again becoming politically controversial (Eagly, 1995). While some theorists are calling for increased investigation and reporting of gender differences in an attempt to reduce gender discrimination (e.g., Eagly, 1987, 1995; Hyde, 1994; Scarr, 1988), there are others who propose that the study of gender differences should be discouraged for the very same reasons (e.g., Ashmore, 1990; Baumeister, 1988).

The question of gender differences is obviously a loaded one, with no universally consensual answer. However, it is accepted by many that the individual differences between men and women are, on the whole, relatively small, with a large overlap between men and women (e.g., Anastasia, 1981; Archer, 1987; Deaux, 1984; Hyde & Plant, 1995; Lott, 1991; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Maitland, 1993; Tavis, 1991; c.f., Eagly, 1987, 1995; Gilligan, 1982). However, within social psychology, there are still many that claim that gender holds a special status compared to other social categories (e.g., Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Cameron & Lalonde, 2001; Fiske & Stevens, 1993; Gilligan, 1982; Skevington & Baker, 1989) and this is not without reason. The social reality is that gender stereotypes pervade almost all we do, existing across time and

across cultures (Fiske & Stevens, 1993; Terborg, 1977). In addition, there exist well-defined norms of appropriate male and female behaviour, with failure to adhere to these norms potentially resulting in serious sanctions. These stereotypes and norms indicate deep-rooted discrepancies in power and status between men and women, resulting in a large range of unequal social, political, and economic outcomes.

However, the importance and centrality of gender has led some to believe that gender is a social category that works in psychologically unique ways, and that the processes underlying gender are different from those governing other categories (see for example, Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Ridgeway, 1991). Gender differences are seen as being determined relatively early in our lives, either by our biology, our evolution, or by early childhood socialisation. As a result, gender is seen by many as having a stable influence on adult behaviour, cognition, and attitudes throughout an individual's lifetime.

This research seeks to investigate the idea that while there is no denying the social reality of gender either psychologically or socially, gender can be seen as just one of many social categories that can be used to define the self and to influence behaviour. It will be proposed that gender is influential, not because it has different psychological predicates compared to other social categories, but because it *is* a social category, a category that underlies the status structures within society (Ridgeway, 2001). Further, this research argues that the psychological way in which gender affects our behaviour, perceptions, and attitudes is both systematic and lawful and can be predicted from the social context. The psychological processes that govern the centrality of gender as a social category and consequent gender-consistent behaviour are the same as those that govern the centrality and normative consequences of other category memberships.

This thesis seeks to explore the psychological role that gender plays in determining the way in which we interpret the world and the way in which we interact with

others. More specifically, it seeks to question the assumption that gender has a permanent and unwavering effect on perceptions, behaviour, and attitudes. An alternative analysis is proposed that suggests that while gender is an important social psychological factor, it is just one of many social categories that can play a part in determining our behaviour. A central aim of this thesis is to investigate conditions under which gender becomes an important determinant of behaviour and conditions where other social categories become influential. The approach taken in this research draws on the work of the social identity perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherall, 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994) as a basis for the arguments presented and the hypotheses that are derived.

The social identity perspective suggests that the self-concept is not a fixed or absolute property of the individual, but is dynamic, changing in response to variations in our social context (Onorato & Turner, 2001; Turner et al., 1994; Turner & Onorato, 1999). The theory suggests that individuals can define themselves as members of any number of different groups, with gender being just one of these. Further, the perspective outlines the mechanisms by which group memberships determine our attitudes and behaviours. It argues that as a particular social category becomes salient individuals become more likely to see themselves as an interchangeable member of that social category, and thus more likely to act in terms of the shared beliefs and norms of that social category.

In summary, this thesis presents a social identity analysis of the context dependence of gender and the self-concept. It presents an empirical program of research that investigates this claim, and ultimately argues that gender's influence on the self and behaviour should be seen as flexible and determined by proximal aspects of the social context, rather than stable and distally determined. An overview of the chapter structure of the thesis is now provided.



## Overview of the Thesis

In order to understand the way in which gender differences are conceptualised and used in psychological theory and research, we begin our investigation with the principal debate within the gender difference literature: the battle of nature versus nurture: Are the gender differences that we see a product of our biology or of our socialisation? Chapter 2 outlines each side of the debate and then examines the implications of the two approaches. It argues that both nature and nurture approaches focus on distal factors, and as such imply stability in gender differences in adulthood. An alternative, based on the work of Deaux and Major (1989), is then investigated, pointing to the importance of both distal factors (e.g., biology, childhood socialisation) and proximal factors (e.g., social context, group norms, gender stereotypes, perceiver expectations) in determining not only the acquisition and perpetuation of gender differences, but also the display of gender differences.

In order to further investigate the role of distal and proximal factors we begin with an examination of gender differences in the self-concept, not only because our sense of self is seen to underlie our perceptions, attitudes, behaviours (e.g., Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Turner et al., 1994) but also because differences in the self-concept are seen to be one of the fundamental social psychological differences between men and women (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997). Thus, Chapter 3 provides an extensive overview of how, within the psychological literature, the self-concept is seen as gendered. In doing so, Chapter 3 describes two distinct interpersonal orientations, or ways of seeing the self in relation to others, that are seen to be inextricably linked with gender. An independent (and masculine) self-concept involves describing the self in terms of unique, internal attributes and emphasising autonomy and the differences between the self and others. In contrast, an interdependent (and feminine) self-concept involves defining the self in terms of relationships with others and group memberships. There are many theories about the aetiology of these gendered self-concepts from both

sides of the nature-nurture debate. However, what is common to most accounts is the assumption of stability of the gendered self in adulthood.

The distinction between an independent self and an interdependent self has been extremely influential, and is seen by many theorists to underlie a diverse range of gender differences from cognitive tasks such as spatial ability to clinical issues such as depression (see Cross & Madson, 1997, for a review). However, the gendered self is also implicated in a range of highly complex social psychological phenomenon, such as the way in men and women consider and solve moral problems and the way in which they approach learning and knowledge. Chapter 4 outlines in detail the way in which the gendered self-concept has been said to have explanatory power over gender differences in moral reasoning and in ways of knowing.

Research into moral reasoning has described two distinct ways of thinking about moral problems, that of justice and that of care (e.g., Gilligan, 1982). An ethic of justice emphasises fairness and equality and involves the application of rules and principles in an objective fashion. It is argued that such an approach to moral problems necessitates a self-concept defined in terms of independence and is more likely to be utilised by men than women. In contrast, an ethic of care emphasises well-being and the maintenance of relationships and dilemmas are therefore resolved in terms of attentiveness, responsiveness, and engagement. It is argued that such an approach requires a interdependent self-concept and is more likely to be utilised by women than by men.

The work on an ethic-of-care has been extremely influential and has resulted in a number of related areas of work. One of these is the investigation into ways of knowing, which looks at the manner in which individuals acquire, structure, process, and communicate information. The relevant studies draw on the distinctions between an independent and interdependent self-concept and care and justice moral orientations (e.g., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, &

Belenky, 1996). As a result, two gender-related ways of knowing are described: a connected way of knowing that entails understanding and acceptance and a separate way of knowing that entails evaluation. Not surprisingly, evidence suggests that women are more likely to utilise connected knowing and men more likely to utilise separate knowing.

These theories of gender differences in moral reasoning and ways of knowing are based on an assumption of an underlying gendered self that is either independent or interdependent. As such, moral reasoning behaviour and ways of knowing are seen to be relatively stable and related to gender. In opposition to this conceptualisation of the self as fixed and stable we will then present an alternative analysis of the self based on social identity theory and self-categorisation theory (described collectively as the social identity perspective). Chapter 5 overviews the social identity analysis of the self-concept and describes the self not as stable and dependent on proximal developmental factors, but as flexible and dependent upon the context in which it is embedded. Therefore, rather than being seen as either constantly independent or constantly interdependent, an individual's self-concept can be seen as capable of being either independent or interdependent, determined not by gender per se, but determined by the social context.

Chapter 5 also outlines the way in which gender and gender differences can be analysed from a social identity perspective. Rather than simply looking at the way in which distal factors such as biology or childhood socialisation lead to the *acquisition* of gender-related stereotypes and behaviours (see Deaux & Major, 1987), the social identity perspective also describes the way in which proximal aspects of the social context affect the *expression* of gender-related behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs. In this way, the social identity perspective provides an analysis of group membership, group norms, and social influence which can not only account for the differences that are observed between men and women, but can also offer an analysis of the context-

dependence of these difference and an approach by which gender differences can be mollified.

If we accept a social identity analysis of gender and the self with its emphasis on flexibility and context dependence, this has implications for how we think about the gendered self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing. Instead of being stable differences related to gender they become context-dependent behaviours and attitudes. Chapter 6 outlines a series of hypotheses that can be drawn from the social identity perspective. More specifically, this chapter examines the idea that we are more likely to feel interdependent in relation to those we perceive as sharing a group membership with us (ingroup members) than those who do not (outgroup members). Implications for moral reasoning and ways of knowing are also discussed.

This thesis is tested empirically in Chapters 7 through to 11. In Chapter 7, Study 1 and Study 2 investigate the social identity analysis of the self and test whether the self-concept is stable and gendered or flexible and context dependent. The two experiments examine individuals' self-definition as either independent or interdependent across varied situations: in the context of ingroup members, in the context of outgroup members, and in a context where gender is salient. Taken together, these first two studies support a social identity analysis and suggest that it is the norms of the context rather than gender per-se that determines whether individuals will describe themselves as independent or interdependent at any given time. Importantly, gender is a determining factor of self-descriptions only in situations where gender is made salient.

Chapter 8 empirically examines moral orientation with Studies 3 and 4 establishing the norms associated with moral thinking. Study 3 suggests that there are gender norms associated with moral orientation such that individuals perceive that women are more likely to feel interdependent in relation to others and more likely to utilise a care orientation than a justice orientation, while men are more likely to feel

independent in relation to others and utilise a justice orientation than a care orientation. However, Study 4 suggests that norms for moral reasoning also exist in relation to the context of the moral problem. Individuals indicate that situations involving an ingroup member are more likely to utilise care considerations than justice considerations. In contrast, in situations involving an outgroup member, individuals indicate that justice considerations are more likely to be important than care considerations.

In Chapter 9, Studies 5 and 6 extend the social identity analysis to the realm of moral reasoning by examining the context dependence of moral orientation. These two studies test traditional ethic-of-care accounts that have conceptualised moral thinking as stable and gendered, and assess moral orientation in contexts that involve ingroup members, outgroups members, or that make gender salient. Taken together, the results of Studies 5 and 6 support a social identity analysis and suggest that the self and moral thinking are flexible and context dependent. More specifically, they demonstrate that individuals are more likely to use a care orientation in contexts that involved an ingroup member compared to contexts that involved an outgroup member. Importantly, no gender differences in moral orientation are apparent in these specified contexts but they become apparent under conditions where gender is made salient.

Studies 7 and 8, presented in Chapter 10, examine ways of knowing to establish the norms associated with people's attitudes towards thinking and knowing. Study 7 suggests that there are gender norms associated with ways of knowing such that individuals perceive that women are more likely to use a connected than a separate way of knowing, and men more likely to use a connected than a separate way of knowing. However, Study 8 suggests that norms for knowing also exist in relation to the context of the situation. Individuals believe that when a situation involves an ingroup member, individuals are more like to utilise connected than separate knowing. In contrast, when an outgroup member is involved the opposite is true with separate knowing being seen as more important than connected knowing.

In the final empirical chapter, Chapter 11, the social identity analysis is extended to the realm of ways of knowing by examining the context dependence of knowing attitudes. Study 9 tests the traditional ways-of-knowing accounts that have conceptualised such attitudes as stable and gendered. It assesses attitudes towards thinking and knowing in contexts that involve ingroup members, outgroups members, or that make gender salient. The results support a social identity analysis and suggest that the knowing attitudes are flexible and context dependent. More specifically, they demonstrate that individuals are more likely to have connected knowing attitudes in contexts that involved an ingroup member than in contexts that involved an outgroup member. Importantly, gender differences in ways of knowing are not apparent in these specified contexts with such differences only evident under conditions where gender is made salient.

Finally, in conclusion, Chapter 12 provides a summary and integration of the findings of the research presented in Chapters 7 through to 11 in relation to the hypotheses. It also provides a general discussion of the implications of the nine studies for theories regarding gender differences in the self-concept, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing. Future directions for the program of research are also discussed, as are the broader implications for feminism and social change.

## CHAPTER 2

### Nature or Nurture:

#### A Stable Approach to Gender Differences

To go for a walk with one's eyes open is enough to demonstrate that humanity is divided into two classes of individuals whose clothes, faces, bodies, smiles, gaits, interests, and occupations are manifestly different. Perhaps these differences are superficial, perhaps they are destined to disappear. What is certain is that they do most obviously exist.

Simone de Beauvoir (1949/1972) *The Second Sex*

#### Introduction

The above passage, from the introductory chapter of Simone de Beauvoir's (1949/1972) *The Second Sex*, was written over 50 years ago, however, it exemplifies two key issues in the ongoing psychological debate about gender and gender differences. Echoing the introductory chapter, de Beauvoir first recognises the existence of gender differences through her observations that men and women differ in their appearances, their behaviours, and their beliefs. She then raises two key psychological questions: Firstly, are these differences between men and women superficial or are they perhaps more inherent and innate, and secondly, will these differences disappear or can they be seen as more enduring? The first of these questions can be seen to address the underlying cause of gender differences and is a variation of the nature-nurture debate, while the second question considers the expression and the future of these gender differences and questions whether they are stable or malleable. This chapter will investigate how these two related issues, the issue of nature versus nurture and the issue of stability versus malleability, have been considered and debated within the psychological literature.

## **Nature versus Nurture**

The nature-nurture debate can be seen as one of the fundamental tensions within psychology. Almost every introductory psychology textbook or course addresses features of the debate and popular psychology abounds with nature and nurture theories. The core question that is asked is: 'Is human behaviour determined by biological factors such as our genetics or our hormones or is human behaviour an outcome of the environmental processes of socialisation?' While the debate has been employed to explain such diverse differences as those between individuals, between races, or between cultures, it is a debate that is most controversially applied to differences between men and women. The following sections will first examine how arguments from both the nature and nurture side have been applied to understanding the development and perpetuation of gender differences and will then continue by briefly describing the more commonly utilised interactionist approach.

### **A Nature Perspective on Gender Differences**

The nature side of the gender difference debate incorporates a range of accounts including those that (a) emphasise the effects of hormones, (b) point to differences in brain structure and functioning, and (c) highlight the role of genetics and evolutionary factors. What these approaches have in common is an emphasis on the role that biology plays in determining human behaviour in general, and more specifically, in determining differences in the behaviour of men and women. Each of these three approaches will be briefly described in turn.

#### **Hormones**

Hormones are commonly seen as sex-specific, with androgens, such as testosterone, being seen as male hormones, while oestrogens and progestogens are seen as female hormones. However, every individual has varying concentrations of



each of these hormones. What differentiates men and women is the relative concentration of these hormones, with men tending to have higher levels of androgens and women higher levels of oestrogens and progestogens.

There is a range of research which suggests that hormone levels are associated with gender-typed behaviours such as aggression (e.g., Dabbs & Morris, 1990; Simpson, 2001) and libido (Davis, 2000). Hormones are also implicated in gender differences in cognitive abilities such as language comprehension and mathematical ability (e.g., Christiansen & Knusmann, 1987; Finegan, Nicols, & Sitarenios, 1992), performance on spatial rotation tasks (e.g., Grimshaw, Sitarenios, & Finegan, 1995; Janowsky, Oviatt, & Orwoll, 1994), choice of gender-related toys (e.g., Berenbaum & Hines, 1992).

Research that looks to hormones as an explanation of gender differences tends to measure levels of sex-related hormones at different stages throughout the life span. Of particular interest are hormonal levels occurring either prenatally or at birth (e.g., Ehrhardt & Backer, 1974; Miller, 1994) or contemporaneous with behaviours (e.g., Fleming, Corter, Stallings, & Meir, 2002). Researchers typically examine whether the degree to which these hormones are present, or the degree to which hormonal levels change, is correlated with gender-typed behaviours.

A large proportion of the research into hormonal accounts of gender differences has centred on animal experimentation. Through animal studies it is possible to systematically manipulate levels of particular hormones in order to examine their effect on gender-related behaviours. Typical studies demonstrate that female animals (including rhesus monkeys, rats, guinea pigs, and chickens) that receive abnormally high doses of androgens exhibit elevated levels of typically masculine behaviour, such as aggression and rough and tumble play (see Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974 for a review). For example, Joslyn (1974) treated three female rhesus monkeys with regular doses of testosterone between 6 and 14 months of age and compared their behaviour with three

untreated males. Prior to treatment, the three males displayed higher levels of aggression and dominance, as is typical with rhesus monkeys. However, during the administration of testosterone the aggressiveness of the female monkeys increased gradually until it equalled that of males. Eventually, two of the females assumed positions of dominance, which were maintained up to a year after testosterone treatment ended.

For ethical reasons it is not feasible to manipulate hormonal levels within a human sample. As a result, research into human gender differences has tended to examine individuals who have spontaneously occurring hormonal imbalances. A good illustration of this approach is research that focuses on girls with congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH), a condition that produces abnormally large amounts of androgens. Studies have demonstrated that girls with CAH, compared to girls with normal androgen levels, are more likely to be 'tomboyish' in childhood, showing increased levels of physical activity, engaging in more rough-and-tumble play, and preferring to play with more stereotypically masculine toys (e.g., Berenbaum & Hines, 1992; Resnick, Berenbaum, Gottesman, & Bouchard, 1986; see also Ehrhardt & Baker, 1974).

Similarly, Money & Ehrhardt (1972) showed a comparable pattern of results related to prenatal hormone levels. A study was conducted examining the behaviour of 25 female children who had received excessive doses of androgens *in utero*. Compared to a control group, these girls also showed more evidence of tomboy behaviour, displaying higher levels of energy, more involvement in sport, self-assertiveness and rivalry with boys, preference for functional clothing, and little interest in dolls. This 'masculine' behaviour continued into adolescence with these girls more likely than the control group to focus on achievement and career rather than romance and marriage.

On the basis of investigations into individuals with abnormal hormonal levels, extrapolations are made to gender differences between men and women in general. It is

suggested that if higher levels of hormones such as testosterone result in more masculinised behaviour in girls then the general behavioural differences seen between men and women can be at least partially attributed to differences in hormonal levels (e.g., Moir & Jessel, 1989).

### **The Brain**

Related to explanations based on hormones, is the investigation into the brain as the basis of gender-related behaviours. Prenatal hormone theorists (e.g., Collaer & Hines, 1995; Hines & Collaer, 1993; Moir & Jessell, 1989) suggest that male and female brains are organised differently due to exposure to sex hormones during critical periods in prenatal development. Indeed, perhaps the most vocal proponents of the nature side of the debate are Moir and Jessel (1989) who, in their popular book *Brain Sex*, propose a theory of gender differences based on differences in brain structure. Moir and Jessel (1989, p. 5) suggest that

The sexes are different because their brains are different. The brain, the chief administrative and emotional organ of life, is differently constructed in men and in women; it processes information in a different way, which results in different perceptions, priorities, and behaviour.

Hoyenga and Hoyenga (1993) identify three underlying assumptions about the belief in differential brain structure: (1) there are two distinct types of brains, male and female; (2) these two brain types clearly differentiate between men and women as they contain structures that do not overlap; and (3) once brain structures are organised, this structure is both permanent and stable.

Research into gender differences in brain structure and functioning has concentrated on different facets of the brain and brain functioning, including brain size, specific regions of the brain, and brain lateralisation. Research into brain size has revealed that men have a brain that is on average 100 grams larger than that of women,

even when corrected for overall body size, and this difference in 'cranial capacity' has been related to a range of gender differences including differences in intelligence (Lynn, 1994) and mathematical ability (Ankney, 1995). Research into brain asymmetry has noted that the corpus callosum, the mass of nerve fibres connecting the left and right hemispheres of the brain, is wider in the brains of women than in the brains of men, and it is suggested that this difference may account for greater 'cross talk' between hemispheres in women (compared to men) and as a result may be seen to underlie gender differences in behaviour (de Lacoste & Holloway, 1982).

Further, some theorists suggest that men and women show functional differences in how they use their left and right hemispheres (Yonder, 2003). While men are said to show greater specialisation, using the left hemisphere for verbal processing and the right hemisphere for visiospatial processing, women are said to show bilateralisation, using both hemispheres for both forms of cognitive processing. For example, Shaywitz et al. (1995) demonstrated that when asked to complete language tasks such as letter recognition, rhyming, and semantic category tasks men's and women's brains showed significantly different patterns of activation on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans.

### **Evolutionary Psychology**

An evolutionary approach to the psychology of gender differences (e.g., Archer, 1996; Buss, 1995; Buss & Kenrick, 1998; Kenrick, 1994; Symons, 1992) utilises the knowledge and principles of evolutionary biology to explain why it is that men and women differ from one another. Such evolutionary psychologists claim that gender differences occur where men and women have faced substantially different physical or social environments in human evolutionary history (Buss & Kenrick, 1998). Adaptations to these different environments then result in particular types of gender-related behaviours that maximise chances at survival and the successful perpetuation of an individual's genes.

Fundamental to an evolutionary account of gender differences is the theory of sexual selection, based on the work of Darwin (1871/1896) and elaborated by Trivers (1972). Central to such an explanation are the distinct reproductive roles of men and women and the differing adaptive problems associated with these roles. As women contribute more to the future of offspring through gestation, birth, lactation, and childrearing, and are restricted in the number of children they can raise, they are seen as a limited resource that men must compete for. As a result it is adaptive for women to be able to choose an appropriate mate who is able to care for them whilst they are childrearing and for men to demonstrate that they satisfy the criteria for selection.

These different adaptive mechanisms are said to underlie many of the differences that we observe in men and women today (Buss, 1995; Buss & Kendrick, 1998). For example, Buss and Schmitt (1993) suggest that evolutionary psychology can explain men's greater level of promiscuity through their need to 'devote a larger proportion of their total mating effort to short-term mating than do women' (p. 205), while Daly and Wilson (1998) suggest that men's higher level of sexual jealousy and dominance are adaptive to combat paternity uncertainties, while women's higher level of romantic jealousy is adaptive for their need for a stable, committed mate.

Explanations of more general behaviours, not directly related to reproduction, can also be informed by evolutionary accounts. It is suggested that during important evolutionary periods, humans lived within a hunter-gather society with a clear gender-related division of labour, such that men hunted while women gathered (Buss, 1995). Such a division of labour would suggest that men who were psychologically specialised for hunting, with superior spatial ability, may have been advantaged in the mate selection process, and hence that particular cognitive ability would have been adaptive.

## A Nurture Perspective on Gender Differences

In contrast to theories based on biology, nurture approaches to gender difference focus on environmental factors or events that occur after conception. Taken to its extreme, the nurture position suggests that at birth we are a *tabula rasa*, or blank slate upon which our environment writes (Locke, 1690/1960). One of the most famous and most widely cited statements from the nurture side of the debate is from behaviourist John B. Watson (1925, p. 82):

Give me a dozen healthy infants...and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, race of his ancestors.

Those approaches taking a nurture perspective to explain gender differences place an emphasis on a range of environmental influences, including the influence of parents through childrearing practices, the influence of peers groups, and the influence of the wider societal structures. The following sections will describe each of these approaches in turn.

### Parenting

Applied to explanations of gender differences, many nurture accounts have tended to focus on the early years of life examining the way in which parents (particularly mothers) affect the development of gender-related behaviours in individuals (Huston, 1983; Jacklin & Baker, 1993). Chodorow (1974, 1978) attributed what she saw as 'general and nearly universal' differences between the genders not to differences in anatomy, but to the fact that 'women's mothering is one of the few universal and enduring elements of the sexual division of labour' and that women 'take primary

responsibility for infant care, spend more time with infants and children than do men, and sustain primary emotional ties with infants' (Chodorow, 1978, p. 3).

Chodorow (1978) goes on to suggest that boys and girls have very different experiences of the mother-child relationship. For girls, the relationship is characterised by similarity and continuity since girls and mothers have their gender in common. However, for boys, the relationship is one characterised by difference, as they must separate themselves from their mother in order to become masculine. According to Chodorow these gender differences in early childhood have long-term ramifications as they develop into 'crucial differences in feminine and masculine personalities' (1978, p. 169), specifically into males' tendency to perceive themselves as independent and females' tendency to perceive themselves as interdependent

Parental influences on the development of gender-specific behaviours can take on many forms. From birth, parents act very differently towards male and female children, displaying very clear-cut expectations about how it is that boys and girls are supposed to act and interpreting the same behaviour in different ways for boys and girls (e.g., Condry & Condry, 1976; Delk, Madden, Livingston, & Ryan, 1986; see Stern & Karraker, 1989, for a review); rewarding some behaviours while punishing others (e.g., Fagot, 1974, 1978; Mischel, 1966); and acting as clearly gendered role-models (Bandura, 1969, 1986; Kohlberg, 1966).

The rewarding and punishing of specific behaviour and modelling are the two major mechanisms involved in social learning theory. Gender-congruent behaviour tends to be rewarded and encouraged, while gender incongruent behaviour is punished or discouraged (e.g., Fagot, 1974, 1978; Mischel, 1966). For example, in a study of 24 families, Fagot (1978) found that parents react differently when their sons or daughters exhibit gender-typed behaviours: while parents encouraged daughters when they danced, dressed up as women, or asked for help, they encouraged sons in behaviour

which required muscular activities such as playing with cars and blocks or pushing and pulling toys. In contrast, daughters were discouraged from manipulating objects, running, jumping and climbing, while sons were discouraged from playing with dolls, or following parents around and asking for help.

However, learning does not only occur through the reinforcement of children's own behaviour, they also learn through watching and imitating others, the process of modelling (Bandura, 1969, 1986; Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Bandura suggest that while there are some exceptions, girls are more likely to imitate female models (such as their mothers) while boys are more likely to imitate male models (such as their fathers) (see also Carlsmith, 1964; Kohlberg, 1966).

Parents also provide very different environments for their male and female children. For example, Rheingold and Cook (1975) examined the bedrooms and toys that parents provided for their children. Not surprisingly, boys' rooms tended to be decorated in blue with themes such as animals, whereas girls were likely to have pink rooms decorated with flowers, frills and lace. As far as toys were concerned, while boys were often given a wide range of toy vehicles, girls were given a wide range of dolls. As Rheingold and Cook conclude,

Boys were provided objects that encouraged activities directed away from the home – toward sports, cars, animals, and the military – and the girls, objects that encouraged activities directed toward the home – keeping house and caring for children (p. 463).

These gender differences in toy selection are still evident in toy stores today. One need only wander down the 'girl' aisle surrounded by the pink associated with dolls, fairy outfits, and toy stoves and compare it to the 'boys' aisle filled with guns, action figures, and toy cars.



## **Peers**

An alternative to theories of parental influence is provided by Judith Rich Harris' (1995, 1998) theory of group socialisation. Harris (1995) suggests that parental behaviours have little psychological affect on their children as adults, to the extent that

children would develop into the same sort of adults if we left them in their homes, their schools, their neighbourhoods, and their cultural or subcultural groups, but switched all the parents around (p. 461).

Harris (1995, 1998) offers an account of socialisation, which emphasises the role of childhood and adolescent peer groups. Harris argues that parents show very few differences in the way they treat their sons and daughters (e.g., Lytton & Romney, 1991), and instead looks to gender-segregated peer-groups in middle childhood to explain how distinct gender roles develop (see also Archer, 1992; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1987; Thorne, 1986).

Harris (1995) suggests that peer groups contribute to childhood socialisation through the creation of their own norms for behaviour. Peer group norms are developed and shaped through the process of 'selecting and rejecting various aspects of the adult culture' (Harris, 1995, p. 467). Socialisation occurs when children identify with their gender-segregated peer groups and take on the attitudes and norms of the group due to a tendency to want to accentuate what their group has in common and differentiate their group from other groups (see also Bruner, 1957; Campbell, 1958; Tajfel, 1969; Turner, 1982). As a result, Harris suggests that children develop differential stereotypes and norms for what it means to be a boy or a girl, and conformity to these stereotypes and norms are enforced through the use of group sanctions.

## **Social Structural Factors**

So far we have seen how theories seek to explain the *development* of gender differences in behaviour through biological factors and childhood socialisation by parents

and peers. In contrast, theories that focus on social structural variables look to the wider society to explain gender differences (e.g., D'Andrade, 1966; Sherif, 1982). Such theories look to factors such as the different social roles that men and women occupy within society (e.g., Eagly, 1987) or to the different levels of status and power that are accorded to men and women (e.g., Miller, 1986; Ridgeway, 1991, 2001; Ridgeway & Diekema, 1992; Sherif, 1982). Rather than attempting to explain how it is that men and women develop differences in behaviour, theories that focus on social structural factors tend to be concerned about the *perpetuation* of gender differences, that is, the processes that maintain existing differences between men and women across time and across situations.

For example, social role theory (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Eagly & Wood, 1999; Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000) focuses on gender roles, defined as 'those shared expectations about appropriate conduct that apply to individuals solely based on their socially identified sex' (Eagly & Wood, 1991, p. 309). Social role theory assumes men and women are allocated into different roles within society, with women being more likely to be responsible for child-rearing and domestic work in the home, and men being more likely to hold high-status jobs within the workplace.

As a result of these differential roles there are very clear expectations and stereotypes about men and women's abilities and about how they should behave. These differences can be summarised broadly as a distinction between being communal and being agentic (see also Bakan, 1966; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Maccoby, 1990; Markus, 1977; Triandis, 1989). While it is expected that women will demonstrate communal attributes such as being friendly, empathic, and communicative, the expectation is that men will display agentic qualities such as independence, assertiveness, and competence.

Social role theory assumes that gender-related stereotypes and expectations and subsequent gender differences in behaviour occur via two routes. Firstly, they suggest that, even outside of their social roles, men and women have a propensity to behave in a manner that is in line with their gender stereotypes and expectations. Secondly, they suggest that men and women gain different experiences and abilities through their gendered social roles, which act to reinforce the belief that men and women are different.

### **Interactionalist Perspectives**

Although there are exceptions (e.g., Moir & Jessell, 1992) most theorists have conceded that the answer to the nature-nurture debate does not lie at either extreme. As suggested by theorists such as Anastasi (1958) and Lerner (1976) it is relatively pointless to ask 'which one' for there is now an abundance of evidence suggesting that both biological and environmental factors are implicated in our behaviour (see also Archer & Lloyd, 1975, 1985).

Evolutionary theorists such as Archer (1996) and Buss (1995), while concentrating on physiological factors, acknowledge the important part that socialisation plays in determining gender-differences. Similarly, those who propose socialisation accounts acknowledge the influence of biology while still insisting on the primary importance of the environment. For example Sandra Bem (1993, p. 38) suggests that,

No matter how many subtle biological differences between the sexes there may someday prove to be, both the size and the significance of those biological differences will depend, in every single instance, on the situational context in which women and men live their lives.

Further, Hubbard (1990) suggests that the nature and nurture are inextricably linked:

There is no way to sort out the biological and social components that produce these (gender) differences, therefore no way to sort nature from nurture, when we confront sex differences...in societies in which people, as groups, do not have equal access to resources and power and hence live in different environments (p.116).

Indeed, it has been demonstrated that biological and social factors are often not independent of one another. For example, while it has been argued that increased testosterone levels in men are related to increased aggression, contextual factors such as stress (Kreuz, Rose, & Jennings, 1972), a sporting win (Mazur & Lamb, 1980), and dominance behaviour (Mazur & Booth, 1998) have also been shown to vary levels of testosterone. Thus biology influences behaviour, and behaviour influences biology. However, these interactionist perspectives have only changed the question from 'which one' to 'which is stronger, and thus the debate continues.

### **Stability versus Malleability**

The debates over whether gender differences in cognition and behaviour are due to nature or nurture is intrinsically related to the debate over whether these differences are stable or malleable. Whether gender differences in behaviour, such as aggression, are due to differences in evolutionary history, prenatal hormonal levels, childhood socialisation, or societal factors, there are still questions that remain about the way in which these differences are expressed. Is it the case that all men are more aggressive than women because of their shared evolutionary history? Do increased levels of testosterone always results in increased levels of aggression? Will an individual with a particular pattern of childhood socialisation express the same degree of aggressive behaviour across time? Are the societal expectations and stereotypes associated with men and women equally applicable across different contexts?

It is obvious that the different approaches to explaining gender differences in human behaviour have very different implications for the stability of that behaviour over time and across contexts. Many of the theoretical accounts that emphasise the nature side of the debate, such as evolutionary accounts, necessitate assumptions of relative stability, at least within an individual's lifespan. On the other hand, if one subscribes to a socialisation account then there is more room for a belief in malleability in gender differences: if social learning can create gender differences then social learning can also remove them.

However, as we have seen earlier, many of the traditional theories of gender differences outlined above are primarily concerned with explaining how it is that gender differences are either developed or perpetuated. Both biological and developmental accounts tend to see gender differences as a stable or essential quality that is inherent in the person, either from birth or from the early years in life (e.g., Eagly, 1995; Jacklin & Baker, 1993). As a result, we are left with accounts that tend to suggest that differences between the genders are stable once an individual reaches adulthood.

For example, West and Zimmerman (1987) observe that gender socialisation theories convey a message that while gender is a product of socialisation, this product is achieved by about age five and from then is 'fixed, unvarying, and static'. Similarly, Chodorow (1978) suggests that gender identity is 'with rare exception firmly and irreversibly established for both sexes by the time the child is around three' (p.150) and Gilligan (1982) sees gender identity as 'the unchanging core of personality formation' (p. 7). Even the group socialisation account (Harris, 1995, 1998), suggests that the influence of the peer group is, for the most part, restricted to childhood and adolescence. Harris (1995) suggests that in adulthood 'group norms of behaviour are no longer enforced so stringently; the consequences of being different are not so serious' as a result, she concludes that the behaviours 'acquired in childhood and adolescent peer groups persist, with little modification, for the remainder of the life span' (p. 474). As a result, even

though socialisation theories emphasise the importance of the environment, we are still left with theoretical assumptions that see gender differences being relatively fixed and stable once an individual has reached adulthood.

However, while no one would deny that there are obvious differences between men and women it is clearly not the case that these differences are stable across time and across contexts. While it may be said that the core stereotypes of men and women have remained relatively consistent over time, with men seen as the traditional bread-winners and the women as the traditional child-raisers, there have been very clear shifts in more specific gender norms and stereotypes, such as appearance, dress, and appropriate behaviour. There is also a wealth of information that suggests that variations in the social context, such as changes in expectations or the presence and absence of others, can mediate gender differences.

Looking first at expectations, Walsh, Hickey, and Duffy (1999) found that when participants expected a mathematical test to distinguish between men and women, stereotypical differences in mathematical ability occurred, with men outscoring women. However, when participants were told that the test was designed to distinguish between Americans and Canadians, these gender differences disappeared. In another study of spatial ability, Sharps, Price, and Williams (1994) demonstrated that when participants thought that a task was designed to test aptitude for the navigation of naval vessels, the flying of aircraft and engineering, men performed significantly better than when they thought the same test was designed to measure interior decoration and design.

In addition, theorists such as Maccoby (1990) suggest that the expression of gender-related behaviours varies as a function of the interaction between two or more people, with the gender make-up of the group (i.e., same-gender group versus mixed-gender group) influencing the interaction style of participants. Similarly, there is evidence that students, particularly girls, demonstrate higher academic achievement in single sex schools compared to those that are co-educational (Lee & Bryk 1987; Young & Frazer

1990). Similarly, Eagly, (1987) suggested that the mere presence of others might increase the likelihood of gender-related behaviours.

The theories outlined so far, with their emphasis on the development and perpetuation of gender differences, are unable to account for the variability that is observed in gender differences. Indeed, in a comprehensive review of the gender difference literature, Deaux and Major (1987) suggest that many theories of gender differences concentrate on explanations of the *acquisition* of gender-related behaviours, rather than the *display* of such behaviours. As a result, they suggest that theories are more likely to concentrate on *distal factors* when explaining differences between men and women. Indeed, biological causes and childhood socialisation occur at a time far removed from the actual behaviours themselves, and more proximal causes are not considered.

In response, Deaux and Major offer their own social psychological, interactionist model that emphasises the ‘multiply determined’ nature of gender-linked behaviours. Such a model integrates the wide range of factors that have been identified as influencing gender-related behaviours and outlines the processes involved in their interrelation. One emphasis of the model is to characterise gender as a product of an individual’s expectations about behaviour and the social context in which the behaviour takes place. In this way, Deaux and Major are able to account for both the stability and flexibility that is observed in gender-related behaviours and gender differences.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

In summary, theories explaining gender differences, either from a nurture perspective, a nature perspective, or from an interaction between the two, have tended to focus on either the development or the perpetuation of behavioural differences between men and women. As a result of this focus, theories have tended to look to factors that

are far-removed or distant from actual displays of behaviour. Consequently, theories of gender difference are likely to have assumptions of behavioural stability across time and across situation.

However, it is argued that these theories are unable to account for the substantial amount of variation in the expression of gender differences. As an alternative, an explanation is needed that can account for both the stability and the malleability that is seen in gender differences. Indeed, Chapter 5 will discuss in depth an analysis of gender and gender differences based on the social identity perspective that places an emphasis on immediate and contemporary social psychological factors that can account for both stability and malleability in gender differences.

The following two chapters will first take a detailed look at evidence in the literature of specific examples of differences between men and women: Chapter 3 will look at the way the self-concept is related to gender, while Chapter 4 will examine the way this notion of a gendered self has been applied to explaining gender differences in two fundamental psychological processes: moral reasoning and ways of knowing.



## CHAPTER 3

### The Gendered Self:

#### Independence and Interdependence

Gender is one of the earliest and most central components of the self-concept and serves as an organising principle through which many experiences and perceptions of self and others are filtered

Spence (1985, p. 64)

Historically, the notion of the self-concept has played a central explanatory role within psychological theory. There is a wealth of research that suggests that the way in which we view our selves, the way in which we view others, and importantly, the way in which we view the relationship between the self and others, have important psychological consequences, regulating our behaviour and influencing our cognitions, our emotions, and our motivations (see for example, Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Gecas, 1982; Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; James, 1890; Kihlstrom & Cantor, 1984; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Sherif, 1982; Suls, 1982; Turner et al., 1994).

However, the above quote from Spence (1985) extends this idea further, and suggests that it is the gendered self-concept that provides the context from which we perceive and organise the world. Indeed, there are a range of gender theories that propose that the self-concept plays a pivotal role in gender identification (e.g., Kohlberg, 1966; Martin & Halverson, 1981; Skevington & Baker, 1989), and in the acquisition and perpetuation of gender-related behaviours (e.g., Sherif, 1982; Wood, Christensen, Hebl, & Rothgerbern, 1997).

This chapter will provide a review of the literature, describing one of the fundamental distinctions made within the self-concept literature, the distinction between a

self that is defined as independent in relation to others and a self that is defined as interdependent in relation to others (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Maccoby, 1990; Markus, 1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989). This chapter will first review the major accounts describing the gendered distinction between the independent self and the interdependent self and, following from Chapter 2, will investigate the way in which this difference has been considered as remaining relatively stable across time and situation. Evidence for and against the stability of gender differences in the self-concept will also be examined.

### **Gender and the Independent and Interdependent Selves**

In much of the self-concept literature the nature and structure of the self-concept is described in terms of two distinct interpersonal orientations, or ways of seeing the self in relation to others: the independent self and the interdependent self (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Maccoby, 1990; Markus, 1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989). While there are a variety of approaches and descriptions, the overall distinction remains similar. An independent self-concept (also termed the separate, individualistic, egocentric, agentic, autonomous, idiocentric, or private self-concept) involves describing the self in terms of unique and internal traits, abilities, attitudes, and preferences, and placing an emphasis on individualism and autonomy. For those with an independent self-concept, the self is viewed as being separate from other individuals and detached from one's situation, social roles, and relationships. For these people, individuality is attained by through uniqueness, and contrasts and comparisons between the self and others.

In contrast, an interdependent self-concept (also termed the dependent, connected, collectivist, sociocentric, relational, allocentric, or communal self-concept) involves defining the self in terms of one's relationships with others, one's social roles, and the groups to which one belongs. For those with an interdependent self-concept, the

self is viewed as being highly dependent upon others and the context in which these relationships are embedded. For these people, boundaries between the self and others are seen as flexible and an individual is defined in terms of his or her location within a system of relationships.

Independence and interdependence are often conceived of as individual difference variables (e.g., Cross, Bacon, & Morris, 2000; Markus, 1977). Such an approach suggests that individuals have a tendency to describe themselves in terms of either an independent or an interdependent self-concept and to behave in line with this self-description. On the other hand, this distinction in self-concept has also been described as being more or less related to specific groups, particularly cultural or racial groups (e.g., Markus & Kitiyama, 1989; Triandis, 1989; see Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002, for a recent review). For example, much of the research into the distinction between the independent and interdependent self developed as an acknowledgement of cross-cultural differences in the self and an attempt to counter the biased assumption of North American theory and research that people are in general independent (Markus & Kitiyama, 1991, 1994; Markus, Mullally, & Kitiyama, 1997). While individuals within Western societies are more likely to emphasise an independent self-concept, individuals within certain Asian, African, and Pacific societies more likely to emphasise an interdependent self-concept. (e.g., Lebra, 1976; Markus & Kitiyama, 1991; Triandis, 1989).

However, analyses of group differences in independence and interdependence are not restricted to cross-cultural research. Perhaps the most significant of the investigated group differences in independence and interdependence, and most important for the present research, is that between men and women. In much of the literature concerning sex and gender differences there is a claim that men and women are fundamentally different when it comes to how they perceive themselves and others (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Lyons, 1983; see also

Markus & Oyserman, 1989; and Cross and Madson, 1997, for overviews). This diverse body of research suggests that men and women tend to construct very different self-concepts and this difference leads to divergent ways of interpreting and thinking about information and interacting with others. While men have a tendency to emphasise an independent self, defining themselves as autonomous and distinct in relation to others, women are relatively more likely to emphasise an interdependent self, and define themselves in terms of others and their relationships.

In a recent review of the literature on gender and the self-concept, Cross and Madson (1997) give a detailed description of the independent and interdependent self-concepts and the way in which they are related to gender. They also provide a thorough review of the psychological literature and demonstrate that many observed gender differences in social behaviour may be explained by individual differences in the way men and women define themselves. In doing so they describe current theories and evidence for gender differences, such as differences in information processing, self-esteem, and emotion (see Chapter 4 for a detailed description on how the self is said to contribute to gender differences in moral reasoning and ways of knowing). In addition, Cross and Madson explore the usefulness of the gender-related independent and interdependent self-concepts for predicting differences in previously unexplored areas.

As Cross and Madson (1997) note, there are many different approaches to describing and explaining differences between independence and interdependence. These approaches differ in their (a) descriptions of the aetiology of the difference, (b) conceptualisation and measurement of the independent and interdependent self-concepts, and (c) description of the process by which the self is said to affect behaviour. Major contributions to this research include Bakan's (1966) duality of agency and communion, Chodorow's (1974, 1978, 1987) psychoanalytical account of mothering, Markus' (1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Markus & Oyserman, 1989) social-cognitive self-schema theory; Trafimow & Triandis' two baskets theory (e.g., Trafimow, Silverman,

Fan, & Law, 1997), and Miller's (1986) social structural account. Each of these major contributions will be outlined below.

