

# Handbook of Diversity in Feminist Psychology

**Hope Landrine, PhD**, is a clinical and health psychologist, and Director of Multicultural Health Behavior Research at the American Cancer Society. She received her PhD in Clinical Psychology at the University of Rhode Island, postdoctoral training in Social Psychology at Stanford University, and post-doctoral training in Cancer Prevention and Control as a National Cancer Institute Fellow at the University of Southern California Medical School. Her research focuses on the role of social, environmental, and cultural variables in health behavior, and in health and cancer disparities among ethnic minorities, women, and the poor. She has received more than \$11 million in research grants, and is nationally known as a leading scholar on minority health. She is a former Associate Editor of *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, has published numerous articles and books, and has received several awards for her research, including Fellow status in APA Divisions 9, 35, 38, and 45, the Association for Women in Psychology Distinguished Publication Award (1996), and the APA-MFP Dalmas Taylor Award for Distinguished, Lifetime Contributions to Research on Ethnic-Minorities (2005). Her best-known books are *Bringing Cultural Diversity to Feminist Psychology* (APA, 1995), *Discrimination against Women: Prevalence, Consequences, Remedies* (Sage, 1997), and *African-American Acculturation: Deconstructing "Race" and Reviving Culture* (Sage, 1996).

**Nancy Felipe Russo, PhD**, is Regents Professor of Psychology and Women's Studies at Arizona State University, where she served as Director of the Women's Studies program (1985–93). Founding Director of the Women's Programs Office of the American Psychological Association (APA) (1977–1985), Russo is a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences, the American Psychological Association (Divisions 1, 9, 26, 34, 35, 35, 38, 45, 52), and the American Psychological Society. She is author or editor of more than 200 publications related to the psychology of women and women's issues; current editor of the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*; and a former editor of the *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. Her honors include a Carolyn Wood Sherif Award and a Heritage Award for Contributions to Public Policy from the APA's Division of the Psychology of Women. She received a Distinguished Career Award from the Association for Women in Psychology, and was recognized by APA's Board of Ethnic Minority Affairs for contributions to ethnic minority issues. Russo is the recipient of the APA's 1995 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest. She is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Hispanic Women's Corporation and of the American Orthopsychiatric Association.

# Handbook of Diversity in Feminist Psychology

Hope Landrine, PhD ■ Nancy Felipe Russo, PhD  
Editors

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# Contributors

**Antonia D. Abbey, PhD**, Professor of Psychology at Wayne State University, College of Liberal Arts and Science, Detroit, Michigan

**Michele P. Andrasik, PhD**, Clinical Health Psychologist and acting Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Toni C. Antonucci, PhD**, Elizabeth M. Douvan Collegiate Professor of Psychology and Research Professor in the Life Course Development Program of the Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

**Julia C. Becker, PhD**, Lecturer of Social Psychology at the University of Marburg, Germany

**Rosemary Blieszner, PhD**, Alumni Distinguished Professor, Professor of Adult Development and Aging in the Department of Human Development and Associate Director of the Center for Gerontology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia

**Ulrike Boehmer, PhD**, Assistant Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Boston University School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts

**Deborah J. Bowen, PhD**, Full Professor and Chair in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health at Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts

**Melanie Brown, MA**, Applied Psychology, Silver Hill Hospital, specializing in treatment of psychiatric illnesses and substance use disorders, New Canaan, Connecticut

**NiCole T. Buchanan, PhD**, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Michigan State University (MSU) and core faculty affiliate in MSU's Center for Multicultural Psychology Research, Center for Gender in Global Context, and the Violence Against Women Research and Outreach Initiative, East Lansing, Michigan

**Heather E. Bullock, PhD**, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Center for Justice, Tolerance, and Community at the University of California, Santa Cruz, California

**Angela M. Byars-Winston, PhD**, Scholar, Institute for Clinical and Translational Research, UW Center for Women's Health Research, School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin

**Fary M. Cachelin, PhD**, Professor of Psychology and Department Chair-person of Psychology at California State University, Los Angeles, California

**Karen Y. Chen, PhD**, U.S. Department of State in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Silver Spring, Maryland

**Susan Clayton, PhD**, Whitmore-Williams Professor of Psychology and Chair of Environmental Studies at the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio

**Erzulie Coquillon, MA**, in Counseling Psychology and JD candidate at Boston College Law School, Boston, Massachusetts

**Irma Corral, MPH, MS** (clinical psych), PhD Candidate, Clinical Psychology/Behavioral Medicine. Currently a Psychology Intern in Behavioral Medicine at the VA Palo Alto Healthcare System in Palo Alto, California

**Faye Crosby, PhD, LLD (Hon.)**, Professor of Psychology at University of California, Santa Cruz, California

**Cirleen DeBlaere, MA**, Assistant Professor of Counseling Psychology at Lehigh University in the Department of Education and Human Services, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

**Florence L. Denmark, PhD**, Robert Scott Pace Distinguished Research Professor of Psychology at Pace University, New York, New York

**Faith-Anne Dohm, PhD**, Professor of Psychology and Interim Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Education and Allied Professions at Fairfield University, Fairfield, Connecticut

**Carolyn Zerbe Enns, PhD**, Professor of Psychology at Cornell College, Mount Vernon, Iowa

**Oliva M. Espín, PhD**, Professor Emerita in the Department of Women's Studies at San Diego State University and the California School of Professional Psychology of Alliant International University, San Diego, California

**Teresa (Tessa) Evans-Campbell, PhD**, Associate Professor in the School of Social Work and Director of the Center for Indigenous Child Welfare Research at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Ruth E. Fassinger, PhD**, Dean of the College of Education at California State University, Stanislaus, California

**Irene Hanson Frieze, PhD**, Professor of Psychology and Women's Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**Amber L. Garcia, PhD**, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio

**Aída Hurtado, PhD**, Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Santa Cruz, California

**Tania Israel, PhD**, Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, California

**Angela J. Jacques-Tiura**, social psychology doctoral student at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan

