

# Clash of the Feminist

Course Code: Psyc 3125A

**Comment [e1]:** I really love that they actually argue about things and then talk about their context in explaining their actions. You could use some work on the technical aspects of your wiring and your words cited, but your great conversation won me over. Score = A

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I will be engaging Florence Goodenough and Florence Denmark in an imagined conversation. Florence Goodenough (1886-1959) was a psychologist who made important contributions from Stanford and University of Minnesota. Goodenough was involved in the field of intelligence in children and how it could be measured and also created procedures to help track angry outbursts of children. In 1963, her work was revised and resulted in the Goodenough-Harris test which is widely used today as a non verbal measure of intelligence. (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) In “1941 she was elected as first president of NCWP ( National Council of Women Psychologist).” (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) Her academic career ran from 1924 to 1947. In contrast Florence Denmark born in 1932, received her PHD in psychology from University of Pennsylvania, and later worked at University of New York. She was the “first person to teach a course on Psychology of women at the PHD level in 1970”. (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) She is praised for making important scholarly contributions to the area of women and leadership. (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) She was involved in founding the AWP (Association for women in Psychology) and was the 5th female president of the APA. The topic of the conversation will be their influence on the advancement of females in psychology. There are a variety of reasons why I chose to pair these two psychologists. Firstly, they were great leaders who aided in the formation of major female psychology groups such as the NCWP and AWP. Although they differed in their approaches they helped women progress in the field. Secondly I believed it would be interesting to engage them in a conversation as the perception women had on Florence Goodenough was “[she] [isn’t] particularly sympathetic to the [NCWP’s] gender based agenda”

(Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) In contrast they viewed Florence Denmark as “the iron fist in Velvet gloves” (Pickren, 2008). These influential individuals have made major contributions but women still viewed them as being extremely different.

Comment [e2]: Great rationale!  
Sounds great!

Thirdly it would be interesting to analyze the context in both time periods and how it impacted the lives and work of the two.

**Goodenough:** Hello Ma'am my name is Florence Goodenough.

**Denmark:** Hello to you to ma'am my name is Florence Denmark and I'm an American psychologist.

**Goodenough:** Speaking of psychology I'm also actively involved in psychological research particularly in the field of intelligence, emotional development in children. What field are you involved in?

**Denmark:** I'm actively “involved in the field of psychology of women and leadership, providing scholarly, educational, leadership and administrative contributions.”

(O'Connell, & Russo, 1990)

**Goodenough:** Hold on, did I hear that wrong. Did you just say Psychology of Women?

**Denmark:** I believe that is correct. This particular field is relatively new, what time period are you from maybe you weren't around when the field was created.

**Goodenough:** Well I was actively involved in psychology during the period of 1924-1947, (Rutherford, 2010) but that field was very underdeveloped. By the way what time period are you researching in.

**Denmark:** My career began in the 1960's however my last major contributions and leadership roles were in the 1980's.

**Goodenough:** How has the development of psychology of women developed after my retirement in 1947.

**Denmark:** After your retirement people such as myself have “documented disadvantaged status of women, wrote about the history of women’s contributions to psychology.

Furthermore I have also aided in legitimizing psychology of women as a field.” (Jack, 2009) Matter of fact after being told your name and time period I recall many things I’ve heard about your actions during your time.

**Goodenough:** Your work sounds very interesting. I’m flattered that you value my contribution. Which one of my contributions is most famous in your time? I’m curious to know which of my contribution is the most acknowledged.

**Denmark:** Well many people do acknowledge that you have created a non verbal intelligence test for children, which was later revised by one of your students. It is now called the Goodenough-Harry test I believe, correct me if I’m wrong. Also I believe you have created the Minnesota Preschool Scale which is like a Stanford-Binet test for children. Oh and how can I forget you were the first president of the NCWP that is the highlight.

**Goodenough:** I’m very glad that my contributions are still recognized more than 50 years after my retirement. Also it’s not the Goodenough-Harry test it’s the Goodenough- Harris test. (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) Don’t feel ashamed I will take no offence to that.

**Denmark:** Thanks I thought you would be upset. However I'd like to understand your participation in the NCWP and your stance on women in psychology. How did you use your position as president to help women advance in the field of psychology?

**Goodenough:** I'm sure many female psychologists after my time have critized my role as president of the NCWP. I'm sure that since you're in a time period far ahead of mine you already know the answer to that question. But I guess you have been wishing to hear my personal response to that question.

**Denmark:** You are right, I'm aware of the great criticism you faced due to your gender-neutral approach. But I like to understand your reasoning for this approach and its effect it had on women in your time period.