### **Bakan: The Duality of Human Existence**

One of the first authors to articulate the distinction between independence and interdependence in psychology was Bakan (1966) in his psycho-theological book, *The Duality of Human Existence*. The duality that Bakan speaks of is the distinction between agency and communion, a duality that he sees as fundamental to the existence of all living things. According to Bakan, agency refers to the existence of an organism as an individual and communion refers to an individual's participation in some larger organism of which the individual is a part. For Bakan, agency is manifested through self-protection, separation, isolation, competition, and the repression of thoughts and feelings. In contrast, communion is manifested through a sense of being at one with other organisms through contact, openness, cooperation, compassion, and the expression of thoughts and feelings.

After briefly acknowledging both the biological and social causes of gender differences, Bakan (1966) suggests that men and women differ when they come to agency and communion, stating that

what we have been referring to as agency is more characteristically masculine, and what we have been referring to as communion is more characteristically feminine. (p. 110)

As anecdotal support for gender differences in agency and communion, Bakan provides a description of Lombroso's (1923, cited in Bakan, 1966) account of differences in men and women's centring, that is, the extent to which the self is perceived as being central. Lombroso believes that a difference in centring is the critical difference underlying men's and women's behaviour. While men are more likely to be egocentrist,

in that they place their self, enjoyment, and activities at the centre of the world, women are more likely to be alterocentrist, where their feelings, ambitions, and enjoyment are centred on things outside of the self. Lombroso believes that this difference in centring occurs as a function of fundamental gender differences in social roles, particularly the fact that women are more likely to assume the responsibilities associated with child rearing.

Bakan (1966) then examines a range of differences between men and women, such as gender differences in achievement, vocation, school grades, communication, aggression, libido, and longevity. Bakan then suggests that the way in which men and women differ on these various dimensions can be linked to their differences in agency and communion.

### **Chodorow's Reproduction of Mothering**

Another extremely influential account for those theorists investigating the independent and interdependent selves is Chodorow's (1974, 1978) psychoanalytic account of the 'general and nearly universal differences that characterise masculine and feminine personality and roles' (Chodorow, 1974, p. 43). Chodorow's work suggests that self-concept differences between men and women develop as a consequence of the way in which they experience the relationships of their early childhood. Chodorow suggests that because the early childhood environment is very different for boys and girls, gender differences are created such that

in any given society, feminine personality comes to define itself in relation and connection to other people more than masculine personality does (p. 44)

Chodorow (1974, 1978) focuses on the mother-child relationship because (a) women are largely responsible for early child-care, (b) it is the first and most important

relationship most individuals have, and (c) it can be considered the first social environment we encounter. For girls, the mother-child relationship is characterised by notions of similarity and continuity, in that 'mothers tend to experience their daughters as more like, and continuous with, themselves' (Chodorow, 1978, p. 150). Further, due to the fact that girls have their gender in common with their mothers, girls also see themselves as similar to their mothers and they can experience and explore their femininity within a continuing attachment relationship with their mothers. When it comes to defining the self and asking the question 'who am I?', Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest that an obvious answer for girls is 'I am like my mother'.

In contrast, for boys, notions of difference and discontinuity characterise the relationship with their mother. Chodorow (1978) suggests that mothering a male child is a very different experience to mothering a female child, as 'mothers experience their sons as a male opposite' (p. 150). Further, in order to define themselves as masculine, boys must separate themselves from their mother and sever 'their primary love and sense of empathic tie' (p.150) with their primary caregiver. In answering the question 'who am I?', boys do not say 'I am like my father', but instead are more likely to say 'I am not like my mother' (Markus & Oyserman, 1989).

As a result of these different childhood experiences of the mother-child relationship, Chodorow (1978) suggests that:

Girls come to define and experience themselves as continuous with others; their experience of self contains more flexible or permeable ego boundaries. Boys come to define themselves as more separate and distinct, with a greater sense of rigid ego boundaries and differentiation. The basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world, the basic masculine sense of self is separate (p. 169).

According to Chodorow these gender differences in early childhood have long-term ramifications as they develop into 'crucial differences in feminine and masculine personalities' (1978, p. 169; see also Block, 1984, for a similar perspective).

### **Markus' Self-Schema Theory**

Markus and her colleagues (e.g., Markus, 1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Markus & Oyserman, 1989; see also Kanagawa, Cross, & Markus, 2001) present a more empirically-grounded account of differences between men and women's independence and interdependence.

In her social-cognitive account of the self-concept Markus (1977; Markus & Sentic, 1982; Markus & Wurf, 1986) proposes that the self is made up of a system of affective-cognitive structures called self-schemata, defined as:

cognitive generalisations about the self, derived from past experience, that organise and guide the processing of self-related information contained in the individual's social experiences (Markus, 1977, p. 64).

These self-schemata are developed as a consequence of past experiences, specific events, and situations which result in a 'repeated categorisation' for the individual on a given dimension and form a more generalised representation of the self. For example, a self-schema may define a person as being humorous, conscientious, or good at maths.

Self-schemata function as an 'interpretive framework' for organising schema-relevant information (Markus, Smith, & Moreland, 1985). In this way a schema acts as a heuristic for the processing of information and determines the importance to be placed upon information, the level of attention required, and how the information is interpreted. Schemas are also used to retrieve memories of past experiences, predict future



behaviour, and regulate affect and motivation. Markus (1977) proposes that the application of a particular, well-defined self-schema results in an individual's behaviour following a relatively predictable and consistent pattern, and suggests that individuals will actively resist information that poses a challenge to their self-definition. For example, an individual with a self-schema of themselves as humorous may place great importance on a good sense of humour, may pay attention to, or remember, situations in which they were funny, and may be more likely to interpret the behaviour of others as joking compared to individuals without a humorous self-schema.

However, Markus also argues for the dynamic nature of the self-concept (Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Nurius & Markus, 1990) suggesting that the self is multifaceted. As such, the self consists of a collection of self-representations such that a given individual can have many different self-schemata, seeing him or herself primarily as humorous, conscientious, or good at maths, depending on the situation. It is the working self-concept (Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Wurf, 1987) that defines how the self is seen at any given time since it is made up of a subset of self-schemata, which are temporarily activated or made salient. Markus suggests that the working self-concept is dependent upon the social context and the motivational state of the individual, and as such is subject to 'significant local variations' (Markus & Kunda, 1986, p. 859).

Since self-schemata are seen to result from past experiences, Markus (1977) proposes that there are individual differences in self-schemata because each individual's experiences are different. There are an infinite number of self-schemata or ways of thinking about the self, but one differentiation that Markus and her colleagues make is between two very different ways of construing the self in relation to others; independence and dependence (Markus, 1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Markus & Oyserman, 1989).

An independent self-schema prioritises difference and autonomy, and individuals with such a self-concept are said to achieve individuality by being distinct and separate

from others, and assertiveness and competitiveness are emphasised. Having an independent self-schema implies that there is a 'real' or 'true' self that is not subject to changes in the social environment and motivations are seen in terms of attempts to 'be true to one's own internal structures of preferences, rights, convictions and goals' (Markus & Kitayama, 1994, p. 569).

In contrast, a dependent (or interdependent) self-schema is one that emphasises the importance of others and relationships when it comes to defining the self. Markus and colleagues suggest that dependent connection with others is achieved through affection, commitment, understanding, dependency, obligation, and responsibility. A dependent self-schema is seen to require an individual to be responsive to the social environment in order to understand the self. Individuality is said to stem from one's position within a social system and motivations are determined in part by considering of the reactions of significant others. Markus also suggests that individuals may also be aschematic (without self-schema) on the independence-dependence dimension. Individuals are said to be aschematic on this dimension if they describe themselves as being neither independent nor dependent, or if they see themselves as being equally independent and dependent.

In one of her first empirical investigations into self-schemata, Markus (1977) looked in depth at the distinction between these two ways of seeing the self and others. In an initial study, participants rated themselves on three scales: independent-dependent, individualist-conformist, and leader-follower, and were then asked to rate how important each of these dimensions were to their self-concept. From responses to these scales, Markus classified participants into one of three groups (a) independent schematics, who consistently rated themselves as independent, individualist, and leaders, and who rated these traits as important; (b) dependent schematics, who consistently rated themselves as dependent, conformist, and followers, and who rated these traits as important; and (c)

aschematics, who rated themselves at neither extreme on the scales, and rated the traits to be of moderate to low importance.

Selected participants were then asked to complete a series of tasks. First, participants indicated whether or not 15 traits related to independence (e.g., adventurous, aloof, egotistical, self-confident) and 15 traits related to dependence (e.g., conforming, tactful, tolerant, unselfish) were self-descriptive. Participants were asked to respond by pressing a 'me' button if they felt the trait was self-descriptive and pressing a 'not me' button if they felt the trait was not self-descriptive. Participants' response latencies were measured for each judgment. Secondly, participants were asked to respond to a subset of 16 of the original 30 traits by indicating which words were self-descriptive, and were then asked to provide evidence from their own past behaviours to illustrate why each word they had chosen was self-descriptive. Finally, participants were asked to predict the probability (from 0 to 100) that they would engage in specific behaviours in the future, such as hesitating before commenting (dependent behaviour) or speaking up immediately (independent behaviour).

The results from this study suggested that there were systematic differences between the responses from independent schematics, dependent schematics, and aschematics. Independent schematics were significantly more likely than the other two groups to endorse traits associated with independence. In addition, in making these decisions, independent schematics needed significantly less time to decide that an independent word was associated with 'me' than other types of words. They were also able to provide more examples of independent behaviours, and thought that they would be more likely to engage in independent behaviour in the future. A similar pattern of results was found for dependent schematics, who were more likely (and faster) to describe themselves in dependent terms, provided more dependent examples of behaviours, and predicted more dependent behaviour in the future. However, the aschematics demonstrated a very different pattern of results. For aschematics,

processing times for independent and dependent words did not differ, they had relatively more difficulty providing examples of independent and dependent behaviours, and they believed that they were just as likely to exhibit independent as dependent behaviours in the future. From these results, Markus (1977) concluded that those individuals who possess clear self-schemata on a given dimension are likely to display consistency between their self-descriptions and their behaviour across different situations.

In a chapter applying self-schema theory to gender, Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest that there are 'fundamental differences in how women and men perceive themselves and their worlds' (p. 100). These differential perceptions are said to be due to differences in the structure and function of the self-concept, as determined by the nature of the social environment and the theories and assumption of the individual. Markus and Oyserman propose that, due to the social interaction and interpersonal experiences that they encounter throughout their lifetime, women are more likely than men to have a connected or interdependent self-schema as a central aspect of their self-concept. In contrast, men are more likely than women to have a separate or independent self-schema.

As we have seen in Markus' earlier work (e.g., Markus, 1977; Markus & Sentis, 1982), schemata are cognitive and affective structures that give meaning to experience, and as a result Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest that the content and form of men's and women's cognitions will vary. These schemata affect not only the perception of the self, but also the perception of all objects, events, and situations (Markus & Sentis, 1982; Markus et al., 1985). Furthermore, as Markus and Oyserman conceive of the independence and interdependence dimension as a rather general and 'first and core' self-schemata, it is seen to underlie many other more specific and elaborated self-schemata. For example, they suggest that women may elaborate an interdependent self-schema and develop more specific, trait-based schemata of themselves as 'understanding and caring, as loving and nurturant, or as responsible, considerate,

conscientious, or sensitive' (p. 105). Similarly, they suggest that those with an independent self-schemata, particularly men, may develop specific trait-based schemata of themselves as assertive, instrumental, or competitive.

Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest that gender differences in independence and interdependence derive from 'multiple sources'. They cite a diverse range of the literature from the 'nurture' perspective, including Chodorow's (1974, 1978) psychoanalytic perspective, Miller's (1986) social structural account, and more general social learning approaches. However, while Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest that multiple causal mechanisms are involved, they see self-schemata as relatively stable once formed. Indeed, they also suggest that once an individual has developed core schema for independence or interdependence, they have a tendency to reinforce and perpetuate this view of themselves. For example, individuals with an interdependent self-schema have been shown to be particularly perceptive and responsive to information that confirms this view of the self, and are likely to develop significant abilities in areas that require an emphasis on relationships and on interpersonal skills, such as social sensitivity and responsiveness to others. In contrast, those that have an independent self-schema are likely to emphasise the processing of information that reinforces separation and autonomy, and develop skills such as critical thinking that perpetuate this self-conception.

### **Trafimow and Triandis' Tripartite Model**

Taking a slightly different perspective, Trafimow, Triandis, and colleagues describe individual and group differences in the way in which people think about themselves in relation to others (e.g., Trafimow, 2000; Trafimow, Triandis, & Goto, 1991; Trafimow, Silverman, Fan, & Law, 1997; Trafimow & Smith, 1998; Triandis, 1989; Triandis & Trafimow, 2001a, 2001b; see also Brewer & Gardner, 1996). While some people, and some groups, think of themselves primarily in terms of their group

memberships (collective self) or relationships with others (allocentric self), others think of themselves primarily in terms of their own unique characteristics (private self). While a distinction is also made between the collective self, which is concerned with ingroups, and the allocentric self, which is concerned with close relationships, the two are seen as being closely related to one another, sharing the values of interpersonal closeness, empathy, and attending to the needs of others. Indeed, Madson and Trafimow (2001) suggest 'allocentrism results from the application of collectivist values to individual relationships' (p. 552; see also Triandis, Chan, Bhawuk, Iwao, & Sinha, 1995; Triandis, Leung, Villareal, & Clack, 1985).

Triandis and Trafimow (Triandis, 1989; see also Triandis & Trafimow, 2001a) suggest that there are clear cross-cultural differences in use of private or collective self-definitions. Individuals from individualistic societies, typically Western societies such as those in North America, Western and Northern Europe, Australia or New Zealand, are more likely to describe themselves with private cognitions (e.g., I am kind, I am good at maths). In contrast, individuals from collectivist societies, including most Latin American, Asian, and African countries, are more likely to describe themselves in collectivist terms (e.g., my ingroup thinks that I am kind, or I am an uncle).

Triandis (1989, see also Triandis & Trafimow, 2001a) suggests a number of major antecedents for cross-cultural differences in the self-concept. He suggests that individualism results from increasingly more complex and affluent societies, which provide both a greater number of groups to which one can belong, and the means to become independent of those groups. In contrast, within collectivist societies, ingroups tend to be fewer in number and smaller in size. Triandis also notes that child-rearing practices tend to vary between individualistic and collectivist cultures, with different emphases in place. While individualistic cultures tend to highlight the importance of autonomy, teaching children the skills needed for self-reliance, independence, and

creativity, collectivist societies tend to place an emphasis on conformity, thus teaching children the importance of obedience, reliability, and proper behaviour.

One explanation of the process that is proposed for the difference in the collective and private selves is the two-baskets theory (e.g., Trafimow et al., 1997). This theory suggests that all cognitions related to one's unique, personal characteristics are stored in one particular location in memory, while those cognitions related to one's groups and relationships are stored in another, separate location. An analysis of individual's responses on the Twenty Statement Test (TST, Kuhn & McPartland, 1954) shows that the statement of a private self-cognition increases the likelihood that the next statement will also be related to the private self, whereas the statement of a collective self-cognition increases the likelihood that the next statement will be related to the collective self (Triandis & Trafimow, 2001a).

Trafimow et al. (1997) suggest that cross-cultural differences exist because of differences in the relative accessibility of collective or private cognitions. Living in an individualistic society, such as the United States, makes private cognitions and the private self more accessible, whereas living in a collectivist society, such as Japan makes collective cognitions and the collective self more accessible.

Madson and Trafimow (2001) suggest that the same mechanisms underlying cross-cultural differences in private and collective self-concepts, relative accessibility, can be seen to underlie gender differences in the self-concept. They argue that men and women grow up and live in distinct subcultures within society (see also Maccoby, 1990) and undergo clearly gendered socialisation in respect to relationships and autonomy. As a result, women are more likely than men to have increased (or even 'chronic') accessibility to allocentric and collectivist cognitions, while men are more likely to have increased accessibility to private cognitions.

In an empirical test of this theory, Madson and Trafimow (2001) used the Twenty Statements Test as a measure of the relative accessibility of private, collective, and allocentric self-cognitions. The TST asks participants to complete 20 written statements that begin with 'I am...'. The answers to these statements were then content-analysed to determine whether they corresponded to the private, collective, or allocentric self-concept. Private self-cognitions were statements that referred to personal traits, characteristics, or behaviours that were unrelated to others (e.g., I am funny, I play basketball). Collective self-cognitions were statements that referred to social groups (e.g., I am a woman, I am a student). Allocentric self-cognitions were statements that implied interdependence, relationships, or a sensitivity towards others (e.g., I am kind to others). Madson and Trafimow found that women, compared to men, indicated significantly more allocentric and collectivist self-cognitions, while men indicated significantly more private self-cognitions than women.

### **Miller's Social Structural Account**

Miller (1986) looks to social structural factors to explain why men and women differ in their focus on others and relationships. She claims that relationships are central to women because of the considerable power differential between men and women within a male-dominated society. Miller suggests that, due to their relative powerlessness, women must pay attention to others and foster relationships as a survival mechanism. She states:

Subordinates...know much more about the dominants than vice-versa. They have to. They become highly attuned to the dominants, able to predict their reactions of pleasure and displeasure...If a large part of your fate depends on accommodating to and pleasing the dominants, you concentrate on them (Miller, 1986, pp. 10-11).



However, Miller's (1986) approach does not take into account why women are attuned to both men and women, and place an emphasis on all relationships, not just relationships with the dominant and more powerful group. One must assume then that Miller takes a more evolutionary approach to her explanation, as is suggested by her usage of terms such as 'survival mechanism'. If this is the case then, rather than taking their cues from the immediate context and social structure, women have found it beneficial throughout their evolutionary past to be attuned to men and foster this relationship and this ability has subsequently become a more generalised emphasis on relationships, regardless of the gender of the other.

### **Stability versus Malleability of the Gendered Self**

As outlined in Chapter 2, the debate of stability versus malleability forms one of the central questions within the gender difference literature: are the differences between men and women stable across time and context? However, issues of stability and malleability also form a core debate within the self-concept literature (e.g., Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Wurf, 1987; McGuire & McGuire, 1988; Turner, 1982; Turner et al., 1994), with two apparently conflicting aspects of the self-concept being evident: (1) the notion of the self-concept as an enduring and stable structure (e.g., Greenwald, 1980; Markus, 1977; Rogers, 1981) and (2) the notion that the self-concept is highly variable and dependent upon social context (e.g., Markus & Wurf, 1986; Turner et al., 1987).

Our everyday experience also tells us that there is continuity in our perception of who we are, moment to moment and day after day (Gergen, 1982), and for this reason many theorists see variables related to the self, such as the self-concept and self-esteem, to be useful predictors of behaviour. In the tradition of personality theorists, the self has been seen as being what the individual brings to the situation, the continuing part of the person that stays constant across situations and across time (e.g., Erickson,

1968; R.H. Turner, 1968). Such a conceptualisation of the self can be described as a personality approach to the self concept (Onorato & Turner, 2001; Turner & Onorato, 1999). Indeed, the types of personalities described in the personality literature, such as introverts and extroverts, and type A personalities, can also be seen as types of selves. Individuals can have an introverted or an extroverted self-concept (Markus et al., 1985), just as they can have an independent or an interdependent self-concept. From such a personality-based approach, the self is seen to explain how a given individual can be seen to act in very similar ways across time and across situations.

Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that individuals are highly resistant to change when it comes to their conceptualisations of themselves (e.g., Greenwald, 1980; Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1984; Swann, 1987), prioritising and paying attention to information that reinforces their existing self-concept, disregarding or rejecting information that is at odds with how they see themselves, and structuring their environments in such a way as to confirm their existing self-perceptions. For example, Swann and colleagues found, both in the laboratory (Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989) and in field studies (Swann, Hixon, & DeLaRonde, 1992), that in order to maintain their perceptions and aid predictability and control, individuals tend to choose partners who reinforce their own views of themselves, regardless of whether these self-views are positive or negative.

However, there is much recognition in the literature that the self-concept is also highly malleable and dynamic, changing across both time and situations (see for example, Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Gergen, 1982; Markus & Wurf, 1987; McGuire & McGuire, 1988; Turner et al., 1994). Such a notion echoes James' (1892) much quoted statement that 'a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognise him and carry an image of him in their minds' (p.179), or as he later clarified, 'as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he cares' (James, 1910, p. 294). However, as noted by Banaji and Prentice (1994), much of

the research investigating this malleability has tended to focus on processes of self-knowledge and self-enhancement, and as a result

the emphasis has been less on demonstrating the dynamic nature of the self per se than on investigating how that dynamic nature is expressed within specified contexts (p. 298).

Nonetheless, malleability of the self-concept has been established through a wide range of research, including that which shows individuals to be motivated towards self-enhancement (e.g., Sedikides, 1993) and to be readily able to incorporate new information into their self-concepts (e.g., Fazio, Effrein, & Fallender, 1981). For example, Kunda and colleagues (Kunda & Sanitioso, 1987; Sanitioso, Kunda, & Fong, 1990; see also Kunda, 1990) found that leading participants to believe that a given trait (introversion or extraversion) was related to academic success made participants more likely to describe themselves in terms of that trait and recall more memories confirming the existence of that trait, than when they were informed that the opposing trait was related to success.

Studies manipulating the self-concept have also demonstrated subsequent variation in social behaviour. For example, Fazio et al., (1981) showed that people who responded to questions designed to highlight the perception of the self as extroverted, not only rated themselves as being more extroverted, but also were more likely to strike up a conversation with a confederate. Similar studies have found that those people led to perceive themselves (a) as 'charitable' donated more money (Kraut, 1973), (b) as 'neat and tidy' littered less (Miller, Brickman, & Bolen, 1975), and (c) as 'honest' were more like to return a pencil (Shotland & Berger, 1970). Further, individuals have also been shown to be highly sensitive to context, changing their conceptions of themselves in response to (a) the perceived views of others (e.g., Rosenberg, 1981; Shrauger & Schoeneman, 1979; Videbeck, 1960), (b) direct comparison or interaction between the

self and others (e.g., Festinger, 1954; Morse & Gergen, 1970; Wood, 1989), and (c) substantial changes in the social environment (e.g., Harter, 1993).

The brief review of the self literature above and the gender difference literature outlined in Chapter 2, suggest that there is evidence that both the differences between men and women and the nature of the self-concept can be seen as stable and as malleable. Taken together, it is obvious that an examination of the nature of the gendered self renders issues of stability and malleability doubly important. So how are issues of malleability and stability dealt with in the gender-related independence/interdependence literature? The following section will first point to the propensity for the major contributions outlined at the beginning of this chapter to focus on distal causes of gender differences, and the related underlying assumptions of stability. It will then look at evidence for and against the stability and malleability of the independent and interdependent self, and discuss the ramifications.

### **Assumptions and Evidence of Stability**

Each of the major contributions outlined above take a very different approach to describing and explaining gender differences in independence and interdependence. However, in line with the description of general gender-difference theory described in Chapter 2, what is common within the independence/interdependence literature is the tendency to see differences in the self in terms of a personality approach, with a focus on the stability of gender differences, and the way in which they are reinforced and perpetuated. Indeed, in response to the claim that the gender-related independent and interdependent selves serve an organising and integrating function, underlying many other gender differences (Cross & Madson, 1997), Martin and Ruble (1997) note that in order to serve such a function the gendered self must 'presumably need to be relatively stable and enduring' (p. 45).

As we have seen in the general gender difference literature, assumptions of the stability of an independent or interdependent self-concept in adulthood are inextricably linked to an emphasis on distal explanatory factors. Such a focus is evident in the accounts given by the major contributors to the literature examining gender difference in independence and interdependence, even if these assumptions are not made explicit at all times. The following sections outline the stability inherent in the accounts of the major contributors by looking at (a) the notion of essentialism, (b) the focus on distal causes, and (c) more explicit statements of stability.

### **Essentialism**

The notion of essentialism encapsulates the idea that the gendered independent and interdependent selves are a necessary and inherent aspect of either society or of the individual. For example, Bakan (1966) describes his distinction between agency and communion as a fundamental difference between men and women and indeed as a fundamental difference in all living things. While he takes an interactionist approach to explaining this difference, citing both biological and social causes for the distinction, it remains for him an essential difference between the genders, and one that is not open to revision.

The same notion of essentialism is evident in the work described by self-schema theorists (e.g., Markus, 1977; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Shteynberg, 1982), although it takes on a slightly different form. While Bakan considers the distinction between independence and interdependence an essential difference for all living things, for self-schema theorists (e.g., Markus, 1977) independence or interdependence is seen as a 'core' or 'basic' aspect of the individual, at least for those who are schematic on this dimension. Indeed, Markus and colleagues (e.g., Markus, 1977; Markus & Shteynberg, 1982; Markus & Wurf, 1987) speak of the chronic accessibility of particular core self-schema, such as the interdependent self-schema in women (Markus

& Oyserman, 1989). If the gendered self is conceived of as being essential, fundamental, or basic to the nature of individuals or society then it is difficult to also conceive of it as being malleable or dependent on temporal or contextual changes.

### **Distal Causes**

All the major contributors outlined in the preceding section describe explanatory factors that are distant from the situation in which independent or interdependent cognitions or behaviours occur, although the extent of this distance varies. Most obvious is Chodorow's (1974, 1978) psychoanalytic account, with its focus on early childhood experiences and differential mothering practices across gender. According to Chodorow, once a male-child has separated from his mother in late infancy, he views himself as independent and autonomous in relation to others and this feeling of separation is generalised across situations. In contrast, the experience of a female child is that of ongoing childhood attachment, which in turn leads to a lifetime of connection.

Similarly, we have seen the way in which Markus and her colleagues look to an individual's past experiences to explain how it is that they possess self-schemas related to independence and interdependence (e.g., Markus, 1977; Markus & Sentis, 1982). Self-schema theorists point to importance of previous events and recurring situations that result in a 'repeated categorisation' along the schematic dimension, and once the schema is formed, an individual is likely to act in line with that schema, regardless of the current context.

However, distal explanations of gender differences in independence and interdependence are not restricted to childhood experiences or past occurrences, they can also involve a focus on more general societal factors, such as those proposed by Bakan (1966), Madson and Trafimow (2001), and Miller (1986). Such societal variables include differences in status and power, socio-economic variation, and the structure of

groups within society. Although research has demonstrated that social structural variables such as these can act as immediate contextual cues and have direct effects upon the self-concept within a given situation, the above theorists tend to investigate the manner in which these social variables affect the acquisition and perpetuation of independence and interdependence, rather than their expression (see also Deaux & Major, 1987).

Concentration on explanatory factors that are so far removed from the situation in which a given behaviour is embedded has obvious implications for stability. For example, while these theorists pay lip-service to the dynamic nature of the self-concept (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Madson & Trafimow, 2001; Triandis, 1989), citing the possibility of change across different environments, a focus on distal explanatory factors, removed from the immediate context, means that any real change in the nature of the self-concept would have to be gradual, not dynamic across short time-periods or contexts.

### **Stability**

While assumptions of stability can be inferred from statements of essentialism and a focus on distal explanatory factors, the major contributions to the independence/interdependence literature also contain more explicit statements about stability and malleability. For example, while self-schema theorists acknowledge that there can be some 'local variation', with some aspects of the self-concept being responsive to the immediate social environment, Markus (1977; Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Wurf, 1987) explicitly states that those central aspects of one's self are relatively fixed and do not vary across time or between situations:

Core aspects of self (one's self schemata) may be relatively unresponsive to changes in one's social circumstances. Because of their importance in defining the self and their extensive elaboration, they may be chronically accessible (Markus & Wurf, 1987, p. 306).

Another way in which assumptions of stability can be inferred is through the inability of theorists to allow for change and malleability. For example, while Markus uses three categories in her classification on the independent/dependent dimension: independent schematics, dependent schematics, and aschematics who are neither independent nor dependent (through ratings of low importance), she does not investigate those individuals who define themselves and behave in terms of *both* independence and dependence and see both of these aspects as important parts of themselves. Although Markus (1977) does recognise that there are those individuals who 'act (and think of themselves) as independent in some classes of situations, and as dependent in other classes of situations' (p. 67), she sees this varied behaviour as being consistent in a given 'class' of situation, and does not suggest how and when this variation might take place or the implications it has for behaviour.

These assumptions of stability then lead to an understanding that gender-related cognitions and behaviours that stem from the independent and interdependent self are also stable. For example, it is clear that the elaborated trait-based self-schemata (such as understanding or assertive) and the specialised skills and abilities (such as empathy or critical thinking), that Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest result from the generalised independent and interdependent self-schemata, are clearly in line with society's stereotypes of men and women. However, while Markus and Oyserman do not make an explicit causal link between the two, the assumed direction is clear. Their account suggests that having an independent or interdependent self-schema leads an individual to view the self consistently in terms of gender stereotypical traits and engage in normative stereotypical roles. The reverse is not seen to be the case, in that they do not allow for the possibility that it is gender-related norms and stereotypes within society that lead men to have conceptions of the self as independent and women as interdependent. As a result, these gender stereotypical behaviours are seen as stable



across time and context (see also Chapter 4 for an in-depth discussion of the stability of moral reasoning and ways of knowing).

Given that the major contributors to the literature have been shown to have assumptions of stability based on essentialism and distal explanatory factors, what evidence is there for this stability? The following section reviews the evidence, both for the stability of the gender-related independent and interdependent selves, and for their malleability.

### **Evidence for Stability**

Lawrence Kohlberg (1966) suggests that 'gender identity is perhaps the most stable of all social identities' (p. 92). His theory of cognitive-developmental analysis provides a stage account of the acquisition of gender, suggesting that the way in which children think about gender and the attitudes and behaviours associated with gender are related to their abilities in cognitive organisation. Once children come to view themselves as stably and irrevocably one gender or another, typically around age 5 or 6, they become motivated to 'value things that are consistent with or like the self' (p.165). As a result, gender constant children develop gender consistent roles, attitudes, behaviours, and values, including independence or interdependence. Indeed the notion of gender stability after childhood is echoed in the more general self-concept literature, with suggestions that the nature and structure of the self is developed in childhood and adolescence and remains relatively stable in adulthood (e.g., Erickson, 1968; Baumeister & Tice, 1986)

Looking more specifically at the independent and interdependent self-concept, as outlined in the beginning of this chapter, Markus (1977) interprets from her initial study into self-schemata that those individuals who possess clear self-schemata on the independence/interdependence dimension are likely to display consistency between their

self-descriptions and their behaviour across different situations. This finding was followed up in a second study, in which Markus investigated differences in the way in which independent schematics, dependent schematics, and aschematics selected and interpreted information about the self. Three weeks after the initial study, the same participants completed a fictitious 'suggestibility' test and were given false feedback that was incongruent with their self-schema. Independent schematics were informed that they were not very independent but were in fact quite susceptible to social influence and would make good team members or followers. In contrast, dependent schematics were informed that they were very independent and not particularly susceptible to being influenced by others. Aschematics were randomly assigned to one or the other feedback condition. Participants then completed the initial task from Study 1, responding either 'me' or 'not me' to 30 independent and dependent traits.

The results of this second study revealed that those with self-schemata on the independence-dependence dimension were less willing than aschematics to accept incongruent information, that is, information that was counter to their self-schemata. Compared to aschematics, schematics were less likely to believe that the suggestibility test was accurate and less willing to take the test again. When asked to indicate how suggestible they actually thought that they were, on average, aschematics described themselves in line with their feedback, while schematics described themselves counter to the feedback they received. On the self-description task participants who were schematic displayed a higher level of consistency in their endorsement of traits in the two studies compared to schematic participants. Further, schematics showed a lengthening of response times for independent and dependent traits while aschematics' reaction times remained unchanged. Markus interpreted these results as suggesting that individuals with independent or dependent schemata are more resistant to changing their views of themselves on this dimension than are aschematics. While receiving counter-schematic information affected the way they responded to traits by lengthening the time it

took to decide if traits were self-descriptive, the actual content of their self-descriptions remained consistent over time in the face of new, contradictory information.

Stability in interdependence has also been demonstrated by Cross et al. (2000), who developed an individual difference measure of the interdependent self-concept, the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) Scale, operationalised as the degree to which individuals include close relationships within their self-concept. Participants indicated their level of agreement with 11 self-descriptive items (e.g., My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am; If a person hurts someone close to me, I feel personally hurt as well). In order to validate the scale, participants were administered the scale as part of a large data collection endeavour, and test-retest reliability was calculated by having individuals complete the test twice within a one or two month period. Test-retest reliability was relatively high, with correlations between time one and time two, being, on average, .71, leading the authors to conclude that the interdependent self-concept is a 'relatively stable individual difference construct' (p. 798).

However, it should be noted that the administration of the RISC scales at both time one and time two was performed in a rather decontextualised situation, under very similar conditions, and tells us only that individuals tend to give relatively similar responses under similar circumstances. Such a test-retest procedure does not reveal whether individuals will give comparable responses under different circumstances, or when asked to imagine themselves in more specific situations.

### **Malleability of the Self-Concept**

The above sections outline a range of research pointing to the stability of the gendered self. However, there is also evidence to suggest that gender-related behaviours and cognition, including the self-concept, are not fixed or stable, but are highly variable (e.g., Deaux & Major, 1987; Eagly, 1987; Echabe & Castro, 1999;

Maccoby, 1990; Miller, Lewy, & Peckham, 1997; Sherif, 1982; Smith, Noll, & Bryant, 1999). For example, Deaux and Major (1987) examined the proximal causes of gender-related behaviours and concluded that the influence of perceiver expectations, activation of gender self-schemata, and situational cues result in behaviours that are multiply determined, highly flexible, and context dependent. Similarly, Smith et al. (1999) found that the gendered self-concept (measured by the Bem Sex Role Inventory) was highly dependent on context, with significant differences in self-concept found across situations involving same-sex or opposite sex friends or strangers, and across home, work, and school contexts.

Similarly, in her influential paper discussing gender identity and gender-related behaviour, Carolyn Wood Sherif (1982) suggests that the gendered self is highly dependent on social context, both in its development and in its expression. She asserts:

Anything we might decide to call 'gender identity' is surely complex and not necessarily integrated, for its parts have been acquired in different social contexts and at different points in developmental history. The research issue becomes one of knowing what parts of the self are involved in different situations. In some situations, one's self-description as 'submissive' or 'tactful' may be highly involving. But in others, it may be irrelevant psychologically (p. 383).

Based on this analysis of social context, it is suggested that whether men and women define themselves as independent or interdependent at any given time will not be determined solely by distal factors such as separation from their mothers or childhood socialisation, but will also be affected by more immediate and proximal factors in the social context. It is instead suggested that individuals are capable of being both independent and interdependent, and it is necessary to describe an approach that can account for differences in the self-concept.

For example, there is evidence suggesting that situational priming techniques can be used to over-ride group differences in independent and interdependent self-concepts, such as those between American and Chinese cultures (Gardner, Gabriel, & Lee, 1999; Trafimow et al., 1991; Trafimow et al., 1997). For example, Gardner et al. (1999) asked participants to read one of two brief paragraphs, circling the pronouns in the text. Paragraphs varied in the type of pronouns they contained. In the independent condition, the majority of pronouns referred to the individual self (e.g., I or mine), whereas in the interdependent condition, the pronouns referred mainly to relationships (e.g, 'we' or 'our'). The results revealed differences in participants' subsequent self-descriptions measured by the Twenty Statements Test. In the independent condition, participants were more likely to describe themselves subsequently in terms of independent traits than those participants in the interdependent condition.

Further, Haberstroh, Oyserman, Schwarz, Kuhn, and Ji (2002) have demonstrated that priming of independence and interdependence has been shown to affect related cognition and behaviour. Using the same pronoun priming technique used by Gardner et al. (1999), Haberstroh et al. demonstrated that, compared to those primed with independence, those primed with interdependence were more likely to display skills required to engage in cooperative conversation, such as distinguishing between two closely related concepts and making inferences about the intended meaning of questions.

Similarly, the priming of groups has been used to override individual differences in independent and interdependent self-concepts. Following the methodology established by Markus (1977), Onorato and Turner (2001) identified women participants as being either independent schematics or interdependent schematics. They then asked participants to respond to a series of independent and interdependent traits under one of two conditions. The individual condition replicated Markus' (1977) study where participants indicated, by pressing the appropriate button, whether each word was self-

descriptive ('me') or not ('not me'). In the gender condition participants indicated whether each word was characteristic of the group women ('us') or of the group men ('them'). Analysis of response latencies revealed that in the individual condition, results replicated Markus' findings, with independent schematics faster to respond to independent words than interdependent words, and interdependent schematics faster to respond to interdependent words compared to independent words. In contrast, in the gender condition, individual differences were not apparent, and overall, participants were faster to say that interdependent traits were associated with 'us' and independent traits were associated with 'them'.

Looking at the importance of social context, Baumeister and Sommer (1997) suggest that rather than there being stable overall gender differences in independence and interdependence, men and women might seek different types of social connectedness, and that gender differences may vary depending on the situation in which individuals are embedded:

Men and women are equally social and care equally how they relate to others – but within different spheres. Women...mainly orient toward and invest in a small number of close relationships, whereas men orient toward and invest in a larger sphere of social relationships (p. 38).

Indeed, the importance of different social arenas has been demonstrated by Hardie & Kashima (1998). Using Brewer and Gardner's (1996) distinction between the individual, relational, and collective self-concepts, Hardie and Kashima investigated the degree to which men and women described themselves across a number of contexts. Australian participants completed a series of scales measuring the individual, relational and collective self, under one of four conditions. In the family context, the 'others' or 'groups' specified in the scales referred to family members, in the peer context, 'others' and 'groups' referred to peer friendship groups, in the National group context, 'others' and 'groups' referred to other Australians, and in the control condition, standard instructions and measures were used.

The results suggest that differences between men and women are not stable, but that the nature of gender differences is dependent on context. In line with traditional findings, women were found to describe themselves as more collective than men in the context of the family. However, in the context of peer groups the opposite was the case, with men describing themselves as more collective than women.

Echabe and Castro (1999) also demonstrated the importance of social sphere when it comes to men and women's perceptions of themselves. Participants were asked to describe themselves in one of two social situations, in the public context of professional activities or in the private context of their close relationships. Echabe and Castro found that, overall, traditional gender differences were found, with women more likely to describe themselves in interdependent terms (such as sensitive, understanding, and affectionate) and men in terms of independent terms (such as independent, self-sufficient, and self-demanding). However, this gender difference was moderated by the social context. In the context of professional activities, both men and women described themselves in independent terms, while in the context of close relationships they both described themselves in interdependent terms.

### **Reconciling the Evidence for Stability and Malleability**

Thus far, this chapter has presented conflicting evidence, both for and against the stability of the gender-related self, and of independence and interdependence. How are these seemingly contradictory findings to be reconciled? Research demonstrates that stable gender differences are apparent, yet there is also support for the context-dependence of independence and interdependence. What is needed is an account of the self and of gender differences that incorporates expressions of both stability and malleability across time and across context.

Indeed, there is evidence that suggests that individuals are likely to behave more consistently across situations and in line with group norms to the extent that they perceive that group to play an important and central part of their self-concept (see Allport, 1943; Sherif, 1982). Similarly, Deaux and Major (1987) suggest that gender-related behaviours are likely to occur under three circumstances: (a) when gender is a central component of the self-concept, (b) when the category gender has been recently activated, and (c) when immediate contextual cues make gender salient. Indeed, given that gender plays such a central role within society, it is not surprising that gender differences in behaviour can be seen as some of the most pervasive differences there are.

There is also evidence to suggest that individuals will display consistency in their behaviour to the degree that they find themselves in situations that are similar (e.g., Gergen, 1982; Turner et al. 1994). Traditional measures of the gendered self- or of gender-related behaviours, often ask individuals to complete scales or questionnaires about how they see themselves in general, or participants are asked to complete measures in an abstract, decontextualised context (see for example Cross et al., 2000). Further, if multiple measures are taken over time, these measures are often taken in very similar and abstract situations. Instructions such as these are unlikely to accurately measure participants' attitudes, beliefs and behaviours, and are likely to mask any variation that occurs across time or in different situations (Gergen, 1967, 1979; Markus & Kunda, 1986; Smith et al., 1999).

Chapter 5 will attempt to reconcile the evidence that we have presented thus far, and will offer an account of the self-concept, and of gender that can incorporate both stability and malleability and predict when each is likely to occur. But first, we will outline the way in which the notion of the gendered self-concept has been used to explain, not just simple conceptions of the self or relationships with others, but complex social psychological, philosophical, and epistemological phenomenon. Chapter 4 therefore



examines the way in which the gendered self is implicated in the way men and women think about and solve moral problems (moral reasoning) and the way they approach knowledge and learning (ways of knowing).

## CHAPTER 4

### Applying the Gendered Self:

### Moral Reasoning and Ways of Knowing

We assume that connectedness and separateness self-schemas influence thinking, not just about the *self* but about *all* objects, events, and situations.

Markus & Oyserman (1989, p. 101, original emphasis)

As we have seen in Chapter 3, the literature makes a gender-related distinction between a self-concept that is independent in relation to others, characterised by a sense of autonomy and separation, and a self-concept that is interdependent, characterised by connection and an emphasis on relationships. This purportedly stable difference in men and women's self-concept has been used to account for many gender differences in psychology (see Cross & Madson, 1997, and Markus & Oyserman, 1989, for reviews). In general terms, Markus and Oyserman (1989) suggest that independence leads individuals to emphasise the discovery of their 'true' or 'unique' self, detached from the social context in which they are embedded. In contrast, emphasising interdependence leads individuals to pay special attention to others and their social environment.

As the opening quote of this chapter suggests, this difference in focus on either the self or others is seen to have important implications for our behaviour, influencing our cognitions, our emotions, and our motivations. Such a notion is echoed in a recent review of the literature by Cross and Madson (1997). As a result, the tendency for men to describe themselves as relatively more independent and women as relatively more interdependent has been used to explain such diverse gender differences as spatial ability (Markus & Oyserman, 1989), self-esteem (e.g., Cross & Vick, 2001; Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992; Kling, Hyde, Showers, & Buswell, 1999), aggression (e.g.,

Moretti, Holland, & McKay, 2001), social comparison (e.g., Kemmelmeier & Oyserman, 2001), eating disorders (e.g., Hesse-Biber, Marino, & Watts-Roy, 1999), social conformity (e.g., Eagly, Wood, & Fishbaugh, 1981), depression (e.g., Nolen-Hoeksema, 1987); and, as will be the focus of this chapter, moral reasoning (e.g., Gilligan, 1982) and ways of knowing (e.g., Belenkly et al., 1986).

Using gender differences in the self-concept to explain gender differences in other areas of psychology is proving to be increasingly popular as it is seen as a move away from looking at intrinsic and biological differences between men and women, highlighting instead the socially constructed nature of the gendered self and gender-related behaviour. However, as we have seen in Chapters 2 and 3, many theories of the self rely on explanatory factors that are distal to contemporary behaviour, such as childhood socialisation or evolutionary history, to explain why men are more likely to define themselves as independent, and women as interdependent, in relation to others. As has been argued, a reliance on distal factors as explanations for gender differences tends to result in an assumption of stability for those differences. Consequently, gender differences in behaviours and attitudes that are said to arise from distally caused differences in the self-concept are also seen as relatively stable across time and across social contexts.

This chapter will provide a detailed examination of the how the notion of a gendered self has been used to explain two specific gender differences in behaviour and how this has resulted in notions of stability. Firstly, it will examine the literature on moral reasoning and moral orientation, by looking at evidence for stable differences in the way men and women approach and think about moral problems. Secondly, this chapter will examine gender differences in ways of knowing, that is, how men and women approach learning and knowledge.

## Moral Reasoning

Stage three...morality is a functional morality for housewives and mothers; it is not for businessmen and professionals (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 372)

The above quote from Lawrence Kohlberg, arguably the most influential of moral reasoning theorists, illustrates the controversial difference between men and women's moral reasoning that has been proposed by many theorists (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969, 1976, 1981, 1984; Kohlberg, Levine, & Hwer, 1983; Piaget, 1932). The stage three morality that Kohlberg speaks of as being useful for women is an intermediate stage of moral development that is not overly complex and is motivated by avoiding disapproval from others. In contrast, the more advanced stages that Kohlberg sees as being useful for men (Stages 5 and 6) are more complicated, involving the application of objective rules and standards.

While Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning has been extremely influential, it also has its critics. Led by Carol Gilligan's (1982, 1987; Gilligan, Ward, Taylor, & Bardige, 1988) critique of traditional conceptions of morality, research burgeoned in the area of gender differences in moral reasoning. In response to the 'disturbing findings' that women score consistently lower than men on traditional moral reasoning scales, with responses either unassessable or rating below the mid-range level, Gilligan developed a theory which redefined moral reasoning. Gilligan's work makes three major claims, that (a) there exist two distinct patterns of moral orientation, an ethic of justice and an ethic of care; (b) these moral orientations are based on differences in the self-concept; and (c) these two moral orientations are gender related, with men more likely than women to use a justice approach and women more likely than men to use a care approach.

Gilligan's initial findings of a gender difference in moral orientation were published in the internationally acclaimed bestseller *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and*

*Women's Development* (1982). In formulating her theory, Gilligan drew on data collected in three studies, all of which involved a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews, two of which focussed exclusively on women, and the third of which was administered to both men and women. All three studies included the same set of questions about how participants conceptualised themselves (How would you describe yourself to yourself?), how they defined moral problems, and what experience they had with conflict and choice. The first study investigated issues of moral conflict and the making of life choices for 25 women in their early adult years. The second study consisted of interviews with 29 women, who in their first trimester of pregnancy were considering abortion. The third study interviewed a sample of men and women representing a range of points on the life cycle, ranging from 6 year olds to 60 year olds and included additional questions about hypothetical moral dilemmas.

On the basis of the results of these three studies, Gilligan (1982) makes the distinction between two gender-related ways of seeing the self in relation to others, the separate self and the connected self, and two approaches to moral reasoning, that of *justice* and that of *care*. In seeking to explain the differences between care and justice, Gilligan (1982, 1988) makes clear what she sees as the causal relationship between conceptions of morality and conceptions of the self. It is suggested that the gender differences apparent in moral reasoning ability and the distinctions between justice and care are due to different ways of defining the self in relation to others.

The justice approach is identified as being commensurate with a traditional, and masculine, view of morality that is seen in psychology and philosophy (e.g., Kohlberg, 1976). Such an approach conceptualises moral decisions as being about a discrete, rational individual making choices. An individual with a justice orientation has a tendency to believe that moral problems should be approached in a detached and objective manner. Such an approach conceptualises moral problems as issues concerning

inequality and oppression, and those who use this approach resolve dilemmas in terms of equality, reciprocity, and the application of universal rules.

To reason about a moral dilemma from a justice orientation requires individuals to think of themselves as a separate, independent individual, capable of abstract and objective reflection. Dilemmas are therefore seen in terms of conflict between the self and others and are resolved by the application of rules, principles, or standards. As individuals are viewed as being separate, one sees others in terms of one's self and moral actions are evaluated in terms of 'how would I like to be treated in the same situation'. In order to illustrate this justice approach to moral reasoning Gilligan (1982) cites one of Kohlberg's male participants in answering the question 'what does the word morality mean to you?':

I think (morality) is recognising the right of the individual, the rights of other individuals, not interfering with those rights. Act as fairly as you would have them treat you. I think it is basically to preserve the human being's right to existence...to do as he pleases, again without interfering with somebody else's rights (p. 19).

In contrast to this justice orientation, on the basis of in-depth analyses of 'the different voice' that women used when talking about themselves and morality, Gilligan (1982) described the care orientation as an alternative way of conceptualising morality and moral problems. A care orientation to morality is conceptualised as an approach concerned with caring and responding to others and emphasises well-being and the maintenance of relationships. Moral problems are defined as issues of detachment and abandonment, and dilemmas are therefore resolved in terms of attentiveness, responsiveness, and engagement. Those individuals who present a care orientation to moral reasoning, emphasising relationships, the prevention of harm, and the promotion of welfare, require a sensitivity to others. This requirement necessitates a conception of the self that is connected, interdependent, and attentive to others and moral actions are

evaluated in terms of 'how should I respond to others on their *own* terms?' A care perspective is exemplified by this university student's response to the question 'why be moral?' (Gilligan, 1982):

Millions of people have to live together peacefully. I personally don't want to hurt other people...It isn't nice to inflict pain. I empathise with anyone in pain. Not hurting others is important to my own private morals...Maybe that's why there is morality – so people can win approval, love, and friendship (p. 65).

On the basis of her three studies, Gilligan (1982) concluded that men and women had very different ways of thinking about themselves and about morality:

The moral imperative that emerges repeatedly in interviews with women is an injunction to care, a responsibility to discern and alleviate the 'real and recognisable trouble' of this world. For men, the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfilment (p. 100).

While Gilligan's initial investigations into care and justice relied upon anecdotal evidence from the three interview studies, her hypotheses were quickly submitted to systematic, empirical testing, first by Lyons (1983) and then by Gilligan and Attanuci (1988). Lyons (1983) conducted a series of open-ended interviews, asking participants to describe themselves and to recount a moral conflict that they had personally experienced. The interviews were content analysed for (a) descriptions of self, (b) considerations presented for real-life moral conflicts, and (c) correlations between the two. The first part of the analysis revealed that there were two characteristic types of self-definition, consistent with the gendered self-concept outlined in Chapter 3. Lyons (1983) described a self that was separate, objective, and independent in relation to others and a self that was connected, subjective, and interdependent in relation to others.

Further, these ways of describing the self in relation to others were strongly related to ways of thinking about moral problems. Analysis of the descriptions of real-life moral dilemmas supported Gilligan's (1982) distinction between two moral orientations, that of justice and that of care. From these distinctions a systematic coding scheme was developed to identify participants' self-descriptions and moral orientation. Finally, correlational analyses revealed results that were consistent with Gilligan's (1982) claim that moral orientation was related to gender. While women were found to focus on both care and justice orientations, men tended to focus exclusively on the justice approach (Lyons, 1983).

Gilligan and Attanucci (1988) found similar results using a structured interview technique and involving real-life autobiographical dilemmas. The results revealed that two-thirds of their participants (53 out of 80) showed either a care or a justice focus, that is, one moral orientation predominated their thinking about moral problems. They also demonstrated that moral orientation was significantly related to gender, in that while only 1 out of 46 male participants showed a care focus, 30 showed a justice focus. In contrast, women were just as likely to focus on care as on justice considerations. Results such as these lead Gilligan (1988) to conclude that '...(the) care focus, although not characteristic of all women, was almost exclusively a female phenomenon' (p. xix).

However, more recent attempts to confirm Gilligan's hypotheses have resulted in mixed support (e.g., Galotti, Kozberg, & Farmer, 1991; Haste & Baddeley, 1991; Jaffee & Hyde, 2000; Pratt, Golding, Hunter & Sampson, 1988; Skoe & Diessner, 1994; Skoe et al., 1999; Stander & Jensen, 1993; Walker, 1984, 1991, 1994; Yacker, & Weinberg, 1990). While gender differences have been found in some samples, using certain measures, under some circumstances, these differences are inconsistent, and a number of factors other than gender have been identified as playing an important role in explaining variation in moral reasoning.



For example, mixed support for Gilligan's hypotheses has been found using the Ethic of Care interview (ECI; Skoe & Marcia, 1991), which involves an interview structured around four dilemmas, one generated by the individual and three standardised interpersonal dilemmas involving conflicts surrounding (a) an unplanned pregnancy, (b) marital fidelity, and (c) caring for a parent. Participants' responses are coded and scored on the basis of the sophistication and complexity of their ethic-of-care reasoning. Using this method in diverse samples including mid to late life adults (Skoe et al., 1996) and Canadian young adolescents (Skoe et al., 1999), Skoe and colleagues demonstrated gender-differences in an ethic of care, with women displaying more sophisticated ethic of care reasoning than men. However, other studies have found no gender differences in samples of high school and university students (Skoe, 1995; Skoe & Diessner, 1994; Skoe & Marcia, 1991) or Norwegian early adolescents (Skoe et al., 1999). Results investigating the relationship between the ECI and identity have lead Skoe and colleagues to conclude that 'the care ethic may be a more central component of ego identity for women than for men' (Skoe, 1998, p. 151; see also Skoe & Diessner, 1994).

Similarly, Pratt et al., (1988) found mixed support for Gilligan's theory. In an initial study, Pratt et al. (1988) found overall gender differences in their adult sample who were asked to provide self-generated autobiographical dilemmas which were subsequently coded using Lyons' (1983) coding method (see Appendix J). However, this difference was significant only for those in middle-adulthood (ages 30 to 45), and gender differences were not apparent for young adults (ages 18 to 24) or older adults (ages 60 to 75). Further, in a second study using married adults, gender differences were found only for those participants who were parents (see also Walker, 1986, 1989).

In a review of the moral reasoning research literature between 1971 and 1984, restricted to traditional Kohlbergian measures of moral reasoning, Walker (1984) examined 108 separate samples reporting analyses of gender-differences. From this review and subsequent meta-analysis Walker found that only eight studies reported

traditional gender differences in moral reasoning (males more advanced than females), and thus concluded that 'the moral reasoning of men and women is remarkably similar, especially given the publication and reporting biases that make differences more likely to be reported' (p. 690, but see Baumrind, 1986).

However, a more recent meta-analysis conducted by Jaffee and Hyde (2000) reviewed 113 separate studies (with 160 independent samples) reporting analyses of gender differences in moral orientation using Gilligan's distinction between care and justice reasoning. Their analysis revealed that while 73 per cent of the samples measuring care reasoning and 72 per cent of samples measuring justice reasoning revealed non-significant gender differences, small but significant overall effect sizes for gender differences were found ( $\eta^2 = .28$  for care reasoning and  $\eta^2 = .19$  for justice reasoning).

Jaffee and Hyde's (2000) analyses also demonstrated that variation in the measurement of moral orientation had an important impact on gender differences. While moderate gender differences were found using measures that did not include an actual moral dilemma (e.g., de Vries & Walker, 1986; Galotti et al., 1991; Ford & Lowery, 1986; Gibbs, Basinger, & Fuller, 1992; Stander & Jensen, 1993) and when self-generated autobiographical dilemmas were used (e.g., Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988; Lyons, 1983; Pratt et al., 1988), gender differences were less likely to be found when hypothetical dilemmas were utilised or where the content was standardised (e.g., Ford & Lowery, 1986; Krebs et al., 1994; Walker, 1986; Yacker & Weinberg, 1990).

This mixed support for Gilligan's hypotheses led Jaffee and Hyde (2000) to conclude that 'the results of this meta-analysis do not indicate that the care and justice orientations are strongly gender differentiated', and that 'these results weaken Gilligan's strongest claims about the relation between gender and moral reasoning' (Jaffee & Hyde, 2000, p. 721). It is clear that the phenomenon of gender differences in moral

reasoning is highly dependent on a number of variables, such as the age and nationality of the sample, and the way in which moral orientation is measured. But what about Gilligan's claim of stability of moral orientation for a given individual? The following section will examine the evidence for and against inter-individual stability in moral orientation.

### **Stability of Moral Orientation**

As we have seen in Chapters 2 and 3, assumptions of stability in gender differences often arise from a focus on distal explanatory factors. While Gilligan does not provide a detailed analysis of the origins of a gender difference in moral orientation, her introduction to *In a Different Voice*, acknowledges the influence of both reproductive biology and social structural factors such as status and power. However, Gilligan's work does see childhood development as an important explanatory factor, stating:

We locate the origins of morality in the young child's awareness of self in relation to others and we identify two dimensions of early childhood relationships that shape this awareness in different ways (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988, p. 114).

The two dimensions Gilligan speaks of are attachment and inequality, which draw heavily on the work of Chodorow (1974, 1978; see also Chapter 3) for descriptions of the connected and separate self and she employs a psychoanalytic-developmental account of the difference between men and women, contrasting the separation that boys must make from their mothers as the primary caregiver with women's continuing connection. On the basis of Chodorow's analysis Gilligan and Wiggins (1988, p, 116) conclude:

To the extent that biological sex, the psychology of gender, and the cultural norms and values that define masculine and feminine behaviour affect the experience of equality and attachment, these factors will presumably influence moral development.

As such, Gilligan's work rests on an assumption that the self-concept is determined by distal factors such as childhood socialisation and as a result both the self-concept and moral reasoning are seen as stable over time and across context.

More recent attempts to quantify differences in moral reasoning have demonstrated some consistency over time (e.g., Eisenberg et al., 2002; Ford & Lowery, 1986; Gump, Baker, & Roll, 2000; Skoe et al., 1996). For example, Gump et al. demonstrated that participants show relatively reliable test-retest reliability ( $r$ 's between .6 and .7) on their Moral Justification Scale over a two-week period. Similarly, Eisenberg et al. (2002) found early adult participants to be relatively stable on composite measures of self-reported prosociality (including a measure of care orientation), moral reasoning, and empathy, over three separate assessments taken at two-year intervals.

Looking exclusively at an ethic of care, Skoe et al. (1996) demonstrated a significant degree of stability for moral reasoning over a four-year period using the Ethic of Care Interview (ECI). Skoe and colleagues recruited a sample of mid-life and older adults (ages ranging from 35-80 years at Time 1) and administered the ECI twice, with approximately a 4-year interval between Time 1 and Time 2. Results revealed a substantial and significant stability coefficient ( $r = .54$ ) over the 4-year interval, suggesting stability in care reasoning for mid-life and older adults.

A more interesting pattern of results was found by Ford and Lowery (1986) who asked participants to describe three important moral conflicts in their lives and then asked them to rate, on a 7-point scale, the degree to which the care and justice orientations played a part in their thinking. When asked, 3 to 4 weeks later, to repeat the ratings procedure on the same three conflicts, women's care ratings were stable across time, and more importantly, they were significantly more stable than their justice ratings.

In contrast, men's justice ratings were stable across time and were significantly more stable than their care ratings. These findings led the authors to conclude that

The care orientation is a consistent consideration for women, and the justice orientation is a consistent consideration for men (Ford & Lowery, 1986, p. 781).

### **Malleability in Moral Orientation**

Just as the stability of the gendered self has been questioned in Chapter 3, there is also mixed evidence for stability in an individual's moral orientation (e.g., Krebs, Vermeulen, Carpendale & Denton, 1991; Pratt et al., 1988; Walker, 1991; Wark & Krebs, 1996). For example, after comparing the moral orientation of participants over a range of dilemmas, Walker (1991) concluded that 'very few subjects were consistent in their use of a single orientation' (p. 339), and within Kohlberg's own framework Krebs et al. (1991) found that individuals were 'more flexible than Kohlberg assumes' (p. 155) showing that 'most people evoke different stages in response to different situations' (p. 162).

Many researchers have suggested that contextual factors may play a more central role in explaining differences in moral orientation than does gender (Jaffee & Hyde, 2000; Pratt et al., 1988; Walker, 1991; Wark & Krebs, 1996). For example, although Jaffee and Hyde (2000) found support for a small gender difference in moral orientation, with women using more care and men using more justice, their meta-analyses also revealed that a number of specific moderator variables were able to uniquely account for variation found in moral reasoning. Their analyses established that differences in moral orientation were dependent on age, socio-economic status, the way in which moral orientation was operationalised, variations in coding schemes, as well as the gender of the protagonist in the dilemma.

Indeed, a number of researchers have demonstrated that the gender differences in moral reasoning found by Gilligan may simply be a product of the content of the autobiographical dilemmas recounted by her participants (Pratt et al., 1988; Walker, 1991; Wark & Krebs, 1996; Yussen, 1977). For example, Walker (1991) performed a post-hoc content analysis of the dilemmas that participants recounted, introducing a distinction between personal and impersonal dilemmas. Personal dilemmas were defined as involving a specific person or group with a significant and continuing relationship with the participant. In contrast, impersonal dilemmas were defined as those involving people not well known to the participant, who were unspecified or generalised, or those dilemmas involving only the self. Walker (1991) found that personal dilemmas elicited more care responses than did the impersonal dilemmas, and concluded that ‘...the nature of the dilemma better predicts moral orientation than does individuals’ sex...’ (p. 342; see also Pratt et al., 1988).

Similarly, Wark and Krebs (1996) measured participants’ moral orientation when reasoning about (a) a hypothetical dilemma (modelled after Kohlberg, 1984), (b) an impersonal autobiographical dilemma, and (c) a personal autobiographical dilemma. Although Wark and Krebs did find gender differences in the expected direction, with women making more care-based moral judgments than men, this difference was significant only for personal autobiographical dilemmas. Indeed, both men and women favoured justice reasoning over care reasoning when considering the hypothetical and impersonal dilemmas. Further, Wark and Krebs found that, contrary to Gilligan’s (1982, 1988) expectations, only a small number of participants (less than 10 per cent) attained the same moral orientation score across all three dilemmas, and further, less than 30 per cent of participants attained equal or adjacent moral orientation scores on all three dilemmas (on a 5-point scale; see also Pratt et al., 1988).

In a more specific manipulation of dilemma content Crandall, Tsang, Goldman, and Pennington (1999) investigated the gendered use of care and justice moral

reasoning for two real-life dilemmas, a case involving surrogate motherhood and a custody case involving babies that were switched at birth. As Sissons and Ryan (2003) point out, the two dilemmas were presented in very different ways. While the surrogate dilemma emphasised the role of lawyers and contracts, the custody dilemma was presented with a greater emphasis on the relationships between the parties involved. Analysis of participants' responses to the two dilemmas revealed a small overall gender difference in the expected direction, however, the results also revealed a strong relationship between justice reasoning and the surrogacy dilemma, and between care reasoning and the custody case. Overall, the results demonstrated that while modest gender differences were apparent, with men endorsing more justice reasoning than women, and women endorsing more care reasoning than men, the content of the dilemmas was found to be a better predictor of moral orientation than was gender, leading Crandall et al. to conclude that 'both genders were flexible in their use of justice and care orientations depending on the dilemma' (p. 187).

### **Ways of Knowing**

Gilligan's distinction between an ethic of care based on the interdependent self and an ethic of justice based on the independent self has been extremely influential for psychologists as well as for those studying philosophy, education, political science, and gender studies. Many theorists have adopted Gilligan's distinction as a basis for their research, extending the analysis of care and justice to different arenas. One such example of this is research investigating the different ways in which men and women approach learning and knowledge, what some theorists call *ways of knowing* (e.g., Belenky, et al., 1986; Goldberger et al., 1996).

The original formulation of ways of knowing was outlined in a book entitled *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind* (Belenky et al., 1986). The research reported in this publication drew directly on Gilligan's work on moral

orientation, applying the arguments made against traditional conceptions of moral reasoning to traditional conceptions of learning and knowledge (Perry, 1970). Belenky and colleagues conducted a series of case studies, in-depth, qualitative interviews with 135 women, each lasting between two and five hours. Participants were drawn from a variety of samples, ages, circumstances, and outlooks, and included students and alumni from a range of universities and participants from a parenting program. Each woman was informed that the interviewers were interested in what was important about life and learning from their point of view. Each interview included broad questions about self-image, relationships, education and learning, decision-making and moral dilemmas, personal change and growth, and visions for the future. The qualitative data were recorded, transcribed, and then coded into five broad epistemological approaches: silence, received knowledge, subjective knowledge, procedural knowledge, and constructed knowledge. Of particular interest here is the approach towards procedural knowledge, that is, the processes individuals use in order to obtain and communicate knowledge. On the bases of qualitative analysis of these case studies Belenky at al. make a clear distinction between what they see as two relatively stable types of procedural knowledge that are related to differences in self-image: separate and connected ways of knowing.

Separate knowing refers to an approach towards learning and knowledge where the individual takes an objective, critical stance, challenging and doubting the ideas of others. Belenky et al. (1986) argue that such an approach is related to the independent self and is commensurate with traditionally masculine and academic models of knowledge, with learning seen as being relatively impersonal and adversarial. Individuals who use separate knowing emphasise the construction of arguments, attacking and defending opinions, and disinterested reason, while tending to ignore personal beliefs and emotions. A separate way of knowing is illustrated by this university student's statement from one of Belenky et al.'s (1986) case studies:



I never take anything someone says for granted. I just tend to see the contrary. I like playing the devil's advocate, arguing the opposite of what somebody's saying, thinking of exceptions to what the person has said, or thinking of a different train of logic (p. 100).

Belenky et al. (1986) contrast this separate approach with connected knowing, an alternative approach towards knowledge and learning where an individual attempts to understand ideas by being subjective and taking the perspective of others. Individuals who take a connected approach to learning tend to see the self as interdependent and emphasise believing rather than doubting others, conversation rather than debate, and being intimate rather than being impersonal. Connected knowing is likely to be conducted in a relatively informal and unstructured way, in order to emphasise personal experience, trust, patience, listening, empathy, and being nonjudgmental. A connected way of knowing is illustrated by this university student's statement from one of Belenky et al.'s (1986) case studies:

When I have an idea about something, and it differs from the way another person is thinking about it, I'll usually try and look at it from that person's point of view, see how they could say that, why they think that they're right, why it makes sense (p. 100).

While the original development of ways of knowing concentrated on the way women approached understanding, Belenky and colleagues (1986) did suggest that there was a relationship between ways of knowing and gender. Belenky et al. were careful in suggesting that connected and separate knowing were not gender *specific*. Indeed, of the women that they interviewed, some leaned heavily towards separation, some towards connection, while others integrated the two perspectives. However, they did suggest that ways of knowing were gender *related*, with women being more likely than men to utilise connected knowing and men more likely than women to employ separate knowing. Belenky et al. (1986) note that 'many women take naturally to

connected knowing, finding it easier to follow authors than attack them, easier to get close to them than to stand apart' (p. 121).

Since the original formulation of ways of knowing relied on an in-depth, qualitative analysis of case studies from an all-female sample, there have been several attempts at developing a quantitative, individual-difference measure of differences in ways of knowing (e.g., Buczynski, 1993; Galotti, Clinchy, Ainsworth, Lavin, & Mansfield, 1999; Knight, Elfenbein, & Messina, 1995). Such measures generally require participants to indicate their level of agreement with a series of statements. Examples of connected statements are: 'When I disagree with someone I try to imagine myself in that person's situations' (Knight et al., 1995), 'The most important part of my education has been learning to understand people who are very different from me' and 'I can obtain insight into opinions that differ from mine through empathy' (Galotti et al., 1999). Examples of separate statements are: 'I like playing devil's advocate and arguing the opposite of what somebody is saying' (Knight et al., 1995), 'In evaluating what someone says, I focus on the quality of their argument, not on the person who's presenting it', and 'I value the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of my own concerns when solving problems' (Galotti et al., 1999).

Using measures such as these, the predictions of gender-related ways of knowing have been supported by more recent research (Baxter Magdola, 1992; Clinchy, 1989, 1996; Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti, Drebus, & Reimer, 2001; Knight et al., 2000; Knight, Elfenbein, & Martin, 1997; Luttrell, 1989). For example, Knight et al. (1995) developed the Knowing styles Inventory (KSI) where participants indicate their level of agreement with 10 items, yielding two unipolar factors said to measure connected and separate ways of knowing. Further research using the KSI (Knight et al., 1997) revealed expected gender differences in ways of knowing with women scoring higher than men on connected knowing and men scoring higher than women on separate knowing. Knight et

al. (2000) replicated the finding for connected knowing, while no gender differences were found for separate knowing.

Similarly, using their Attitudes Toward Thinking and Learning Scale (ATTLS), Galotti et al. (1999) report the results of four studies that suggest gender differences in connected and separate ways of knowing, with men having significantly higher separate knowing scores than women, and women having significantly higher connected knowing scores than men. In addition, when participants were divided on the basis of a median split on their knowing scores into one of four groups High Connected knowing, High Separate Knowing, High Both, Low Both, females were disproportionately likely to be in the High Connected Knowing group and men were disproportionately likely to be in the High Separate Knowing group. These findings were replicated in a subsequent study (Galotti et al., 2001)

### **Stability and Malleability of Ways of Knowing**

Although the distinction between connected and separate knowing has been employed for more than 15 years, quantitative measures of ways of knowing are a relatively recent development (e.g., Galotti et al., 1999; Knight et al., 1995). As a result, research investigating issues of stability and malleability is very limited. However, as with the gendered self and moral orientation, we can examine the underlying assumptions of stability inherent in the work of theorists. Indeed the previous work on the independent and interdependent selves and the care and justice perspective are particularly important here as they provide the theoretical basis from which the theory of gender differences in ways of knowing evolved (Belenky et al., 1986).

Beyond overt statements about the purported stability of ways of knowing (Belenky et al., 1986; Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti et al., 2001) there are assumptions of stability inherent in the work of ways of knowing theorists. Firstly, the construction of

individual difference measures in ways of knowing (e.g., ATTLS, Galotti et al., 1999; KSI, Knight et al., 1995) and the attempt to use differences on these measures to predict behaviour and attitudinal differences between individuals (e.g., Galotti, 2001; Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti et al., 2001; Knight et al., 1997) bring with them the assumption that these measures reflect relatively stable aspects of the individuals, aspects that are consistent across time and across situations.

In addition, just as in the research surrounding the gendered self and moral orientation, theorists have looked to distal factors to explain individual differences in ways of knowing. For example, Belenky et al. (1986) looked to the importance of childhood factors, such as mothering and socialisation, to explain differences in connected and separate ways of knowing. Similarly, Knight et al. (2000) investigated the way in which different parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, or permissive) and birth-order was associated with connected and separate knowing.

However, there is limited support for stability in ways of knowing. In validating the KSI, Knight et al. (1995) demonstrated a 13-week test-retest coefficient of .71 for connected knowing and .74 for separate knowing. To our knowledge, test-retest analysis has not been conducted for the ATTLS and participants in Belenky et al.'s (1986) case-studies were typically only interviewed once.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

We have seen in this chapter how gender differences in the independent and interdependent self have been seen as underlying differences in care and justice moral orientation and connected and separate ways of knowing. Further, the assumptions underlying the notion of a stable gendered self, outlined in Chapter 3, can also be seen to be present in the theories surrounding moral orientation and ways of knowing. However, just as evidence for a stable gendered self was found to be less than universal,

this chapter demonstrates that at best, the evidence for stability in moral orientation and ways of knowing is mixed.

So, just as in Chapter 3, we are left with the question of how to reconcile these seemingly mixed and contradictory findings. What is needed is an account of the self and of gender differences that can incorporate expressions of both stability and malleability across time and across context. The clue to where this answer lies is in an analysis of social context.

### **Stability, Malleability, and Social Context**

Due to underlying assumptions of stability and a focus on distal factors, the importance of social context is largely ignored within the realms of the gendered self, moral reasoning, and conceptions of ways of knowing. However, the importance of social context has been acknowledged by a limited number of theorists investigating the self (e.g., Markus & Wurf, 1987; Onorato & Turner, 2001; Turner et al., 1994; Turner & Onorato, 1999), and moral reasoning (e.g., Damon & Colby, 1987; Eisenberg, 1987; Seigfried, 1989; Youniss, 1987).

For example, Damon & Colby (1987) reproach cognitive-developmental accounts of moral reasoning, such as those offered by Kohlberg and Gilligan, for their inability to incorporate notions of social influence, arguing that social factors remain 'vaguely defined and underemphasised' (p. 163) within such theories. Instead, the authors point to the need to recognise the 'intrinsically social component' (p. 5) of morality. Similarly, Youniss (1987), suggested that far from being an individualistic concept, 'morality originates in interpersonal interactions and relationships' (p. 132), and offered a conceptualisation of moral reasoning as affective and attitudinal as well as cognitive, concluding that 'social context cannot be ignored' (p. 132). Finally, in a study of children's self-attributions regarding moral behaviour, Eisenberg (1987) found that both

the structure and the quality of social interaction influenced moral reasoning, and concluded that 'the nature of one's social interactions affects moral values, decision-making regarding the performances of moral actions and post-hoc evaluations of one's own behaviour' (p. 33).

Indeed if we look at the evidence for and against stability in the self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, we can see that a variety of contextual factors play an important role in determining the expression of these attitudes and behaviours. Demonstrations of stability are most often found in contexts that are abstract, generalised or unspecified, and that test-retest analyses are most often conducted in circumstances that are relatively similar. In contrast, evidence of malleability is demonstrated when the social context or the nature of the self-other relationship is varied, such as in the priming tasks used to manipulate differences in the self-concept or in the differences in moral reasoning found when personal and impersonal dilemmas are used.

The following chapter presents an analysis of the self-concept based on social identity theory and self-categorisation theory, together referred to as the social identity perspective. Such an analysis points to the importance of locating the self within the social context in which it is embedded and, importantly, describes a lawful and systematic process by which the social context influences the way we perceive ourselves, the way we perceive others and the attitudes and behaviours that arise from these perceptions. In this way, we believe that an analysis from the social identity perspective is able to incorporate the broad range of contextual factors that have been found to affect attitudes and behaviours. Further, we believe that it provides a way to integrate the seemingly disparate findings of stability and malleability, and the inconstant findings of gender differences into a coherent formulation.

## CHAPTER 5

### The Self and Gender:

#### A Social Identity Perspective

Women are probably the most important natural grouping to be studied within social identity theory

Skevington and Baker, 1989, *The Social Identity of Women*

The preceding chapters present a range of theories and experimental findings in the realm of the self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing that are at odds with one another. On the one hand we have seen theories of gender difference that look to distal explanatory factors such as evolutionary processes or early childhood socialisation to explain how the behaviour of men and women is acquired, reinforced, and perpetuated. As a result, these theories posit relatively stable gender differences in the self-concept (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989), and subsequent stable differences in moral reasoning (Gilligan, 1982; Lyons, 1983), and ways of knowing (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Clinchy, 1989; Galotti et al., 1999; Knight et al., 2000; Knight et al., 1997). On the other hand, we have seen contradictory findings suggesting that gender differences on these dimensions are, at one extreme, non-existent or, at the very least, dependent on more proximal aspects of the social context, and as such are variable across time or across social contexts (e.g., Deaux & Major, 1987; Walker, 1989).

In an attempt to reconcile these seemingly contradictory findings, this chapter presents an alternative analysis of both the self-concept and gender that is informed by social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) and self-categorisation theory (Turner, 1985; Turner et al., 1987; Turner et al., 1994), an approach that will be referred to collectively as the social identity perspective. The social identity perspective is ideally situated as a theoretical framework from which to re-examine the issues surrounding gender differences in the self-concept. Indeed, as the opening quote states, gender is

one of the central groups to which the perspective has been applied (Skevington & Baker, 1989).

The contribution that the social identity perspective makes to the literature we have outlined can be seen to be twofold. Firstly, the social identity perspective provides an in-depth and unique analysis of the self-concept. In contrast to more traditional accounts of the self, the social identity perspective views the self as a flexible and adaptable construct that is dependent on the social context in which it is embedded. Secondly, the perspective provides a unique analysis of gender and gender differences by examining gender as an important and central *social category* (e.g., Breakwell, 1979; David, Grace, & Ryan, 2003; Skevington & Baker, 1989; Williams & Giles, 1978). As a social category, gender can be seen as being subject to the influences of stereotypes and group norms and the processes of salience and social influence.

The social identity perspective is also able to incorporate an understanding of both distal and proximal influences on gendered behaviour, as suggested by Deaux and Major (1987). While distal influences such as childhood socialisation may play an important role in developing the norms and expectations about men and women, it is proximal aspects of the social context that tell us when it is appropriate to act in terms of our gender. In this way the social identity perspective is able to elucidate the processes involved in group behaviour and the self-concept, it is able to make concrete predictions about the situations in which these gender differences will or will not be apparent and the nature of these gender differences when they do occur. As we will see in this chapter, by combining an analysis of the self as flexible and context-dependant with an analysis of gender as a social category, the social identity perspective is able to account for the seemingly contradictory findings of stable, variable, or non-existent gender differences.

In order to situate this analysis within a historical context this chapter will begin with a brief chronicle of the social identity perspective, starting first with social identity theory and the minimal group studies, and then continuing with the extension of social



identity theory through self-categorisation theory. The chapter will then continue with a more specific account of the way in which the social identity perspective informs an analysis of the self-concept. Finally, the chapter will conclude with an analysis of the way in which gender and gender differences can be seen in social categorical terms in accordance with the social identity perspective.

### **Social Identity Theory**

Social identity theory (a term created by Turner & Brown, 1978) began as a result of attempts to explain the psychological basis of intergroup discrimination found in the *minimal group studies* (Tajfel, 1972; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; Turner, 1975, 1978). Tajfel et al. (1971) first constructed a paradigm designed to identify the *minimal* conditions necessary for individuals to favour members of their own group over members of another, by excluding factors previously identified as playing a role in intergroup discrimination, such as a conflict of interest, competition over scarce resources, or a history of hostility. To this end, participants were allocated to one of two distinct, non-overlapping groups and led to believe that this assignment was made on a rather trivial basis, such as their preference for abstract artists (Klee or Kandinsky) or their ability to estimate the number of dots on a screen (underestimators or overestimators). In reality, participants' allocation into groups was entirely random, group membership was anonymous, and no social interaction took place. Participants were asked to perform a task where they were required to allocate points (as if they represented sums of money) to an anonymous member of their own and the other group, but not to themselves, excluding self-interest as a determining factor.

Unexpectedly, Tajfel et al. (1971) found that the mere categorisation of individuals into groups was enough to produce discrimination, such that participants favoured their ingroups, allocating more points to ingroup members than to outgroup members. A second study found that not only were participants ingroup favouring, but

that participants chose allocation strategies that maximised the difference between the ingroup and the outgroup, even when that meant lower overall allocations to the ingroup. Additional research has replicated these results, confirming the importance of a group-based identity for ingroup favouritism, extending the findings to more favourable descriptions of the ingroup over the outgroup (Doise et al., 1972), and demonstrating that the pattern remains even when groups are allocated to groups in an *explicitly* random manner (Brewer & Silver, 1978). Further, studies have ruled out the possibility that the pattern of results found in the minimal group paradigm is simply a result of perceptions of similarity or cohesion between the self and ingroup member (Allen & Wilder, 1975; Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Brewer & Silver, 1978; see also Turner, 1982 for a review).

In an attempt to make sense of these minimal group findings, social identity theorists subsequently introduced the notion of social categorisation. They argued that participants in the minimal group studies interpreted the seemingly meaningless group memberships as a relevant way in which to define themselves and others in the situation, and in doing so had created a *social identity* for themselves, (Tajfel, 1972, Turner, 1975). This notion of social identity became the lynch-pin of social identity theory, and resulted in a number of important theoretical formulations, including the interpersonal-intergroup continuum, the discontinuity hypothesis, the need for positive social identity, and an emphasis on dynamic processes. Each of these aspects of social identity theory will be briefly discussed in turn.

### **Interpersonal-Intergroup Continuum**

Tajfel (1972) defined *social identity* as being 'the individual's knowledge that he (or she) belongs to certain groups together with some emotional and value significance to him (or her) of the group membership' (p. 31). As individuals, we each have an infinite number of different social identities that we can use to define ourselves. These social identities can be based on broad group memberships such as those founded on

nationality, race, or gender, or they can be more specific such as those based on work groups, friendship groups, or sporting teams. However, it is important to note that these social identities are not simply synonymous with externally defined sociological categories. As Turner (1982) states:

We are concerned here with group membership as a psychological and not a formal-institutional state, with the subjective sense of togetherness, we-ness, or belongingness which indicates the formation of a psychological group (p. 16)

Importantly, social identities need to be psychologically meaningful, and once an identity has been internalised there are important ramifications for one's psychology and behaviour. Tajfel (1974, 1978a; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) illustrated these consequences by outlining a bipolar continuum of behaviour:

At one extreme...is the interaction between two or more individuals which is *fully* determined by their interpersonal relationships and individual characteristics and not at all affected by various social groups or categories to which they respectively belong. The other extreme consists of interactions between two or more individuals (or groups of individuals) which are *fully* determined by their respective memberships of various social groups or categories, and not at all affected by the interindividual personal relationships between the people involved. (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 34).

Tajfel (1978a) notes that in 'real life' either extreme of the interpersonal-intergroup continuum is extremely unlikely, with no behaviour being purely unaffected by group membership or purely unaffected by personal attributes. However, Tajfel (1978a, Tajfel & Turner, 1979) did argue that as one's behaviour shifted along the continuum and became more intergroup in nature, a number of consequences could be observed. These will be outlined below.

## **The Discontinuity Hypothesis**

One of the central tenants of the social identity perspective is the *discontinuity hypothesis* (Tajfel, 1978b, 1978c, 1981), which suggests that there is a qualitative difference, or psychological discontinuity, between acting as an individual person and acting as a group member (see also Asch, 1951; Mayo, 1949; Sherif, 1936, 1967). When social identities are made salient there is a qualitative change in people's psychology and behaviour such that they no longer behave in terms of their individual differences, but act in terms of the shared and collective norms and values associated with their group membership. As a result, in order to understand the attitudes and behaviours of an individual in the context of groups, we cannot simply look to that individual *as an individual*, focusing solely on stable aspects of their personality and what they bring to the situation. Instead we need to look at the individual in terms of how they see themselves in terms of their group memberships and social identities, and what those group memberships mean in a given context.

Tajfel (1978a) suggested that, to the extent that behaviour becomes defined in terms of group membership, members of a given ingroup will (a) demonstrate increased consensus of their attitudes and behaviour, (b) have a tendency to perceive an outgroup as relatively more homogenous, as 'undifferentiated items in a unified social category, rather than in terms of their individual characteristics' (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 36); and (c) act towards that outgroup in a relatively uniform manner (for reviews of evidence supporting these ideas see Haslam, Turner, Oakes, McGarty, & Reynolds, 1998).

## **Positive Social Identity**

Central to the process of categorisation and identification are the notions of distinctiveness and meaning. Tajfel and Turner (1979) suggest that once individuals categorise themselves in terms of a given group membership they will then aim to

achieve a positive self image by differentiating their own group from other groups on dimensions that are valued by the ingroup. For the participants in the minimal group studies, the only identity available to them was that based on a trivial category and the only dimension of comparison available was the allocation of points. As a result, creating a social identity and displaying ingroup favouritism were the only way of achieving positive distinctiveness (Turner, 1975; see also Brewer, 1979; Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Turner, 1981).

However, this quest for positive distinctiveness is not limited to participants in the minimal group studies. Social identity theory suggests that when individuals define themselves in terms of any group membership, they strive to see that group as not only different from other groups, but as better than other groups. However, as Turner (1999) notes, this interpretation of the minimal group findings has been (mis)understood to imply (a) that identifying with a group will automatically result in discrimination or prejudiced against outgroups (e.g., Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Kelley, 1993) and (b) that ingroup bias will automatically lead to increased levels of (individual) self-esteem (e.g., Hogg & Abrams, 1990; Rubin & Hewstone, 1998; Walsh & Banaji, 1997).

Addressing the first of these misinterpretations, Turner (1999; Turner & Reynolds, 2002) notes that ingroup bias is only one of a number of strategies that individuals or groups can undertake to pursue a positive social identity. Tajfel and Turner (1979) identified three basic strategies that individuals or groups can undertake to enhance their social identity. Firstly, individuals may utilise an *individual mobility* strategy, attempting to achieve a positive identity through leaving or dis-identifying with their group and joining a group that enjoys higher status (e.g., by leaving a losing sporting team and joining a more successful one). Secondly, group members may employ *social creativity* strategies to enhance their social identity, by (a) comparing groups on new or different dimensions than those that typically characterise the groups (e.g., 'we may not be successful, but we are good sports'), (b) changing the value of negative attributes used to describe the

ingroup (e.g., 'losing only makes us stronger'), or (c) comparing the ingroup to a different outgroup (e.g., 'we're not coming first, but at least we are not coming last'). It is only the final strategy, *social competition*, which incorporates ingroup bias. Such a strategy involves the ingroup challenging the outgroup on dimensions relevant to their intergroup relationship and often involves conflict, ingroup bias, and social change. In a sporting context, social competition may take the form of trying to triumph over the other teams, while in the minimal group studies, challenging the outgroup took the form of allocating them relatively fewer points.

Tajfel and Turner (1979) further identify a number of variables that play an important role in the expression of social competition or ingroup favouritism, including (a) the degree to which individuals identify with their group (e.g., Spears, Doosje, Ellemers, 1999); (b) whether the given intergroup comparison is relevant or meaningful in the immediate social context; (c) the relevance of the comparative dimension to the intergroup relationship (e.g., Reynolds, Turner, & Haslam, 2000; Terry & Callan, 1998); and (d) the nature of the social structure surrounding the intergroup relationship (e.g., Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Turner & Brown, 1978). These variables suggest that the nature of intergroup relations is highly dependent on contextual variables. Indeed, the dynamic nature of social identity and intergroup relations is examined further in the following section.

### **Dynamic Processes and Social Comparison**

Another of the central tenants of social identity theory is the dynamic nature of intergroup process (e.g., Tajfel 1972, 1974, Tajfel & Turner, 1979; see also Gergen, 1973, Moscovici, 1972). Contrasting static and dynamic approaches, Tajfel (1974) suggests:

The 'dynamic approach' to the problems of social identity...is based on several considerations. First it is unlikely that there exist many examples of intergroup situations which are static in the sense that they consist of an unchanging set of social relationships between the groups. We are, however, less concerned here with social situations than with their psychological counterparts; these are bound to be even less static (p. 77).

One of the primary processes involved in this dynamism is the process of social comparison. As outlined in the previous section, strategic social comparison is one way in which a positive social identity can be maintained. If favourable comparisons can be made between the ingroup and the outgroup, such that the ingroup is perceived as positively differentiated from the outgroup, then a positive social identity is achieved. However, as Tajfel and Turner (1979) note, ingroups are not necessarily comparable to every available outgroup and not all dimensions of comparisons are relevant. Both the outgroup and the dimension of comparison must be perceived to be a relevant and these can be determined by perceptions of similarity, proximity, and situational salience.

Indeed, these social relationships and social situations (also referred to in the above quote from Tajfel) play an important role in social identity theory. Tajfel (1978, Tajfel & Turner, 1979) identified key features of the broader social structure that are important in determining social identification and subsequent intergroup relations. These are: (a) the *permeability* of group boundaries; are individuals able to move from one group to the other? (b) the *stability* of intergroup relations; is the nature of the relationship between the groups likely to change? and (c) the *legitimacy* of status differences; how justified are any status differences between the groups?

However, it was the need to further explicate the dynamic nature of social identity processes and to ascertain the cognitive and psychological processes governing the dynamism that led to the extension of social identity theory and the formulation of self-categorisation theory. The background of self-categorisation theory and its fundamental ideas will be outlined in the following section.

## Self-Categorisation Theory

Self-categorisation theory (Turner, 1982, 1984; Turner et al., 1987) first developed in order to resolve a number of issues that were raised by social identity research and to extend and elaborate the ideas and theories that were originally related to intergroup conflict to encompass the broader areas of group processes, stereotyping, and social cognition. Central to this elaboration was the delineation of the perceptual, cognitive, and motivational processes involved in defining (or categorising) the self in terms of one's social identities.

In order to explicate psychological process involved in social identification and further elaborate the process by which an individual moves along the interpersonal-intergroup continuum, Turner (1982, 1984, 1985; Brown & Turner, 1981) made a series of assumptions and hypotheses about the nature and function of the self-concept. Turner (1982) made a distinction between one's *social identity*, as outlined by social identity theory, and one's *personal identity*, which is that part of one's self that is derived from more specific, individual attributes, such as 'feeling of competence, bodily attributes, ways of relating to others, psychological characteristics, intellectual concerns, personal tastes and so on' (Turner, 1982, p. 18).

The following sections will outline the key concepts within self-categorisation theory, including the self-categorisation process, levels of categorisation, salience, self-stereotyping and depersonalisation, and the outcomes of categorisation.