**Elizabeth Lee, MS**, graduate student in social psychology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania, and Director of Public Relations for *Inquisitive Mind* online magazine

**Keren Lehavot, MS**, graduate student, Clinical Psychology program at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Bernice Lott, PhD**, Professor Emerita of Psychology and Women's Studies, University of Rhode Island and former Dean of University College, Kingston, Rhode Island

**M. Brinton Lykes, PhD**, Professor of Community-Cultural Psychology, Associate Director of the Center for Human Rights and International Justice, and Chair of the Department of Counseling and Applied Developmental and Educational Psychology, Boston College, Boston, Massachusetts

**Bonnie Moradi, PhD**, Associate Professor of Psychology and a member of the Counseling Psychology program at the University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

**Margaret A. Nosek, PhD**, Professor, Baylor College of Medicine, Department of PM&R and founder and Executive Director of the Center for Research on Women with Disabilities at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas

**Michele R. Parkhill, PhD**, Research Scientist, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Eden-Reneé Pruitt, PhD**, Lecturer in Psychology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania

**Kelly L. Rabenstein, MS**, Assistant to the Director of Riverlife Task Force for outreach activities, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

**Jane M. Simoni, PhD**, Clinical Health Psychologist, and Professor in the Department of Psychology and Adjunct Professor, Departments of Women's Studies and Global Health, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Ruth Striegel-Moore, PhD**, Professor of Social Sciences at Walter A. Crowell University and Department Chairperson of Psychology at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut

**Janet K. Swim, PhD**, Professor of Psychology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania

**Dellanira Valencia-Garcia, MA**, advanced doctoral student in the Clinical Psychology Program, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Karina L. Walters, MSW, PhD**, Associate Professor and William P. and Ruth Gerberding Endowed Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Carolyn M. West, PhD**, Associate Professor of Psychology (Family Violence and Human Sexuality course), University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Karen Fraser Wyche, MSW, PhD**, Clinical Psychologist and Professor,  
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Oklahoma  
College Of Medicine, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

**Oksana Yakushko, PhD**, Department of Educational Psychology, University  
of Nebraska–Lincoln, Nebraska

# Foreword

In reading over the chapters for this handbook, I am reminded of how far the field has evolved and the many innovations and developments that were envisioned that have subsequently come to fruition over the years. When the field of feminism and feminist psychology first developed, I was privy to its conception and witnessed, as well as participated in, research aimed at dispelling myths regarding gender and women's roles in multiple arenas such as the workplace, home, and educational system, as well as in the overall development of feminist theories. At the time, these were new and important innovations that paved the way for current research and thought to grow and develop. In reading this handbook, I am struck and also impressed by the advancements that we have made and the multilayered analysis of feminist psychology and its place in the field since that time.

No longer is it a narrow (but critical) discussion of how women and men must be considered equally and yet also how gender can be a distinguishing factor in development and the construction of social roles. Feminist analysis today, as is demonstrated by the examination of feminist thought presented in this book, is a much larger and more vast undertaking. In short, as stated in the book's title, the field is now truly diverse. Feminist psychology has expanded from a discussion of gender to its current implication and presence in every facet of human life. In fact, this handbook is an indication of the many ways that feminist thought has developed and infiltrated multiple layers of society. The sections of the book testify to this fact and cover the staples of feminist discourse: theory, gender, health, violence, and politics; in so doing, this text is a prime example of the presence of feminist thought in virtually all aspects of life and in psychology in general.

Additionally, this text gains credibility not only in the breadth of its topics but in the depth of the analysis in individual chapters as well. This book is significant in that it gathers together many feminist scholars, all of whom are experts in their respective areas of research. Each chapter represents quality research that could stand alone, but the benefit of this text is that it unites exceptional feminist researchers in one compilation. It is a useful book not only in psychology classes, but also in women's studies classes and sociology classes on diversity; it is an important addition to any professional library.

In a word, this book actualizes diversity. Although diversity is the direction in which the field is moving, few publications truly embody what this means. This handbook is an exception; each chapter pertains to diversity as well as

adding to the entire range of variance that the handbook covers. This is the first time that both of these topics are wedded in such a comprehensive manner. This handbook covers topics related to age, multiculturalism, research design, health concerns, class, politics, sexual harassment, and immigrant women, to name a few. Issues such as race, class, and age are at the forefront of research and are inextricably entwined in this discussion. For instance, Chapter 4 covers research implications and considerations in using diverse samples, and Chapter 7 discusses same-sex relationships. Chapter 12 talks about HIV/AIDS and Chapter 16 talks about sexual harassment. Additionally, one of the chapters talks about older women, thus covering women in virtually all aspects of the life span. All of these chapters, although different in context, are similar in that they are proponents of a discussion of diversity, regardless of the specific manner in which both unite.

Why is diversity so important? The world is changing daily. Not only is the world's population shifting in that populations are rising due to improvements in health care and medicine, but the world is also becoming older. The proportion of older persons is expected to double between 2000 and 2050, from 10 to 21 percent, whereas the proportion of children is projected to drop by one-third, from 30 to 21 percent (Second World Assembly on Ageing, 2002). Additionally, more of these older persons are women, making gender important to discuss and analyze in this age group. Development and social constructs of gays and lesbians are more openly discussed and need to be analyzed and studied further. Women are more likely to be aware of sexism, disordered eating, and abuse in the world and should be informed of the ramifications of these issues and how to combat them. Technological advances have changed the way people communicate, relate to each other, and have heightened the contact that we have with people of different cultures and races, thus increasing the need for cultural competence. Women are advocating for themselves and their needs with increasing frequency and need accurate, scholarly information to inform them. Therefore, psychologists, social workers, professors, and students need to be informed of all of these issues and how they interconnect to be able not only to help others but also to combat prejudices and stereotypes that hinder. All of these topics are not only discussed, but are also analyzed in this book. Chisholm and Greene (2008) state: "Diversity is a socially constructed concept indicating the mere presence of differences. However, we are challenged to understand the meaning of the difference, not simply acknowledge its presence" (p. 43). It is not enough to state that there is diversity in the field of feminist psychology. One must go further and strive to comprehend its significance in every aspect possible.