**Goodenough:** You have every right to ask me any question. At that particular time I felt that "women were demanding recognition that they have not yet earned and opportunities which they have not proved themselves to be qualified." (Jack, 2009)

**Denmark:** Wow, I think that is kind of harsh considering many "members of the NCWP did agree that they were being edged out of military positions because of their sex and weren't being invited into positions made available by the departure of their male colleagues for the war effort." (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010)

**Goodenough:** I would like to highlight the contextual factors that occurred in my time during the formation of the NCWP. We formed our group "a day after Pearl Harbour" (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) We believed that by "drawing attention to gender issues in a time of war, we would be undermining our status as scientist by highlighting our special status as women". (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) I know it may seem very shocking however we didn't want to be seen as a special interest group at a

time of national emergency. I believed we could take advantage of the crisis by creating important contributions and developing our status in the discipline.

Comment [e3]: Good, I really like this discussion!

**Denmark:** I'm sure your well aware that after the "post war period the NCWP was renamed the International Council of Psychologist and began to admit many men into the council." (Buskist, 2008) Don't you think that your ignorance of gender discrimination lead to the "downfall of the first professional group of women." (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010)

**Goodenough:** Your statements are very accusing. I believed that by "suggesting gender influences opportunity or success in science, women would jeopardize the already weak position we held within the discipline of psychology." (Jack, 2009)

**Denmark:** In our time period we were able to obtain information about interactions between you and Lewis Terman. You worked with Lewis during your years at Stanford when you were working for your PHD.

**Goodenough:** And?

**Denmark:** I know that Terman addressed you to not engage in any feminist action while serving president of the NCWP. He told you it's "inappropriate for women to improve their status in the discipline in this way". (Jack, 2009)

**Goodenough:** This is true. However I can assure you that his remarks didn't influence my decisions. You seem to be accusing me of being anti feminist. You should explain to me what you have done for women in psychology.

**Denmark:** Firstly, many "woman have referred to me as the iron fist in velvet gloves"(Pickren, 2008) I dedicated my life to try to make sure that "women's contributions would be understood and appreciated" (O'Connell, & Russo, 1990)

I was also one of the “first PHD level teachers of psychology of women” (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) Contextually speaking, my time was a generation fighting for equality on all dimensions including race, gender.

**Goodenough:** You view yourself as being a strong feminist but how much of a scientist are you really. I mean I don't want to offend you, but besides your involvement in organizations you haven't really made scientific contributions to the field.

**Comment [e4]:** Whoa! Way to give as good as you're getting, Goodenough! 😊

**Denmark:** Well I have conducted research and “written scholarly work on women and leadership” (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010) Also I was “3<sup>rd</sup> president of division 35 the psychology of woman and in order to go through council and be approved as a division it had to be primarily casted in the light of research and not so much activism” (Pickren, 2008) So for your information I was actually involved in a division that was also dedicated to research.

**Goodenough:** I can see that you may have also faced some of the tough problems that didn't allow you to form an activist group. Your group couldn't be focused on activism in order to get approved which shifted the groups mandate and focus from the groups beliefs. “Even the NCWP's mandate wasn't approved of by the members” (Pickren, & Rutherford, 2010)

**Denmark:** You're correct. As woman we have faced hardships to gain equality with our male counterparts. Even though our times are far apart we still face gender discriminations. However we did have many benefits you didn't such as the “Equal Rights Amendment [which] demands that sex shouldn't be a factor in determining people's rights” (Emerson, 1970) Also many ethic codes changes were made to protect woman who were being exploited by male

therapists. So with ethic codes changes and legal changes benefiting our purpose females have been able to gain more equality with men.

**Goodenough:** I'm glad now that you understand the kind of pressures I was facing. We were also very early in the process of getting woman involved in psychology. Your time period has the benefit of our contributions, legislation that demands equality and ethics code changes in the APA. I wonder how 50 years after your time what the status of woman would be. It seems as time passes things become more equal and the oppressed people will always prevail.

**Denmark:** You're right. I will ensure people understand the factors that impacted your actions during your time such as contextual factors like World War 2.

**Goodenough:** Thank you very much, I'd hate for people to have a negative image of me.

**Denmark:** Anyways Ma'am I shall be getting back to my beauty sleep I have an important meeting in the morning.

**Goodenough:** Same here I'm getting very exhausted it was nice speaking to you, farewell friend.

**Denmark:** Goodbye Ma'am.



## **Bibliography**

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**Comment [e5]:** Not the right format—check APA. But very good use of outside resources.

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