### The Categorisation Process

Fundamental to self-categorisation theory is its elaboration on the way people define themselves as an individual or as a group member, the process of *self-categorisation*. Turner (1985, Turner et al., 1987) outlines a series of assumptions and



hypotheses outlining the role that the self-concept and self-categorisations play in psychological group formation and group behaviour.

One of the basic assumptions of self-categorisation theory is that the self-concept is an elaborate, context-dependent cognitive structure that consists of numerous, highly differentiated elements. This means that any given individual has numerous conceptions of themselves (self-categorisations) that can be activated or 'salient' as a consequence of situational variation and characteristics of the individual (Turner, 1982). The process of self-categorising involves the perception of the self as being a member of a particular class or category of stimuli, such that the self is seen as similar, equivalent, or interchangeable with other stimuli in that category, and this category is contrasted to other some other class of stimuli (Turner, 1985; see also Bruner, 1957; Campbell, 1958, Rosch, 1978; Tajfel, 1969, 1972).

Central to self-categorisation theory is the notion that there are infinite ways in which to categorise the self. Further, these self-categorisations exist at differing levels of abstraction, such that they can be seen as being more or less inclusive and as such can be organised in a hierarchical system of classification (Turner, 1985, cf. Rosch 1978). To illustrate we could look to nationality and geography: categories at a lower or subordinate level of abstraction such as *French*, *German*, and *Italian* can be subsumed or included within the relatively higher, intermediate level category of *Western European*, which can in turn be subsumed, along with Eastern Europeans, into the higher level, superordinate category, *European*.

Self-categorisation theory outlines three key levels of a categorisation which it sees as theoretically important: (1) the superordinate level of the self as a *human*, contrasting human beings with other species or non-living things; (2) the intermediate *social* level, where similarities and differences between human beings lead to the definition of groups and the self is seen a member of a group in contrast to other groups;

and (3) the subordinate *personal* level, where the self as an individual is contrasted with other ingroup individuals (Turner, 1985, Turner et al., 1987; Turner et al., 1994).

However, it is important to note that although these categorisations are organised within a hierarchy, self-categorisation theory does not see any one of these self-categorisations as being any more important or valid than the others. In contrast to other approaches, such as the personality approach to the self-concept with its emphasis on personal identity, each self-categorisation and level of categorisation is seen to be an accurate and real reflection of the individual (Turner, 1985). Further, it should not be assumed that because the intermediate level of abstraction is termed 'social' that the human or personal levels of categorisation are unaffected by social forces. Indeed, all levels of categorisation are seen as social in relation to their content, origin, and function (Turner, 1985).

### **Salience**

Self-categorisation theory describes the process by which levels of categorisation and different self-categorisations become switched on, cognitively activated, self-defining, or *salient* (Turner, 1985, Turner et al., 1987). This process of salience is due to an interaction between the situation and what the individual brings to the situation. Fundamental is the process of social comparison, with the categorisation process depending on the perception of similarities and differences between stimuli or classes of stimuli. Importantly, stimuli can only be compared to the extent that they have already been categorised as similar at some higher level of abstraction, and this comparison will take place on a dimension that defines the higher level category (Turner, 1985; Oakes, 1996). For example, the French and Italian can only be compared to the extent that they are both seen as European countries, while Europe and Australia can be compared only to the extent that they are both seen as continents.

Self-categorisation theory also outlines the way in which aspects the social context and aspects of the individual can determine the relative salience of any given categorisation (Oakes, 1987, Oakes, Turner, & Haslam, 1991, Turner, 1985). One important determinant is *fit*, the degree to which a given categorisation is perceived to be an appropriate way to organise stimuli within a given context (see also Bruner, 1957). Two aspects of fit have been identified, comparative fit and normative fit.

*Comparative fit* follows the principles of *meta-contrast* (Turner, 1985, Turner et al, 1987, see also Campbell, 1958). The meta-contrast principle suggests that, within a frame of reference, any given collection of stimuli will be perceived as belonging to a common category to the extent that, on relevant comparison dimensions, the differences within the collection of stimuli (intracategory difference) are perceived to be less than the differences between that collection and other stimuli (intercategory difference). For example, within a situation containing French and Italian people, the Italians will be perceived as sharing category membership to the extent that intracategory differences (e.g., the differences between the Italian people) are less than the intercategory differences between the Italians and the French. However, if the differences within are seen as greater than the between, both the Italians and the French may be categorised at a higher level of abstraction, and seen as Europeans, or alternative categorisations may be used.

The categorisation process is also highly dependent on *normative fit*. It is not sufficient that the differences between categories are perceived to be greater than the differences within (comparative fit), but it must also be the case that these differences are in line with the perceiver's expectations about the nature of those categories. For example, the Italians and French in our previous example are unlikely to be classified as such unless they conform to our expectations about those categories. For examples, if the Italians are seen to be enjoying cheese and speaking French while the French are

enjoying pasta and speaking Italian, nationality is unlikely to be seen as an appropriate way to categorise those individuals, and alternative categorisations will be sought.

The principles of metacontrast can also be used within a given category to determine the relative *prototypicality* of a category member, that is, how representative it is of that group. A given member of a category is seen as relatively more prototypical to the extent that it is more similar than different to other members of that category. For example, within the category Italian, an individual who is seen as being relatively more similar to other Italians on dimensions related to being Italian (e.g., appearance, stereotypical behaviour) will be seen as more prototypical than an individual who is different.

Finally, the categorisation process is also dependent upon *perceiver readiness* or accessibility, that is, what the individual brings to the situation: their prior experiences, and their expectations, goals and theories (Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Turner et al, 1994).

### **Self-Stereotyping and Depersonalisation**

Self-categorisation theory outlines the link between self-categorisation and group behaviour, describing a continuum based on variations in cognition and perception related to the self that corresponds to the intergroup-interpersonal behavioural continuum proposed by social identity theory (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1987). The theory suggests that self-perception tends to vary along a continuum from the perception of the self as a unique individual (personal identity) to the perception of the self as a member of a social category (social identity). Further, Turner (1982, 1984) suggested that the 'cognitive redefinition' of the self from one's personal identity to one's social identity leads to *depersonalisation*. Applying the intergroup processes of stereotyping and homogeneity described by social identity theory to the self, Turner suggests that the

process of self-stereotyping leads to 'a shift toward the perception of self as an interchangeable exemplar of some social category and away from the perception of self as a uniquely differentiated person (Turner, 1985, p. 100).

### **The Outcomes of Categorisation**

The process of categorisation is not simply a way of organising stimuli in our environment. Self-category has become salient, the result is that intracategory similarities and intergroup differences are *accentuated*. Continuing our nationality example, once we have chosen 'nationality' as the appropriate classification in our group of Italians and French people, we will then tend to accentuate (a) what Italians have in common, (b) what the French have in common, and (c) the differences between the Italians and the French. Further, the nature of a particular member of that category is inferred from their category membership. If we were asked to describe a particular individual person, we would be more likely to see that person in line with the expectations associated with their nationality.

Self-categorisation theory describes not only the perceptual outcomes of categorisation, but also the attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. Indeed, the theory argues that it is self-stereotyping and depersonalisation, the 'switching on' of one's social identity, that makes intergroup behaviour possible:

Individuals react to themselves and others not as differentiated, individual persons but as exemplars of the common characteristics of their group. It is through this process that salient or functioning social identifications help to regulate social behaviour...by causing group members to act in terms of shared need, goals and norms (Brown & Turner, 1981, p. 39).

Turner (1982, 1984, 1985; Turner et al., 1987) suggests that the categorisation process has a number of important outcomes and is seen to underlie group

phenomenon. Within a social category the relationship between ingroup members tends to be characterised by (a) perceptions of similarity, (b) social cohesion, (c) interpersonal attraction, (d) positive evaluation, (e) altruism and cooperation, and (f) emotional empathy. These perceptions of similarity and feelings of attraction, altruism, and empathy lead the individual to act as a group member, to see the group's goals as their goals and to see the norms associated with the group as appropriate ways to behave.

Another outcome of the categorisation process is that members within a given category tend to exhibit uniformity in their attitudes and behaviour. Self-categorisation theory suggests that the categorisation of the self as a member of a group, and seeing the self as similar to other ingroup members, leads one to expect to agree with members of one's group (Turner, 1985; 1987, 1991; Turner, & Oakes, 1989). Categorisation therefore provides the basis for *mutual social influence*, people not only expect to share a common perspective with ingroup members, but they actively work to reach such an agreement.

### **The Social Identity Perspective and the Self**

The self-concept plays a pivotal theoretical role within the social identity perspective as a fundamental determinant of our attitudes, motivations, and behaviours and as a determinant of intergroup relations and group processes (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Oakes et al., 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987; Turner et al., 1994). However, the conceptualisation of the self that is used within the social identity perspective is unlike that which is used by more conventional accounts of the self. The following sections will outline the main ways in which the social identity perspective can inform the literature on the self-concept, concentrating on the discontinuity hypothesis and the notion of a flexible, context-dependent self.

## **The Discontinuity Hypothesis and the Self**

As we have seen in Chapter 3, traditional analyses of the self in general, and the gendered self more specifically, have tended to rely on a construal of the self-concept based on a personality approach (e.g., Markus, 1977). Such a model defines the self-concept in terms of individual differences in styles and fixed cognitive structures, emphasising the relative stability of the self across situations, and the enduring nature of attitudes, motivations, and behaviours related to the self. However, while the personality model of the self has proved to have descriptive and predictive power in many areas of personality and social psychology, its highly individualised approach means that it is not as readily applicable to analyses of group-related behaviour (Onataro & Turner, 2001; Turner & Onorato, 1999).

However, the failure of the personality approach to explain group-related aspects of the self is not surprising given that the appropriateness of using personality constructs within the realm of group processes has been often questioned (Turner & Onorato, 1999). Indeed, as we have seen earlier in this chapter, the discontinuity hypothesis suggests that there is a psychological discontinuity between acting as an individual person and acting as a group member. In order to accommodate the notion of the discontinuity hypothesis in relation to the self-concept, the social identity perspective provides a description of the cognitive structure and function of the self-concept that is in sharp contrast to the personality approach.

As we have seen thus far, the social identity perspective suggests that the self-concept is made up of at least two major components, (1) one's personal identity, that is, self descriptions that reflect personality traits, internal attributes, interests, and idiosyncrasies; and (2) one's social identity, that is, one's internalised, socially significant, social categorisations and group memberships (Turner, 1982, 1984, Turner et al, 1987; Turner et al, 1994). Taking these different aspects of the self-concept into account, the

social identity perspective suggests that when we see ourselves as a group member, our self-definition derives from what we share with fellow ingroups, rather than from our individual traits. However, it is not the case that we simply want to substitute the notion of a stable personal self with a stable social self. The social identity perspective proposes a self that is flexible, adaptable, and dependent upon the social context in which it is embedded.

### **The Context Dependence of the Self**

The social identity perspective describes the nature of the categorisation process and the way in which self-categories become salient as highly dynamic. To the extent that the self is linked this process, the self-concept is far from stable. Turner (1987) states:

The model proposed by (self-categorisation theory) is by no means static, fixed, global, reified. The opposite is the case: a fundamental idea is the rejection of self-categories as 'absolutes': the self is dynamic, relational, comparative, fluid, context specific and variable. Self-categorisations are part of the process of relating to the social world, not 'things' (p. 144).

Further, the emphasis that the social identity places on social contextual variables results in a conceptualisation of the self that is highly dependent on context. Turner (1984) states:

The subjective self-images which we may assume represent the cognitive output of the self-concept, are highly variable and situation specific. Different parts or combinations of parts of the self-concept are able to function relatively independently of each other to produce the endless diversity of subjective experience across differing situations (p. 526).

Instead of conceptualising the self-concept as an inherent and stable property of the individual, the social identity perspective describes a view of the self as an inherently



social construct 'based on social comparisons and relevant to social interaction' (Turner, 1985, p. 94), that changes in response to variations in our social context (e.g., Onorato & Turner, 2001; Turner, 1985; Turner et al. 1994; Turner & Onorato, 1999). Further, the self is seen as being multi-faceted in that any given individual has multiple concepts of the self and these particular aspects of the self are activated (or made salient) by particular social contexts.

Importantly, that the self-concept is multi-faceted does not mean that the self simply fluctuates in a random or arbitrary manner. The social identity perspective describes the changing nature of the self-concept in terms of systematic and lawful processes, which are informed by the body of literature describing the processes of categorisation (e.g., Haslam & Turner, 1992; Spears, 2001; Turner et al., 1987; Turner et al., 1994; Van Rijswijk & Ellemers, 2002). Indeed, much empirical research from the social identity pe

### **Gender and the Social Identity Perspective**

In her foreword to *The Social Identity of Women*, Barbara Lloyd suggests that the social identity perspective provides a useful theoretical framework from which to examine the paradoxes of the research into gender and gender differences. She suggests:

Social gender categories are discrete and non-overlapping but the behavior of women and men tells a different story. An adequate social psychological theory must account simultaneously for the considerable behavioral similarity between women and men on the one hand and the implications of membership in exclusive social gender categories which, through their social construction, define contrasting expectations and performance of women and men on the other (Lloyd, 1989, viii).

Indeed, the social identity perspective is useful as it describes the process by which we come to see ourselves (and others) in terms of a group membership, such as gender, while also delineating the ramifications of such a categorisation. The following

sections outline the way in which gender impacts on our perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours.

### **Gender as a Social Category**

The social identity perspective suggests that gender impacts on our behaviour, not because it is different from other social categories, but precisely because it is a social category (e.g., Breakwell, 1979; David et al., 2003; Skevington & Baker, 1989; Williams & Giles, 1978). Indeed, the perspective sees gender as just one of many social categories that may affect our behaviour, albeit a potentially potent one. Importantly, the social identity perspective suggests that gender will only influence our behaviour to the extent that it is switched on, activated or salient within a given social context (e.g., Postmes & Spears, 2002). That is, it is influential only to the extent that the social context defines it as being an appropriate way in which to define the self (and others), and to the extent it is seen as an appropriate cue for behaviour.

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, when people define themselves in terms of a particular shared social category, depersonalisation occurs such that there is an increase in (a) the perceived similarity between the self and other ingroup members, (b) the perceived differences between the ingroup and members belonging to other social categories (outgroup members), (c) the cohesiveness within groups, (d) the likelihood that individuals will act in terms of the shared beliefs and norms of that social category, and (e) the likelihood of ingroup bias and ethnocentrism (Turner, 1982, 1985, Turner et al., 1987).

Gender can, therefore, be seen to potentially affect our behaviour in a number of ways. Firstly, when gender is made salient it defines our comparative framework. In such a situation it is appropriate to define the self as a woman in comparison to men, or a man in comparison to women. For example, if the social category of gender were to

become salient for Jason, this would result in a tendency for him to accentuate the similarities within his gender group (e.g., 'we men are all practical') while at the same time emphasising the differences between men and women (e.g., 'those women are so much more emotional than us men').

Secondly, category salience also defines the appropriate norms and standards within a given situation. When individuals see themselves as members of a social category, they are more likely to perceive and stereotype themselves in terms of the attributes that define their groups in relation to other groups (Turner, 1982, Turner et al., 1987). However, the effect of self-categorisation is not restricted to self-perceptions but also to behaviour. As Turner (1982) states:

Individuals form or learn the stereotypic norms of that category. They ascertain that certain ways of behaving are criterial attributes of category membership. Certain appropriate, expected, or desirable behaviours are used to define the category as different from other categories (p. 31).

Therefore, when gender is made salient, the norms and stereotypes associated with men and women become an important indicator of appropriate behaviour. Indeed, gender has been recognised as an influential social category precisely because gender stereotypes are seen to be extraordinarily persuasive. They are not only descriptions of what men and women are like, but are powerfully prescriptive (Fiske & Stevens, 1993). In this way gender stereotypes act as well-defined norms of appropriate male and female behaviour, with failure to adhere to these norms resulting in negative evaluations and potentially serious sanctions (Nieva & Gutek, 1980).

### **The Context Dependence of Gender**

As noted earlier, the social identity perspective suggests that gender is just one of many social categories that can affect our behaviour, and the context dependent nature

of the categorisation process means that while gender may be influential in some situations, there are other situations in which gender will not be at all influential. The social identity perspective suggests that social behaviour in general, and gender-related behaviour in particular, is not solely due to distal factors, but can also be affected by more proximal aspects in the social context.

Indeed, just as Deaux and Major (1987) distinguish between the development and the expression of gender differences, a distinction can also be made between the *content* of a category and *use* of that category on specific contexts (e.g., Condor, 1991; Ellemers et al., 2002). Distal explanatory factors outlined in Chapter 2, such as evolutionary theory, childhood socialisation, and broad social structural factors, can be seen to play an important role in shaping the content of gender categories. It is through these mechanisms that the norms and stereotypes associated with gender are created, and it is this way that we expect men to be independent, autonomous, and objective and women to be interdependent, caring, and empathic. In contrast, it is the proximal aspects of the social context that determine when it is appropriate to use gender as category to define the self and to act in line with these expectations. It is in this way that the social identity perspective is able to reconcile the mixed and sometimes contradictory evidence for a stable gendered self.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

This chapter began by placing the social identity perspective within a historical context and outlining the major theoretical premises of the perspective. We started with social identity theory's analysis of intergroup behaviour through the discontinuity hypothesis, the need for positive social identity, and an emphasis on dynamic processes. We then examined the way in which self-categorisation theory extended this analysis by providing an account of the cognitive processes involved in categorisation, salience, depersonalisation, and the outcomes of the categorisation process.

We then looked at the way in which the social identity analysis can inform the literature on the self-concept and gender. Such an analysis revealed that both the self and gender are dependent upon the social context in which they are embedded. Firstly, the discontinuity hypothesis suggests that a personality approach to the self-concept does not accurately encapsulate the multi-faceted, content-dependent nature of the self. Similarly, the social identity perspective suggests that gender is just one of many social categories that can affect our behaviour, and the dynamic nature of the categorisation process suggests that an emphasis on distal explanatory factors does not fully capture the context-dependence of gender as a social category. Instead, the distinction between the content of a social category and its use allows us to reconcile the seemingly contradictory theories and evidence that we have seen for gender differences in the self, moral reasoning and ways of knowing.

This alternative analysis of the self-concept and gender raises many questions about the traditional literature surrounding the gendered self-concept (outlined in Chapter 3) and the way in which it has been applied to moral reasoning and ways of knowing (Chapter 4). The following chapter will therefore provide a summary and integration of the literature outlined thus far, and will then establish a series of testable hypotheses that can be derived from a social identity analysis of the gender and the self.

## CHAPTER 6

### Summary of the Literature and Predictions

Anything we might decide to call “gender identity” is surely complex and not necessarily integrated (with social life)...The research issue becomes one of knowing what parts of the self are involved in different situations

Carolyn Sherif (1982, p. 183)

Chapters 2 through 5 provide a review of a large body of literature examining (a) gender differences in general; (b) gender differences in the self-concept, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing; and (c) an analysis of the self and gender based on the social identity perspective. This chapter provides a brief summary and integration of this literature. It then proposes a series of experimental hypotheses that can be drawn from this analysis, to be tested systematically in the following empirical chapters.

#### Summary and Integration

The body of literature that we have outlined in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 tends to conceptualise psychological differences between men and women as relatively stable, both over time and across social contexts. Looking at general gender differences in attitudes and behaviour, we have seen from Chapter 2 that both sides of the nature-nurture debate have tended to rely upon distal explanatory factors, that is, factors that are removed from the situation in which the behaviour is embedded. As a result, these differences between men and women are seen to be relatively fixed and stable, either being determined by evolutionary selection, genetics, or hormones, or by being firmly established in childhood through socialisation from either parents or the broader society (e.g., Buss, 1995; Chodorow, 1978, Harris, 1995; Moir & Jessel, 1989).

Although theories at either extreme of the nature-nurture spectrum are now rare, integrationist theories still tend to focus on factors that are isolated from contemporary circumstance. Regardless of actual aetiology, most theories suggest that by early adulthood, gender-related behaviours are relatively enduring, remaining largely unaffected by changes in situation or by the passing of time. We concluded Chapter 2 with the recognition that a more balanced view of gender differences was needed, one that not only emphasised the acquisition of gender differences and distal explanatory factors, but that could also incorporate theories about the display of gender-related behaviour and more proximal aspects of the social context (e.g., Deaux & Major, 1987).

Following on from Chapter 2, we examined the way in which the assumption of stability in gender differences is applied to more specific aspects of behaviour. As we have seen in Chapter 3, one of the fundamental applications can be seen in the analysis of how gender impacts on self-definition (e.g., Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Lyons, 1988). Chapter 3 provides a review of the way in which the literature surrounding the gendered self conceptualises two distinct interpersonal orientations, or ways of seeing the self in relation to others, and describes the way in which these self-concepts are seen to be inextricably linked with gender. An *independent* (and masculine) self-concept involves describing the self in terms of unique, internal attributes and emphasising autonomy and the differences between the self and others. In contrast, an *interdependent* (and feminine) self-concept involves defining the self in terms of relationships with others and group memberships.

We have also seen from Chapter 3 the range of theories regarding the aetiology of these gendered self-concepts, including those that emphasise evolutionary accounts, those that look to psychoanalytic descriptions of boys' separation from their mother, and those that look to more social factors such as gender socialisation accounts and descriptions of broad social structural variables. However, in line with the generalised theories of gender differences outlined in Chapter 2, what is common to most accounts

of the gendered self is the emphasis that is placed on distal explanatory factors and the implicit stability of the gendered self in adulthood.

However, while there is some support for the notion of a stable, gender-related self-concept, with significant test-retest results over time and evidence that participants are resistant to change over contexts (e.g., Markus, 1977), there is also conflicting evidence demonstrating that the independent and interdependent self is malleable, varying across time and across social contexts (e.g., Gardner et al., 1999; Trafimow et al., 1991). Indeed, malleability has been demonstrated using a number of different paradigms, including studies demonstrating that individuals' self-descriptions tend to vary across different social arenas and evidence that situational priming can over-ride individual and group differences in independence and interdependence. We concluded Chapter 3 with the recognition that this seemingly conflicting body of evidence needs to be reconciled.

Following on from Chapter 3 we then examined the way in which the distinction between an independent self and an interdependent self has been extremely influential, employed by many theorists as a basis to explain gender differences across a range of different psychological phenomenon (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997). In Chapter 4 we looked specifically at two related areas in which the gendered self-concept has been said to have explanatory power over gender differences: moral reasoning, the way in which people think and reason about moral dilemmas, and ways of knowing, the way in which people approach learning and knowledge.

Looking first at moral reasoning, we saw how ethic-of-care theorists, such as Gilligan (1982), describe two distinct ways of thinking about moral problems, justice and care, and the ways in which these moral orientations are argued to be related to the gendered self. A justice orientation emphasises fairness and equality. Dilemmas are solved through the application of rules and principles in an objective fashion, and thus



necessitate a self-concept defined in terms of independence. Ethic-of-care theorists suggest that such an approach to moral problems is more likely to be utilised by men than women. In contrast, a care orientation emphasises well-being and the maintenance of relationships. Dilemmas tend to be resolved in terms of attentiveness, responsiveness, and engagement and thus require an interdependent self-concept. Ethic-of-care theorists suggest that such an approach is more likely to be utilised by women than by men.

We also saw in Chapter 4 that theorists looking at the way in which people acquire, structure, process, and communicate information have drawn on the distinctions between an independent and an interdependent self-concept and between care and justice moral orientations. As a result, two gender-related ways of knowing are described: a connected way of knowing that entails understanding and acceptance and a separate way of knowing that entails objective evaluation and critical thinking (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Galotti et al., 1999; Knight et al., 1995). Not surprisingly, these theorists suggest that while women are more likely to utilise connected knowing, men are more likely to utilise separate knowing.

Chapter 4 also demonstrates that these theories of gender differences in moral reasoning and ways of knowing are based on an assumption of an underlying self that is either independent or interdependent. As such, moral reasoning behaviour and ways of knowing are seen to be related to gender, and believed to be due to a focus on distal explanatory factors. Importantly, they are seen to be relatively stable across time and situations. Through a review of the relevant literature, we saw that, just as there is mixed evidence for a stable gendered self, there is evidence both supporting and failing to support stable differences in moral reasoning (e.g., Walker, 1994) and ways of knowing.

In an attempt to reconcile the seemingly contradictory evidence of stable, gender-related differences in the self-concept, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, Chapter 5

provided an alternative analysis of the self and gender based on the social identity perspective. In Chapter 5 we first outlined the important theoretical premises involved in both social identity theory and self-categorisation theory, and we then examined the way in which the social identity perspective is able to inform an analysis of the self-concept and of gender.

As we have seen in Chapter 5, the social identity perspective has two main contributions to make to the notion of a stable, gendered self. Firstly, the discontinuity hypothesis (Sherif, 1967; Tajfel, 1978b, 1978c) suggests that there is a psychological discontinuity between acting as an individual and acting as a group member. Thus, if one wants to examine group-related behaviours, it does not make sense to look to stable, personality-like aspects of the individuals, such as relatively stable individual differences in the self-concept. Secondly, the social identity perspective places on emphasis on malleability and context dependence, both of the self-concept and in the effect that gender has on our behaviour. Further, the perspective sees gender as just one of the many social categories that can influence our perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours, outlining in detail the process by which it can predict when and how particular social categories may come to influence our behaviour.

In summary, the social identity perspective suggests that we cannot look solely to individual differences and distal factors to determine whether people will see themselves as independent or interdependent. Importantly, the perspective makes the distinction between the content of a given social category and the use of that category. As such, the perspective emphasises the importance of immediate social-contextual factors, such as the salient social categorisation of the self and others and the level of identification with a given group for determining when it is that group norms and stereotypes will be appropriate indices of behaviour. Indeed, it is possible to generate a series of alternative hypotheses from the social identity perspective, describing (a) the conditions under which individuals will define themselves in terms of independence and interdependence, (b) the

conditions under which gender will become an influential social category, and (c) the way in which this self-definition affects an individual's moral reasoning and way of knowing. These hypotheses will be outlined below.

## Hypotheses

### The Importance of Social Context

As summarised above, we have seen mixed support for the notion of a stable gendered self, and indeed there is evidence that the independent and interdependent self-concept is malleable across social contexts. In light of this mixed evidence and the analysis of the self-concept offered by the social identity perspective, it is difficult to conceive of a given individual being equally independent (or interdependent) in relation to all people, and across all contexts. Further, it is hard to see this seemingly adaptable self-definition being determined solely by distal factors, removed from the context in which the self-definition occurs. Instead, an alternative way of conceptualising the self in terms of independence and interdependence can be hypothesised based on a social identity analysis:

**H1: Individuals are capable of being both independent and interdependent in relation to others and they will look to proximal aspects of their social context to determine which is appropriate.**

### The Role of Categorisation

The way in which individuals see themselves in relation to others does not fluctuate randomly across time and situations, but rather varies according to systematic processes. Further, we suggest that the nature of the independent and interdependent

self is a group-related attitude, perception, and behaviour. Fundamental to the independent and interdependent self are the nature of one's self-categorisation and the nature of the self-other relationship: it is the process of self-categorisation that defines the self and others by 'systematically including them within some, and excluding them from some other related categories' (Turner, 1982, p. 18).

The social identity perspective thus offers a process by which we can predict the nature of the self-other relationship, that is, when the self will be seen as independent or interdependent in relation to others. It can be argued that the interdependent self corresponds with the self when defined in the context of ingroup members, with whom we share a social category membership, and to whom we feel similar and interchangeable. As we have seen in Chapter 5, behaviours analogous to interdependence (such as empathy and feelings of connection, similarity, and shared identity) are observable in relation to intragroup processes and the perception of fellow ingroup members (Turner, 1982, 1984; Turner et al., 1987). Indeed Turner (1984) suggests:

Through common category membership, group members should tend to perceive their interests as identical, assigning their own goals to others and other's goals to themselves. Shared social identification, therefore, should tend to induce a form of cooperation between group members that verges on altruism, since other's needs are perceived as one's own (p. 529).

In contrast, behaviours analogous to independence (such as feelings of dissimilarity, distance, and separation) are observable in relation to intergroup processes and the perception of outgroup members (Turner, 1984; Turner et al., 1987). Thus the independent self seems to correspond with the self when defined in the context of outgroup members, who are different and independent from the self.

Importantly, group membership can contribute to self-definition in two ways (a) through the perceived group membership of the other, and (b) through the perceived group membership of the self. Indeed, the social identity perspective suggests that how two individuals (say Sarah and Nancy) define themselves and whether they consider themselves independent or interdependent from one another will depend on a range of proximal contextual factors, such as the salient social category, the dimensions of comparison, and the frame of reference. For example, Sarah and Nancy could define and compare themselves in terms of their individual attributes which could emphasise independence or interdependence: “we are similar because we are both tall” or “we have very different senses of humour”. In contrast, a given situation might make salient the fact that they are both mothers, which might foster a sense of interdependence and make them see themselves as very similar to one another compared to their friends who don’t have children. However, if another group membership, such as political group memberships, were to become salient, Sarah and Nancy might recognise that on that dimension they are quite different, and as a consequent they might feel independent from one another in that situation.

From the above example we can see that people can define themselves in terms of different dimensions, different roles, and as members of different groups, and these different self-conceptions can lead individuals to see others as more or less connected to the self. The following hypothesis can thus be made.

**H2: The nature of the self-other relationship will determine independence and interdependence. In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to describe themselves as interdependent compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to describe themselves as independent.**

## When Will Gender Become Influential?

While we hypothesise that there will be a relationship between perceptions of category membership and definitions of the self in relation to others, we do not propose that this relationship is a simple one. It is not the case that shared category membership leads inevitably to interdependence or that category differentiation leads inevitably to independence. The social identity perspective suggests that our perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours can also be affected by the nature of the groups that we belong to through the process of mutual social influence and the internalisation of specific group norms. Thus the following hypothesis can be made:

**H3: Social categories affect the way in which we see ourselves and the way in which we behave because of our desire to adhere to the norms and stereotypes associated with those categories.**

Indeed, there are many groups that can influence the way in which we see ourselves, and subsequent behaviour arising from such self-definitions. There are norms that can be associated with our nationality (e.g., Japanese people see themselves as connected and defined by their relationships and group memberships), our professions (e.g., scientists approach knowledge with objectivity and criticism), or even our friendship or sporting groups (e.g., our team is fair and equitable). It is in this way that gender can influence feelings of independence and interdependence. As we have noted in Chapter 5, the social identity perspective makes a distinction between the content of a social category and the use of that category to define the self and determine behaviour. The perspective therefore allows us to predict when a given group membership will become influential:

**H4: Gender is just one of many social categories which can affect the way in which we see ourselves and our subsequent behaviour. Gender will only be influential to the degree that it is seen as the appropriate social category by which to define ourselves in a given situation (i.e., when it becomes salient).**

However, while gender will only influence our behaviour when we see it as an appropriate way in which to define ourselves, we are able to make concrete predictions about the nature of these gender differences when they do occur. The social identity analysis suggest that individuals are more likely to see themselves and act in terms of gender-related norms when their gender is salient. In respect to the independent and interdependent self-concept, the following concrete hypothesis can be made:

**H5: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to describe themselves as interdependent, while men will be more likely than women to describe themselves as independent.**

## **Applications**

We have outlined several hypotheses about the way in which people will define themselves in relation to proximal aspects of their social context. Given the relationship that is said to exist between the self-concept and moral reasoning and ways of knowing, an individual's moral orientation and their approach to knowledge and learning can also be seen as variable, depending on the context in which it is utilised:

**H6: Attitudes and behaviour associated with the independent and interdependent self will be dependent upon the proximal aspects of the social context and the nature of the self-other relationship**

Further, we expect that there will be norms associated with moral reasoning and ways of knowing, in that we are not expected to act towards all people in the same way:

**H7: Clear norms exist about appropriate ways to approach moral dilemmas and knowledge and learning. There are norms that are associated with gender, as well as norms that are associated with interacting with ingroup and outgroup members.**

### **Moral Reasoning**

The social identity perspective suggests that when individuals are asked to think about and solve a moral dilemma, the nature of the relationship between the self and another person involved in the dilemma will be an influential factor. Assuming that a situation involving an ingroup member is more likely to lead to interdependent self-definitions (Hypothesis 2), it follows that a moral dilemma involving an ingroup member will be more likely to be solved in terms of empathy with an emphasis on the maintenance of relationships. In contrast, a moral dilemma involving an outgroup member will be more likely to be solved in terms of objective reasoning and the application of rules with an emphasis on fairness and equality. We can therefore propose the following hypothesis:



**H8: In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to use a care orientation to moral reasoning compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to use a justice orientation.**

Such a hypothesis does not, however, discount theories that men and women recount different types of moral dilemmas (Walker, 1991) or that there exists some underlying differences in self-definition (Chodorow, 1989). Rather, it is proposed that concrete differences in social context can moderate these gender differences and that gender differences are not appropriate at all times. Based on the social identity analysis of salience and group norms, the following hypothesis can be made:

**H9: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to use a care orientation to moral reasoning, while men will be more likely than women to use a justice orientation.**

### **Ways of Knowing**

The social identity perspective also makes similar predictions about the way in which people will approach learning and knowledge, with the nature of the self-other relationship being an influential factor. Assuming that a situation involving an ingroup member is more likely to lead to interdependent self-definitions (Hypothesis 2), it follows that in a situation involving an ingroup member, individuals will be more likely to place an emphasis on understanding and perspective taking. In contrast, in a situation involving an outgroup member, individuals will be more likely to place an emphasis on objectivity and criticism. We can therefore propose the following hypothesis:

**H10: In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to use a connected way of knowing compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to use a separate way of knowing.**

However, once again, such a hypothesis does not discount that gender differences in ways of knowing exist. Rather, it is proposed that concrete differences in social context can moderate these gender differences and that gender differences are not appropriate at all times. As such, the following hypothesis can be made:

**H11: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to use a connected way of knowing, while men will be more likely than women to use a separate way of knowing.**

### **Summary**

This chapter presents a series of hypotheses that can be generated from a social identity analysis of the self-concept and of gender. Chapters 7 through to 11 will report a series of empirical studies designed to test these hypotheses systematically. Chapter 7 reports two studies designed to examine how individuals describe themselves across a number of situations, in the contexts of ingroups and outgroups (Study 1) and in the context of gender salience (Study 2). Chapter 8 presents two studies investigating the different group norms associated with moral orientation, with Study 3 looking at gender norms and Study 4 looking at norms associated with shared group membership. Chapter 9 presents two studies investigating the way gender and the categorisation of the self as a group member affects the way in which individuals approach a moral problem. Chapter 10 reports two studies investigating the different group norms

associated with ways of knowing, with Study 7 looking at gender norms and Study 8 looking at norms associated with shared group membership. Finally, Chapter 11 presents a study investigating the way in which gender and the categorisation of the self as a group member affects the way in which individuals approach learning and knowledge.

## CHAPTER 7

### The Self in Social Context:

#### Study 1 and Study 2

The self-concept provides the context from which we perceive and organise the world. It determines how we see ourselves and others; our motivations, goals, beliefs, and attitudes; and the way in which we interpret and process information (see for example Baumeister, 1998; Cross & Madson, 1997; Kilstrom & Cantor, 1984; Markus et al., 1985; Sherif, 1982; Turner et al., 1994). As we have seen in Chapter 3, self-theorists make a distinction between two distinct interpersonal orientations, or ways of seeing the self in relation to others (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Markus, 1977; Triandis, 1989). While the independent self-concept involves describing the self in terms of unique, internal attributes and emphasising autonomy, the interdependent self-concept involves defining the self in terms of one's relationships with others, social roles, and the groups to which one belongs. Importantly, theorists see this distinction as being closely related to gender, with men more likely to emphasise an independent self, and women an interdependent self (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Lyons, 1983; Markus & Oyserman, 1989; see Cross and Madson, 1997, for an overview).

In explaining these differences between men and women, theorists have tended to focus on distal causes, that is, those that are removed from the current context in which an individual is embedded (see Deaux & Major, 1987). Some explanations concentrate on the development of the gendered self-concept in childhood, looking at parenting (e.g., Chodorow, 1978), peer influence (e.g., Harris, 1995, 1998), and other forms of childhood socialisation (e.g., Bandura, 1967; Maccoby, 1990). Other theorists look to evolutionary explanations (e.g., Buss, 1995) or broader social structural variables (e.g., Markus & Oyserman, 1989; Miller, 1986) to explain gender differences in the self-concept. However, while there are substantial differences in these accounts, their common emphasis on distal factors results in an assumption of stability in the self-

concept in adulthood. Such accounts suggest that once you have been separated from your mother, or once you have been socialised to the gender norms of your society, your self-concept remains relatively fixed and stable, either independent or interdependent.

There is, however, mixed evidence for a stable, gendered self. Supporting the notion of stability Markus (1977) found evidence that individuals are consistent in their self-definition as either independent or interdependent over different contexts, actively resisting information that contradicted their view of themselves. Similarly, Cross et al. (2000) found significant test-retest reliability in their measure of interdependence (the RISC Scale) over time. However, there is also evidence to suggest that gender-linked behaviours and cognition are not stable, but can be characterised as highly variable and dependent on proximal aspects of the social context (e.g., Deaux & Major, 1987; Eagly, 1987; Maccoby, 1990; Sherif, 1982). Indeed, looking specifically at independence and interdependence, research has demonstrated that the self-concept varies across contexts (such as family, friendship groups, and work situations; Hardie & Kashima, 1998; Echabe & Castro, 1999) and across situations where independence and interdependence are made salient (e.g., Gardner et al., 1999; Haberstroh et al., 2002).

This mixed evidence suggests that whether men and women define themselves as independent or interdependent at any given time will not be determined solely by distal factors, but will also be affected by more immediate and proximal factors in the social context. What is needed then is an analysis of the self-concept and of gender that is able to incorporate both notions of stability and of malleability, and is able to take account of proximal aspects of the social context.

As we saw in Chapter 5, the social identity perspective is ideally placed to address these issues. The perspective argues that the self-concept is not a fixed or absolute property of the individual, but is instead dynamic, changing with the categorisation process and in response to variations in our social context (Onorato &

Turner, 2001; Turner et al. 1994; Turner & Onorato, 1999). The social identity perspective also sees gender as just one of many social categories that can affect our behaviour. Further, it describes the important ramifications of seeing the self and others in terms of group memberships, such as gender. As a social category becomes salient, depersonalisation occurs, resulting in individuals being less likely to see themselves in terms of their individual attributes and more likely to see themselves as an interchangeable member of that social category. Thus, when gender is salient, depersonalisation enhances perceived stereotypical differences men and women, increases the cohesiveness of gender groups, and makes individuals more likely to act in terms of gender norms and stereotypes.

As we have seen in Chapter 6, the social identity perspective allows us to generate a series of hypotheses about independence and interdependence and their relationship with gender. The first broad hypothesis is as follows:

**H1: Individuals are capable of being both independent and interdependent in relation to others and they will look to proximal aspects of their social context to determine which is appropriate.**

The two studies presented in this chapter investigate the fluidity and context dependence of the self and of the self-other relationship. Study 1 investigates the circumstances under which individuals will feel independent or interdependent in relation to others, and examines whether it is always true that women are more likely to describe themselves as interdependent and men as independent. Study 2 continues this investigation, examining more specifically the conditions under which gender differences in the self-concept will occur.

## **Study 1: The Effect of Categorisation on the Self**

The social identity perspective suggests that the way in which we see ourselves in relation to others, that is, the way we define or categorise ourselves, is not solely due to distal factors and fixed from our childhoods but is also dependent on the immediate social context in which we are embedded. Different situations call for us to define ourselves and others in different ways. While in one context it may be appropriate to define the self as independent and autonomous in relation to others, in another, an interdependent and relational self may be more appropriate.

Study 1 asks the question: Is it always true that women are interdependent and men are independent? While there is some evidence to suggest that, on average, this is the case, most studies investigating this gender difference are conducted in situations where participants are asked to describe how they see themselves in general, or overall, in a context that is not specified. More particularly, participants are often asked to define themselves in isolation from others, or in terms of a generalised other, so the nature of the self-other relationship is unclear. In contrast, the social identity perspective suggests that asking individuals to describe themselves in contexts where differing self-other relationships are specified will differentially affect their self-concept. Thus, men and women will describe themselves as either independent or interdependent, as a function of whether the context defines it as appropriate, rather than as a function of gender per se.

The social identity perspective offers a process by which we can predict the nature of the self-other relationship, that is, when the self will be seen as independent or interdependent in relation to others. As we have seen in Chapter 6, the interdependent self can be seen to correspond with the way in which the self is defined in relation to ingroup members, with whom we share a social category membership, and to whom we feel similar and interchangeable. In contrast the independent self seems to correspond

with the way in which the self is defined in terms of outgroup members, who are different and separate from the self. Study 1 was designed to investigate the way in which independence and interdependence are related to perceptions of shared category membership. It is therefore hypothesised that:

**H2: The nature of the self-other relationship will determine independence and interdependence. In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to see themselves as interdependent compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to see themselves as independent.**

More specifically, it is hypothesised that when individuals are asked to select traits to describe themselves, in a situation that emphasises ingroups and shared category membership, they will be more likely to select interdependent traits than independent traits. In contrast, in a situation that emphasises outgroups and differences in category membership, participants will be more likely to select independent traits than interdependent traits.

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

Participants were 70 first-year psychology students at The Australian National University taking part in the study in return for course credit. Of these, 47 were female and 23 were male and their age ranged from 17 to 43 years with a median age of 18 years. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions where the context was manipulated to emphasise either ingroups or outgroups. The



experiment thus had a 2 (gender: male and female) by 2 (salient social context: ingroup and outgroup) between-participants design.

## **Procedure**

The study was presented to participants as two separate and unrelated tasks. Task 1 was designed to manipulate the salient social context. Participants were given a brief statement that informed them that people belonged to many different social groups including sociological groups, such as racial groups or gender, or more specific groups like sporting teams or clubs (See Appendix A). Those participants in the ingroup salience condition were then asked to 'list five groups that *you belong to*', then choose one of these groups (by putting an asterisk next to it) and 'list five things that you think that *you share* with members of this group'. Those participants in the outgroup salience condition were asked to 'list five groups that *you do not belong to*', choose one of these groups and 'list five things that you think that *distinguish you* from members of this group'.

The second part of the study was presented as a separate task and contained a measure of self-definition where participants were asked to select traits to describe themselves. Participants were given a checklist containing 75 adjectives, in a format similar to that of Katz and Braly (1933). Pilot testing established 25 traits that were associated with an independent self-concept (e.g., aloof, autonomous, individualistic, objective, distant), 25 traits that were associated with an interdependent self-concept (e.g., caring, cooperative, dependent, affectionate, understanding), and 25 neutral traits that were neither independent nor interdependent (e.g., intelligent, artistic, lazy, practical, neat). Traits were balanced for favourability (see Appendix A).

Participants were instructed to read through the checklist and underline all of the words that they thought were self-descriptive *at that particular moment*. Participants were then asked to go back over the words that they had underlined and select the five words

they thought best described them *at that time*, listing those words in the spaces provided. Following the checklist task participants were debriefed in full.

## Results

### Self-Description Content

The results consisted of the traits that participants used to describe themselves, presented in Table 7.1 as a function of context and Table 7.2 as a function of gender. A trait was included as descriptive if it was selected by at least 20% of participants in a given condition (Katz & Braly, 1933; Haslam & Wilson, 2000). The level of agreement was also calculated from the self-descriptions using the original measure devised by Katz and Braly (1933). This index reflects the minimum number of traits that are necessary to include 50% of the traits selected by participants in each condition. As each participant selected 5 traits from the 75 traits presented, if there was perfect agreement, 2.5 traits would represent 50% of the traits selected, whereas perfect disagreement or chance would mean that 37.5 traits would be necessary to represent half the descriptions. A smaller number is therefore indicative of greater agreement.