It is inspiring and wonderful to realize how far we have come—from basic feminist research once considered revolutionary, to many different facets of feminist thought, which strike me as just as innovative. This book represents the enthusiasm and general dedication to feminist scholarship that is both rewarding and inspiring. In addition, it is a text that is critical for all who are in the field of psychology to own, refer to, and use. No longer are diversity and gender issues considered to be on the periphery as they once were; now one would be remiss in not considering these factors in psychology. The field has truly grown and developed into a diverse and vibrant area of research,

and this reality and the qualities thereof are reflected in this important and timely publication. It is helping to advance the field by expanding the borders of feminism to include diverse and relevant topics.

—*Florence L. Denmark, PhD*

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# Preface

Editing this book has been a time-consuming labor of love. This handbook differs from previous work by not only seeking to bring a multilevel, multicultural understanding of diversity to feminist psychology, but also to “give multicultural feminist psychology away” to a host of audiences within and beyond the discipline and outside of the academy. Written by leading experts and active researchers in the field, this book provides a single text that can serve as a resource for achieving these goals. In addition to describing key concepts and findings that enrich understanding of women’s diversity, the authors have provided concrete illustrations of research and applications that can be used to teach others how to conduct their work from a multicultural feminist perspective.

The chapters differ significantly from each other in length, focus, perspective, writing style, and the kind of information presented. This diversity reflects not only differences in the data available on specific topics but also cultural (positional) differences among authors, who come from diverse ethnic, geographical, and cultural backgrounds, as well as different generations. Each author brings her own cultural perspective, values, and concerns to her chapter and focuses on issues that she chose as most relevant to address. Our respect for this variation in author approach reflects our belief that it is time for reviewers and editors to “accept the differences in perspectives among women of different cultures and allow views to be heard without editing the ‘baby out with the bath water.’ Women of color [and other marginalized groups] complain . . . about the cultural biases of reviewers and editors who transform what they never understood into something the author never wrote, thereby excluding the diversity we ostensibly seek to achieve” (Landrine, 1995, p. xxiii). This is perhaps the most fundamental level at which cultural diversity in feminist psychology needs to be maintained.

The book is organized into six sections. In the first section, we present an overview that provides a context for the knowledge that follows. After outlining the historical context for the emergence of a multicultural perspective on diversity in feminist psychology, we show how the knowledge presented in Sections I through V (Theory and Methodology; Nature and Meaning of Gender; Health and Therapy; Violence and Harassment; Politics, Policy, and Advocacy) illustrates feminist principles and priorities in action. Given that multicultural feminist psychology is so broad that it is impossible to include in-depth chapters on every relevant topic, the overview also provides an opportunity to include references to work on some other relevant topics not able to be

covered in this volume (e.g., developmental issues, gender role socialization, sexualization and sexual abuse of girls, personal and social identities, depression and anxiety, reproductive issues, education and achievement). In Section VI (Conclusion), we present an afterword, where we articulate our visions and hopes for the future development of a multicultural feminist psychology.

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Finally, we want to recognize the feminist pioneers across the disciplines who have led the struggle for women's equality in all their diversity and continue to inspire future generations.





# Theory and Methodology



# Overview: Diversity in Feminist Psychology

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Nancy Felipe  
Russo and  
Hope Landrine

Historical analysis of feminist psychology in the United States has traced its roots to the inception of the discipline. However, it was in the 1970s that feminist psychology emerged as a vital force in the discipline and the psychology of women became recognized as an “official” subfield (Chrisler & Smith, 2004; Russo & Denmark, 1987). This “new” psychology of women has challenged psychological theories, methods, and applications, arguing for more attention to situational and cultural contexts (Denmark & Paludi, 2008; Landrine, 1995a; Paludi, 2004; Rabinowitz & Martin, 2001; Unger, 2001) and for the development of new methods for studying them (McHugh & Cosgrove, 2004). It has both reflected and shaped the larger cultural context, and is explicitly feminist in perspective (Worell & Johnson, 1997), and international in scope (Safir & Hill, 2008).

From the beginning, women of diverse ethnicity and sexual orientation made important scientific, professional, and leadership contributions to this emerging area (Russo & Denmark, 1987; Russo & Dabul, 1994). Indeed, the first research conference in the field, which was cosponsored by the American Psychological Association and the National Institute of Mental Health in 1975,

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included a chapter devoted to “Employment and Sex Role Ideology in Black Women” (Gump, 1978); another chapter also pointed out that “white middle-class sexist bias limits the advancement of knowledge at every level, from sampling strategy to theory construction, in both the sociological and psychological literatures ... concerned with adult development” (Russo, 1978, p. 105).

Recognition of gendered racist and classist bias was not immediately translated into new theories, findings, and applications congruent with the interests and priorities of members of neglected populations, however. Even within feminist psychology, work related to diversity has sometimes been marginalized. For example, the suggestion that there be a presentation on ethnic women’s issues at the first APA-Division 35 jointly-sponsored conference on women and psychotherapy in 1979 was rejected by the conference organizers, and it was only after that conference when questions were raised that a chapter on ethnic women was added to the book that came out of the conference (Brodsky & Hare-Mustin, 1980)—a chapter written by a sociologist (Wilkinson, 1980).

