

GENDER MATTERS

What is Gender Based Analysis? Teaching Guide

Video Summary

This video introduces the concept of **Gender Based Analysis**, a way of thinking critically about how gender assumptions, biases, and ideologies affect psychology.

Discussion Questions

As a class discuss and think of examples for some of the questions raised in the video (see Additional Readings, below, for resources that provide background to these questions):

- How does gendering work to systematically exclude certain people from pursuing psychology?
- How does gendering exclude people from being studied? Or exclude them from benefitting from psychology?
- How do ideas about gender affect our research, our theories, and the way we apply psychology in the world?
- How can we use our knowledge of how psychology is gendered to create more effective, gender-equitable, and inclusive psychology?
- One thing that Gender Based Analysis lets us do is become better consumers of research findings. Why is this an important skill to develop?

Activities

- Watch a clip from the Psychology's Feminist Voices [interview with Lisa Diamond](#) in which she talks about her research on sexual identity. As a class discuss: (1) How did concerns about gender influence her work? (2) What did she discover about sexual identity in her research? and (3) How does her feminism makes her a better psychologist?
- As a class, select a well-known psychological study – perhaps one discussed in your course textbook – and together analyze it through the lens of Gender Based Analysis. Among the questions you might consider are:
 - Who are the participants in this research?
 - Who were *not* included as participants?
 - To whom are the findings of this study thought to generalize?
 - Who are the researchers who conducted the study?
 - What assumptions about gender, or race, or sexual orientation are embedded in the study (they will likely be unstated, so think hard!)?
 - What are the gender-related implications of this research?
 - How might the study be redesigned to be more gender sensitive?

Example Study: Dutton and Aron's study of misattribution of arousal and attraction. Dutton, D. G., & Aron, A. P. (1974). Some evidence for heightened sexual attraction under conditions of high anxiety. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 30(4), 510–517.

Example Study: Milgram's classic study of obedience to authority.

Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral study of obedience. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67, 371-381. For a gendered interpretation to inspire discussion, see Nicholson, I. (2011). "Shocking" masculinity: Stanley Milgram, "obedience to authority," and the "crisis of manhood" in Cold War America, *Isis*, 102, 238-268.

Assignments

- Assign students to read the following article and ask them to write a response paper in which they consider: (1) What gender difference(s) in spatial abilities are often reported? (2) What questions about spatial ability did these researchers ask and how were these questions different from those usually asked by researchers? and (3) Is this research on spatial ability still gendered? If so, in what ways?

Tarampi, M. R., Heydari, N., & Hegarty, M. (2016). A tale of two types of perspective taking: Sex differences in spatial ability. *Psychological Science*, 27(11), 1507–1516.

- Have students read psychologist Naomi Weisstein's now classic 1968 article "Psychology Constructs the Female" in which she argues "psychology has nothing to say about what women are really like, what they need and what they want, especially because psychology does not know." In pairs have student discuss and write a brief reflection paper in which they consider the following questions: (1) Which subfields of psychology is Weisstein especially critical of? (2) What characteristics about these subfields does she find problematic? (3) Could her criticisms also be applied to other identity categories (e.g., gender more broadly, race/ethnicity, class, ability, sexuality, etc.) or other areas of psychology? and (4) In the fifty years since Weisstein wrote her article how much do you think psychology has changed? How much do her criticisms still stand?

Weisstein, N. (1971). [Psychology constructs the female](#). *Journal of Social Education*, 35, 362-373.

Additional Readings

- Ceci, S. J. & Williams, W. M. (2011). Understanding current causes of women's underrepresentation in science. *Proceeding of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108, 3157-3162.
- Cundiff, J. L. (2012). Is Mainstream Psychological Research "Womanless" and "Raceless"? An Updated Analysis. *Sex Roles*, 67(3-4), 158-173.
- Eccles, J. S. (1994). Understanding Women's Educational and Occupational Choices. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 18(4), 585-609.
- Martin, E. (1991). The egg and the sperm: How science has constructed a romance based on stereotypical male-female roles. *Signs*, 16(3), 485-501.
- Moss-Racusin, C. A., Dovidio, J. F., Brescoll, V. L., Graham, M. J., & Handelsman, J. (2012). Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 109, 16474-16479.
- Schiebinger, L., Klinge, I., Paik, H. Y., Sánchez de Madariaga, I., Schraudner, M., and Stefanick, M. (Eds.) (2011-2016). *Gendered Innovations in Science, Health & Medicine, Engineering, and Environment*. Retrieved from genderedinnovations.stanford.edu