Looking at the content of participants' self-descriptions presented in Table 7.1 a pattern in line with the hypotheses can be seen as a function of salient social context. Those participants in the condition where ingroups and similarity were made salient were more likely to choose interdependent traits to describe themselves (considerate, dependable, compassionate, sociable, and understanding) than independent traits (independent). In contrast, participants for whom outgroups and dissimilarity were made salient were more likely to choose independent traits to describe themselves (independent, objective, ambitious, and unique) than interdependent traits (tolerant).

Table 7.1. Self-Description Content and Agreement as a Function of Salient Social Context.

	Independent Traits		Interdependent Traits		Neutral Traits		A
Ingroup	independent	26%	considerate	34%	intelligent	37%	9.7
			dependable	31%			
			compassionate	26%			
			sociable	23%			
			understanding	23%			
Outgroup	independent	37%	tolerant	20%	intelligent	40%	10.3
	objective	26%			stubborn	23%	
	ambitious	26%					
	unique	23%					

Note: Table contains traits selected by more than 20% of participants in each condition. A = Agreement.  $A_{\min} = 2.5$ ;  $A_{\max} = 37.5$ ; with a lower score reflecting greater agreement.

It is also interesting to note that the level of agreement within the ingroup and outgroup conditions (9.7 and 10.3 respectively) are relatively high and are comparable to levels of agreement found in other stereotyping studies (see for example Katz and Braly, 1933; Haslam & Wilson, 2000), suggesting that, for our participants, there is some consensus when it comes to describing the self in the context of ingroups and outgroups.

Table 7.2 displays the content of participants' self-descriptions and their level of agreement as a function of gender. In contrast to traditional accounts of gender and self-concept, a clear pattern of results is not evident. Under conditions where group memberships and the nature of the self-other relationship were made salient, males chose an equal number of independent traits to describe themselves (independent), as they did interdependent traits (compassionate). Similarly, females were equally likely to describe themselves as interdependent (considerate, sociable, dependable) as they were to describe themselves as independent (independent, ambitious, objective).

Table 7.2. Self-Description Content and Agreement as a Function of Gender.

	Independent Traits		Interdependent Traits		Neutral Traits		A
Males	independent	35%	compassionate	26%	intelligent	39%	11.1
Females	independent	30%	considerate	28%	intelligent	38%	9.9
	ambitious	21%	sociable	28%	stubborn	21%	
	objective	21%	dependable	26%			

Note: Table contains traits selected by more than 20% of participants in each condition. A = Agreement.  $A_{\min} = 2.5$ ;  $A_{\max} = 37.5$ ; with a lower score reflecting greater agreement.

### Independence and Interdependence

Looking at the content of participants' self-descriptions we see an interesting picture that is at odds with traditional accounts of a stable, gendered self, but that is in line with our hypotheses drawn from the social identity perspective. In order to further investigate the data through quantitative methods, we examined the number of independent and interdependent traits that each participant selected to describe themselves. The means are displayed in Figure 7.1 as a function of salient social context.

In order to examine the influence of salient social context and gender on the number of independent and interdependent traits selected a 2 (self-definition: independent, interdependent) x 2 (context: ingroup, outgroup) x 2 (gender: male, female) mixed model ANOVA was performed, with repeated measures on the first variable.

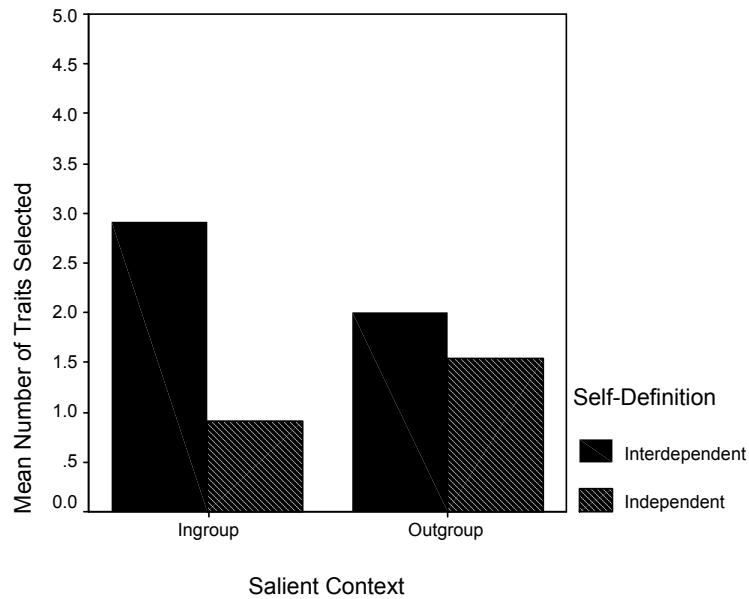


Figure 7.1. Mean Number of Interdependent and Independent Traits Selected as a Function of Salient Social Context

The analysis revealed a significant main effect for self-definition,  $F(1, 66) = 23.00$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .26$ , such that overall, participants were more likely to select interdependent traits to define themselves ( $M = 2.46$ ) than independent traits ( $M = 1.23$ ). However, this main effect was qualified by a significant self-definition x salient social context interaction,  $F(1, 66) = 12.02$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ . Analysis of simple effects revealed that, as hypothesised, participants selected significantly more interdependent traits in the ingroup salient context ( $M = 2.91$ ) than in the outgroup salient context ( $M = 1.90$ ),  $F(1,66) = 11.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .15$ , while the opposite was the case for independent traits which were selected significantly more in the outgroup condition ( $M = 1.60$ ) than the ingroup condition ( $M = .96$ ),  $F(1,66) = 7.91$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .11$ . Gender was a not a significant predictor of self-definition, either on its own or in interaction with salient social context,  $F_s < 1$ .

In order to examine the relative importance that participants placed on independence and interdependence a self-score was calculated to reflect the number of interdependent traits participants selected relative to independent traits. Based on the

pilot study, traits determined to be interdependent were given a value of 1, traits determined to be independent were given a value of -1, and neutral traits were given a value of 0. Self-scores therefore ranged from -5 to 5, with a higher self-score reflecting relatively greater emphasis on interdependent traits than independent traits being selected to describe the self.

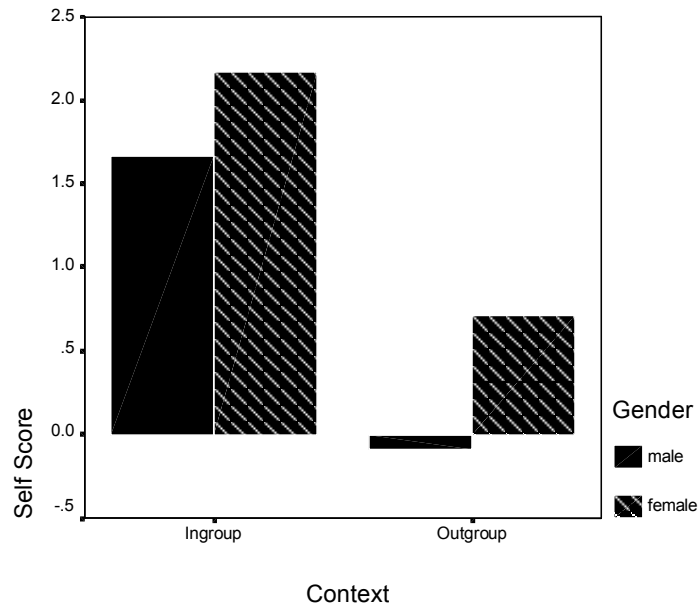


Figure 7.2. *Self-Scores as a Function of Salient Social Context and Gender*  
*Note:* Positive scores indicate a more interdependent self-description while negative scores indicate a more independent self-description

In order to investigate the impact of salient social context and gender on self-scores a 2 (context: ingroup, outgroup) x 2 (gender: male, female) ANOVA was performed. As can be seen in Figure 7.2, overall, the positive nature of participants' self-scores ( $M = 1.23$ ) reflected a tendency to prefer interdependent traits to independent traits. However, in contrast to traditional findings, there was no main effect for gender, with males and females equally likely to place an emphasis on interdependent traits when describing themselves  $F(1, 66) = 1.98, ns$ . Nor was there a significant interaction between context and gender,  $F(1, 66) < 1, ns$ . However, as predicted, there was a significant main effect for salient social context,  $F(1, 66) = 12.02, p < .01$ , with those

participants in the ingroup context more likely to emphasise interdependent traits in their self descriptions ( $M = 2.0$ ) than those participants in the outgroup condition ( $M = 0.46$ ).

## Discussion

The results from Study 1 suggest that, rather than being fixed, caused by distal factors, and related to gender, descriptions of the self as either independent or interdependent are highly dependent on context and are related to perceptions of shared category membership and the nature of the self-other relationship. Where participants were asked to focus on the groups to which they belonged, and the things that they had in common with fellow ingroup members, both men and women were more likely to describe themselves in terms of interdependent traits such as considerate and compassionate. In contrast, where participants were asked to focus on the groups they did not belong to, and the things that differentiated them from outgroup members, both men and women were more likely to describe themselves in terms of independent traits such as unique and objective. Importantly, and in contrast to past findings, in the context of salient group memberships, gender was not a significant predictor of self-definition, either in its own right or in interaction with the salient social context.

Further, it is also interesting to note that the level of agreement between participants when asked to describe themselves within the ingroup and outgroup conditions are comparable to levels of agreement found in stereotyping studies where participants were asked to describe members of particular groups, such as Jews or Aboriginal Australians (see for example Katz and Braly, 1933; Haslam & Wilson, 2000). This level of agreement illustrates that there is some consensus and uniformity when it comes to describing the self, and suggests that the self-concept, rather than being a stable, intrinsic aspect of an individual, is in fact a representation that is socially shared and is highly dependent upon context. For participants, it was the salient social context, perceptions of category membership, and the nature of the self-other relationship that

determined the appropriate way of describing the self in terms of interdependent or independent traits. Study 1 therefore suggests that under these circumstances it is the proximal aspects of the social context rather than gender that predict self-description. However, these findings, while supporting the hypotheses, still leave us with the question: under what circumstances will gender influence the self-concept?

### **Study 2: The Effect of Gender Salience on the Self**

Study 1 suggests that women and men can describe themselves as either independent or interdependent depending on the proximal aspects of the social context and perceptions of shared category membership. However, this is not to say that the relationship between perceptions of category membership and self-definitions is a simple one or that traditional findings of gender differences in self-descriptions are unfounded. The social identity perspective suggests that our perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours can also be affected by the nature of the groups that we belong to through the process of mutual social influence and the internalisation of specific group norms.

Therefore, simple categorisation is not the only determinant of independence or interdependence. Gender, just like any other social category, will influence behaviour only to the extent that it is salient (David et al., 2003; Deaux & Major, 1987). As outlined in Chapter 6, the social identity perspective suggests that group-relevant behaviour occurs when individuals see themselves as members of that social category:

**H3: Social categories affect the way in which we see ourselves and the way in which we behave because of our desire to adhere to the norms and stereotypes associated with those categories.**



Study 2 therefore investigates whether individuals will be more likely to describe themselves in line with gender-related norms and stereotypes when their gender is salient. As Deaux (1985) points out, measuring the self-concept under experimental conditions allows us the ability to vary the degree to which gender is salient in a given context. From a social identity perspective we can hypothesise:

**H4: Gender is just one of many social categories which can affect the way in which we see ourselves and our subsequent behaviour. Gender will only be influential to the degree that it is seen as an appropriate social category by which to define ourselves in a given situation (i.e., when it becomes salient).**

There is no doubt that stereotypes and norms certainly exist expressing the notion that women are interdependent and men are independent (e.g., Bakan, 1966; Cross & Madson, 1997; Maccoby, 1990; Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989). Indeed, research suggests that the stereotypes associated with gender are not only descriptions about men and women, but are powerfully prescriptive (Fiske & Stevens, 1993). In this way gender stereotypes act as well-defined norms of appropriate male and female behaviour, with failure to adhere to these norms resulting in negative evaluations and potentially serious sanctions (Nieva & Gutek, 1980).

Looking more specifically at norms related to independence and interdependence, as we have seen in Chapter 3, Onorato and Turner (2001; Turner & Onorato, 1999) provide evidence that suggests that when gender is salient women are more likely to describe the group 'women' in interdependent rather than independent terms compared to the group 'men'. Building on this work Study 2 investigates the way in which men and women see themselves under conditions where they are thinking of themselves in terms of their gender. The following hypothesis can be made:

**H5: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to see themselves as interdependent, while men will be more likely than women to see themselves as independent.**

More specifically, it is hypothesised that when individuals are asked to select traits to describe themselves in a situation that emphasises gender and gender differences women will be more likely to select interdependent traits than independent traits, while men will be more likely to select independent traits than interdependent traits.

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

Participants were 50 undergraduate psychology students from the University of Canberra and The Australian National University taking part in the study in return for course credit. There were 29 females and 21 males whose age ranged from 18 to 52 years, with a median age of 20 years. The study consisted of a 2 group (gender: male/female) between-participants design. The primary dependent variable was self-description, as in Study 1, completed under conditions where gender was made salient.

### **Procedure**

Participants were asked to complete the same adjective self-description task that was used in Study 1, but this time under conditions where gender was made salient (see Appendix B). Gender was made salient by having participants complete the task either (a) directly after another study which included an extensive debrief emphasising gender differences in social learning and modelling behaviour or (b) directly after a 15 minute presentation about gender differences in aggressive behaviour. Participants read through

the checklist, underlining all words they thought were self-descriptive *at that particular moment*. Participants then went back over the words they had underlined and selected the five words they thought described them the best *at that time*, listing those words in the spaces provided. Following the checklist task participants were debriefed in full.

## Results

### Self-Description Content

The results consisted of the traits that participants used to describe themselves, presented in Table 7.3 as a function of gender. As in Study 1, a trait was included as descriptive if it was selected by at least 20% of participants in a given condition and the level of agreement within a condition was calculated as the minimum number of traits that are necessary to include 50% of the traits selected by participants in each condition.

From Table 7.3, as hypothesised, and consistent with traditional accounts of a gendered self, when gender was made salient, a discernable difference is evident in the self-descriptions of men and women. While women choose some independent traits to describe themselves (ambitious and independent), they were much more likely to choose interdependent traits (approachable, understanding, dependable, committed, sociable, and courteous). In addition, women displayed a high level of agreement (9.5) of how the self should be described in this situation. In contrast, men gave more varied self-descriptions (15.5) when gender was salient. As predicted, men's self descriptions were characterised not only by independent traits (independent and ambitious) but also by a complete lack of interdependent traits, replicating traditional findings that men are not only characterised as masculine, but also as not being feminine (Bussey, 1986; Money & Ehrhardt, 1972).

Table 7.3. Self-Description Content and Agreement as a Function of Gender.

	Independent Traits		Interdependent Traits		Neutral Traits		A
Males	independent	28%			imaginative	24%	15.5
	ambitious	20%			sportsmanlike	20%	
					practical	20%	
Females	ambitious	24%	approachable	44%	intelligent	24%	9.5
	independent	20%	understanding	40%	practical	24%	
			dependable	24%			
			committed	20%			
			sociable	20%			
			courteous	20%			

Note. Table contains traits selected by more than 20% of participants in each condition.

$A_{\max} = 2.5$ ;  $A_{\min} = 37.5$ ; therefore a lower score reflects greater agreement.

### Independence and Interdependence

In order to further investigate the data through quantitative methods, we examined the number of independent and interdependent traits that each participant selected to describe themselves, displayed in Figure 7.3 as a function of gender. In order to examine the influence of gender on the number of independent and interdependent traits selected a 2 (self-definition: independent, interdependent) x 2 (gender: male, female) mixed model ANOVA was performed, with repeated measures on the first variable.

The analysis revealed a significant main effect for self-definition,  $F(1, 48) = 9.35$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .16$ , such that overall, participants were more likely to select interdependent traits to define themselves ( $M = 2.10$ ) than independent traits ( $M = 1.24$ ). However, this main effect was qualified by a significant self-definition x gender interaction,  $F(1, 48) = 32.42$ ,  $p < .001$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variance in the data,  $\eta^2 =$

.40. Analysis of simple effects revealed that, as hypothesised, female participants selected significantly more interdependent traits ( $M = 2.76$ ) than did male participants ( $M = 1.19$ ),  $F(1, 48) = 41.61, p < .001, \eta^2 = .46$ , while the opposite was the case for independent traits which were selected significantly more by male participants ( $M = 1.76$ ) than female participants ( $M = .86$ ),  $F(1, 48) = 11.47, p < .01, \eta^2 = .19$ .

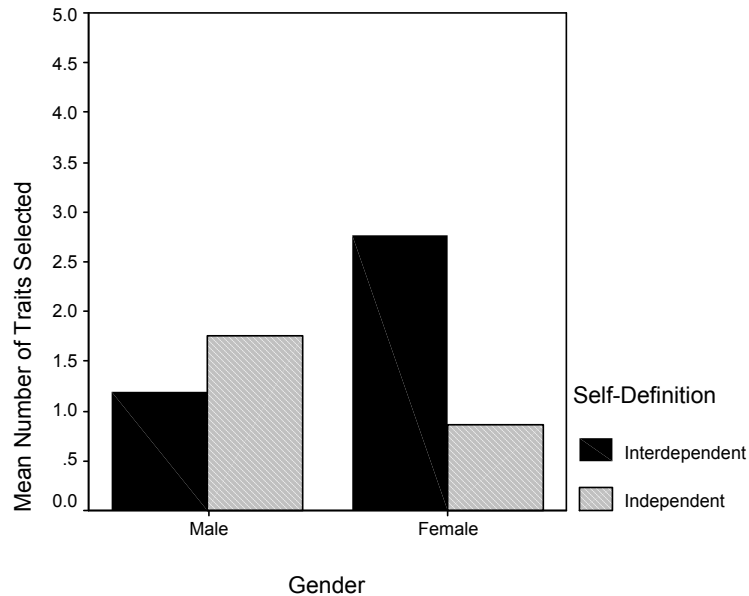


Figure 7.3. Mean Number of Interdependent and Independent Traits Selected as a Function of Gender

As in Study 1, self-scores were calculated by giving interdependent traits a score of 1, independent traits a score of  $-1$ , and neutral traits a score of 0. As can be seen from Figure 7.4, as predicted, when gender was salient, women were more likely to emphasise interdependent traits when asked to describe themselves ( $M = 1.96$ ) than were men ( $M = -0.57$ ) who placed a greater emphasis on independent traits,  $t(48) = 5.69, p < .001$ .

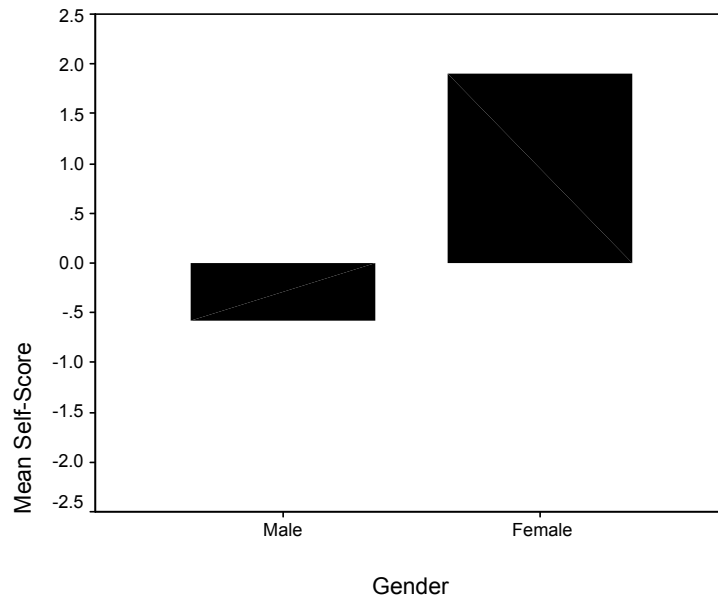


Figure 7.4. *Study 2: Self scores as a function of gender*

*Note:* Positive scores indicate a more interdependent self-description while negative scores indicate a more independent self-description

## Discussion

The results from Study 2 demonstrate that gender differences in self-descriptions consistent with traditional accounts of a gendered self were evident when the social category gender was made salient and the differences between men and women were emphasised. In this context, women placed a greater emphasis on interdependent traits when asked to describe themselves, compared to men who placed a greater emphasis on independent traits. In light of these findings, it is suggested that, consistent with a social identity perspective, the norms related to gender appropriate behaviour are more readily accessible under conditions of gender salience, prompting participants to act in a manner consistent with gender differences.

## General Discussion

Traditional accounts of gender and the self-concept have conceptualised the self-concept in terms of two distinct ways of seeing the self in relation to others: an

independent self emphasising unique attributes and autonomy, and an interdependent self emphasising relationships. These two ways of seeing the self have been said to have strong, stable links to gender, with men more likely to describe themselves as independent and women more likely to describe themselves as interdependent. Further, those examining the aetiology of these gender differences in self-concept tend to focus on distal causes such as childhood socialisation, and as a result, these differences are seen as stable. However, taken together, the two studies presented here are consistent with a social identity conceptualisation of the self and suggest that proximal aspects of the social context, such as perceptions of shared group membership and the norms of salient social categories, play an important role in self-definition.

This work demonstrates that the self is not a fixed property of the individual, but is a fluid and variable product of the context in which it is embedded. Study 1 suggests that perceptions of shared category membership indicate how the self should be defined in relation to others, with participants seeing themselves as interdependent in the context of similar ingroups and independent in the context of dissimilar outgroups. Further, no gender differences in independence and interdependence were apparent in these specific contexts. However, the results from Study 2 suggest that traditional finding of gender differences in self-descriptions can be replicated under conditions where the social category gender is made salient.

Jointly, the studies presented here suggest that when predicting how individuals describe themselves, it is the proximal aspects of the context that are important, rather than gender per se. In Study 1, it was the categorisation process and the nature of the self-other relationship which affected self-definition, while in Study 2, it was the norms and expectations associated with gender. However, as outlined in Chapter 5, distal factors, such as childhood socialisation and societal stereotypes still come into play, as it is these factors that contribute to an understanding of what these shared norms are.

These studies therefore support the suggestion made by Deaux & Major (1987) for an interactive account of gender differences that looks at a combination of both distal and proximal factors. While distal factors may have an important impact on the content of shared beliefs and norms, it is proximal factors in the social context that indicate which norms are appropriate guidelines in a given situation, such as gender norms, peer group norms, or other ingroup norms

It should be noted, however, that in Study 1 each participant completed the self-description task with a different group in mind and, *in general*, thinking about similar ingroups increased the likelihood of defining the self in interdependent terms while thinking about dissimilar outgroups increased the likelihood of defining the self in terms of independent traits. Thus, it was the process of categorisation and perceptions of shared group membership that determined the way in which our participants defined themselves. However, we would not like to claim that this pattern of results would always be the case. For example, it is likely that making salient an ingroup that had very strong norms for independence (e.g., Americans) would lead individuals to define themselves as more independent. Indeed, we believe that this is the very process that occurred in the Study 2 when gender was made salient. Under these conditions having their ingroup salient led men to describe themselves as more independent. Future research could examine the way in which the salience of *specific* ingroups and outgroups, with varying norms, affect self-descriptions. Such an approach would also allow for more control over the salient groups, and rule out any possible confounds due to differences in the groups generated.

The finding of context dependence in the realm of self-definition has important implications for many other areas of psychology. As stated in the Chapter 4, many theorists use an assumption of stable gender differences to explain other behavioural and cognitive differences such as moral reasoning and ways of knowing. Our results suggest that such analyses need to take into account the flexibility of the self-concept



and recognise that this implies the context dependence and malleability of many other gender differences previously thought to be stable. The following chapters will present a series of studies investigating the way in which proximal aspects of the social context, such as shared group membership and gender salience, affect the way in which individuals think about moral problems (Chapter 8 and 9) and the way in which they approach moral problems (Chapters 10 and 11).

## CHAPTER 8

### Group and Gender Norms for Moral Reasoning:

#### Study 3 and Study 4

##### Introduction

In Chapter 7 we reported two empirical studies challenging the traditional notions of a gendered self that is stable across time and situation. These findings in the area of the independent and interdependent self-concept have important ramifications for many other areas of psychology. As we have seen in Chapter 4, the distinction between an independent self and an interdependent self has been extremely influential, and has been employed by a range of theorists as a basis to explain gender differences across a range of different psychological phenomenon (see Cross & Madson, 1997, and Markus & Oyserman, 1989, for reviews). More specifically, Chapter 4 details the way in which the notion of a stable gendered self has been implicated in the explanation of differences in the ways men and women think and reason about moral issues.

This area of research, linking the gendered self and moral reasoning, was first pioneered by Carol Gilligan (1982, 1987; Gilligan et al., 1988) with her formulation of an ethic of care. As we have seen in Chapter 4, Gilligan's research puts forward three major claims. Firstly, drawing on previous work on a gendered self, such as that by Chodorow (1978), Gilligan (1982, 1988; see also Lyons, 1983) makes the distinction between two gender-related ways of seeing the self in relation to others: the masculine separate self (commensurate with the independent self) and the feminine connected self (commensurate with the interdependent self). Secondly, these two ways of seeing the self in relation to others are seen to be causally related to two different orientations to moral reasoning, that of justice and that of care. A justice orientation emphasises fairness and equality. Dilemmas are solved through the application of rules and

principles in an objective fashion, and thus necessitate a self-concept defined in terms of independence. In contrast, a care orientation emphasises well-being and the maintenance of relationships. Dilemmas tend to be resolved in terms of attentiveness, responsiveness, and engagement and thus require an interdependent self-concept. The final and perhaps most controversial point that Gilligan makes is that these two moral orientations are gender related, with men more likely than women to use a justice approach and women more likely than men to use a care approach.

As with other theories of independence and interdependence, Gilligan's (1982; Gilligan & Wiggins, 1988) work rests on an assumption that the self-concept (and hence moral orientation) is determined by distal factors such as mothering and childhood socialisation. As a result both the self-concept and moral reasoning are seen to be relatively stable over time and across context. However, the literature reviewed in Chapter 4 demonstrates mixed and often contradictory evidence for stable gender-related differences in moral reasoning. While some research indicates moral orientation to be related to gender (Jaffe & Hyde, 2000; Skoe et al., 1996; Skoe et al., 1999) and stable over time (e.g., Eisenberg et al., 2002; Ford & Lowery, 1986; Gump et al., 2000), there is also evidence that suggests that moral orientation is highly variable and dependent upon a range of demographic, methodological, and most importantly, contextual factors (e.g., Crandall et al., 1999; Jaffee & Hyde, 2000; Pratt et al., 1988; Sissons & Ryan, 2003; Walker, 1991; Wark & Krebs, 1996)

Indeed, the importance of social context as a determinant of moral reasoning is consistent with the social identity analysis of the self-concept and gender outlined in Chapter 5 and is also in line with the results of Study 1 and Study 2 reported in Chapter 7. The results of these empirical studies suggest that the way in which people define themselves as either independent or interdependent is flexible across situations and is dependent on the proximal aspects of the social context. In Study 1 we demonstrated that in the context of similar ingroups, individuals are more likely to describe themselves

as interdependent, while in the context of dissimilar outgroups, individuals are more likely to describe themselves as independent. In these group contexts, gender differences were not apparent. However, in Study 2 we demonstrated that gender differences were apparent when gender was made salient, with women more likely to see themselves as interdependent and men to see themselves as independent.

As we have argued in Chapter 6, given the relationship that is said to exist between the self-concept and moral reasoning and ways of knowing, an individual's moral orientation and their approach to knowledge and learning can also be seen as variable, depending on the context in which it is utilised:

**H6: Attitudes and behaviours associated with the independent and interdependent self will be dependent upon the proximal aspects of the social context and the nature of the self-other relationship**

However, we cannot simply rely on the link between the independent and interdependent self and moral reasoning to hypothesise that moral reasoning is context dependent. In Chapter 7 we argued that the context dependence of the self-concept was partly due to salient norms and expectations about how to define the self in a given situation. More specifically, the social identity perspective suggests that when people define themselves in terms of a particular shared social category membership there is an increase in the likelihood that an individual will act in line with the norms associated with that group (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1987).

On this basis, we expect that, just as there are norms and expectations about how to define the self in particular contexts, there will also be norms and expectations associated with moral reasoning. Just as we don't see ourselves and others in identical

ways across time and situations, we are not expected to reason about all moral problems in the same manner:

**H7: Clear norms exist about appropriate ways to approach moral dilemmas. There are norms that are associated with gender, as well as norms that are associated with interacting with ingroup and outgroup members.**

The two studies presented in this chapter follow on from the findings related to gender and shared category membership presented in Chapter 7. They extend this analysis by investigating the norms and expectations associated with the way in which people approach moral problems in differing social contexts. Study 3 investigates whether there exist differential expectations about the way in which men and women approach moral reasoning. Study 4 investigates whether there exist differential expectations about the way in which individuals approach moral problems in the context of ingroup and outgroup members

### **Study 3: Gender Norms for Moral Reasoning**

The aim of Study 3 is to examine the nature of gender norms and expectations related to moral reasoning. As we have seen, clear gender norms are apparent in relation to the independent and interdependent self-concept. Given that such a close causal relationship is said to exist between the gendered self and care and justice orientation (Gilligan, 1982, Lyons, 1983), and the fact that the nature of the care and justice orientations, with their emphasis on relations and objectivity, so closely resembles previously established gender norms and expectations, it is possible to hypothesise the nature of gender differences in moral orientation.

It is anticipated that, given either a male or a female target in a hypothetical dilemma, participants will be more likely to see care considerations as important to the female target and justice considerations as important to the male target. Further, it is hypothesised that, in comparison to the male target, the female target will be seen to identify more with, and see herself as more similar to, individuals involved in a dilemma. Finally it is anticipated that participants will believe that a member of the opposite gender will act differently, with males seen as more likely to be concerned about justice considerations and females to be concerned about care.

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

Participants were 38 high-school students (30 female, 8 male) visiting The Australian National University (ANU) as part of a school excursion. Participants were randomly allocated to one of two experimental conditions where the gender of the target in the scenario was manipulated. The experiment thus had a 2 (gender of participant: male and female) by 2 (gender of target: male and female) between-participants design.

### **Procedure**

Participants read a brief description of a scenario involving a student at The Australian National University (see Appendix C). The gender of the target was manipulated between participants and was described as either a female student named Susan or a male student named Matthew. The scenario described the student involved in a moral dilemma: whether to borrow a book from the library for a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) student (a non-university tertiary student, equivalent to community college student in the USA or polytechnic student in the UK) risking the

possibility of fines in order to help out another student. Participants were asked to briefly describe (a) what the problem was and (b) what they thought the student would do.

Participants then responded to a series of questions regarding how important they thought a range of care and justice considerations would be to the student target. These considerations were derived from Lyons (1983) scheme for coding considerations of care and justice (see Appendix J). Care considerations included being able to trust, helping a person in need, feeling good about responses, not being perceived as mean, not hurting another, avoiding conflict, and taking into account the specific aspects of the situation. Justice considerations included not getting into trouble, following the rules, not having to pay fines, feeling obliged to help, reciprocal help, and following general principles of right and wrong. Participants indicated how important they thought each consideration would be to the target on a 9-point scale from 1 (not at all important) to 9 (very important).

Participants were then asked to indicate how much they thought the target would identify with, and feel similar to, the TAFE student, and how important they thought the gender of the target was when completing the questionnaire, from 1 (not at all) to 9 (very much). Participants were then asked if they thought a student of the opposite gender to the target would have acted differently in the same situation (from 1, not at all differently, to 9, very differently) and what they thought would be that student's most important consideration (not getting in trouble, helping someone in need, following the rules or avoiding conflict). Finally, participants completed some basic demographic questions, and on completion of the study, were debriefed in full.

## Results

### Care and Justice Considerations

The results consisted of participants' perceptions of how important care and justice considerations would be to the target. In order to ensure that the considerations described in the questionnaire did in fact reflect care and justice considerations an agglomerative hierarchical cluster analysis was performed using a complete linkage method. As expected, the analysis revealed two distinct clusters of considerations: (1) care considerations (trust, helping, feeling good, not being mean, not hurting another, avoiding conflict, and taking into account specificities) and (2) justice considerations (avoiding trouble, following rules, not paying fines, feeling obliged, reciprocal help, and following general principles). As a result, participants' responses to these questions were averaged to form a measure of importance of care considerations ( $\alpha = .69$ ) and a measure of importance of justice considerations ( $\alpha = .69$ ). The means are displayed in Figure 8.1 as a function of gender of target.

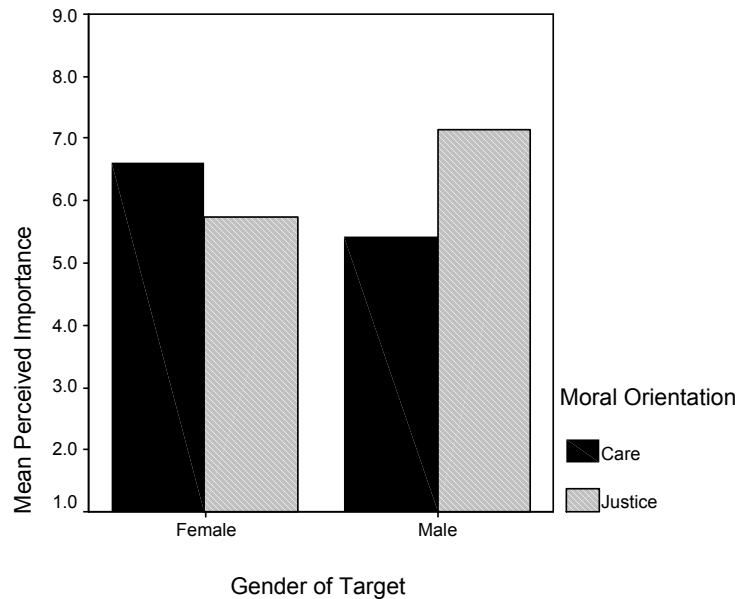


Figure 8.1. *Importance of Care and Justice Considerations as a Function of Gender of Target.*



In order to investigate the effects of the gender of the target and the gender of the participant on the perceived importance of care and justice considerations, a 2 (moral orientation: care, justice) x 2 (gender of the target: male, female) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) mixed model analysis of variance (ANOVA), with repeated measures on the first variable, was performed. The analysis revealed a main effect for moral orientation,  $F(1, 34) = 4.74, p < .05, \eta^2 = .12$ , such that participants believed that overall, targets would place a greater importance on justice considerations ( $M = 6.42$ ) than on care considerations ( $M = 6.06$ ). However, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction between moral orientation and the gender of the target,  $F(1, 34) = 26.70, p < .001$ , which accounted for a large proportion on the variance in the data ( $\eta^2 = .44$ ).

Analysis of simple effects revealed that, as predicted, participants perceived care considerations to be significantly more important to a female target ( $M = 6.62$ ) than a male target ( $M = 5.42$ ),  $F(1, 34) = 18.18, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35$ , while justice considerations were seen to be significantly more important to a male target ( $M = 7.12$ ) than a female target ( $M = 5.75$ ),  $F(1, 34) = 17.41, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$ .

### **Identification and Similarity**

In order to investigate the degree to which participants thought that the target would identify with the TAFE student, an identification score ( $\alpha = .81$ ) was calculated by collapsing the questions: 'How much do you think (the target) would identify with the TAFE student?' and 'How similar do you think (the target) would feel to the TAFE student?' The means for perceived identification are displayed in Figure 8.2 as a function of the gender of the target and gender of the participant. In order to investigate the effects of the gender of the target and the gender of the participant on perceived

identification a 2 (gender of the target: male, female) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) between-participants ANOVA was performed.

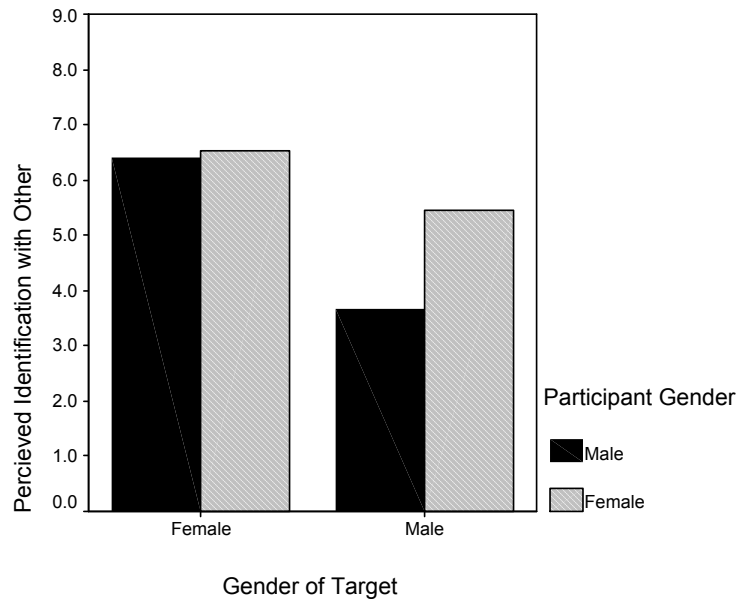


Figure 8.2. *Perceived Identification with Other as a Function of Gender of Target and Gender of Participant.*

The analysis of identification revealed, as predicted, a main effect for gender of target,  $F(1, 34) = 6.54, p < .05, \eta^2 = .16$ , with participants perceiving that a female target would identify significantly more with the TAFE student ( $M = 6.20$ ) than a male target ( $M = 5.25$ ). The analysis also revealed a significant main effect for gender of the participant,  $F(1, 34) = 5.36, p < .05, \eta^2 = .14$ , with female participants perceiving that overall the target would feel more similar to the TAFE student ( $M = 5.97$ ) than did male participants ( $M = 4.94$ ). There was no significant interaction,  $F(1, 34) = 1.24, ns$ .

### **The Importance of Gender**

Overall, participants believed that the gender of the target was moderately important ( $M = 4.42$ ) when deciding what they would do and they believed that a student of the opposite gender to the target would have acted more than moderately differently

from the target ( $M = 6.05$ ). Analysis of variance revealed that these perceptions did not vary with either the gender of the target or the gender of the participant.

Participants were asked to indicate what an individual of the opposite gender to the target would have done. Responses to the question “what do you think would have been a male (female) student’s most important consideration?” were coded as being either a care consideration (avoiding conflict, helping) or a justice consideration (avoiding trouble, following rules) and these results are displayed in Table 8.1 as a function of gender. As can be seen, participants indicated that a male student would be equally likely to see a care or a justice consideration as most important, however a female student was seen as being significantly more likely to see a care consideration as important (94%) than a justice consideration (6%),  $\chi^2(1) = 7.81, p < .01$

*Table 8.1. Most Important Consideration of Opposite Gender as a Function of Gender*

		Most Important Consideration			
		Justice	Care	Total	
Gender	Male	Count	9	9	18
		% within gender	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	1	15	16
		% within gender	6%	94%	100.0%
	Total	Count	10	24	34
		% within gender	30%	70%	100.0%

## Discussion

The results provide good support for the existence of gender-related norms and expectations in the realm of moral reasoning. Our participants predicted that hypothetical targets would behave in line with our hypothesised gender norms, with female targets seeing care considerations as more important than justice ones, and male

targets seeing justice considerations as more important than care considerations. Further, female targets were expected to identify more strongly with the TAFE students than their male counterparts.

Interestingly, when asked directly, participants said they viewed the target's gender as of only moderate importance when considering their responses, however, they did expect a member of the opposite gender to the target to act more than moderately differently. Participants indicated that although males would be equally likely to see care and justice considerations as important, females were seen to almost exclusively see a care consideration as most important.

#### **Study 4: Group-Based Norms for Moral Reasoning**

The results from Study 3 provide support for the notion of gender-related norms and expectations in the realm of moral reasoning. Our participants predicted that the male and female targets would differ significantly, with female targets seeing care considerations as more important than justice ones, and male targets seeing justice considerations as more important than care considerations. Further, female targets were seen to identify more strongly with the TAFE students than their male counterparts.

However, norms also exist for situations involving ingroup and outgroup members. While gender norms may exist this does not necessarily mean that men and women are expected to act towards all people in the same way, or to think about all problems in the same manner. As we have seen in Study 1, the salience of group memberships had a significant effect on the way in which individuals described themselves. Given the relationship that is said to exist between the independent and interdependent self and moral orientation we can hypothesise that group membership will be equally important to moral orientation.

In order to investigate these norms a forth study was conducted with a methodology similar to that of Study 3. Participants were again presented with the library dilemma involving a target, Person X, who interacted with a target who was either an ingroup member (from the same university) or outgroup member (from another university). It was anticipated that participants would be more likely to see care considerations as important in the situation involving the ingroup member and justice considerations as more important in the situation involving the outgroup member.

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

Participants were 45 first year psychology students from The Australian National University (29 female, 16 male). Participants were randomly allocated to one of two experimental conditions where the group membership of the person with whom the target interacted was manipulated. The experiment thus had a 2 (gender of participant: male and female) x 2 (group membership: ingroup, outgroup) between-participants design.

### **Procedure**

Participants read a description of a scenario involving a student at The Australian National University similar to that used in study 3 (see Appendix D). The scenario described a target (Person X) involved in a moral dilemma: whether to borrow a book from the library for another student risking the possibility of fines in order to help out another student. The group membership of this other student was manipulated so that they were either an ingroup member (from the same university) or an outgroup member (from another university). Participants were asked to briefly describe (a) what the problem was and (b) what they thought the student would do.

Participants then responded to the same series of questions used in Study 3, indicating, on a 9-point scale from 1 (not at all important) to 9 (very important), how important they thought a range of care and justice considerations would be to the target. Participants were then asked to indicate how much they thought the target student would identify with, and feel similar to, the other student. Finally, participants completed some basic demographic questions, and on completion of the study, were debriefed in full.

## Results

### Care and Justice Considerations

The results consisted of participants' perceptions of how important care and justice considerations would be to the target. As in Study 3 participants' responses to these questions were averaged to form a measure of importance of care considerations and a measure of importance of justice considerations. The means are displayed in Figure 8.4 as a function of group membership.

In order to investigate the effects of group membership and the gender of the participant on the perceived importance of care and justice considerations, a 2 (moral orientation: care, justice) x 2 (group membership: ingroup, outgroup) x 2 (gender of participant) mixed-model analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed with repeated measures on the first factor. The analysis revealed a significant main effect for moral orientation,  $F(1, 41) = 4.95$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .11$ , with participants perceiving justice considerations to be significantly more important overall ( $M = 6.38$ ) than care considerations ( $M = 6.10$ ). However, this was qualified by a group membership by moral orientation interaction,  $F(1, 41) = 34.44$ ,  $p < .001$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variance in the data,  $\eta^2 = .46$ . Analysis of simple effects revealed that in a context that involves an ingroup member, participants believe that targets will see care considerations ( $M = 6.81$ ) as more important than justice considerations ( $M = 6.28$ ),  $F(1,$

41) = 6.72 ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .14$ . In contrast, when an outgroup member is involved the opposite is true with justice considerations ( $M = 6.48$ ) being seen as more important to targets than care considerations ( $M = 5.34$ ),  $F(1, 41) = 32.36$  ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .44$ .