Interest in the diversity of women’s experiences was given a boost by President’s Commission on Mental Health (PCMH), established under President Carter. The PCMH report officially recognized inadequacies in mental health services for women and expressed concern about “the failure of mental health practitioners to recognize, understand, and empathize with the feelings of powerlessness, alienation, and frustration expressed by many women” (PCMH, 1978, p. 7). The PCMH Subpanel on the Mental Health of Women emphasized that “the mental health implications of the pervasive sexism that impacts ... women of all ages, socioeconomic, and racial/ethnic groups in our society must receive priority attention in policy formation and program implementation” (p. 1025). In 1984, an APA-sponsored interdisciplinary conference in which diverse women were well-represented developed a *Women’s Mental Health Agenda* that emphasized the need to recognize the interactive effects of differences and consider variation in the needs of diverse populations of women, including ethnic women, older women, lesbians, and chronically mentally ill women, among others (Russo, 1985).

Research on and by ethnic women exploded during the decade of the 1980s, accompanied by a growing recognition of the need to integrate findings related to race, class, and cultural differences into mainstream theory, research, and practice (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1983; Brodsky, 1982; Cole, 1986; Fine, 1985; Kahn & Jean, 1983; Lott, 1981; Mays & Comás-Díaz, 1988; Reid & Comas-Díaz, 1990). Feminist research on specific groups of women of color began yielding new findings and theory on Hispanic women/Latinas (e.g., Amaro & Russo, 1987; Comas-Díaz, 1991; Mirande & Enriquez, 1979), Native American women (e.g., Blackwood, 1984; Greene, 1980, *Medicine*, 1978), Asian American women (e.g., Fujitomi & Wong, 1981; Lott & Prian, 1979), and African American women (e.g., Matson, 1983; Murray & Scott, 1981; Smith & Stewart, 1983), as well as on poor women (e.g., Belle, 1990; Reid, 1994) and older women (Rodeheaver & Datan, 1988). Theorists across the disciplines undertook critical analysis of racism and class oppression that influenced the thinking of feminist psychologists and stimulated coalitions across lines of gender, race, and class (e.g., Collins, 1990; hooks, 1981; Lorde, 1982; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983, among others). All of the chapters in this book make reference to aspects of this early work, but in particular see those by Hurtado; Lykes, Coquillon, and Rabenstein; and Moradi and DeBlaere.

Also, during the decade of the 1980s, ethnic minority women in psychology began to build formal support structures in professional organizations. The Section on Black Women was established in APA Division of the Psychology of Women in 1984, with its stated goals including “to increase the scientific understanding of those aspects of culture and class which pertain to the psychology of Black women, and to increase the quality of education and training in the psychology of Black women” (By-laws, Section I). Subsequently, sections on the Concerns of Hispanic Women/Latinas and on Lesbian and Bisexual Women’s Issues were approved in 2003, and a Section for Asian Pacific American Women’s Concerns in 2008. The Division also has Committees on Lesbian Issues (established in 2006) and Native American Women (established in 2001).

Unfortunately, despite burgeoning research findings and calls for their integration into the mainstream of feminist psychology, textbooks on the psychology of women and subject matter covered in feminist psychological journals during this period continued to reflect a White, middle-class focus (Brown, Goodwin, Hall, & Jackson-Lowman, 1985; Thomas & Miles, 1995). Thus, the diversity of the population of the United States was not reflected in the issues and priorities of the knowledge base being disseminated to future generations of psychologists, and knowledge about the lives of women of color continued to receive a perfunctory treatment that perpetuated its marginal status in feminist psychology.

To begin to address this situation, in 1990 APA Division 35 President Bernice Lott highlighted the need for more attention to cultural diversity in feminist psychology and established a Division 35 Task Force on Cultural Diversity in Feminist Psychology (1990–1992). Hope Landrine served as the Task Force chair. The charge of the Task Force was to begin the process of bringing cultural diversity into the mainstream of feminist psychological research, theory, practice, and advocacy. Among the many outcomes of the Task Force work was adoption of new procedures for recruiting minority women into Division 35, and changing the publication policies of *Psychology of Women Quarterly* to more strongly emphasize a commitment to diversity and explicitly encourage submission of cultural and cross-cultural manuscripts.

A second, equally important charge of the *Task Force* was to produce the first textbook devoted to cultural diversity in feminist psychology. The resulting book, *Bringing Cultural Diversity to Feminist Psychology: Theory, Research, and Practice*, was written during 1990–1992 and published in 1995 as the first book in the new APA Division 35 Book Series. Edited by Hope Landrine and published by APA, *Bringing Cultural Diversity to Feminist Psychology* quickly became a resource widely-cited and adopted by scholars, practitioners, and students in feminist psychology and women’s studies.

In that book, Landrine (1995b) argued that if feminist psychologists were to take contextualism seriously, studies of ethnic populations would not be marginalized, and all cultures would be subjected to a similar analysis. Given that feminist psychology emerged in the context of the U.S. feminist movement, the field was the product of European American culture, and should be self-reflexively examined as such. She emphasized that *Bringing Cultural Diversity* challenged researchers to understand “that European American culture is the structure and content of feminist psychology and is the only thing that is discovered and revealed in feminist data, constructs, therapies, and

theories of gender” (Landrine, 1995b, p. 17). This challenge helped stimulate the spread of a multicultural feminist perspective that encourages the analysis of cultural contexts through multiple lenses. From these new multicultural feminist perspectives, diversity is defined as encompassing the intersections of culturally-defined categories of social difference, with gender only one of multiple social constructs to be considered in dynamic interaction. At this writing, *Bringing Cultural Diversity* remains the best-selling of all books in the Division 35 Book Series, and is regarded as a classic by scholars in feminist psychology. It signaled a sea-change in efforts to take seriously the task of integrating diversity into the field.

Other evidence of a sea-change in the position of diversity in feminist psychology is found in the discussions and outcomes of the first National Conference on Education and Training in Feminist Practice held in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1993 (the Boston Conference). The goals of the conference were “to explore, integrate, and create a cohesive agenda for training in educating in feminist practice the next decade” (Worell & Johnson, 1997, p. xi). Feminist practice was defined as all activities in which psychologists participate, including research, teaching, clinical practice and supervision, scholarly writing, and leadership. The conference planners, a committee of nine members of the APA Division of the Psychology of Women, began by defining a framework of feminist process that had “structure for diversity” as its first principle (Worell & Johnson, 1997, p. 6). In addition to including a specific working group on diversity, the planners asked all of the other groups to apply the principles they developed to the “various layers of identity that are represented in diverse populations of women” (Worell & Johnson, 1997, p. 7).

The conference planning paid off—the reports of the working groups reflect deep thought and meaningful discussions about integrating diverse perspectives into their area of consideration, and the recognition of valuing of diversity was voted to be included as a primary theme in the conference plenary session. Related themes included addressing differential power, privilege, and oppression as well as promoting empowerment and individual women’s voices (see Common Themes—Final Plenary Session, below). The process of achieving consensus on common themes did not come without tension relating to diversity issues, however. In particular, the statement “Gender is a significant locus of oppression, but it is not primary for all women” (p. 249) was found to be disturbing by some participants, and consensus on including it as a common theme of the conference could not be obtained. A more detailed discussion of tensions and concerns can be found in the report of the diversity working group (Greene & Sanchez-Hucles, 1997).

Thus, although there was consensus on the importance of diversity and a commitment to incorporating diversity into feminist analyses, consensus on how gender should be incorporated into that analysis was not achieved, perhaps because conceptualization of the constructs of diversity, gender, and the other dimensions of social difference as dynamic cultural constructs had not been fully apprehended. Today, it is more widely recognized that interrelationships among gender and other dimensions of diversity change with the particular dimensions becoming more or less salient and relevant to a particular

## Exhibit 1.1

### Common Themes of the Final Plenary Session, First National Conference on Education and Training in Feminist Practice, July 8–11, 1993

#### *Feminist Practice*

Includes therapy/intervention, teaching, political action, consultation, writing, scholarship, research, supervision, assessment and diagnosis, administration, and public service.

Promotes transformation and social change.

Assumes that the personal is political.

Embraces diversity is a requirement and foundation for practice.

Includes an analysis of power and the multiple ways in which people can be oppressed and oppressing.

Promotes empowerment and the individual woman's voice.

Promotes collaboration.

Promotes the value of diverse methodologies.

Promotes self-reflection on the personal, discipline, and other levels as a life-long process.

Promotes continued evaluation and reflection of our values, ethics, and process, which is an active and reflective feminist process.

Asserts that the misogyny and other inequalities are damaging.

Encourages the demystification of theory and practice.

Views theory and practice as evolving and emerging.

The process of feminist practice is a part of the content of feminist practice.

The contextual framework that looks at the psychological and political is important.

Learning integrates thoughts, knowledge, feelings, and experience.

Source: From Worell & Johnson, 1997, p. 249.

analysis depending on the cultural or situational context (see Enns & Byars-Winston, Chapter 13 for a more in-depth discussion).

The report of the Boston Diversity Working Group inspired Russo and Vaz (2001) to develop the concept of "diversity-mindfulness" to represent the perceiving and processing of the multiplicity of differences among individuals, their social contexts, and their cultures. They specified the qualities of *feminist* diversity-mindfulness as

- *openness to differences among and between people;*
- *the cultivation, appreciation, and nurturance of different perspectives;*
- *receptiveness to and respect for others; valuing difference; and*
- *[recognition that] ... we are all subject and object. (p. 185)*

They emphasized that diversity mindfulness in research does not mean that every dimension of diversity must always be considered. However, diversity-mindfulness does require the consistent recognition of the potential limitations

of one's approach and humility about generalizations drawn from one's work. It also requires conscious attention to the multiplicity of approaches in the field as a whole, as well as active support for developing policies and funding programs that maintain a balance among diverse perspectives regardless of personal interest in exploring all of them.

The existence of such tensions among feminists and multicultural feminists should not be surprising, given that historically there have been few occasions for the "difficult dialogues" around race and gender to take place, and if they did not create tension they would not be difficult (Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo, & Rivera, 2009). Recognition of the importance of dialogue as a means to foster mutual understanding and empathy is reflected in the "difficult dialogue" programs that have been instituted in professional conferences, including the biannual National Multicultural Conference and Summit which was first held in 1999, "to convene students, practitioners, and scholars in psychology and related fields to inform and inspire multicultural research and practice" (see <http://www.multiculturalsummit.org/>). Its definition of multiculturalism encompasses experiences related to ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, gender, physical ability, social class, age, and other social identities. The establishment of this biannual event provided a legitimized and visible venue for intellectual and social exchange on the part of multicultural feminist theorists and practitioners. Such exchange plays a key role in the development and dissemination of new ideas and contributes to rapid advances in a field.

## Struggles and Accomplishments

There continues to be healthy disagreement and debate about priorities, theories, methods, and applications in feminist psychology. "Feminism" and "feminist" are very big words. Nonetheless, the Boston Conference deliberations provided explicit legitimacy and authority for integrating diversity into feminist psychology; further it provided helpful knowledge and guidance on strategies for how to do so. The work has only just begun, however, and the field's greatest challenge continues to be conceptualizing and understanding the dynamics of difference. The great strides that have been made in response to that challenge are reflected in the body of work presented in this book.

The approach taken in this handbook reflects the development of new social and theoretical models and understandings of diversity. Thus, we envision diversity as a dynamic, ever-changing, multilevel cultural construct that encompasses ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, gender, physical ability, social class, age, and other socially-constructed social status and identity differences among women. "Feminist psychology" refers to feminist theory, research models and methods, and psychotherapy and other forms of practice and advocacy that are based on the consensus principles articulated at the Boston Conference. "Multicultural feminist psychology" reflects a perspective that is based on the consensus principles of the Boston Conference, but views dimensions of difference represented by diversity as themselves as social constructions. Because diversity is a dynamic construct, the elements that are most salient in a particular context at a particular moment will vary.