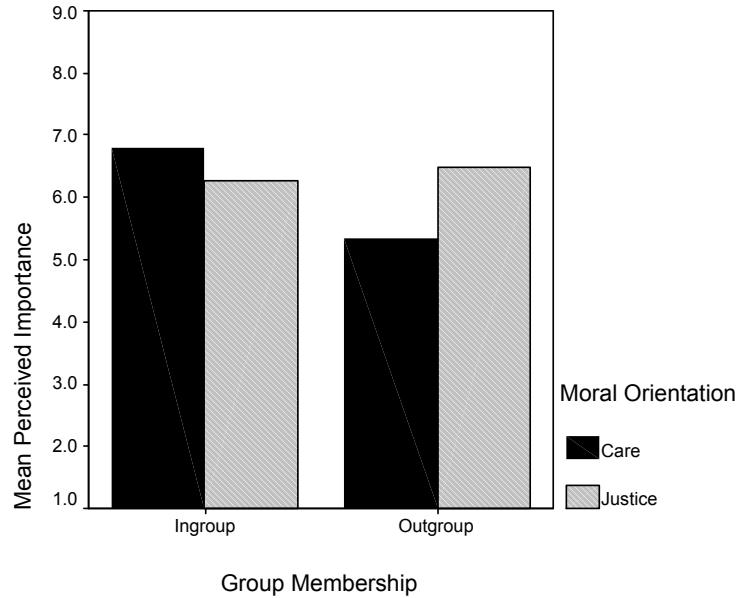


Figure 8.4. *Perceived Importance of Care and Justice Considerations as a Function of Group Membership.*

### Identification and Similarity

As in Study 3, an identification score ( $\alpha = .83$ ) was calculated by collapsing the questions: 'How much do you think Person X would identify with the other student?' and 'How similar do you think Person X would feel to the other student?' The means for perceived identification are displayed in Figure 8.4 as a function of group membership and gender of the participant. In order to investigate the effects of group membership and the gender of the participant on perceived identification a 2 (group membership: ingroup, outgroup) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) between-participants ANOVA was performed.

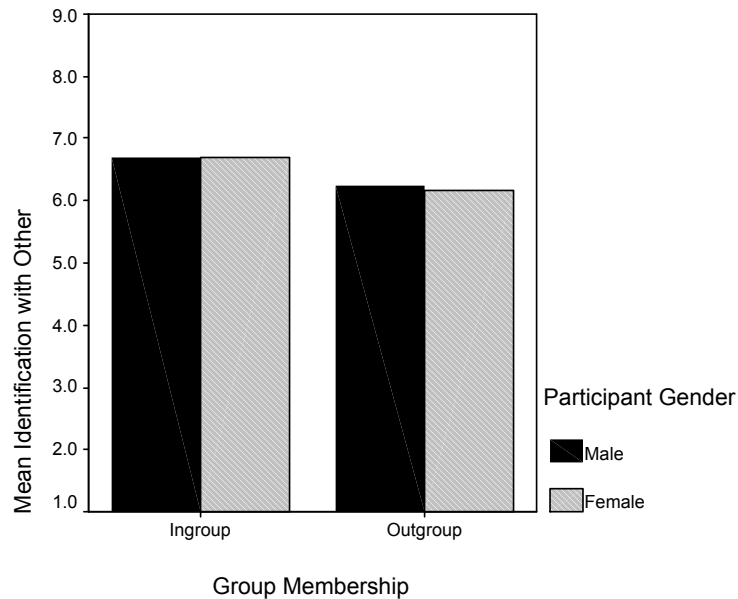


Figure 8.4. *Perceived Identification with Other as a Function of Group Membership and Gender of Participant.*

Overall, participants believed that the target would identify relatively highly with the other student ( $M = 6.07$ ). The analysis of variance revealed no significant main effects for group membership or gender of the participant, nor was there a significant interaction, all  $F_s < 1$ , ns. However, as can be seen from Figure 8.4, the trend in the data was in the hypothesised direction, with participants perceiving that the target would identify more with the ingroup member ( $M = 6.22$ ) than a male target ( $M = 5.90$ ), although this difference was not significant.

## Discussion

The results provide good support for the existence of group membership-related norms and expectations in the realm of moral reasoning. Our participants predicted that a hypothetical target would behave in line with our hypothesised group-related norms. Participants believed that, in a context that involved an ingroup member, targets would see care considerations as more important than justice ones, while in a context that involved an outgroup member, targets would see justice considerations as more



important than care considerations. Further, trends in the data suggest that targets were seen to identify more strongly with ingroup members than outgroup members.

### **General Discussion**

Traditional accounts of gender and moral reasoning have outlined two distinct moral orientations that are related to different ways of seeing the self in relation to others. While a care orientation draws on the interdependent self and emphasises the maintenance of relationships, a justice orientation draws on the independent self-concept and emphasises fairness and equality. These two moral orientations have been said to have strong links to gender, with men more likely to use a justice orientation and women more likely to use a care orientation. Further, traditional accounts of moral reasoning have conceptualised these differences as stable across time and situation, with individuals tending to focus on one orientation or the other.

However, taken together, the two studies presented here question this notion of stability in moral reasoning and are consistent with a social identity conceptualisation of the self. They are also consistent with the results from Study 1 and Study 2 that suggest that proximal aspects of the social context, such as perceptions of shared group membership, the nature of the self-other relations, and salient social categories, play an important role in self-definition and thus in the norms employed in moral reasoning.

The results from Study 3 and Study 4 demonstrate that there are clear norms and expectations associated with moral reasoning. Study 3 suggests that there are clear, gender-related norms that are in line with traditional accounts of moral reasoning. Further, participants acknowledged the importance of gender as a determinant of moral orientation, recognising that a target of the other gender would reason in a different manner. However, the results from Study 4 suggest that categorisation per se is also an

important determinant of moral reasoning, and that norms and expectations also exist in relation to how we reason about problems involving ingroup and outgroup members.

Now that we have established that there are clear norms and expectations about moral reasoning in relation to both gender and group membership, we need to ascertain whether these differential norms and expectations will lead to individuals to look to proximal aspects of their social context to determine appropriate moral reasoning behaviour. To this end, Chapter 9 presents two studies designed to investigate the way in which proximal aspects of the social context, such as shared group membership and gender salience, affect the way in which individuals think about moral problems.

## CHAPTER 9

### **Moral Reasoning: Study 5 and Study 6**

#### **Introduction**

In Chapter 8 we reported two empirical studies that point to the existence of context-dependent group-based norms in moral reasoning. As such, these studies challenge the traditional accounts that depict moral reasoning as stable across time and situation. As we have seen in Chapter 4, and have summarised in Chapter 8, traditional accounts of moral reasoning describe two distinct ways of thinking about moral problems, that of justice and that of care (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan et al., 1988). While a justice orientation requires an independent self in order to emphasise fairness and the objective application of rules and principles; a care orientation requires an interdependent self in order to emphasise the maintenance of relationships and responsiveness.

Such an approach to moral reasoning has relied on the notion of a stable and gender-related self-concept (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989). Thus, moral reasoning is also conceptualised as being relatively stable, both over time and across context, with individuals seen to have a tendency to focus on either a care or a justice orientation (e.g., Gilligan, 1982, Gilligan et al., 1988). Further, theorists see moral reasoning as being closely related to gender, such that women are more likely to have a care orientation, while men are more likely to have a justice orientation.

However, the studies we have presented in Chapter 8 provide initial evidence that moral reasoning might not necessarily be stable. The results of these studies are in line with previous research pointing to the importance of social context in determining

moral reasoning (e.g., Crandall et al., 1999; Jaffee & Hyde, 2000; Pratt et al., 1988; Sissons & Ryan, 2003; Walker, 1991; Wark & Krebs, 1996) and with a social identity analysis of the self-concept and gender. Study 3 and Study 4 suggest that there are clear norms and expectations about the way in which to approach moral problems, and that these norms differ across situations. Study 3 confirms that there are gender-related norms associated with moral reasoning, such that women are expected to place an emphasis on a care orientation while men are expected to place an emphasis on justice. However, Study 4 suggests that there are also norms and expectations in relation to how moral dilemmas should be approached in the context of ingroups and outgroups. While people are expected to emphasise a care orientation in a context that involves ingroup members, they are expected to emphasise a justice orientation in a context involving outgroup members.

Such an analysis is consistent with evidence that suggests that an individual's moral orientation is not always stable (e.g., Walker, 1984) with some researchers suggesting that the gender differences found by Gilligan may simply be a product of the content of the autobiographical dilemmas recounted by her participants (Pratt et al., 1988; Walker, 1991). For example, Walker performed a post-hoc content analysis of the dilemmas that participants recounted, introducing a distinction between personal and impersonal dilemmas. Personal dilemmas were defined as involving a specific person or group with a significant and continuing relationship with the participant. In contrast, impersonal dilemmas were defined as those involving people not well known to the participant, who were unspecified or generalised, or those dilemmas intrinsic to the self. Walker found that personal dilemmas elicited more care responses than did the impersonal dilemmas, concluding that "...the nature of the dilemma better predicts moral orientation than does individuals' sex..." (1991, p. 342; see also Crandall et al., 1999).

Although the effect of social context on moral reasoning has been investigated conceptually within the ethic of care framework, it has not been investigated empirically. The studies by Walker (1991) and Pratt et al. (1988), demonstrating that personal dilemmas (involving friends) elicited more care responses than did the impersonal dilemmas (involving strangers), have utilised post-hoc content analyses of participants' autobiographical dilemmas, rather than systematic and empirical manipulation of variables.

To this end, the two studies presented in this chapter seek to extend the analysis of the context-dependence of moral reasoning by seeking to confirm the norms and expectations demonstrated in Study 3 and Study 4. Study 5 and Study 6 empirically investigate the way in which men and women reason about a hypothetical moral problem in differing social contexts: in the context on an ingroup member, in the context on an outgroup member, and when gender is salient.

### **Study 5: The Context Dependence of Moral Reasoning**

The social identity perspective suggests that proximal aspects of the social context play an important role in determining the way in which individuals think about and solve a moral dilemma. In particular, the perspective suggests that the nature of the relationship between the self and another person involved in the dilemma will be an influential factor, as will the norms and expectations that apply in a given situation.

On the basis of the results found in Study 3 and Study 4 (and informed by our findings from Study 1 and study 2), it is likely that a moral dilemma involving an ingroup member will be more likely to elicit an interdependent self-definition, emphasising the maintenance of relationships and responsive and empathic solutions. In contrast, a moral dilemma involving an outgroup member will be more likely to elicit an independent self-definition, emphasising fairness and equality and solutions involving objective

reasoning and the application of rules. We can therefore propose the following hypothesis:

**H8: In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to use a care orientation to moral reasoning compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to use a justice orientation.**

In the studies we have presented thus far, manipulations of group membership and the nature of the self-other relationship have varied the identity of the other so that they are either an ingroup or an outgroup member. However, the hierarchal nature of self-categorisation proposed by the social identity perspective also allows us to manipulate the nature of the self-other relationship by varying self-categorisation. If the self is categorised at a low level of abstraction, the other is seen as an outgroup member, while categorisation at a higher level of abstraction renders the other as an ingroup member. In this way, the identity of the other can remain constant and unconfounded with social context, while the nature of the self-other relationship can be varied.

Therefore, it is hypothesised that when participants define themselves at a more inclusive level of categorisation, thus incorporating the other as part of their self-categorisation, they will see that person as an ingroup member and be more likely use a care approach to moral reasoning. In contrast, when participants define themselves at a less inclusive level of categorisation, thus excluding the other from their self-categorisation, they will see that person as an outgroup member and be more likely use a justice approach to moral reasoning.

Such a hypothesis does not, however, necessarily discount findings of gender differences in moral reasoning. Rather, it is proposed that concrete differences in social context can moderate these gender differences, and that gender differences are not appropriate at all times. Based on the social identity analysis of salience and group norms, gender differences in line with gender norms and expectations will occur when the social context indicates that this is appropriate. Thus, the following hypothesis can be made:

**H9: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to use a care orientation to moral reasoning, while men will be more likely than women to use a justice orientation.**

## **Method**

### **Overview**

Participants were administered a 5 page 'social reasoning' questionnaire which included basic demographic questions, a description of a moral dilemma and a series of questions regarding the dilemma and their self-concept. Participants were tested in small groups, completing the questionnaire individually and working at their own pace, with the questionnaire taking between 20 and 30 minutes to complete.

### **Participants**

Participants were 102 undergraduate psychology students at The Australian National University (ANU). Of these, 85 were first-year psychology students participating as part of course requirements. The remainder of participants were third-year psychology students who took part on a voluntary basis, and completed the

questionnaire during scheduled laboratory sessions. There were 61 females and 41 males, whose age ranged from 17 to 38 years, with a median age of 19 years.

## **Design**

Participants were randomly assigned to one of 3 experimental conditions where a particular self-category was made salient. This manipulation served to vary the nature of the self-other relationship or to make salient the self-category gender. The moral dilemma used in the study involved a TAFE student (a non-university tertiary student, equivalent to community college student in the USA or polytechnic student in the UK) who could be conceptualised as either an ingroup member if the self-category 'tertiary student' was salient or an outgroup member if the social category 'ANU student' was made salient. Further, the nature of the self-other relationship is ambiguous if the salient self-category is gender, as the gender of the target is not specified. The experiment thus had a 2 (gender: male and female) by 3 (salient self-category: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) between-participants design. The primary dependent variable was moral orientation, measured as the percentage of care and justice responses given by each participant.

## **Procedure**

Participants first completed some basic demographic questions including their age and gender. Participants were told that the study examined how they approached issues of social reasoning. In order to manipulate self-category salience participants were told that the study was interested in them as either (a) *a tertiary student* (as opposed to staff members), (b) *an ANU student* (as opposed to students at different tertiary institutions), or (c) *a man or a woman* (as opposed to a woman or a man) (see Appendix E).



Participants were then asked to put themselves into a hypothetical situation involving a TAFE student and were given the following facts:

You are in the university library just on closing time about to borrow a book.

An individual comes up to you and explains that they are a TAFE student and that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have due tomorrow.

They explain that as a TAFE student they are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a library card. They ask you if you will borrow the book for them on your library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible, explaining that if they don't have this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, you realise that if the book is returned late, or not at all, you will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book at your own expense.

The information about the situation was balanced with both care oriented facts (e.g. the opportunity to help someone in need) and justice orientated facts (e.g. the fact that there are rules and procedures to be followed). However, in order to allow participants to fully construct their own dilemma the moral issue was not made explicit. Instead, participants described, in their own words, what the problem was for them and then briefly described what they would do.

The main dependent variable was participants' moral orientation in response to the library scenario. In order to measure the degree to which participants used care and justice considerations in coming to their decisions, respondents were asked to describe

five important factors that they considered while deciding whether or not to borrow the book for the TAFE student.

As a manipulation check for self-category salience, participants were given three social categories which they could use to describe themselves – as a *tertiary student*, as an *ANU student* and in terms of their *gender*, either male or female. Participants were then asked to think of how they saw themselves ‘at this point in time’ and ranked the importance of the social categories from 1 to 3 where 1 was *most important* and 3 was *least important*. Participants then completed a series of identification measures in order to assess their level of identification with each of the three social categories:

When considering the situation how much did you think of yourself (as a tertiary student in general / as an ANU student / in terms of your gender)?

At this point in time, how *similar* do you see yourself to (other tertiary student / other ANU students /people of the same gender as yourself)?

Participants indicated their responses to these questions on a 9-point scale (from 1, *not at all*, to 5, *moderately*, to 9, *very much*). Participants were also asked to indicate how similar they felt to the TAFE student on a 9-point scale (from 1, *not at all*, to 5, *moderately*, to 9, *very much*).

Following the questionnaire participants were debriefed in full.

### **Coding and Measures**

Following the procedures set out by Lyons’ (1983) coding scheme (see Appendix J), each of the considerations were coded, blind to participants’ gender and experimental condition, as being either of a care or a justice orientation. Ten per cent of the considerations were selected randomly to establish inter-rater reliability,. Agreement was found to be 88%

A percent care score (as used by Lyons, 1983 and Walker, 1991) was calculated for each participant as the percentage of all considerations which reflected a care orientation. As Walker (1991) notes, a percent justice score would be complementary to the percent care score, and as such, the additional analysis of such a variable would be redundant.

## Results

### Manipulation Checks

#### Social Category Salience

In order to investigate whether the manipulation of social category salience was successful, a chi-square analysis was performed between the experimental condition and participants' self-categorisation, as measured by the self-category ranked as most important at the time of the experiment (see Table 9.1). It was found that there was no relationship between salient social category and self-categorisation,  $\chi^2(4) = 4.23, ns$ .

Table 9.1. Reported Self-Categorization as a Function of Salient Social Category.

Salient Social Category		Self-Categorisation		
		Tertiary Student	ANU Student	Gender
Tertiary Student	Count	8	17	8
	% within Context	24%	56%	24%
ANU Student	Count	16	13	8
	% within Context	43%	35%	22%
Gender	Count	13	10	9
	% within Context	41%	31%	28%

In order to assess participants' level of identification three identification measures - identification with tertiary students, identification with ANU students, identification with gender - were formed by averaging responses indicating how much participants thought

of themselves as category members and how similar they saw themselves to other category members. Means are displayed in Figure 9.1 as a function of salient social context.

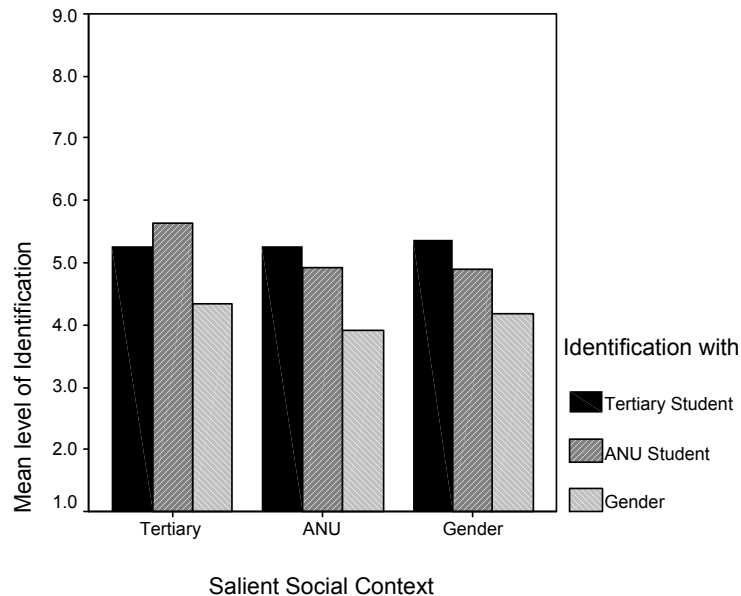


Figure 9.1. *Mean Level of Identification as a Function of Salient Social Context*

In order to investigate participants' level of identification as a function of salient social context a 3 (salient social context: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) x 3 (identification: tertiary student, ANU student, gender), ANOVA was performed with identification as a within-participants factor. Analyses revealed a significant main effect for identification,  $F(2, 99) = 18.75, p < .001, \eta^2 = .16$ , with participants identifying significantly less with their gender ( $M = 4.14$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 5.14, t(101) = 5.02, p < .001$ ) or ANU students ( $M = 5.30, t(101) = 4.57, p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between levels of identification with tertiary students and ANU students,  $t(101) = 1.03, ns$ . There was no main effect for salient social context,  $F(2, 198) = 1.01, ns$ , nor was there a significant interaction,  $F(2, 198) < 1, ns$ . On the basis of these results, it was therefore concluded that the experimental manipulation was not successful.

## Self-Categorisation

Although the experimental manipulation of self-category salience was unsuccessful the relationship between self-categorisation and moral reasoning style can still be investigated by looking directly at participants' reported self-categorisation and other identification measures. It was found that in the context of the experiment, of the 134 participants, 37 (36%) categorised themselves as tertiary students in general, 45 (39%) categorised as ANU students in particular, and 25 (25%) categorised themselves in terms of their gender. Chi-square analysis revealed that participants' gender did not significantly affect their self-categorisation,  $\chi^2(2) = 2.7, ns$ .

Mean levels of identification are displayed in Figure 9.2 as a function of perceived self-categorisation. To investigate participants' level of identification as a function of perceived self-categorisation and gender a 3 (self-categorisation: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) x 2 (gender: male, female) x 3 (identification: tertiary student, ANU student, gender), ANOVA was performed with identification as a within-participants factor. The analysis revealed no significant main effects for either self-categorisation,  $F(2, 96) < 1, ns$ , or gender  $F(1, 96) = 2.79, ns$ , suggesting that there was no simple relationship between participants' overall level of identification and their self-categorisation or gender. Further, results revealed no significant self-categorisation by gender interaction,  $F(2,96) < 1, ns$ ; no identification by gender interaction,  $F(1, 192) < 1, ns$ ; and no 3-way interaction,  $F(4, 192) = 2.22, ns$ .

There was however, a significant main effect for identification,  $F(2, 192) = 15.83, p < .001, \eta^2 = .14$ , with participants identifying significantly less with their gender ( $M = 4.14$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 5.14, t(101) = 5.02, p < .001$ ) or ANU students ( $M = 5.30, t(101) = 4.57, p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between levels of identification with tertiary students and ANU students,  $t(101) = 1.03, ns$ . However, this main effect for identification was qualified by a significant interaction between self-

categorisation and level of identification,  $F(4, 192) = 25.48, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variance.

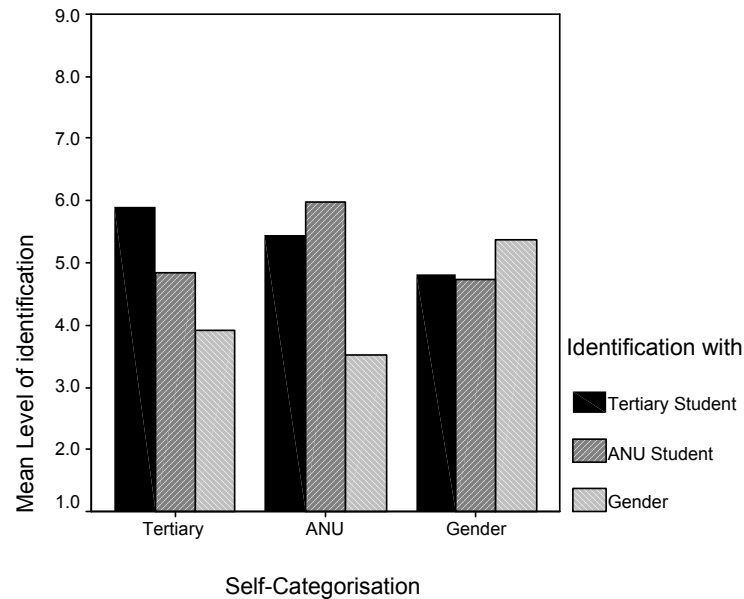


Figure 9.2. Mean Level of Identification as a Function of Self-Categorisation

Analysis of simple effects revealed that participants identified most strongly with the group to which they categorised themselves. That is, those who categorised themselves as a tertiary student displayed significantly higher levels of identification with tertiary students ( $M = 5.66$ ) than with ANU students ( $M = 4.85, p < .001$ ) or their gender ( $M = 3.92, p < .001$ ),  $F(2, 126) = 26.41, p < .001, \eta^2 = .30$ . Similarly, those who categorised themselves as ANU students displayed significantly higher levels of identification with ANU students ( $M = 5.98$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 5.44, p < .01$ ) or with their gender ( $M = 3.52, p < .001$ ),  $F(2, 126) = 53.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = .46$ . Finally, those participants categorising themselves in terms of their gender displayed higher levels of identification with their gender ( $M = 5.36$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 4.73$ ), although this difference was only marginally significant ( $p = .06$ ) and they identified more highly with their gender than with ANU students ( $M = 4.80, p < .05$ ),  $F(2, 126) = 2.80, p = .06, \eta^2 = .04$ .

### Identification with the Target

It was hypothesised that variations in self-categorisation would lead to changes in the nature of the self-other relationship by defining whether or not the target person (the TAFE student) is seen as an ingroup member. The mean level of identification with the TAFE student is displayed in Figure 9.3 as a function of self-categorisation and gender. In order to investigate the relationship between gender and self-categorisation on identification with the TAFE student, a 2 (gender: male, female) by 3 (self-categorisation: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) ANOVA was performed on participants' responses to the question 'how similar do you feel to the person asking to borrow the book?'

A significant main effect for self-categorisation was found,  $F(2,96) = 13.84, p < .001, \eta^2 = .22$ , such that those participants who categorised themselves as tertiary students saw the target person as more similar to themselves ( $M = 4.62$ ) than those who categorised as ANU students ( $M = 3.05, t(75) = 5.95, p < .001$ ). Similarly, those participants who categorised themselves in terms of their gender saw themselves as more similar to the target person ( $M = 4.12$ ) than those who categorised as ANU students ( $M = 3.05, t(63) = 3.29, p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between those participants who categorised as tertiary students and those categorised in terms of their gender,  $t(60) = 1.34, ns$ . A significant main effect was also found for gender,  $F(1,96) = 13.05, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$ , with female participants seeing the target as more similar to themselves ( $M = 4.25$ ) than did male participants ( $M = 3.34$ ).

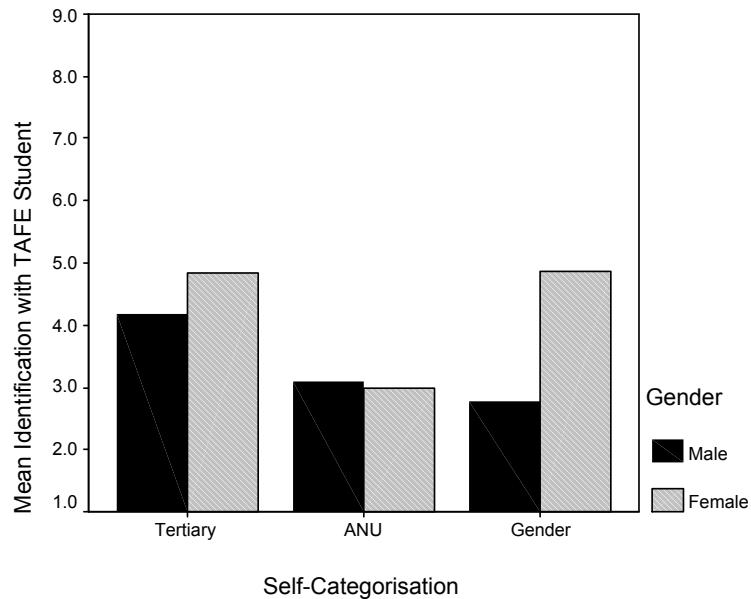


Figure 9.3. *Mean Levels of Identification with the TAFE Student as a Function of Self-Categorisation and Gender*

However, these main effects were qualified by a self-categorisation by gender interaction  $F(2,96) = 6.41, p < .01, \eta^2 = .12$ . Analysis of simple effects indicated that a gender difference in identification with the target occurred only for those participants who categorised themselves in terms of their gender, with women seeing themselves as significantly more similar to the target person ( $M = 4.88$ ) compared to men ( $M = 2.78$ ),  $F(1, 127) = 15.60, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$ . Gender differences were not apparent for those participants who categorised themselves as a tertiary student or an ANU student,  $ps > .05$ .

### **Self-Categorisation and Moral Orientation**

Participants' moral orientation was defined as the percentage of care orientated responses they generated in response to the hypothetical dilemma (percent care score). The mean per cent care score is displayed in Figure 9.4 as a function of perceived self-categorisation and gender. In order to investigate the significance of the observed pattern of results, a 2 (gender: male, female) x 3 (self-categorisation: tertiary student,



ANU student, gender) between-participants ANOVA was conducted. As hypothesised, a significant main effect for self-categorisation was found,  $F(2,96) = 17.23, p < .001$ , which accounted for 26% of the variability in moral orientation,  $\eta^2 = .26$ . Participants who categorised themselves as tertiary students and thus saw the TAFE student as an ingroup member produced more care orientated responses ( $M = 71.49\%$ ) compared to those participants who categorised themselves as ANU students and hence saw the TAFE student as an outgroup member ( $M = 37.75\%$ ),  $t(75) = 6.56, p < .001$ .

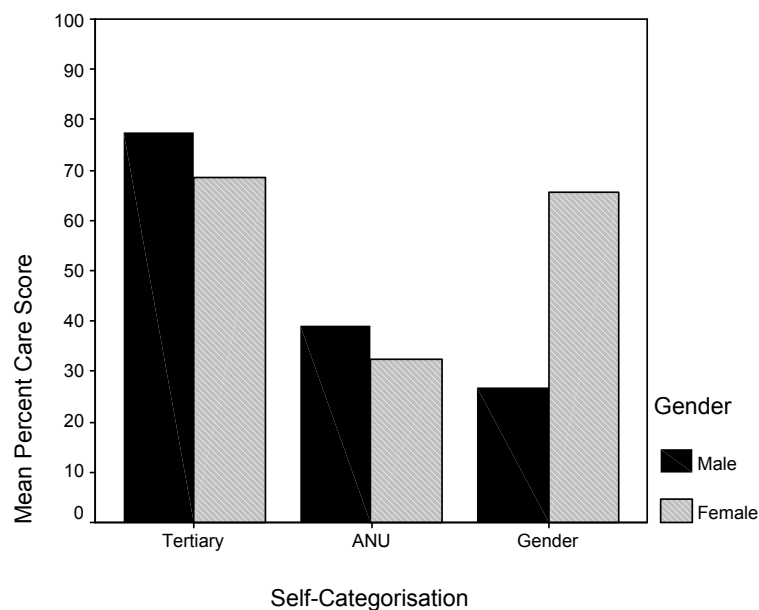


Figure 9.4. Mean Percent Care Score as a Function of Self-Categorisation and Gender.

However, the main effect for self-categorisation was qualified by a significant self-categorisation x gender interaction,  $F(2, 96) = 6.38, p < .01, \eta^2 = .12$ . Analysis of simple effects revealed no significant gender differences in moral orientation for those participants who categorised themselves as either tertiary students or ANU students. However, as hypothesised, for those participants who categorised themselves in terms of their gender there was a significant gender difference in moral orientation,  $F(1, 128) = 18.76, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$ , with women producing significantly more care orientated responses ( $M = 65.63\%$ ) than men ( $M = 26.67\%$ ).

## Discussion

Although the manipulation of salient social context was unsuccessful, our post-hoc analysis based on participants reported self-categorisation as either a tertiary student, an ANU student, or in terms of their gender, revealed a pattern of results that was consistent with our hypotheses. The results support the hypothesis that it is the nature of the self-other relationship, rather than gender per se, that determines an individual's moral orientation. In a moral dilemma involving a TAFE student, where participants categorise themselves in terms of a more inclusive category (tertiary student) and identify with the other student they are more likely to take a care approach to the moral problem than those participants who define themselves at a less inclusive level (ANU student). Further, contrary to traditional ethic-of-care findings, the results suggest that gender differences in moral reasoning occur only when the social category gender is salient, and the differences between men and women are emphasised. In this context, women were more likely to take a care approach than men.

However, while these results provide evidence for the link between the nature of the self-other relationship and moral orientation, they do not necessarily inform our hypothesis of context dependence. As the analysis was based on self-reported categorisation and not on empirical manipulations of social category salience, it could be the case that there are stable individual differences in the way in which people categorise themselves and that these are related to moral orientation. Maybe there are those individuals who have a tendency to categorise themselves at a higher level of inclusiveness and use a care orientation, or there are those that tend to categorise themselves in terms of their gender and act in line with gender norms and expectations.

In order to truly illustrate the context-dependence of moral orientation we need to demonstrate moral orientation varying as a function of a manipulation of salient social category. In hindsight, the manipulation of salient social category used in this study was

relatively weak, consisting of a brief preamble of the aims of the study and the comparison group. In order to re-examine the effect of manipulated salient social category on moral orientation, an additional study was conducted.

### **Study 6: The Context Dependence of Moral Reasoning II**

Study 6 was identical in all respects to Study 5, except for the manipulation of social category salience, which was strengthened.

#### **Method**

##### **Participants**

Participants were 137 undergraduate first-year psychology students at The Australian National University (ANU) participating as part of a scheduled laboratory class. Of these, nine were excluded from the analysis due to incomplete data, leaving a total of 128 participants. There were 82 females and 46 males, whose age ranged from 17 to 52 years, with a median age of 19 years.

##### **Design**

The design of this study was identical to that used in Study 5, although stronger manipulations of salient self-category were utilised. The experiment thus had a 2 (gender: male and female) by 3 (salient self-category: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) between-participants design. The primary dependent variable was moral orientation, measured as the percentage of care responses given by each participant.

## Procedure

The procedures used in this experiment were almost exactly the same as those used in Study 5, with the exception that the manipulations of salient self-category were strengthened. In order to manipulate self-category salience participants completed a brief brainstorming task they believed to be a separate study (see Appendix F). Participants were randomly placed in small groups of three to four people and asked to come up with as many arguments as possible for a given debate topic. Participants in the tertiary student condition were told that they would have to argue that tertiary education (such as university and TAFE) provided better preparation for a career than on-the-job training. Those participants in the ANU student condition were told that they would have to argue that the ANU offered better opportunities for school-leavers than other tertiary institutions in Canberra. Those participants in the gender condition were divided into same-gender groups. Male participants were asked to argue that men are still real men, while female participants were asked to argue that women are NOT the weaker gender.

Following the experimental manipulation participants were then informed they were to complete a separate study. Participants were asked to put themselves into the same hypothetical situation as in Study 5 which involved a TAFE student asking them to borrow a book for them from the library. Participants described, in their own words, what the problem was for them, briefly described what they would do, and described five important factors that they considered while deciding whether or not to borrow the book for the TAFE student. Participants then completed the same manipulation checks and identification measures as in Study 5. Following the questionnaire participants were debriefed in full.

## Coding and Measures

As in Study 5, each of the considerations were coded, blind to participants' gender and experimental condition, as being either of a care or a justice orientation. Ten per cent of the considerations were selected randomly to establish inter-rater reliability, agreement was found to be 86%

## Results

### Manipulation Checks

#### Social Category Salience

In order to investigate whether the manipulation of social category salience was successful, a chi-square analysis was performed between the experimental condition and participants' self-categorisation, as measured by the self-category ranked as most important at the time of the experiment (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2. Reported Self-Categorization as a Function of Salient Social Category.

Salient Social Category		Self-Categorisation		
		Tertiary Student	ANU Student	Gender
Tertiary Student	Count	26	5	4
	% within Context	74%	14%	11%
ANU Student	Count	3	27	5
	% within Context	9%	77%	14%
Gender	Count	7	15	36
	% within Context	12%	26%	62%

A significant relationship between salient self-category and self-categorisation was found,  $\chi^2(4) = 80.72, p < .001$ , suggesting that the salience manipulation was successful. Those participants in the tertiary student condition were more likely to

categorise themselves as tertiary students (74%) than as ANU students (14%) or in terms of their gender (11%). Those in the ANU condition were more likely to categorise themselves as an ANU student (77%) than as a tertiary student (9%) or in terms of their gender (14%). Those in the gender condition were more likely to categorise themselves in terms of their gender (62%) than as ANU students (26%) or as tertiary students (12%).

### **Identification with Salient Self-Category**

As in Study 5, in order to assess participants' level of identification, three identification measures - identification with tertiary students, identification with ANU students, identification with gender - were formed by averaging over responses indicating how much participants thought of themselves as category members and how similar they saw themselves to other category members. Means are displayed in Figure 9.5 as a function of salient social category and gender.

To investigate participants' level of identification as a function of salient social category and gender a 3 (salient social category: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) x 2 (gender: male, female) x 3 (identification: tertiary students, ANU students, gender), ANOVA was performed with identification as a within-participants factor. Analyses revealed a significant main effect for identification,  $F(2, 242) = 23.92, p < .001, \eta^2 = .17$ , with participants identifying significantly less with their gender ( $M = 4.41$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 5.15, t(126) = 3.191, p < .01$ ) or ANU students ( $M = 5.39, t(126) = 4.26, p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between levels of identification with tertiary students and ANU students,  $t(127) = 1.57, ns$ .

The main effect for identification was, however, qualified by a significant interaction between salient social category and level of identification,  $F(4, 242) = 25.03, p < .001, \eta^2 = .29$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variance in the data. Analysis of simple effects revealed that participants identified most strongly with the social category which was made salient in their condition. That is, those who for whom

the category tertiary students was salient displayed significantly higher levels of identification with tertiary students ( $M = 6.50$ ) than with ANU students ( $M = 5.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ) or their gender ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $p < .001$ ),  $F(2, 120) = 33.80$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .36$ . Similarly, those participants in the ANU student condition displayed significantly higher levels of identification with ANU students ( $M = 6.19$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 4.71$ ,  $p < .001$ ) or with their gender ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $p < .05$ ),  $F(2, 120) = 24.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .29$ . Those participants in the gender condition showed higher levels of identification with their gender ( $M = 5.39$ ) than with tertiary students ( $M = 4.57$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and while they did identify more with their gender than with ANU students ( $M = 4.91$ ) this difference was not significant ( $p = .16$ ),  $F(2, 120) = 3.95$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ .

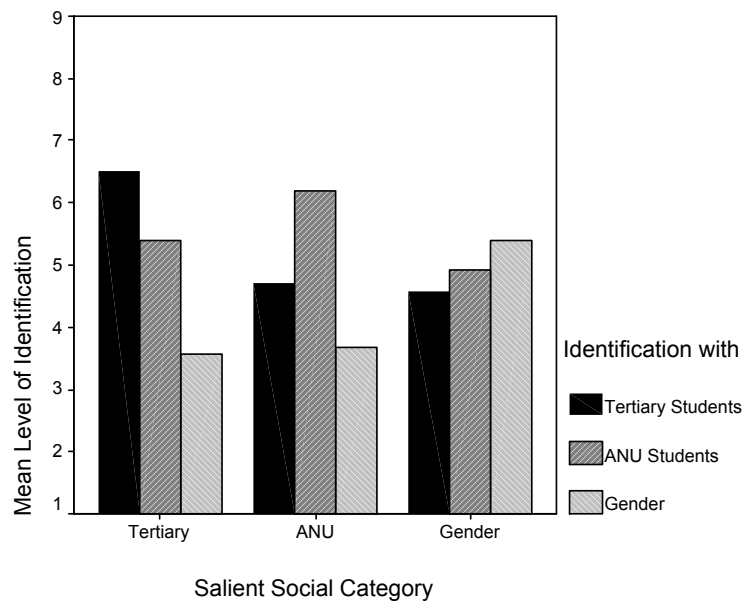


Figure 9.5. Mean Levels of Identification as a Function of Salient Social Category

### Identification with the Target

Participants also indicated their level of identification with the TAFE student by 'how similar do you feel to the person asking to borrow the book'. Mean levels of identification are displayed in Figure 9.6 as a function of salient social context and gender. In order to investigate whether the manipulation of salient social category

affected the nature of the self-other relationship a 3 (salient social category: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) by 2 (gender: male, female) ANOVA was performed. A significant main effect for salient self-category was found,  $F(2,122) = 8.62, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$ , such that those participants for whom the category tertiary students was salient saw the target person as more similar to themselves ( $M = 5.43$ ) than those for whom the category ANU students was salient ( $M = 3.77, t(68) = 3.83, p < .001$ ) or those for whom gender was salient ( $M = 4.62, t(91) = 2.01, p < .05$ ). Similarly, those participants for whom gender was salient saw themselves as significantly more similar to the target person than those for whom the category ANU students was salient,  $t(91) = 2.19, p < .05$ . A significant main effect was also found for gender,  $F(1,122) = 4.28, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$ , with female participants seeing the target as more similar to themselves ( $M = 4.94$ ) than did male participants ( $M = 4.02$ ).

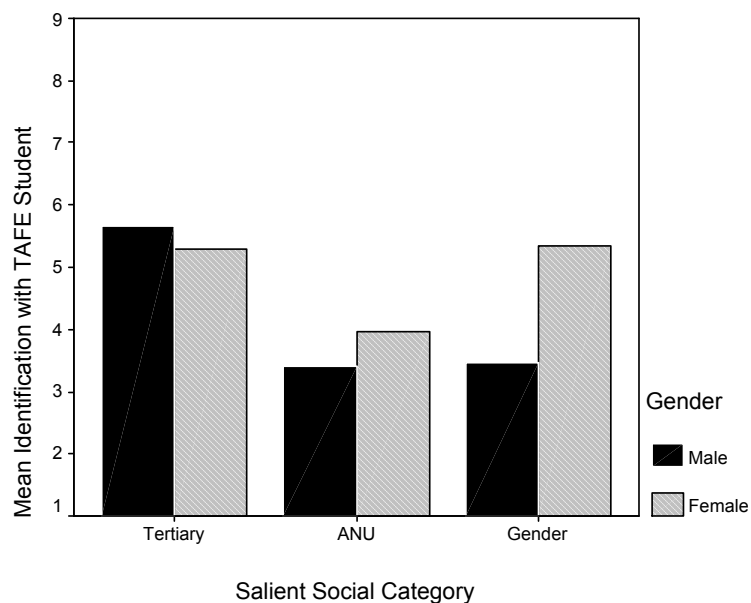


Figure 9.6. *Identification with TAFE Student as a Function of Salient Social Category and Gender*

However, these main effects were qualified by a significant salient self-category by gender interaction  $F(2,122) = 4.41, p < .05, \eta^2 = .07$ . Analysis of simple effects indicated that a gender difference in identification with the target occurred only for those



participants for whom gender was salient, with women seeing themselves as significantly more similar to the target person ( $M = 5.33$ ) than did men ( $M = 3.45$ ),  $F(2, 122) = 15.94$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .17$ . Gender differences were not apparent for those participants for whom the categories tertiary students or ANU students was salient,  $ps > .05$ .

### **Salient Social Context and Moral Orientation**

Participants' moral orientation was defined as the percentage of care-orientated responses they generated in response to the hypothetical dilemma (percent care score). Means are presented in Figure 9.7 as a function of salient social category and gender. In order to investigate the significance of the observed pattern of results, a 3 (salient self-category: tertiary student, ANU student, gender) by 2 (gender: male, female) between-participants ANOVA was conducted. As hypothesised, a significant main effect for salient self-category was found,  $F(2,122) = 6.13$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .09$ . Participants in the tertiary student condition, who saw the TAFE student as an ingroup member, produced more care orientated responses ( $M=62.76\%$ ) than those participants in the ANU student condition who saw the TAFE student as an outgroup member ( $M=43.57\%$ ),  $t(68) = 3.17$ ,  $p < .01$ .

However, the main effect for salient social category was qualified by a significant interaction with gender,  $F(2,122) = 6.83$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .10$ . Analysis of simple effects revealed no significant gender differences for those participants for whom the category tertiary students or ANU students was salient,  $ps > .05$ . However, as hypothesised, for those participants for whom gender was salient there was a significant gender difference,  $F(2, 122) = 19.79$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .14$ , with women producing significantly more care orientated responses ( $M = 61.25\%$ ) than men ( $M = 30.45\%$ ).

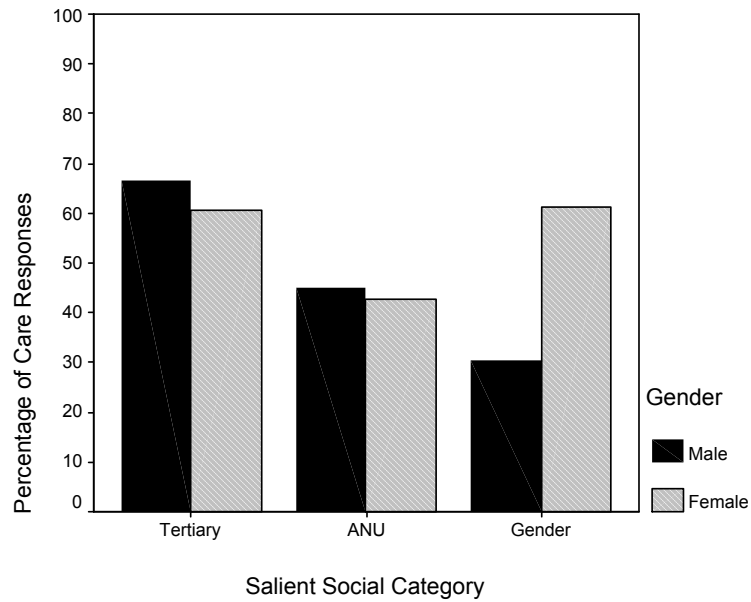


Figure 9.7. *Mean Percentage of Care Responses as a Function of Salient Social Category and Gender.*

## Discussion

The pattern of results from Study 6 is consistent with that found in Study 5 and provide support for the hypotheses and predictions derived from the social identity perspective. The results suggest that it is proximal aspects of the social context, such as the nature of the self-other relationship and salient group norms, that determine an individual's moral orientation, rather than gender per se. In a context that emphasised a more inclusive social category (tertiary student), participants identified with the other student and were more likely to take a care approach to the moral problem than those participants who were in a context that emphasised self-definition at a less inclusive level (ANU student). Further, as hypothesised, gender differences in moral reasoning occurred only when the social category gender was made salient, and the differences between men and women were emphasised. In this context, women were more likely to take a care approach than men.

## General Discussion

The present research was designed to test traditional ethic-of-care accounts which have conceptualised moral thinking as stable and gendered, describing two distinct moral orientations: men with a justice approach arising from an independent self-concept and women with a care approach arising from an interdependent self-concept. Taken together, the results of the two studies presented here offer an alternative analysis, which views the self and moral thinking as flexible and context dependent. These results provide experimental support for previous reports of the importance of dilemma content (Crandall et al., 1999; Jaffee & Hyde, 2000; Pratt et al., 1988; Walker, 1991; Wark & Krebs, 1996) and are consistent with a social identity analysis, suggesting that it is proximal aspects of the social context, such as the nature of the self-other relationship and group norms, that predict moral orientation rather than a simple relationship with gender.

The results from Study 5 and Study 6, demonstrate that it is not just variation in the identity of the other that can influence moral orientation, but that variations in self-definition, from more to less inclusive social categories, can effect moral considerations. In both Study 5 and Study 6, participants were more likely to display a care orientation when defining themselves at a more inclusive level than when defining themselves at a less inclusive level.

Further, pervasive gender differences, as suggested by Gilligan and colleagues, were not apparent. In Study 5 gender differences in moral orientation occurred only when participants categorised themselves in terms of their gender, while in Study 6 they occurred only when gender was explicitly made salient. It must be noted however, that in Study 6 gender was made salient through a discussion involving the stereotypes associated with gender, so it was not just gender, but gender stereotypes that were

salient to participants. It is important that future research replicate these findings with a manipulation of gender salience that is not directly associated with stereotypicality.

These results do not undermine Gilligan's contribution to the understanding of moral thinking, as we believe the identification of an ethic-of-care and an emphasis on a connected self-concept is important. However, the studies presented here suggest that such an analysis needs to take into account the flexibility of the self-concept and recognize that this implies the context dependence and malleability of moral reasoning. The results suggest that individuals can reason from either a care perspective or a justice perspective as a function of whether or not it is relevant to do so.

The finding of the context-dependence of the self-other relationship and its affects on moral orientation has implications for other bodies of research. As we have seen in Chapter 4, there are close links proposed between gender differences in the self-concept and moral reasoning and gender differences in the way in which people approach learning and knowledge. Our results suggest that such analyses need to take into account the flexibility of the self-concept and recognise that this implies the context dependence and malleability of many other gender differences previously thought to be stable. Chapter 10 and Chapter 11 will present a series of studies investigating the way in which proximal aspects of the social context, such as shared group membership and gender salience, affect the way in which individuals approach learning and knowledge.

## **CHAPTER 10**

### **Ways of Knowing: Gender Norms and Group Membership Norms**

#### **Study 7 and Study 8**

##### **Introduction**

In Chapters 7, 8, and 9 we have presented a series of empirical studies that challenge (a) the traditional conceptualisation of a gendered self that is stable across time and situation (Chapter 7), and (b) traditional accounts of moral orientation as stable and intrinsically related to gender (Chapters 8 and 9). These findings have important implications for other areas of psychology. As we have seen in Chapter 4, the notion of a gender-related self-concept and the distinction between a care and justice moral orientation has been extremely influential in the explanation of differences in the way in which men and women approach learning and knowledge, that is, their way of knowing (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Goldberger et al., 1996).

In Chapter 4 we outlined Belenky et al.'s distinction between two types of procedural knowledge, separate and connected ways of knowing. Separate knowing refers to an approach towards learning and knowledge where the individual takes an objective, critical stance, challenging and doubting the ideas of others. Belenky et al. (1986) argued that such an approach is related to the independent self and is commensurate with traditionally masculine and academic models of knowledge, with learning seen as being relatively impersonal and adversarial. In contrast, those who utilise a connected way of knowing attempt to understand ideas by being subjective and taking the perspective of others. These individuals tend to see the self as interdependent

in relation to others and emphasise believing rather than doubting others, conversation rather than debate, and being intimate rather than being impersonal.

While the original development of ways of knowing focused on the way in which women approached understanding, Belenky and colleagues (1986) suggested a relationship between ways of knowing and gender. In line with theories of a gendered self and of moral orientation, Belenky et al. envisaged that women would be more likely than men to employ connected knowing and men more likely than women to employ separate knowing, a hypothesis that has been supported by subsequent empirical research (e.g., Baxter Magdola, 1992; Clinchy, 1989, 1996; Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti et al., 2001; Knight et al., 2000; Knight et al., 1997; Luttrell, 1989).

As with theories of the gendered self and of moral orientation, explanations of men's and women's ways of knowing rest on an assumption of relative stability over time and across context (Belenky et al., 1986; Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti et al., 2001; Knight et al., 1997). However, the studies reported here thus far question this assumption of stability and suggest that proximal aspects of the social context play an important role in determining the way in which the self is defined and the way in which moral problems are approached.

To summarise the results found so far: In the context of ingroups, participants were more likely to (a) define themselves in terms of interdependence (Study 1); (b) expect others to use a care orientation in relation to a moral dilemmas (Study 4); and (c) themselves use a care approach to solve a moral dilemma (Study 5 and Study 6). In contrast, in the context of outgroups, participants were more likely to (a) define themselves in terms of independence (Study 1); (b) expect others to use a justice orientation in relation to a moral dilemmas (Study 4); and (c) themselves use a justice approach to solve a moral dilemma (Study 5 and Study 6). Importantly, in these group-based contexts, gender differences were not apparent in either the self-concept or in

moral orientation. It was only when gender was salient, that gender differences became apparent, such that (a) women placed a greater emphasis on interdependence when asked to describe themselves, compared to men who placed a greater emphasis on independence (Study 2); (b) participants expected female targets to use a care orientation more than a justice one, and male targets to use a justice orientation more than a care one (Study 3); and (c) women placed a greater emphasis on a care orientation, compared to men who placed a greater emphasis on justice (Study 5 and Study 6).

As we have argued in Chapter 6, given the relationship that is said to exist between the self-concept, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, it is difficult to conceptualise ways of knowing as being stable across time and situation and being simply related to gender. Instead it is suggested that the way in which an individual approaches knowledge and learning can also be seen as variable, depending on the context in which it is embedded:

**H6: Attitudes and behaviours associated with the independent and interdependent self will be dependent upon the proximal aspects of the social context and the nature of the self-other relationship**

However, as argued in Chapter 8, we cannot simply rely on the links between the gendered self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing to hypothesise that ways of knowing are context dependent. In Chapter 7 we have argued that the context dependence of the self-concept is due in part to salient norms and expectations about how to define the self in a given situation. Further, in Chapter 8 we have demonstrated that clear group-based and gender-based norms exist in the realm of moral reasoning. Thus in line with the social identity perspective, when people define themselves in terms of a particular shared social category membership there is an increase in the likelihood

that an individual will act in line with the norms associated with that group (Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1987).

On this basis, we expect that, just as there are norms and expectations about how to define the self or approach moral problems in a particular context, there will also be norms and expectations associated with ways of knowing, such that we are not expected to approach learning and knowledge in the same manner:

**H7: Clear norms exist about appropriate ways to approach learning and knowledge. There are norms that are associated with gender, as well as norms that are associated with interacting with ingroup and outgroup members.**

The two studies presented in this chapter follow on from the findings presented thus far related to gender and shared category membership. They extend this analysis by investigating the norms and expectations associated with the way in which people approach learning and knowledge in differing social contexts. Study 7 investigates whether there exist differential expectations about the way in which men and women approach learning and knowledge. Study 8 investigates whether there exist differential expectations about the way in which individuals approach learning and knowledge in the context of ingroup and outgroup members.

### **Study 7: Gender Norms for Ways of Knowing**

The aim of Study 7 is to examine the nature of gender norms and expectations related to ways of knowing. As we have seen, clear gender norms are apparent in relation to the gendered self-concept and moral reasoning. Given that such a close causal relationship is said to exist between the gendered self, moral orientation, and



ways of knowing and the fact that the nature of connected and separate knowing, with their emphasis on empathy and objectivity, so closely resembles already established gender norms and expectations, it is possible to anticipate the nature of gender differences in ways of knowing. It is thus hypothesised that, given either a male or a female target, participants will be more likely to see connected knowing as important to the female target and separate knowing as important to the male target. .

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

Participants were 63 third-year students (37 female, 26 male) from The University of Canberra, participating as part of a scheduled laboratory class. Participants were randomly allocated to one of two experimental conditions where the gender of the target was manipulated. The experiment thus had a 2 (gender of target: male, female) by 2 (gender of participant: male, female) between-participants design.

### **Procedure**

Participants read a brief description of a target person (see Appendix G). The gender of the target was manipulated between participants and was described as either a female target named Susan or a male target named Matt. All other aspects of the description were identical; the target was described as being a student from the same university as the participants, and in order to allow participants to form an impression of the target some further details were given. The description read as follows:

Matt (Susan) is a male (female) student at The University of Canberra who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in his (her) third year.

Matt (Susan) enjoys going to movies and gets on well with other people; he (she) is described as having a good sense of humour.

Matt (Susan) has a pet dog called Rupert and rents a house in Kaleen.

Matt (Susan) also has a part time job which requires him (her) to interact with many people.

Participants then responded to a series of 20 statements regarding the degree to which they thought the target would utilise a range of connected and separate ways of knowing. These items were derived from The Attitudes Towards Learning and Knowledge Survey (ATTLS, Galotti et al., 1999). Each of the items from the ATTLS was adapted so that they referred to the target rather than to the self (e.g., 'Susan values the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of her own concerns when solving problems'; 'Matt tries to think *with* people instead of *against* them'). Participants were asked to indicate how much they agreed with each of the statements, given their fairly limited knowledge about the target, on a 7-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Finally participants completed some basic demographic questions, and on completion of the questionnaire were debriefed in full.

## **Results**

### **Connected and Separate Knowing**

The results consisted of participants' expectations of how likely it was that the target would utilise connected and separate ways of knowing. Participants' responses were averaged to form a measure of expected utilisation of connected knowing ( $\alpha = .78$ )

and a measure of expected utilisation of separate knowing ( $\alpha = .74$ ). The means are displayed in Figure 10.1 as a function of gender of target.

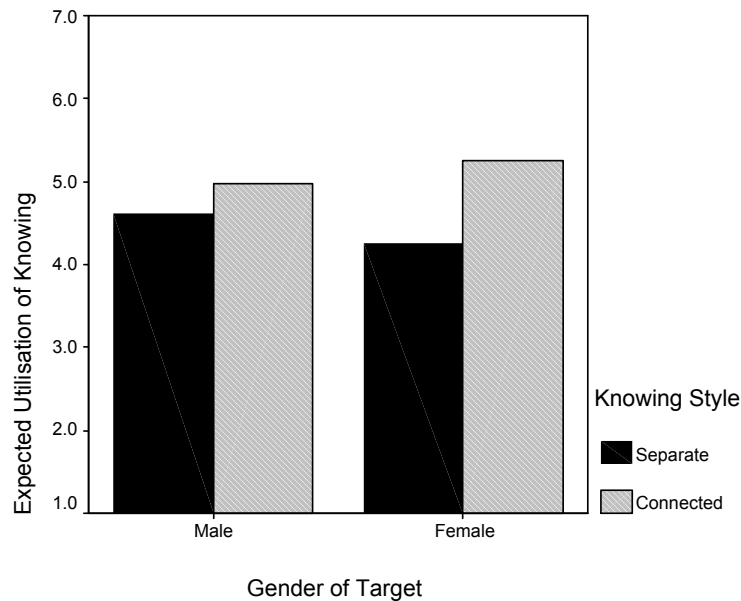


Figure 10.1. *Expected Utilisation of Connected and Separate Knowing as a Function of Gender of Target.*

In order to investigate the effects of the gender of the target and the gender of the participant on the expected utilisation of connected and separate knowing, a 2 (knowing style: connected, separate) x 2 (gender of target: male, female) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) mixed model analysis of variance (ANOVA), with repeated measures on the first variable, was performed. The analysis revealed a main effect for knowing style,  $F(1, 59) = 26.09, p < .001$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variability in the data,  $\eta^2 = .31$ . This main effect revealed that participants expected that, overall, targets would be more likely to utilise connected knowing ( $M = 5.11$ ) than separate knowing ( $M = 4.44$ ).

However, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction between knowing style and the gender of the target,  $F(1, 59) = 5.23, p < .05, \eta^2 = .08$ . Analysis of

simple effects revealed that, as predicted, participants expected that connected knowing would be utilised more by a female target ( $M = 5.25$ ) than a male target ( $M = 4.97$ ),  $F(1, 43) = 5.61$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .12$ . In contrast, participants expected that separate knowing would be utilised more by a male target ( $M = 4.61$ ) than a female target ( $M = 4.27$ ),  $F(1, 43) = 8.80$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .17$ .

In order to investigate the relative emphasis that participants expected targets to place on connected and separate knowing, a knowing score was calculated for each participant as their mean expected utilisation of connected knowing minus their mean expected utilisation of separate knowing. Knowing scores therefore ranged from -6 to +6; a more positive score indicates relatively more emphasis on connected knowing, and a more negative score indicates relatively more emphasis on separate knowing. Mean knowing scores are presented in Figure 10.2 as a function of gender of the target and gender of the participant. It can be seen that overall the means of the knowing scores are positive but are also relatively close to zero, which indicates that on average participants' expectations about the utilisation of connected and separate knowing did not differ greatly, but that they tended to expect that targets would be more likely to utilise connected knowing than separate knowing.

In order to investigate the effects of the gender of the target and the gender of the participant on the knowing scores, a 2 (gender of the target: male, female) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) between participants ANOVA was performed. The results indicated that there was no significant main effect for gender of the participant and no 2-way interaction,  $F_s < 1$ , *ns*. There was, however, a significant main effect for gender of the target,  $F(1, 59) = 5.25$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ , which revealed that participants expected that a female target would place a relatively greater emphasis of connected knowing ( $M = .99$ ) than would a male target ( $M = .36$ ).

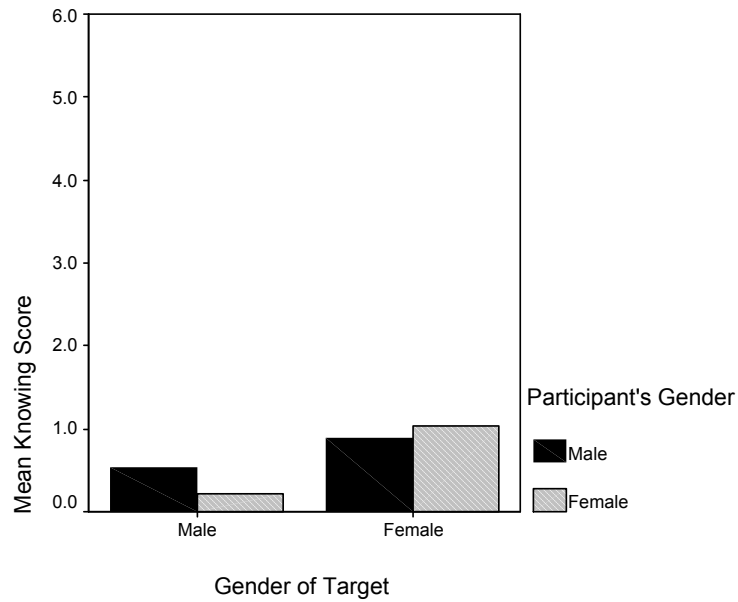


Figure 10.2. *Mean Expected Knowing Score as a Function of Gender of Target and Gender of Participant.*

## Discussion

The results from Study 7 provide good support for the existence of gender-related norms and expectations in the realm of ways of knowing. Our participants expect that a hypothetical target will behave in line with our hypothesised gender norms, with female targets expected to place a greater emphasis on connected knowing than on separate knowing, compared to male targets.

### Study 8: Group-Based Norms for Ways of Knowing

The results from Study 7 provide support for the notion of gender-related norms and expectations in the realm of ways of knowing. Our participants expect that the male and female targets will behave in different ways, with female targets expected to place a greater emphasis on connected knowing than separate, compared to male targets.

However, as argued in Chapter 6, norms also exist for situations involving ingroup and outgroup members. While gender norms most certainly exist this does not necessarily signify that men and women are expected to act towards all people in the same way, or to think about all problems in the same manner. As we have demonstrated in the studies reported thus far, the salience of group memberships had a significant effect on the way in which individuals described themselves and the way in which they approach moral problems. Given the relationship that is said to exist between the gendered self, moral orientation, and ways of knowing we can hypothesise that group membership will be equally important to ways of knowing.

In order to investigate these norms another study was conducted with a methodology similar to that of Study 7. Participants were again described a target person, Person X, who was in a context that involved either ingroup members (people from similar groups to the target) or outgroup members (people from different groups to the target). It was anticipated that participants would be more likely to expect the target to utilise connected knowing in the situation involving ingroup members and expect targets to utilise separate knowing in the situation involving outgroup members.

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

Participants were 57 second-year students (35 female, 22 male) from the The Australian National University, participating as part of a scheduled laboratory class. Participants were randomly allocated to one of two experimental conditions where the target person interacted with either ingroup or outgroup members. The experiment thus had a 2 (group membership: ingroup, outgroup) by 2 (gender of participant: male, female) between-participants design.

## Procedure

Participants read a brief description of a target person, Person X, who attended the same university as the participants (see Appendix H). In the ingroup condition, Person X was described as follows:

Person X is a student at The Australian National University who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in their second year.

Person X also has a part-time job that requires them to work with people from groups that are very similar to the groups that Person X belongs to.

In this job Person X is required to solve many problems in collaboration with these people.

Person X feels very similar to their co-workers

In contrast, in the outgroup condition Person X was described as follows:

Person X is a student at The Australian National University who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in their second year.

Person X also has a part-time job that requires them to work with people from groups that are very different from the groups that Person X belongs to.

In this job Person X is required to solve many problems in collaboration with these people.

Person X does not feel very similar to their co-workers

Participants were then given the following instructions: 'Think about how you think Person X would approach their work. Given your fairly limited knowledge about Person X, please answer the following questions in relation to Person X in their work context.'

Participants then responded to the same 20 statements derived from the ATTLS (Galotti et al., 1999) that were used in Study 7, regarding the degree to which they expected Person X would utilise a range of connected and separate ways of knowing. Participants indicated how much they agreed with each of the statements on a 7-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Finally participants completed some basic demographic questions, and on completion of the questionnaire were debriefed in full.

## Results

### Connected and Separate Knowing

The results consisted of participants' expectations of how likely it was that the target would utilise connected and separate ways of knowing. Participants' responses to the ATTLS were averaged to form a measure of utilisation of connected knowing ( $\alpha = .60$ ) and a measure of utilisation of separate ( $\alpha = .74$ ). The means are displayed in Figure 10.3 as a function of group membership.

In order to investigate the effects of group membership and the gender of the participant on the expected utilisation of connected and separate knowing, a 2 (knowing style: connected, separate) x 2 (group membership: ingroup, outgroup) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) mixed model analysis of variance (ANOVA), with repeated measures on the first variable, was performed. The analysis revealed a main effect for knowing style,  $F(1, 53) = 51.63, p < .001$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variability in the data,  $\eta^2 = .49$ . This main effect revealed that, overall, participants expected targets to be more likely to utilise connected knowing ( $M = 5.20$ ) than separate knowing ( $M = 4.35$ ).



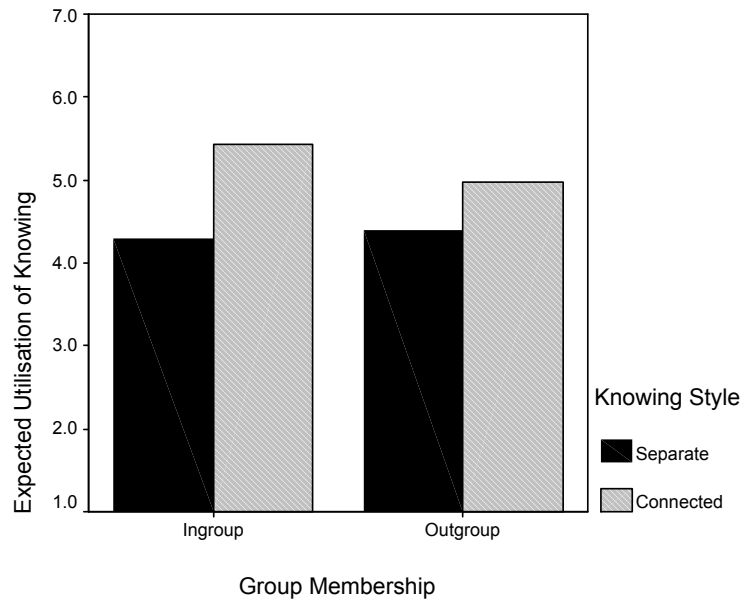


Figure 10.3. *Expected Utilisation of Connected and Separate Knowing as a Function of Group Membership.*

However, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction between knowing style and group membership,  $F(1, 59) = 4.02, p < .05, \eta^2 = .07$ . Analysis of simple effects revealed that, as predicted, participants expected that connected knowing would be utilised more by targets in an ingroup context ( $M = 5.44$ ) than by targets in an outgroup context ( $M = 4.97$ ),  $F(1, 53) = 7.60, p < .01, \eta^2 = .13$ . However, participants expected that separate knowing would be utilised equally by targets in an ingroup context ( $M = 4.30$ ) and an outgroup context ( $M = 4.39$ ),  $p > .05$ .

As in Study 7, knowing scores were calculated in order to investigate the relative emphasis that participants expected targets to place on connected and separate knowing. Knowing scores ranged from -6 to +6 with a more positive score indicating relatively more emphasis on connected knowing, and a more negative score indicating relatively more emphasis on separate knowing. Mean knowing scores are presented in Figure 10.4 as a function of group membership and gender of the participant. As in Study 7, overall, mean knowing scores were positive but also relatively close to zero, indicating

that, on average, participants' expectations about the utilisation of connected and separate knowing did not differ greatly, but they tended to expect that targets would be more likely to utilise connected knowing than separate knowing.

In order to investigate the effects of group membership and the gender of the participant on the knowing scores, a 2 (group membership: ingroup, outgroup) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) between participants ANOVA was performed. The results indicated that there was no significant main effect for gender of the participant and no 2-way interaction,  $F_s < 1$ ,  $ns$ . There was, however, a significant main effect for group membership,  $F(1, 53) = 4.02$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .07$ , which revealed that participants expected a target in an ingroup context to place a relatively greater emphasis on connected knowing ( $M = 1.14$ ) than a target in an outgroup context ( $M = .58$ ).

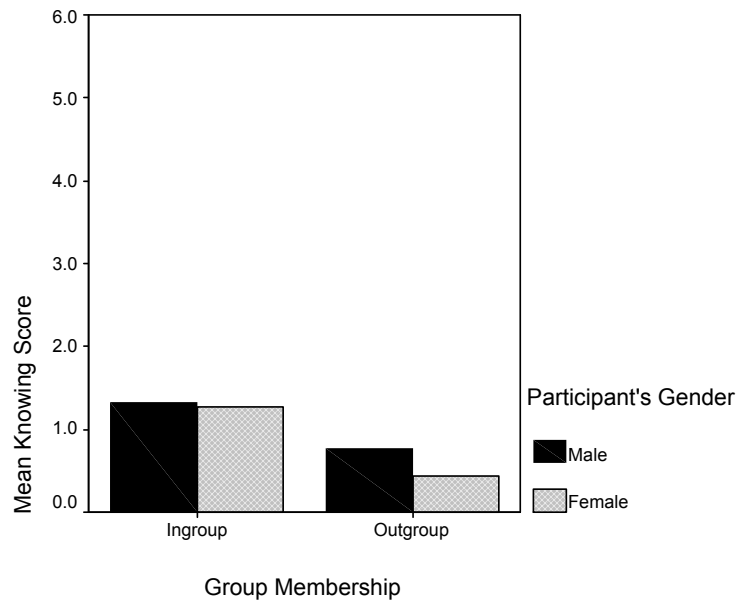


Figure 10.4. *Mean Expected Knowing Score as a Function of Group Membership and Gender of Participant.*

## **Discussion**

The results from Study 8 provide good support for the existence of group membership-related norms and expectations in the realm of ways of knowing. Our participants predict that a hypothetical target will behave in line with our hypothesised group-related norms. Participants expect that, in a context that involves ingroup members, targets will be more likely to utilise connected knowing than separate knowing, compared to a context that involves outgroup members.

### **General Discussion**

Traditional accounts of gender and approaches to learning and knowledge have outlined two distinct ways of knowing that are related to different ways of seeing the self in relation to others. While connected knowing draws on the interdependent self and emphasises empathy and perspective taking, separate knowing draws on the independent self-concept and emphasises objectivity and criticism. These two ways of knowing have been said to have strong links to gender, with men more likely to use separate knowing and women more likely to use connected knowing. Further, traditional accounts have conceptualised these differences as stable across time and situation, with individuals tending to utilise one knowing style or the other.

However, taken together, the two studies presented here question this notion of stability in ways of knowing and are consistent with a social identity conceptualisation of the self. They are also consistent with the results presented thus far that suggest that proximal aspects of the social context, such as perceptions of shared group membership, the nature of the self-other relations, and salient social categories, play an important role in self-definition and moral orientation.

The results from Study 7 and Study 8 demonstrate that there are clear norms and expectations associated with ways of knowing. Study 7 suggests that there are clear, gender-related norms that are in line with traditional accounts of ways of knowing. However, the results from Study 8 suggest that group membership is also an important determinant of ways of knowing, and that norms and expectations also exist in relation to how we approach learning and knowledge in situations that involve ingroup and outgroup members.

Now that we have established that there are clear norms and expectations about ways of knowing in relation to both gender and group membership, we need to ascertain whether these differential norms and expectations will lead individuals to look to proximal aspects of their social context to determine appropriate ways of approaching learning and knowledge. To this end, Chapter 11 presents a study designed to investigate the way in which proximal aspects of the social context, such as shared group membership and gender salience, affect the way in which individuals report their own approach to learning and knowledge.

## CHAPTER 11

### The Context Dependence of Ways of Knowing: Study 9

#### Introduction

In Chapter 10 we have reported two empirical studies that point to the existence of context-dependent group-based norms in ways of knowing. As such, these studies challenge the traditional accounts that conceptualise approaches to learning and knowledge as stable across time and situation. As we have seen in Chapter 4, and have summarised in Chapter 10, traditional accounts of ways of knowing describe two distinct ways of approaching learning and knowledge, separate and connected knowing (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Goldberger et al., 1996). While separate knowing involves an individual taking an objective, critical stance, challenging and doubting the ideas of others, connected knowing involves attempts to understand ideas by being subjective and taking the perspective of others.

Such an approach to ways of knowing is derived from the notion of a stable and gender-related self-concept (e.g., Cross & Madson, 1997; Markus & Oyserman, 1989) and of stable gender differences in moral reasoning (e.g., Gilligan, 1982). As such approaches to learning and knowledge are also conceptualised as being relatively stable, both over time and across context, with individuals seen to have a tendency to focus on either connected or separate knowing (e.g., Galotti et al., 1999; Knight et al., 1997). Further, theorists see ways of knowing as being closely related to gender, such that women are more likely to utilise connected knowing, while men are more likely to utilise separate knowing (e.g., Baxter Magdola, 1992; Clinchy, 1989, 1996; Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti et al., 2001; Knight et al., 2000; Knight et al., 1997; Luttrell, 1989).

However, our analysis based on the social identity perspective and the studies we have presented thus far provide initial evidence that stability in ways of knowing might not necessarily be the case. In particular, the results from Study 7 and Study 8 suggest that there are clear norms and expectations about the ways in which to approach learning and knowledge, and that these norms differ across situations. Study 7 confirms that there are gender-related norms associated with ways of knowing, such that women, in comparison to men, are expected to emphasise connected knowing relative to separate knowing. However, Study 8 suggests that there are also norms and expectations in relation to how to approach learning and knowledge in the context of ingroups and outgroups. In a context that involves ingroup members, individuals are expected to utilise connected knowing more than separate knowing, compared to a context that involves outgroup members.

On the basis of the results found in Study 7 and Study 8 (and informed by our other studies), it would seem that a learning situation that involves an ingroup member will be more likely to elicit an interdependent self-definition, emphasising empathy and perspective taking. In contrast, a learning situation involving an outgroup member will be more likely to elicit an independent self-definition, emphasising objectivity and critical thought. We can therefore propose the following hypothesis:

**H10: In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to use a connected way of knowing compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to use a separate way of knowing.**

Such a hypothesis does not, however, necessarily discount findings of gender differences in ways of knowing. Rather, it is proposed that concrete differences in social context, can moderate these gender differences, and that gender differences are not

appropriate at all times. Based on the social identity analysis of salience and group norms, gender differences in line with gender norms and expectations will occur when the social context indicates that this is appropriate. Thus, the following hypothesis can be made:

**H11: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to use a connected way of knowing, while men will be more likely than women to use a separate way of knowing.**

## **Method**

### **Participants and Design**

The participants were 267 first-year undergraduate psychology students attending scheduled laboratory classes at The Australian National University. Of these, 186 were women and 81 were men. Participants completed the Attitudes Toward Thinking and Learning Survey in one of three salience conditions: an ingroup context, an outgroup context, or a gendered context (see Appendix I). Salient social context was manipulated within laboratory classes; each participant was randomly allocated to one condition. The experiment thus had a 2 (gender of participant: male, female) by 3 (salient context: ingroup, outgroup, and gender) between-participants design.

### **Materials and Procedure**

Participants were informed that they would be participating in two unrelated studies that were packaged together for convenience. The first study was described as an investigation into group similarities and differences, the second as an investigation

into how people approached knowledge. Participants were randomly allocated to 1 of the 3 experimental conditions and were administered a three-page questionnaire by a female experimenter. In order to manipulate the salience of the context participants in each condition received a different first page. Those participants in the ingroup condition were asked to “list five groups that *you belong to*,” then to choose one of these groups (by putting an asterisk next to it), and then to “list five things that you think that *you share* with members of this group.” Those participants in the outgroup condition were asked to “list five groups that *you do not belong to*,” choose one of these groups and then “list five things that you think that *distinguish you* from members of this group.” Those participants in the gender condition were asked to “list five gender differences that you would be interested in studying,” choose one of these differences and then to “list five things that you think might cause this difference in behaviour.”

All participants then completed the 20-item Attitudes Towards Thinking and Learning Survey (ATTLS, Galotti et al., 1999). The instrument consists of 10 statements that represent a connected way of knowing (e.g., “I am always interested in knowing why people say and believe the things that they do”) and 10 statements that represent a separate way of knowing (e.g., “It’s important for me to remain as objective as possible when I analyse something”). Participants were asked to indicate how much they agreed with each statement on a 7-point likert scale that ranged from 1, *strongly disagree*, to 7, *strongly agree*.

Following the questionnaire participants were debriefed in full.

## **Results**

The data consisted of participants’ level of agreement with the 20 items on the ATTLS. Connected knowing (CK) and separate knowing (SK) scores were calculated by collapsing over the 10 connected items ( $\alpha = .81$ ) and the 10 separate items ( $\alpha = .71$ )



respectively. In contrast to previous findings, correlation analysis revealed that there was a small but significant positive correlation between CK and SK scores,  $r = .29, p < .001$ . Mean CK and SK scores are presented in Figures 11.1 and 11.2, respectively, as a function of the salient social context and participants' gender.

In order to examine the effect of salient context and gender on participants' connected and separate knowing scores a 2 (knowing style: connected, separate) x 2 (gender of participant: male, female) x 3 (salient context: ingroup, outgroup, gender) mixed ANOVA was conducted with repeated measures on the first variable. Analysis of variance revealed a significant main effect for knowing style,  $F(1, 268) = 215.22, p < .001$ , which accounted for a large proportion of the variance,  $\eta^2 = .45$ . As in Study 7 and Study 8, this main effect revealed that, on average, participants had higher CK scores ( $M = 5.23$ ) than SK scores ( $M = 4.38$ ),.

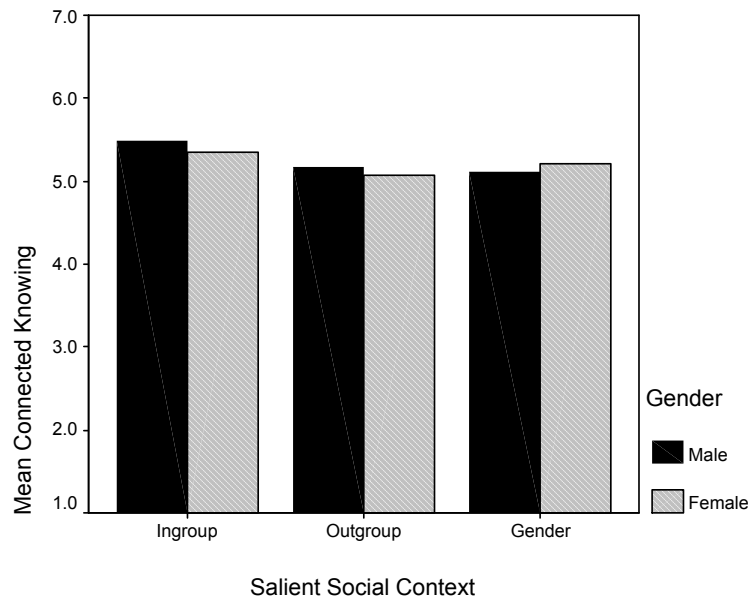


Figure 11.1. Mean Connected Knowing as a Function of Gender of Participant and Salient Social Context.

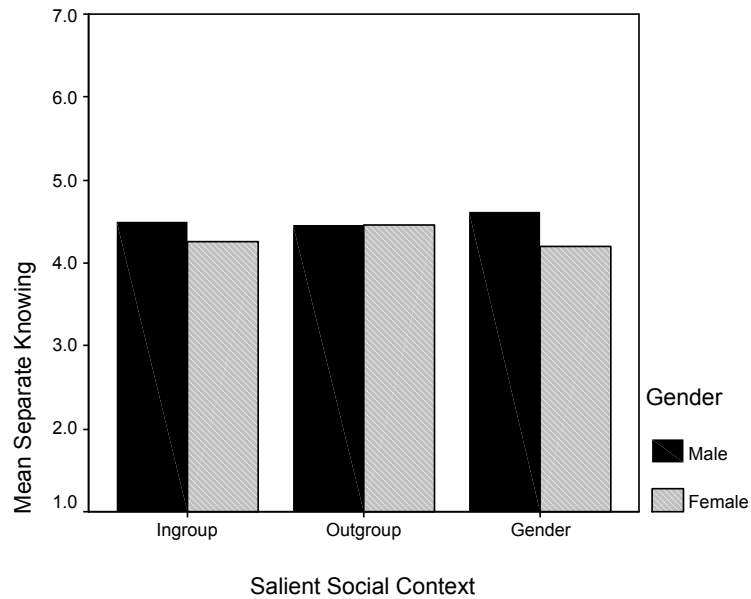


Figure 11.2. Mean Separate Knowing as a Function of Gender of Participant and Salient Social Context

However, this main effect was qualified by a significant knowing style x salient context interaction,  $F(2, 268) = 4.27, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$ . To decompose this interaction, two ANOVAs were performed on CK scores and SK scores separately. For CK scores there was a significant effect for salient context,  $F(2, 268) = 4.27, p < .05, \eta^2 = .03$ . Analysis revealed that, as hypothesized, those participants in the ingroup context displayed significantly higher levels of CK ( $M = 5.40$ ) than those participants in the outgroup context ( $M = 5.11$ ),  $p < .01$ , and those participants in the gender condition ( $M = 5.18$ ),  $p < .05$ . There was, however, no significant difference in CK scores between those participants in the outgroup context and those in the gender context,  $p > .05$ . For SK scores, the analysis revealed that there was no significant effect for salient context,  $F(2, 268) < 1, ns$ .

The results also indicated that there was no significant interaction between knowing and gender,  $F(1, 268) = 2.71, ns$ , and that the three-way knowing x gender x salient context interaction was only marginally significant,  $F(2, 268) = 2.52, p = .08$ .

However, in order to test the hypotheses fully, planned contrasts were conducted to look at gender differences in CK and SK scores across condition. The contrasts revealed that there were no significant differences in CK between men and women in any of the salient contexts, all  $ps > .05$ . However, contrasts revealed that although there were no differences in SK scores between men and women in either the ingroup context,  $t(91) = 1.70$ ,  $ns$ , or the outgroup context  $t(89) < 1$ ,  $ns$ , there was, as predicted, a significant gender difference in the salient gender context,  $t(89) = 2.35$ ,  $p < .05$ , such that men displayed significantly higher levels of SK ( $M = 4.61$ ) than did women ( $M = 4.20$ ).

In order to investigate the relative emphasis that participants placed on connected and separate knowing, a knowing score was calculated for each participant as their CK score minus their SK score. Knowing scores therefore ranged from -6 to +6; a more positive score indicates relatively more emphasis on connected knowing, and a more negative score indicates relatively more emphasis on separate knowing. Mean knowing scores are presented in Figure 11.3 as a function of the salient context and participants' gender. It can be seen that overall the means of the knowing scores are all positive but are also relatively close to zero, which indicates that on average participants did not show a great deal of difference between connected and separate knowing, but tended to endorse more strongly those statements related to connected knowing than those related to separate knowing.

In order to examine the effect of salient context and gender on participants' way of knowing a 2 (gender of participant: male, female) x 3 (salient context: ingroup, outgroup, gender) ANOVA was conducted. The results indicated that overall there was no difference between men and women's ways of knowing, with no significant main effect for gender,  $F(1, 268) = 2.71$ ,  $ns$ . There was however, a significant main effect for salient context,  $F(2, 268) = 4.29$ ,  $p < .05$ . Contrasts revealed that those participants in the ingroup context described their way of knowing as significantly more connected ( $M = 1.06$ ) than did those participants in the outgroup context ( $M = 0.65$ ),  $t(181) = 3.28$ ,  $p < .01$ .

There was, however, no significant difference in knowing scores between those participants in the gender context ( $M = 0.85$ ) and participants in either the ingroup context,  $t(181) = 1.57$ , *ns*, or the outgroup context,  $t(180) = 1.49$ , *ns*.

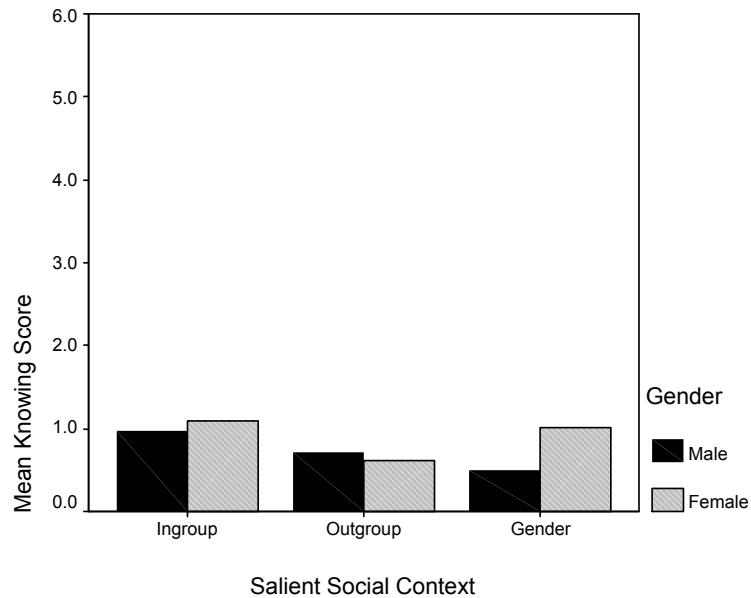


Figure 11.3. Mean Knowing Score as a Function of Gender of Participant and Salient Social Context.

It was hypothesised that there would be a significant interaction between gender and salient context, but this interaction turned out to be only marginally significant,  $F(2, 268) = 2.51$ ,  $p < .09$ . In order to test the hypotheses fully, planned contrasts were conducted. Contrasts revealed that although there were no differences between men and women in either the ingroup context,  $t(90) < 1$ , *ns*, or the outgroup context  $t(89) < 1$ , *ns*, there was, as predicted, a significant gender difference in the gender condition,  $t(89) = 2.46$ ,  $p < .05$ , such that women's way of knowing was significantly more connected ( $M = 1.01$ ) than men's ( $M = 0.49$ ).

## Discussion

The present research was designed to test traditional accounts of ways of knowing which have conceptualised approaches to learning and knowledge as stable and gendered: men with separate knowing arising from an independent self-concept and women with connected knowing arising from an interdependent self-concept. Taken together, the results of the two studies presented here offer an alternative analysis, which views the self and approaches to learning and knowledge as flexible and context dependent. These results are consistent with a social identity analysis, suggesting that it is proximal aspects of the social context, such as the nature of the self-other relationship and group norms, which predict ways of knowing rather than a simple relationship with gender.

In line with previous research (Galotti et al., 1999; Galotti et al., 2001; Knight et al., 2000), results revealed that, on average, participants' connected knowing scores were higher than their separate knowing scores. However, in contrast to past studies that suggest connected knowing and separate knowing are separate and orthogonal dimensions (e.g., Belenky et al., 1986; Galotti et al., 1999; Knight et al., 1995) or that they are inversely related to one another (cf. Clinchy, 1996), our results demonstrated a small but significant positive relationship between connected and separate knowing.

In support of our hypotheses, participants' connected and separate knowing were found to be highly dependent upon the social context and not, as suggested by previous research, on gender per se. Whereas gender differences were found in separate knowing, with men showing higher levels of separate knowing than women, this difference occurred only when gender was made salient. Further, although there was no difference between men's and women's levels of connected knowing, a gender difference was apparent in the relative emphasis that men and women placed on

connected and separate knowing such that women placed a greater emphasis on connected knowing than men, but again, only when gender was made salient.

When participants were asked to focus on the groups to which they did or did not belong and on the similarities and differences between themselves and other group members, a different pattern of results emerged. Those participants in the ingroup context displayed significantly higher levels of connected knowing than did those participants in the outgroup context, and difference scores indicated that they also placed a greater relative emphasis on connected knowing than on separate knowing.

These results are consistent with the results of our other studies reported in Chapters 7 to 9. Taken together they provide clear evidence of the important role that proximal aspects of the social context play in determining the way in which we define ourselves, the way in which we think about moral problems, and the way in which we approach learning and knowledge. The following chapter will synthesise the results of all nine of our empirical studies, and will discuss the implications of these results for theories of the gendered self, moral orientation, and ways of knowing. The following chapter will also discuss the broader implications of this research, and outline future directions for research.

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **A Gendered Self or a Gendered Context:**

#### **A Summary of the Research and Conclusions**

The research presented in Chapters 7 through to 11 paints a complex picture of the ways in which gender can affect our perceptions, behaviours, and attitudes. The studies demonstrate that, in line with traditional accounts of a gendered self, under specific circumstances, gender has a strong and predictable influence on our behaviour. In such situations men and women are seen to act very much in line with traditional gender norms and expectations. However, the studies also demonstrate that in other situations these gender differences can evaporate, and behaviour is instead determined by the norms and expectations of very different social categories, varying greatly across contexts.