## Envisioning Difference, Understanding Gender

There is a continuing struggle to theorize and study intersections of difference. The number of research articles and books addressing diversity issues has multiplied, with intersections among gender, race/ethnicity and class, sexual orientation, age, and disability receiving primary attention (Andersen & Hysock, 2008; Chan, 1997; Chisholm & Greene, 2008; Denmark & Paludi, 2008; DeSouza, Baldwin, Koller, & Narvaz, 2004; Diamond, 2007; Fassinger & Arseneau, 2008; Healey, 1993; Kitzinger, 2001; LaFont, 2003; Olkin, 2006; Reid, Cooper, & Banks, 2008; Wyche, 2001). Questions of how best to articulate multiple sources of oppression have posed challenges to theory and method, and the struggle to answer them has produced new concepts that require new methods of assessment. For example, “diversity mindfulness” represents the effortful perceiving and processing of the multiplicity of differences among individuals, their social contexts, and their cultures. The terms “ethgender” and “gendered racism” reflect efforts to represent ethnic minority women’s lived experiences of oppression and discrimination. The concepts of “double jeopardy” and “multiplicative jeopardy” and “cross-categorization effects” represent efforts to conceptualize the conjoint effects of multiple group membership. Sections I and II in this book consider the development and interplay among concepts and method as feminist psychologists have responded to the challenge and sought to theorize and examine the conjoint effects of the multiple sources of oppression and discrimination experienced by women.

## Theory and Method

Incorporating diversity into feminist theory has mandated the conceptualization of gender as a cultural construct rather than a personal attribute and stimulated a large and influential body of work. Conceptualizing gender and other dimensions of difference as dynamic, multilevel social constructs requires conducting research that examines the functioning of the constructs on and across multiple levels of analysis. Methods that can illuminate how gender affects women’s lived, subjective experiences may differ from those that can illuminate interpersonal processes. The three chapters in Section I of this book consider interrelationships among theory and method, advances in understanding those relationships, and the challenges that need to be met if multicultural feminist knowledge is to progress.

In chapter 2 of this book, Aída Hurtado considers how multicultural feminism has called for feminist psychologists to think in “complex, relational, and contextual ways” (p. 48). She focuses on three essential principles—intersectionality, self-reflexivity, and accountability—that have influenced the thinking of multicultural feminist scholars and are reflected in this book.

Hurtado’s multilevel discussion of intersectionality, which considers intersectionality in relation to multiple identities, the law, the social structure, and borderlands theory, serves as a model and stimulus for ways to approach the conceptualization of interacting dimensions of difference. Her discussion of self-reflexivity, including its impact on the development of new methodologies, is an exciting portrait of the intellectual benefits and enrichment that

have resulted from the quest to find methods that can represent human experiences in all of their diversity. Hurtado's gift for reframing constructs from diverse points of view is seen in her discussion of accountability. In contrast to the view that an investigator's responsibility to be accountable and give voice to community stakeholders is burdensome, Hurtado articulates the benefits of accountability. For researchers who identify their personal identities with their communities, accountability becomes essential to one's well-being. Thus, accountability becomes a "compelling reason for academic production and social existence" (p. 36). Another benefit of the multicultural feminist emphasis on accountability to the community is that it forces grounding of feminist theorizing in women's real world experiences.

Hurtado's rich description of the activities and accomplishments of multicultural feminism ends with a call for a developmental perspective that would guide the development and dissemination of a "living curriculum" and program for social action informed by research knowledge. Her discussion and illustration of methodological issues provides a solid stepping-off point for Chapter 3, where Brinton Lykes, Erzulie Coquillon, and Kelly L. Rabenstein discuss the challenging interplay between theory and method in community-based participatory and action research (PAR).

By "participatory and action research," Lykes et al. refer to a range of research methodologies that are informed by a combination of systems theory, humanistic values, democratic participation, and action for change (see also Lykes & Coquillon, 2007). These methodologies are designed to understand women's lived experiences and are also congruent with the consensus of the Boston Conference that feminist practice "promotes transformation and social change" (see the exhibit on Common Themes in this chapter).

In keeping with principles of multicultural feminism articulated by Hurtado, Lykes et al. articulate a collaborative role for the stakeholders (including the research participants themselves and members of the community) of knowledge production and highlight the benefits of such collaboration. They offer a view of PAR as both an epistemology and methodology reflected in their discussions of principles and practices at the interface between feminist and community psychology. They provide a compelling case for their argument that simplistic accounts of human experience provide an "impoverished analysis of the complex and often contradictory social and cultural lived realities of women and men, many of whom are also engaged collaboratively with them as co-researchers" (p. 57).

The work of Lykes and her colleagues is groundbreaking in that it goes beyond theorizing, critiquing, and calling for more complex approaches in research. In Chapter 3, they explain and concretely illustrate with case examples, how to conduct research that will yield an enriched view of women's lives at the same time that it has a transformative effect on their consciousness. In so doing, they bridge the gap between feminist ideals and actualities with regard to contextualizing diverse women's experiences. Of all the methodologies considered in this book, PAR stands out as the one that is most true to the activist roots of the feminist movement. The chapter's cogent analysis of the relation between feminist and community psychology also makes it an exemplar for individuals who wish to "give multicultural feminist psychology away"—in this case to researchers in community psychology.

In Chapter 4, Corral and Landrine also consider the relation between theory and method, but take the discussion beyond design and procedure to consider issues of equivalence in sampling, measures, and statistical methods used in research that makes group comparisons. In doing so, they illuminate “the problems and the politics of normative methodologies, measures, and statistical analyses” (p. 84), including the “use of inappropriate, group-differences statistics to compare nonequivalent samples, obtained via non-equivalent methodologies, on non-equivalent scaling attached to non-equivalent items” (p. 120). The idea that the bulk of psychological studies that compare status groups may be based on nonequivalent samples, methods, and measures has profound implications for the interpretation of current research findings. If measures used to identify differences between members of comparison groups are not comparable, the validity of the findings is questionable. Thus, equivalence in meaning, interpretation, and impact of study methods and measures has become a serious concern and challenge to researchers who seek to foster multicultural research and psychology.

As the authors observe, not only is work based on nonequivalent comparisons scientifically flawed, it serves to reproduce the status quo. Using research on health disparities as an example, they show how the normative practice of attributing ethnic differences in health to culture/ethnicity serves only to reproduce the social order; they highlight the paucity of research on the correlates of ethnicity that render ethnic samples nonequivalent (e.g., segregation, discrimination and social exclusion), and argue that these correlates, rather than culture/ethnicity, account for ethnic health disparities.

In sum, failure to recognize the inextricable connections between knowledge and methods of knowledge production has been an important theme in the feminist critique of psychological science, but a full analysis of the complexity and implications of those connections for differing types of research questions in differing research contexts has yet to be accomplished. As a body of work, the three chapters in this section provide a foundation for beginning that analysis. They, in combination with the work reviewed in later chapters, provide a complex portrait of the diversity of ways that concepts, methods, measures, and statistical analyses influence research findings that cannot be separated from the larger context in which they are obtained. Given that knowledge production is occurring in a larger context of intersecting social inequalities, developing new approaches that do not reproduce those inequalities is a continuing challenge, but also an opportunity for creativity and innovation.

This section thus provides a foundation for considering how the dimension of gender intersects with other dimensions of diversity, which thus shape the experience of oppression in the lives and circumstances of women, a task undertaken in Section II.

## The Nature and Meaning of Gender

Psychology has a long history of studying sex differences (Shields, 1975; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974), with the findings used to justify the status quo based on women’s deficiencies. While research that identifies gender x ethnic differences in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors among specified populations can

answer important questions, theoretical explanations for such differences have evolved far beyond traditional “sex difference” models. There continues to be debate about how to theorize gender (see Wilkinson, 2001). From our perspective, and as the chapters in this section reveal, gender can be theorized as a multifaceted, multilevel cultural construct that dynamically interacts with other dimensions of difference (which are themselves cultural constructs) in complex ways over the life cycle.

As a complex multilevel construct, gender can be viewed as a dynamic system of interconnected elements that function on psychological, interpersonal, and structural levels, and change and evolve within and across cultures and over time. These elements include gendered traits, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviors, expectations, norms, roles, environments, and institutions. Gender can function as “master” (or a meta-) status that interacts with other dimensions of social diversity to determine the variety of social positions a woman might hold in society (Anderson, 2005; Deaux & Major, 1987; Frable, 1997; Hamilton & Russo, 2006; Reid & Comas-Díaz, 1990; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). As you can well imagine, the methodological challenges this conceptualization creates are daunting.

The body of research described in these chapters represents efforts to overcome those challenges, unpack gender, and examine its elements in interaction with other dimensions of difference.

In Chapter 5, Janet K. Swim, Julia Becker, Elizabeth Lee, and Eden-Reneé Pruitt describe how women from various countries and cultures experience sexism differently because individuals from their countries and cultures vary in their endorsement of sexist beliefs. Their portrait of the complex variation in patterns of beliefs across countries and over time reinforce a dynamic view of gender and illustrate the importance of considering context when envisioning interrelationships among gender’s many facets. The relation of traditional beliefs to violence and HIV infection rates found in varying cultural contexts underscores that the focus on feminist psychology on power issues is not misplaced, a theme revisited in Section IV.

As might be expected, people who live in individualistic and/or wealthier nations show less support for traditional gender roles. However, in such countries sexist beliefs have taken on more subtle forms, stimulating theory and research on “modern sexism” or “neo-” sexism. This work also informs the struggle to conceptualize the experience of discrimination for women with diverse social identities described by Hurtado in Chapter 2. Do we “add” the effects of racism and sexism independently (double jeopardy perspective)? Or do we “multiply” the effects together in attempts to account for unique experiences that women of color have with discrimination (multiplicative perspective)?

These authors also link beliefs to behaviors in an examination of how discrimination is affected by being a member of more than one group that has a devalued status. They show how evaluation bias can be affected by being a member of more than one socially devalued group as well as by being a member of more than one outgroup relative to the person doing the evaluating. Whether or not multiple group memberships enhance or detract from obtaining a positive evaluation depends on the status of the groups.

Swim and her colleagues document how ideological belief systems that support hierarchal relationships, dominance structures, and justify the

maintenance of the status quo affect women's experiences with sexism. In doing so they shift the focus of the investigator's lens beyond the multiple types of social groups to which women belong to the ideological belief systems that provide the context for how the intersecting elements of social difference interact. This work provides a model for conceptualizing and studying conjoint effects of intersecting difference in other contexts and resolving differences between double jeopardy, multiplicative jeopardy, and cross-categorization literatures. It may be that experiences with discrimination are domain-specific, with some domains yielding preferences for specific combinations of multiple group membership compared to others.

In Chapter 6, Bonnie Moradi and Cirleen DeBlaere bring more complexity to the analysis of the interplay of theory and method in research seeking to understand the effects of multiple sources of oppression. They review concepts, instruments, and findings of research that examine women's experiences of sexist discrimination, with special attention to intersections with race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Perceived sexist discrimination is widespread among women, but findings with regard to racial, ethnic, and cultural group differences are inconsistent. Reasons for this inconsistency have yet to be explained and may be due to methodological differences across studies. The authors show how conceptualizing and assessing the lived experience of conjoint sources of oppression and discrimination require clarity in theory and precision of measurement. Research studies informed by additive and interactionist theoretical perspectives use instruments that assess multiple sources of discrimination separately, while work from ethgender or gendered racism perspectives requires measures of the emergent and unique expressions of discrimination in minority women's lives. Moradi and DeBlaere's evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of methods to assess self-reported experiences of discrimination from multiple sources will be useful for researchers who wish to contribute to this area of investigation, and serves as a model for approaches to other areas as well.