This concluding chapter serves several functions. Firstly, it offers a summary and integration of the nine empirical studies reported here, describing the ways in which they provide support for the series of hypotheses outlined in Chapter 6. Secondly, this chapter discusses the implications of these nine studies for traditional theories of a gendered self, moral orientation, and ways of knowing. Finally, the chapter examines the broader implications of the studies and considers future directions for this program of research.

#### **The Fate of the Hypotheses**

In this section we will examine, in turn, the fate of each of the hypotheses outlined in Chapter 6. In doing so we will provide an integrated summary of the results found across our nine empirical studies.

## The Self and the Importance of Social Context

The first of our hypotheses developed in response to the mixed evidence for a self-concept that was simply related to gender. Hypothesis 1 questioned the notion of a given individual being equally independent (or interdependent) in relation to all people and across all contexts and offered an alternative to traditional accounts based on distal explanatory factors, removed from the context in which the self-definition occurs:

**H1: Individuals are capable of being both independent and interdependent in relation to others and they will look to proximal aspects of their social context to determine which is appropriate.**

More specifically, a social identity analysis of categorisation and group membership was used to generate a series of more concrete hypotheses. It was suggested that the nature of the independent and interdependent self is a group-related perception that varies in a systematic and predictable way:

**H2: The nature of the self-other relationship will determine independence and interdependence. In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to describe themselves as interdependent compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to describe themselves as independent.**

The results from Study 1 provide good empirical support for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. The results indicate that rather than being fixed, caused by distal factors, and simply related to gender, descriptions of the self in terms of either independence or interdependence are highly reliant on the social context in which they are embedded



(Hypothesis 1). More specifically, the results demonstrate that the way in which individuals describe themselves is clearly related to perceptions of shared category membership and the nature of the self-other relationship (Hypothesis 2). Ingroup contexts were more likely to elicit interdependent self-descriptions, including traits such as considerate and compassionate, while outgroup contexts were more likely to elicit independent self-descriptions, including traits such as unique and objective. Importantly, under these circumstances gender was not a significant predictor of self-definition.

### **The Gendered Self and Social Context**

As we outlined in Chapter 6, the notion of a context-dependent self-concept does not necessarily preclude the possibility of gender differences in independence and interdependence. The social identity perspective also suggests that the groups that we belong to can affect the way in which we define ourselves through the process of mutual social influence and the internalisation of group norms:

**H3: Social categories affect the way in which we see ourselves and the way in which we behave because of our desire to adhere to the norms and stereotypes associated with those categories.**

Further, the social identity perspective makes a distinction between the content of a social category and the use of that category to define the self and determine behaviour. The perspective therefore allows us to predict when a given group membership will become influential:

**H4: Gender is just one of many social categories which can affect the way in which we see ourselves and our subsequent behaviour. Gender will only be influential to the degree that it is seen as an appropriate social category by which to define ourselves in a given situation (i.e., when it becomes salient).**

More specifically, concrete predictions about the nature of these gender differences were outlined in Hypothesis 5:

**H5: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to describe themselves as interdependent, while men will be more likely than women to describe themselves as independent.**

Taken together, the results from Study 1 and Study 2 provide good empirical evidence for Hypothesis 3, Hypothesis 4, and Hypothesis 5. The results demonstrate that gender differences in self-descriptions were evident only when gender was made salient, confirming the idea that norms related to gender-appropriate behaviour are more readily accessible (and perceived as appropriate) under conditions of gender salience (Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4). In a gender salient context, women placed a greater emphasis on interdependent traits when asked to describe themselves, compared to men who placed a greater emphasis on independent traits (Hypothesis 5).

### **Applications**

In Chapter 6 we outlined the implications for a context-dependent self-concept for other realms of psychology. Given the relationship that is said to exist between the self-concept, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, Hypothesis 6 predicted that an

individual's moral orientation and their approach to knowledge and learning could also be seen as variable, and context dependent:

**H6: Attitudes and behaviour associated with the independent and interdependent self will be dependent upon the proximal aspects of the social context and the nature of the self-other relationship**

The results from Study 3 through to Study 9 provide good empirical support for Hypothesis 6. Taken together they suggest that just as the self-concept is dependent upon social category salience, self-categorisation, and the subsequent nature of the self-other relationship, so too are moral reasoning and ways of knowing. The results of these studies will be summarised in more detail, in light of the more concrete hypotheses that follow.

### **Norms in Moral Reasoning and Ways of Knowing**

In Chapter 6 we also argued that, just as there are established norms associated with self-definition, so too would there be norms associated moral reasoning and ways of knowing:

**H7: Clear norms exist about appropriate ways to approach moral dilemmas and knowledge and learning. There are norms that are associated with gender, as well as norms that are associated with interacting with ingroup and outgroup members.**

The results from Study 3, Study 4, Study 7, and Study 8 provide empirical support for Hypothesis 7. Taken together, Study 3 and Study 4 establish the existence of

clear norms and expectations associated with moral reasoning. Study 3 indicates that there are gender-related norms, such that women expected to see care considerations as more important than justice ones, and males expected to see justice considerations as more important than care considerations. However, the results from Study 4 suggest that norms and expectations also exist in relation to how we reason about problems involving ingroup and outgroup members. In a context that involves ingroup members, people were expected to see care considerations as more important than justice ones, while in a context that involves an outgroup member, people were expected to see justice considerations as more important than care considerations.

Similarly, Study 7 and Study 8 establish the existence of clear norms and expectations associated with ways of knowing. The results from Study 7 provide good support for the existence of gender-related norms and expectations in the realm of ways of knowing, with women expected to place a greater emphasis on connected knowing than separate, compared to men. Similarly, the results from Study 8 provide good support for the existence of group membership-related norms and expectations in the realm of ways of knowing. In a context that involves ingroup members, people were expected to be more likely to utilise connected knowing than separate knowing, compared to a context that involves outgroup members.

### **Moral Reasoning**

Following on from the broad prediction made in Hypothesis 6 about the link between the context dependence of the self-concept and of moral reasoning, more concrete hypotheses were made from a social identity perspective:

**H8: In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to use a care orientation to moral reasoning compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to use a justice orientation.**

However, as with the self-concept, such a hypothesis does not necessarily discount the existence of gender differences in moral reasoning. Rather, it was proposed that concrete differences in social context would moderate these gender differences, and that gender differences would not be appropriate at all times:

**H9: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to use a care orientation to moral reasoning, while men will be more likely than women to use a justice orientation.**

Empirical support for Hypothesis 8 and Hypothesis 9 were found from Study 5, using self-reported self-categorisations, and from Study 6, using a manipulation of the salient social context. Taken together the studies suggest that it is proximal aspects of the social context, such as the nature of the self-other relationship and group norms, which predict moral orientation rather than a simple relationship with gender. In both Study 5 and Study 6, individuals tended to place an emphasis on care orientation when reasoning about a situation involving an ingroup member. In contrast, when an outgroup member was involved, individuals tended to place a greater emphasis on a justice orientation (Hypothesis 8). Further, pervasive gender differences were not apparent in either study (Hypothesis 9). In Study 5 gender differences in moral orientation occurred only when participants categorised themselves in terms of their gender, while in Study 6 they occurred only when gender was explicitly made salient.

## Ways of Knowing

Given the relationship that is said to exist between the gendered self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, predictions were also made about the way in which people would approach learning and knowledge:

**H10: In a situation that emphasises ingroup members, individuals will be more likely to use a connected way of knowing compared to a situation that emphasises outgroup members, when they will be more likely to use a separate way of knowing.**

However, as with the self-concept and moral reasoning, such a hypothesis does not necessarily discount the notion of gender differences in ways of knowing. Rather, it is proposed that concrete differences in social context would mediate these gender differences, and that gender differences would not be appropriate at all times:

**H11: When gender is made salient, women will be more likely than men to use a connected way of knowing, while men will be more likely than women to use a separate way of knowing.**

The results of Study 9 provide empirical support for Hypothesis 10 and Hypothesis 11. Individuals' approaches to learning and knowledge were found to be highly dependent upon social context and a simple relationship with gender was not in evidence. In the context of ingroups, individuals displayed significantly higher levels of connected knowing than did those in the context of outgroups, and difference scores indicated that they also placed a greater relative emphasis on connected knowing than on separate knowing (Hypothesis 10). Gender differences were found only when gender

was salient, with men showing higher levels of separate knowing than women, and women placing a greater emphasis on connected knowing than men (Hypothesis 11).

### **Summary of Findings**

From the above, it can be seen that the program of nine experimental studies presented here provide good empirical evidence for the hypotheses outlined in Chapter 6. They demonstrate that the way in which individuals define themselves in relation to others and the way in which they approach moral problems and learning are not simply related to gender or determined by distal factors. Instead, these studies demonstrate that attitudes and behaviours associated with independence and interdependence are, at least in part, determined by proximal aspects of the social context, such as the salient social context in which one is embedded, the group to which one belongs, and the norms and expectations associated with those groups.

To summarise briefly: In the context of ingroups, individuals are more likely to (a) define themselves in terms of interdependence (Study 1); (b) expect others to use a care orientation reason in relation to a moral dilemma (Study 4) and a connected approach to learning and knowledge (Study 8); and (c) themselves use a care approach to solve a moral dilemma (Study 5 and Study 6) and a connected way of knowing (Study 9). In contrast, in the context of outgroups, participants were more likely to (a) define themselves in terms of independence (Study 1); (b) expect others to use a justice orientation reason in relation to a moral dilemmas (Study 4) and a separate approach to learning and knowledge (Study 4); and (c) themselves use a justice approach to solve a moral dilemma (Study 5 and Study 6) and a separate way of knowing (Study 9).

Importantly, in these group-based contexts, gender differences were not apparent in either the self-concept or in moral orientation. However, when gender was salient, gender differences did become apparent such that (a) women placed a greater emphasis

on interdependence when asked to describe themselves, compared to men who placed a greater emphasis on independence (Study 2); (b) individuals expected women to use a care orientation to moral reasoning and a connected approach to learning, while men were expected to use a justice orientation to moral reasoning and a separate way of knowing (Study 3 and Study 7); and (c) women placed a greater emphasis on a care orientation, compared to men who placed a greater emphasis on justice (Study 5 and Study 6), and women were more likely to place an emphasis on connected knowing compared to men (Study 9).

The following section outlines the important implications that these findings have for traditional conceptualisations of the gendered self, and for traditional theories of moral reasoning and ways of knowing.

### **Implications: A Gendered Self or a Gendered Context?**

As we have argued in our review of the literature, traditional accounts of the self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing see gender as a crucial determinant of an individual's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. They posit the notion of a gendered self (either independent or interdependent) that is determined by distal factors such as evolutionary processes, childhood socialisation, or broad social structural factors, and is thus seen as relatively stable both across time and across situation.

Indeed, particular portions of the research presented here seem to be consistent with this notion of a gendered self. Our studies report significant gender differences in self-definition, gender differences in moral orientation, and gender differences in approaches to learning and knowledge. However, contrary to traditional theories, these gender differences were in no way ubiquitous or pervasive. They occurred only under very particular circumstances, that is, when gender was made salient or individuals categorised themselves in terms of their gender. It was under these conditions, and only



under these conditions, that men and women acted in line with the norms and expectations associated with their gender stereotype.

In addition to our findings of gender differences, our studies also demonstrate that when it comes to social perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours, individuals are exceedingly malleable, looking to proximal aspects of their social context to determine what is appropriate. Individuals can describe themselves as either independent or interdependent, they can reason from either a care or justice perspective, and they can approach learning and knowledge in either a connected or a separate way. Taken together, these results illustrate that if one wants to be able to predict how an individual is going to behave in a given situation, simply looking to the individual's gender or to distal factors such as their childhood socialisation will be unlikely to have definitive predictive power. Instead, one needs to examine the features of the immediate social context: What groups does the individual see as important? Who are they interacting with? What is the nature of the self-other relationship? What norms and expectations are in play? Thus, the studies that we have presented here suggest that when gender differences are observed *it is not the self that is intrinsically gendered*, as traditional analysis of gender and the self have proposed, but *it is the social context that is gendered*.

### **The Process**

A social identity analysis of social categorisation and group membership provides a parsimonious account of not only the gender differences that have been observed in self-definition, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing and but also the lack of them. By making the distinction between the content of a social category (e.g., what it means to be a man or a woman) and the use of the social category (e.g., when it is appropriate to see the self as a man or a woman) we are able to explain the context dependence of gender differences. In this way, the process of self-categorisation allows us to predict when it is that gender differences will occur. It suggests that gender is an influential predictor of

behaviour only to the extent that gender is a meaningful category by which to categorise the self and others within a given context. When the social context indicates to an individual that it is appropriate to see the self in terms of gender, that individual is likely to act in line with perceived gender norms and expectations. However, if another group becomes a more meaningful categorisation, gender norms are no longer prescriptive, and other norms of behaviour become influential. In this way, gender is just one of many social categories that can influence our perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. Gender is influential, not because it is in some way special or different from other categories, but precisely because it is a social category that has norms and expectations associated with it.

However, while we argue that gender is just one amongst many social categories that can affect our behaviour, it should be noted that the social reality is that gender, for most, is an ubiquitous category and is arguably the most salient of all social categories (e.g., Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Fiske, Haslam, & Fiske, 1991), particularly for women (e.g., Cameron & Lalonde, 2001). In social identity terms, gender tends to be a *highly accessible* social category and individuals are *perceiver ready* to categorise themselves and others as men or women (Bruner, 1957; Oakes, 1987). As a result, it is not surprising that gender differences in behaviour may be observed across a wide range of circumstances. While we suggest that under some circumstances other social groups can take priority over the salience of gender, and have demonstrated this within a laboratory setting, this is not to suggest that this is necessarily an easy process, particularly within a society that is so dominated by its division of the world into girls and boys, men and women. However, what we do want to suggest is that the self (and moral reasoning and ways of knowing) is not intrinsically related to gender.

## Future Research

The results that we have presented here provide excellent support for our hypotheses, demonstrating the malleability of the self-concept, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, and pointing to the importance of self-categorisation as a determinant of behaviour. However, while the research answers many questions, it also raises many more. This section briefly discusses the way in which the research presented here can be extended through future research.

### The Use of Specific Groups

The research that we have presented clearly demonstrates the importance of group membership as a determinant of our behaviour. However, it should be noted that in many of these studies, the way in which we manipulated social category salience resulted in individuals responding to questions with different groups in mind. *In general*, thinking about similar ingroups increased the likelihood of interdependence, care orientation, and connected knowing while dissimilar outgroups increased the likelihood of independence, a justice orientation, and separate knowing. However, we would not like to claim that this pattern of results would always be the case. For example, it is likely that making salient an ingroup that had very strong norms for separate knowing (e.g., lawyer) would lead individuals to conform to these norms and describe their own approach to knowing as more separate. Indeed, as we have argued, this is the very process that occurred with men, who, when their gender ingroup was made salient, described themselves as independent, reasoned from a justice perspective, and displayed higher levels of separate knowing. Future research may want to examine the way in which the salience of *specific* ingroups and outgroups, with different norms related to independence and interdependence (such as national groups, cultural groups, occupational groups) affect individuals' behaviour. Such an approach would also allow for more control over

the salient groups, and rule out any possible confounds due to differences in the groups generated.

### **Alternate Approaches to Malleability**

The research that has been presented here has emphasised the malleability and flexibility of the gender-related self-concept and subsequent behaviour arising from gender differences in the self-concept. However, it should be noted that we have investigated only one way through which the self can be seen as flexible. Our research has concentrated on manipulating the relative salience of particular social identities. Such an approach has demonstrated variations in gender-related behaviours corresponding to the level of gender related identification, such that those who identify more highly with their gender group are more likely to see themselves and behaviour in line with the norms and stereotypes associated with their gender group. However, this focus on strength or quantity of identification is just one of the ways in which the social identity perspective sees our psychology and behaviour as being a dynamic process. Future research may choose to focus on alternative mechanisms, such as the quality of social identifications and changes in the broader social context.

### **Content versus Use**

As we have outlined in Chapter 6 a distinction can be made between the content of social categories and their use, and thus there are two ways in which malleability of the self and social identity can be construed (Condor, 1989; Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Ellemers et al., 2002; Smith, Murphy, & Coats, 1999). The methodology we have employed in the research presented here concentrates on the malleability of the use of social categories and looks to changes in the level of social identification, contrasting the presence (or salience) of social identification with its absence (or non-salience). However Condor (1989) suggests:

A tendency to conceive of flexibility in terms of variations in the strength of category identification has led to a tendency to underestimate the potential for flexibility in the meaning and use of the category Women (p. 26).

In light of this distinction, the flexibility of gender-related behaviours could be investigated by manipulating not only the *quantity* of social identification with gender, but also the content or *quality* of gender-related identity. Such an emphasis would examine the variation in what it *means* to be a man or a woman, looking to change the content of gender categories by varying the perceived norms and stereotypes associated with gender categories (e.g., Haslam & Turner, 1992; McGarty, Yzerbyt, & Spears, 2002; Spears, Oakes, Ellemers, & Haslam, 1997).

### **Immediate Context versus Broader Context**

It must also be noted that the approach to malleability and dynamism that we have taken, manipulating levels of identification with gender as a social category, corresponds most closely to that taken by the self-categorisation tradition. In contrast to this focus on immediate social contextual factors, social identity theory focuses upon the broader context (Haslam, 2001; Turner & Oakes, 1997). As we have seen in Chapter 5, social identity theory identifies a number of key features of social structure that are important in determining social identification, such as the permeability of group boundaries, the stability of intergroup relations, and the legitimacy of status differences (Tajfel, 1978b, Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Further research into the changing nature of gender-related behaviours may wish to take into account variations in the wider social structure (e.g., Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1999).

### **Some Final Comments: Feminism and Change**

As we have seen, the findings of context-dependence and malleability in behaviours traditionally seen to be simply related to gender has significant implications

for theories of the self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing. However, the findings also have broader implications for more general societal attitudes towards men and women and for social and political change. Indeed, from within the psychological arena, Susan Condor (1989) suggests, “an emphasis on change over time is characteristic of feminist political orientations, and that ideas which stress social continuity are characteristic of anti-feminist positions” (p. 18). While Condor suggests that such a simple dichotomy is an oversimplification, it is clear that assumptions of flexibility and change are a necessary precondition of any social movement that is looking to transform society.

Such an analysis of feminism and change is also consistent with the social identity approach that we have employed. A social identity perspective not only offers a psychological analysis of social behaviour, but also proposes a relatively sophisticated political analysis of social behaviour (Haslam, 2001; Oakes et al., 1994). The perspective acknowledges that individuals are members of groups that are markedly different from one another on a range of dimensions and recognises the consequences of social structure and the importance of malleability. Thus, in contrast to psychoanalytic or evolutionary accounts of the self, the social identity perspective offers us the possibility of change (e.g., Reicher, 1987).

We began Chapter 2 with a quote from Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* (1949/1972) that pondered the nature of gender differences. Are they intrinsic and enduring or are they superficial and destined to disappear? The work that we have presented here shed some light on de Beauvoir’s questions. Our analysis suggests that gender differences, at least those in the realm of the self, moral reasoning, and ways of knowing, are not intrinsic and enduring, but are instead highly dependent on the context in which they are imbedded and as such should be seen as extremely malleable. But does this mean that they are destined to disappear? As we have noted earlier, the context in which we live is one that is indisputably gendered, in a way that is not so easily

transformed as it is in the laboratory. However, our findings of malleability and context dependence give hope that at least change is possible, that there is at least the potential for us to lessen gender's influence on our expectations, perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours.

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## APPENDIX A

### Study 1 Questionnaires

#### Ingroup Cover Sheet

People belong to all sorts of different social groups. They can be broad sociological groups like racial groups, nationalities, and gender, or they can be more specific like university, sporting teams, or clubs.

Please list 5 groups that you belong to.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Now, pick one of the groups that you listed above (put a big asterix, \*, next to it) and list five things that you think that you share with members of this group:

5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Outgroup Cover Sheet

People belong to all sorts of different social groups. They can be broad sociological groups like racial groups, nationalities, and gender, or they can be more specific like university, sporting teams or clubs.

**Please list 5 groups that you do NOT belong to.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Now, pick one of the groups that you listed above (put a big asterix, \*, next to it) and list five things that you think that distinguish you from members of this group:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Dependent Measures

Please read through the following list of words and underline all of the words which you think are **descriptive of yourself at this time**.

affectionate	cowardly	jovial	solitary
aloof	dependable	lazy	sophisticated
ambitious	dependent	materialistic	sportsmanlike
approachable	distant	meditative	stubborn
arrogant	distinct	musical	stupid
artistic	exempt	neat	suave
autonomous	forgiving	objective	supportive
boundless	free	ostentatious	tactful
caring	free-willed	persistent	tender
closed	gregarious	practical	tolerant
committed	happy-go-lucky	reliant	unattached
compassionate	helpful	responsive	uncommitted
concerned	imaginative	revengeful	understanding
confident	impartial	self-contained	uninhibited
connected	impressionable	self-reliant	unique
conservative	impulsive	self-sufficient	very religious
considerate	independent	sensual	warm
cooperative	individualistic	separate	yielding
courteous	intelligent	sociable	

Now, please go back over the words that you have underlined and select the **five** words that seem to describe you the best and list these words below.

**Word 1** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 3** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 5** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### Study 2 Questionnaire

Please read through the following list of words and underline all of the words which you think are **descriptive of yourself at this time**.

affectionate	cowardly	jovial	solitary
aloof	dependable	lazy	sophisticated
ambitious	dependent	materialistic	sportsmanlike
approachable	distant	meditative	stubborn
arrogant	distinct	musical	stupid
artistic	exempt	neat	suave
autonomous	forgiving	objective	supportive
boundless	free	ostentatious	tactful
caring	free-willed	persistent	tender
closed	gregarious	practical	tolerant
committed	happy-go-lucky	reliant	unattached
compassionate	helpful	responsive	uncommitted
concerned	imaginative	revengeful	understanding
confident	impartial	self-contained	uninhibited
connected	impressionable	self-reliant	unique
conservative	impulsive	self-sufficient	very religious
considerate	independent	sensual	warm
cooperative	individualistic	separate	yielding
courteous	intelligent	sociable	

Now, please go back over the words that you have underlined and select the **five** words that seem to describe you the best and list these words below.

**Word 1** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 2** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 3** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 4** \_\_\_\_\_

**Word 5** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C

### Study 3 Questionnaires

#### Female Version

**You are about to read a short scenario about Susan, a female student at the Australian National University. You will then be asked about what you think Susan would do, and what considerations you think she would have.**

Susan is a female student at the Australian National University. One day she is in the University library, just on closing time, about to borrow a book.

An individual comes up to Susan and explains that they are a TAFE student and that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have to do that is due the next day.

They explain that as a TAFE student they are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a library card. They ask Susan if she will borrow the book for them on her library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible and explain that if they don't borrow this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, Susan realises that if the book is returned late, or not at all, she will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book at her own expense.

Briefly describe what you think the problem is for Susan

---

---

What do you think Susan would do?

---

---







Please answer the following questions:

**How much do you think Susan would identify with the TAFE student?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
Not at all Moderately Very

**How similar do you think Susan would feel to the TAFE student?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
Not at all Moderately Very

**When thinking about what you thought Susan would do, how important was her gender?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
Not at all Moderately Very

**Do you think that a male student would have acted differently from Susan?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
Not at all Moderately Very

**What do you think would have been a male student's most important consideration?  
(please circle)**

- (a) not getting in trouble
- (b) helping out someone in need
- (c) following the rules
- (d) avoiding conflict

**What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your gender? M F (please circle)**

## Male Version

**You are about to read a short scenario about Matthew, a male student at the Australian National University. You will then be asked about what you think Matthew would do, and what considerations you think he would have.**

Matthew is a male student at the Australian National University. One day he is in the University library, just on closing time, about to borrow a book.

An individual comes up to Matthew and explains that they are a TAFE student and that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have to do that is due the next day.

They explain that as a TAFE student they are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a library card. They ask Matthew if he will borrow the book for them on his library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible and explain that if they don't borrow this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, Matthew realises that if the book is returned late, or not at all, he will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book at his own expense.

**Briefly describe what you think the problem is for Matthew**

---

---

**What do you think Matthew would do?**

---

---







## APPENDIX D

### Study 4 Questionnaires

#### Outgroup Version

**You are about to read a short scenario about Person X, a student at the Australian National University. You will then be asked about what you think Person X would do, and what considerations you think they would have.**

Person X is a student at the Australian National University. One day Person X is in the University library, just on closing time, about to borrow a book.

An individual comes up to Person X and explains that they are a student from another university and that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have to do that is due the next day.

They explain that because they are from another university they are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a library card. They ask if they can borrow the book on Person X's library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible and explain that if they don't borrow this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, Person X realises that if the book is returned late, or not at all, Person X will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book.

**Briefly describe what you think the problem is for Person X**

---

---

**What do you think Person X would do?**

---

---

In order to come to a decision of what to do in this situation, Person X would have to weigh up many different considerations about the situation. For the following questions, please rate how important you think that each of the following considerations would be to Person X.

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they not get in trouble with the library?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Moderately				Very
important				important				important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they be able to trust the other student?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Moderately				Very
important				important				important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they follow the rules of the library?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Moderately				Very
important				important				important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they help a person in need?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Moderately				Very
important				important				important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they do not have to pay fines?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Moderately				Very
important				important				important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they feel good about their actions?**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all				Moderately				Very
important				important				important





Please answer the following questions:

**How much do you think Person X would identify with the other student?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
Not at all Moderately Very Much

**How similar do you think Person X would feel to the other student?**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
Not at all Moderately Very  
similar similar similar

**What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_**

**What is your gender?**

M F

**(please circle)**

## Ingroup Version

**You are about to read a short scenario about Person X, a student at the Australian National University. You will then be asked about what you think Person X would do, and what considerations you think they would have.**

Person X is a student at the Australian National University. One day Person X is in the University library, just on closing time, about to borrow a book.

An individual that Person X recognises from a class comes up to Person X and explains that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have to do that is due the next day.

They explain that they have lost their library card and are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a replacement library card. They ask if they can borrow the book on Person X's library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible and explain that if they don't borrow this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, Person X realises that if the book is returned late, or not at all, Person X will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book.

**Briefly describe what you think the problem is for Person X**

---

---

**What do you think Person X would do?**

---

---

In order to come to a decision of what to do in this situation, Person X would have to weigh up many different considerations about the situation. For the following questions, please rate how important you think that each of the following considerations would be to Person X.

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they not get in trouble with the library?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they be able to trust the other student?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they follow the rules of the library?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they help a person in need?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they do not have to pay fines?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they feel good about their actions?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How obliged do you think Person X feels to help the other student?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
obliged      obliged      obliged

**How important do you think it is for Person X that the other student doesn't think that they are mean?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that their actions don't hurt another person?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X to avoid conflict with the other student?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How likely do you think it is that Person X would help because they would like to be helped in the same situation?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Ver  
likely      likely      likely

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they takes into account the specific aspects of the situation?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important

**How important do you think it is for Person X that they follows the general principles of what they think is right and wrong?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9  
Not at all      Moderately      Very  
important      important      important



## APPENDIX E

### Study 5 Questionnaires

#### Outgroup Cover Sheet

### SOCIAL REASONING STUDY

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex - M F (please circle)

On the following page you will be described a social situation which has the potential to be a moral dilemma. We are interested in how you, as an **ANU student** (as opposed to students from other tertiary institutions), approach the problem. When answering the questions that follow remember that there are no right or wrong answers. What is of most interest are the reasons why you choose the action that you do.

## Ingroup Cover Sheet

### SOCIAL REASONING STUDY

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex - M F (please circle)

On the following page you will be described a social situation which has the potential to be a moral dilemma. We are interested in how you, as a **tertiary student** (as opposed to a staff member), approach the problem. When answering the questions that follow remember that there are no right or wrong answers. What is of most interest are the reasons why you choose the action that you do.



## Gender Cover Sheet

### SOCIAL REASONING STUDY

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex - M F (please circle)

On the following page you will be described a social situation which has the potential to be a moral dilemma. We are interested in how you, as a man or a woman, approach the problem. When answering the questions that follow remember that there are no right or wrong answers. What is of most interest are the reasons why you choose the action that you do.

## Moral Reasoning Questionnaire

### **Facts about the situation** -

You are in the university library just on closing time about to borrow a book.

An individual comes up to you and explains that they are a TAFE student and that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have due tomorrow.

They explain that as a TAFE student they are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a library card. They ask you if you will borrow the book for them on your library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible; explaining that if they don't borrow this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, you realise that if the book is returned late, or not at all, you will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book at your own expense.

**Explain, in your own words, what the problem is for you in this situation.**

---

---

---

**What would you do?**

---

---

---

**What are the important factors to be considered in coming to this decision?  
Please describe five considerations.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please do not turn over the page until instructed**





## APPENDIX F

### Study 6 Questionnaires

#### Outgroup Manipulation

Imagine that your group is going to be in a debate to be held at the ANU open day. The debate is entitled....

#### **The Australian National University vs. Other Tertiary Options**

Your group will have to argue in favour of **The ANU**, that is you will have to argue that **The ANU offers better opportunities for school leavers than other tertiary institutions in Canberra.**

Your group will given about 15 minutes to brainstorm and come up with as many points as possible. Write these in the space provided.

**The ANU offers better opportunities for school leavers than other tertiary institutions in Canberra.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

## Ingroup Manipulation

Imagine that your group is going to be in a debate entitled....

### **Tertiary Education vs. On the Job Training - Preparation for a Career**

Your group will have to argue in favour of **Tertiary Education**, that is you will have to argue that **Tertiary education (such as university and TAFE) provides better preparation for a career than on the job training.**

Your group will given about 15 minutes to brainstorm and come up with as many points as possible. Write these in the space provided.

**Tertiary education (such as university and TAFE) provides better preparation for a career than on the job training.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

## Gender Manipulation Men

Imagine that your group is going to be in a debate entitled....

**It's a new millenium and men are no longer real men**

Your group will have to argue on the **NEGATIVE** side, that is, you will have to argue that **Men are still real men.**

Your group will given about 15 minutes to brainstorm and come up with as many points as possible. Write these in the space provided.

**Men are still real men.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_



## Gender Manipulation Women

Imagine that your group is going to be in a debate entitled....

### **Women are the Weaker Sex**

Your group will have to argue in favour of **WOMEN**, that is you will have to argue that **Women are NOT the weaker sex.**

Your group will given about 15 minutes to brainstorm and come up with as many points as possible. Write these in the space provided.

### **Women are NOT the weaker sex.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

## Moral Reasoning Questionnaire

### **Facts about the situation** -

You are in the university library just on closing time about to borrow a book.

An individual comes up to you and explains that they are a TAFE student and that they have found a book that is very important for an assignment that they have due tomorrow.

They explain that as a TAFE student they are unable to borrow books from the ANU Library without filling in a lot of forms and waiting a week for a library card. They ask you if you will borrow the book for them on your library card.

They promise that they will return the book as soon as possible; explaining that if they don't borrow this book they are at great risk of failing their assignment.

However, you realise that if the book is returned late, or not at all, you will be responsible for any fines, or to replace the missing book at your own expense.

**Explain, in your own words, what the problem is for you in this situation.**

---

---

---

**What would you do?**

---

---

---

**What are the important factors to be considered in coming to this decision?  
Please describe five considerations.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please do not turn over the page until instructed**





## APPENDIX G

### Study 7 Questionnaires

#### Female Version

Susan is a female student at The University of Canberra who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in her third year.

Susan enjoys going to movies and gets on well with other people; she is described as having a good sense of humour.

Susan has a pet dog called Rupert and rents a house in Kaleen.

Susan also has a part time job which requires her to interact with many people.

**Think about how you think Susan would approach her work. Given your fairly limited knowledge about Susan, please answer the following questions in relation to Susan in her work context.**

**When Susan encounters people whose opinions seem alien to her, she make a deliberate effort to “extend” herself into that person, to try and see how they could have those opinions.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan values the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of her own concerns when solving problems.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan tries to think with people instead of against them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan tends to put herself in other people’s shoes when she is discussing controversial issues, to see why they think the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan likes to play the devil’s advocate – arguing the opposite of what someone is saying.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan has certain criteria that she uses in evaluating arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan feels that the best way for her to achieve her own identity is to interact with a variety of other people.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan likes to understand where other people are ‘coming from’ and what experiences have led them to feel the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**One could call Susan’s way of analyzing things ‘putting them on trial’ because of how careful she is to consider all of the evidence.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan always is interested in knowing why people say and believe the things they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**It’s important to Susan to remain as objective as possible when she analyses something.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**The most important part of Susan’s education has been learning to understand people who are very different from her.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**In evaluating what someone says, Susan focuses on the quality of their argument, not on the person who is presenting it.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan finds that she can strengthen her own position through arguing with someone who disagrees with her.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan enjoys hearing the opinions of people who come from backgrounds different from her – it helps her understand how the same things can be seen in such different ways.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan often finds herself arguing with the authors of books she reads, trying to logically figure out why they are wrong.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan’s more likely to try to understand someone else’s opinion than try and evaluate it**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan tries to point out weaknesses in other people’s thinking to help them clarify their arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan can obtain insight into opinions that differ from hers through empathy.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Susan spends time figuring out what’s ‘wrong’ with things; for example she’ll look for something in a literary interpretation that isn’t argued well enough.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**How similar do you think you are to Susan**

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      very

**What is your age \_\_\_\_\_ years**

**What is your gender    male                      female                      (please circle)**

## Male Version

Matt is a male student at The University of Canberra who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in his third year.

Matt enjoys going to movies and gets on well with other people; he is described as having a good sense of humour.

Matt has a pet dog called Rupert and rents a house in Kaleen.

Matt also has a part time job which requires him to interact with many people.

**Think about how you think Matt would approach his work. Given your fairly limited knowledge about Matt, please answer the following questions in relation to Matt in his work context.**

**When Matt encounters people whose opinions seem alien to him, he make a deliberate effort to “extend” himself into that person, to try and see how they could have those opinions.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt values the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of his own concerns when solving problems.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt tries to think with people instead of against them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt tends to put himself in other people’s shoes when he is discussing controversial issues, to see why they think the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt likes to play the devil’s advocate – arguing the opposite of what someone is saying.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt has certain criteria that he uses in evaluating arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt feels that the best way for him to achieve his own identity is to interact with a variety of other people.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt likes to understand where other people are ‘coming from’ and what experiences have led them to feel the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree



**One could call Matt's way of analyzing things 'putting them on trial' because of how careful he is to consider all of the evidence.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt always is interested in knowing why people say and believe the things they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**It's important to Matt to remain as objective as possible when he analyses something.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**The most important part of Matt's education has been learning to understand people who are very different from him.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**In evaluating what someone says, Matt focuses on the quality of their argument, not on the person who is presenting it.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt finds that he can strengthen his own position through arguing with someone who disagrees with him.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt enjoys hearing the opinions of people who come from backgrounds different from him – it helps him understand how the same things can be seen in such different ways.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt often finds himself arguing with the authors of books he reads, trying to logically figure out why they are wrong.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt's more likely to try to understand someone else's opinion than try and evaluate it**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt tries to point out weaknesses in other people's thinking to help them clarify their arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt can obtain insight into opinions that differ from his through empathy.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Matt spends time figuring out what's 'wrong' with things; for example he'll look for something in a literary interpretation that isn't argued well enough.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**How similar do you think you are to Matt**

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      very

**What is your age \_\_\_\_\_ years**

**What is you gender    male                      female                      (please circle)**

## APPENDIX H

### Study 8 Questionnaires

#### Outgroup Version

Person X is a student at the Australian National University who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in their second year.

Person X also has a part-time job that requires them to work with people from groups that are very different from the groups that Person X belongs to.

In this job Person X is required to solve many problems in collaboration with these people.

Person X does not feel very similar to their co-workers

Think about how you think Person X would approach their work. Given your fairly limited knowledge about Person X, please answer the following questions in relation to Person X in their work context.

When Person X encounters people whose opinions seem alien to them, they make a deliberate effort to “extend” themselves into that person, to try and see how they could have those opinions.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X values the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of their own concerns when solving problems.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X tries to think with people instead of against them.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X tends to put themselves in other people’s shoes when they are discussing controversial issues, to see why they think the way they do.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X likes to play the devil’s advocate – arguing the opposite of what someone is saying.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X has certain criteria that they use in evaluating arguments.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X feels that the best way for them to achieve their own identity is to interact with a variety of other people.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X likes to understand where other people are ‘coming from’ and what experiences have led them to feel the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**One could call Person X’s way of analyzing things ‘putting them on trial’ because of how careful they are to consider all of the evidence.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X always is interested in knowing why people say and believe the things they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**It’s important to Person X to remain as objective as possible when they analyse something.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**The most important part of Person X’s education has been learning to understand people who are very different from them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**In evaluating what someone says, Person X focuses on the quality of their argument, not on the person who is presenting it.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X finds that they can strengthen their own position through arguing with someone who disagrees with them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X enjoys hearing the opinions of people who come from backgrounds different from them – it helps them understand how the same things can be seen in such different ways.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X often finds themselves arguing with the authors of books they reads, trying to logically figure out why they are wrong.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X’s more likely to try to understand someone else’s opinion than try and evaluate it**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X tries to point out weaknesses in other people’s thinking to help them clarify their arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X can obtain insight into opinions that differ from theirs through empathy.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X spends time figuring out what’s ‘wrong’ with things; for example they’ll look for something in a literary interpretation that isn’t argued well enough.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**How similar do you think you are to Person X**

not at all      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      very

**Person X’s gender was not specified. What gender did you imagine Person X to be? (please circle)**

male

female

**What is your age \_\_\_\_\_ years**

What is your gender      male      female (please circle)

## Ingroup Version

Person X is a student at the Australian National University who is enrolled in a Science degree, and is currently in their second year.

Person X also has a part-time job that requires them to work with people from groups that are very similar to the groups that Person X belongs to.

In this job Person X is required to solve many problems in collaboration with these people.

Person X feels very similar to their co-workers

Think about how you think Person X would approach their work. Given your fairly limited knowledge about Person X, please answer the following questions in relation to Person X in their work context.

When Person X encounters people whose opinions seem alien to them, they make a deliberate effort to “extend” themselves into that person, to try and see how they could have those opinions.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X values the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of their own concerns when solving problems.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X tries to think with people instead of against them.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X tends to put themselves in other people’s shoes when they are discussing controversial issues, to see why they think the way they do.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X likes to play the devil’s advocate – arguing the opposite of what someone is saying.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X has certain criteria that they use in evaluating arguments.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X feels that the best way for them to achieve their own identity is to interact with a variety of other people.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

Person X likes to understand where other people are ‘coming from’ and what experiences have led them to feel the way they do.

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**One could call Person X's way of analyzing things 'putting them on trial' because of how careful they are to consider all of the evidence.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X always is interested in knowing why people say and believe the things they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**It's important to Person X to remain as objective as possible when they analyse something.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**The most important part of Person X's education has been learning to understand people who are very different from them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**In evaluating what someone says, Person X focuses on the quality of their argument, not on the person who is presenting it.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X finds that they can strengthen their own position through arguing with someone who disagrees with them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X enjoys hearing the opinions of people who come from backgrounds different from them – it helps them understand how the same things can be seen in such different ways.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X often finds themselves arguing with the authors of books they reads, trying to logically figure out why they are wrong.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X's more likely to try to understand someone else's opinion than try and evaluate it**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X tries to point out weaknesses in other people's thinking to help them clarify their arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X can obtain insight into opinions that differ from theirs through empathy.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**Person X spends time figuring out what's 'wrong' with things; for example they'll look for something in a literary interpretation that isn't argued well enough.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**How similar do you think you are to Person X**

not at all                      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      very

**Person X's gender was not specified. What gender did you imagine Person X to be? (please circle)      male                      female**

**What is your age \_\_\_\_\_ years**

**What is your gender      male                      female (please circle)**

**APPENDIX I**  
**Study 9 Questionnaires**  
**Ingroup Coversheet**

People belong to all sorts of different social groups. They can be broad sociological groups like racial groups, nationalities, and gender, or they can be more specific like university, sporting teams, or clubs.

**Please list 5 groups that you belong to.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Now, pick one of the groups that you listed above (put a big asterix, \*, next to it) and list five things that you think that you share with members of this group:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Outgroup Coversheet

People belong to all sorts of different social groups. They can be broad sociological groups like racial groups, nationalities, and gender, or they can be more specific like university, sporting teams or clubs.

Please list 5 groups that you do NOT belong to.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Now, pick one of the groups that you listed above (put a big asterisk, \*, next to it) and list five things that you think that distinguish you from members of this group:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Gender Salient Coversheet

Gender and gender differences are hot topics in psychology today. People are interested in looking at what affect gender has on behaviour (like intelligence or aggression) and what causes the gender differences that we observe: is it biological or social or some combination of the two.

**Please list 5 gender differences that you would be interested in studying.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Now, pick one of the differences that you listed above (put a big asterix, \*, next to it) and list five things that you think might cause this difference in behaviour:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



## Knowing Questionnaire

Please complete the following questions:

**1. I have certain criteria I use in evaluating arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**2. When I encounter people whose opinions seem alien to me, I make a deliberate effort to “extend” myself into that person, to try and see how they could have those opinions.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**3. I value the use of logic and reason over the incorporation of my own concerns when solving problems.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**4. I try to think with people instead of against them.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**5. I tend to put myself in other people’s shoes when they are discussing controversial issues, to see why they think the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**6. I like to play the devil’s advocate – arguing the opposite of what someone is saying.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**7. I feel that the best way for me to achieve my own identity is to interact with a variety of other people.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**8. I like to understand where other people are ‘coming from’ and what experiences have led them to feel the way they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**9. One could call me way of analyzing things ‘putting them on trial’ because of how careful I am to consider all of the evidence.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**10. I always am interested in knowing why people say and believe the things they do.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**11. It’s important to me to remain as objective as possible when I analyse something.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**12. The most important part of my education had been learning to understand people who are very different from me.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**13. In evaluating what someone says, I focus on the quality of their argument, not on the person who is presenting it.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**14. I find that I can strengthen my own position through arguing with someone who disagrees with me.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**15. I enjoy hearing the opinions of people who come from backgrounds different from mine – it helps me understand how the same things can be seen in such different ways.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**16. I often find myself arguing with the authors of books I read, trying to logically figure out why they are wrong.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**17. I’m more likely to try to understand someone else’s opinion than try and evaluate it**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**18. I try to point out weaknesses in other people's thinking to help them clarify their arguments.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**19. I can obtain insight into opinions that differ from mine through empathy.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

**20. I spend time figuring out what's 'wrong' with things; for example I'll look for something in a literary interpretation that isn't argued well enough.**

strongly disagree      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      strongly agree

## **APPENDIX J**

### **Lyons (1983) Coding Scheme**

#### **Morality as Care and Morality as Justice A Scheme for Coding Considerations of Care and Considerations of Justice**

##### **A. Considerations of Care**

1. General effects to others (unelaborated)
2. Maintenance or restoration of relationships; or response to another considering interdependence
3. Welfare/ well-being of another or the avoidance of conflict; or the alleviation of another's burden/ hurt/ suffering (physical or psychological)
4. Considers the 'situation vs./over the principle'
5. Considers care of self; care of self vs. care of others

##### **B. Considerations of Rights**

1. General effects to the self (unelaborated including 'trouble', 'how to decide')
2. Obligations/ duty/ commitments
3. Standards / rules/ principles for the self or society; or considers fairness, that is, how one would like to be treated if in the other's place
4. Considers the 'principle vs./ over the situation'
5. Considers that others have their own contexts