This chapter also considers responses and outcomes of discrimination that are revisited in later sections. Moradi and DeBlaere review a growing literature that documents robust associations of sexism, racism, and other sources of discrimination with negative physical and mental health outcomes, including increased risk for anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and cardiovascular problems, providing a foundation for the chapters that focus on health and well-being in Section III.

In Western culture, sex and sexuality have played central roles in defining gender categories. These range from the construction and assignment of gender based on the presence or absence of a penis, to the construction of ideals for female beauty around its ability to attract male sexual interest, to stigmatizing sexual orientation and using the accusation of being a lesbian as a weapon of social control (you don't want to go to bed with me? You must be a lesbian...). The examples are legion. It is not possible to contemplate re-visioning gender as a cultural construct without addressing issues of sexuality.

Thus, the discussion of same-sex relationships among women of color by Ruth Fassinger and Tania Israel in Chapter 7 not only provides information about a neglected population—it challenges us to examine how heterosexist biases shape our visions of our own possibilities. They argue that "limiting

views of women's intimacy to lesbian identity or to sex between women narrows the imaginative possibilities for women's myriad ways of relating to one another, renders insignificant very common forms of intimacy between women, and ignores the fluidity and multidimensionality of women's connections" (p. 227).

Labels matter. Their examination of the limiting effects of labeling sexuality of women of color as if it were a static construct when in actuality it is dynamic and fluid can inform understandings and issues for individuals who are managing identities that cross other dimensions of difference. They emphasize moving "beyond both social identity labels and sexual behavior to explore the myriad forms of intimate connections between women, and to articulate a women-centric, culturally-conscious perspective for re-conceptualizing—or re-visioning—the lives of sexual minority women of color in contemporary U.S. society" (p. 220).

In discussing women of color who have same-sex relationships, Fassinger and Israel refocus the analytical lens on the conjoint effects of triple oppression. As they observe, "relegation to the margins" is exacerbated for these women of color, whose experiences are largely ignored in both feminist and lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/queer (LGBTQ) literature (p. 211). They point out that the dominant discourses in psychology have placed race in the background in research on White LGBTQ individuals, but have placed race ethnicity at the center of the analysis in research on LGBTQ people of color, thereby creating a literature of "psycolonization" (p. 213).

Further, when researchers have studied same-sex relationships, they have largely focused primarily on women of color who identify as lesbian to the neglect of those who identify as bisexual or queer. Women now also identify as transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, androgynous, bigender, or pangender, or even reject gender as a meaningful organizer of their experience. The study of how gender-variant or gender-transgressive sexual minorities acquire and enact their identities is not only of interest in its own right; such categories present a profound challenge to current oversimplified, dichotomous, phallogocentric thinking about gender (Fassinger & Arseneau, 2008).

As Fassinger and Israel so eloquently observe: "the dominance of European American male perspectives in constructing the current psychological understanding of healthy expressions of same-sex attraction obscures the complexities of female relationships, hides the myriad ways in which women's intimacy manifests outside the context of a declared lesbian identity, and makes it extraordinarily difficult to embrace alternative forms of women's intimacy, particularly for women of color" (p. 221). They emphasize that "women" and "sexuality" vary widely, offering a view of sexuality as comprised of multiple experiences (proclivities, desires, behaviors, preferences) that reflect a woman's context, (e.g., cultural norms and expectations, demographic locations, historical factors, sociopolitical forces). In envisioning alternative women-centric approaches, like Hurtado (Chapter 2) their work points to the usefulness of a developmental and dynamic approach, and provides examples of research that can be used as a model (Diamond, 2007) for others.

In keeping with Hurtado's call for a developmental perspective, the importance of viewing gender as a cultural package with norms and expectations that change over the life cycle is underscored by the work of Toni C. Antonucci,

Rosemary Blieszner, and Florence L. Denmark in Chapter 8 of this book. These authors consider how the meaning of gender changes with age, picking up the theme of intersections in their introduction of the concepts of “gendered ageism” and “gendered age stereotypes.” They suggest that in the process of resolving issues in claiming their identity and dealing with societal oppression, lesbians may develop competencies and resilience that will enable them to more easily negotiate the process of aging. This underscores the need for research on the extent to which dealing with more than one type of oppression may or may not lead to more effective resistance and resilience, depending on the situational and cultural context. As Antonucci and her colleagues point out, ethnic women may have increased problems as they age compared to White women because they are more likely to be poor and disadvantaged. However, women of color may also experience advantages compared to White women, particularly if their cultural heritage values age and wisdom and they have positive relationships with their family members.

Antonucci and her colleagues also foreshadow topics developed in subsequent sections in highlighting the violence and maltreatment experienced by older women, the importance of work and family relationships in coping with life transitions, and in their discussions of disability and immigrant status. In the process of examining women’s experience of aging, they demonstrate the importance of viewing women in context, profiling how demographic trends are changing the population distribution in the United States and globally in fundamental ways. In their analysis of the social relationships of older women, they describe how these are experienced differently by women and men and shape adaptation and adjustment to late-life transitions.

In sum, as a body of work, the chapters in this section present a rich and complex view of the dynamics of gender as a cultural construct that varies across situational contexts and over time. In addition to documenting the need for new concepts of difference in all its multiplicity, the knowledge in these chapters serves as a foundation for interpreting the association of elements of gender to women’s health outcomes discussed in Section III, the power dynamics manifested in violence against women discussed in Section IV, and the application of feminist principles to populations of women in policy and advocacy contexts in Section V.

## Health: Physical and Mental

Good health is essential to leading a productive and fulfilling life, and the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment.

—Platform for action: Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China

These words from in the national platform for action of the United Nation’s Fourth World Conference on Women underscore a stark reality: Walking through doors of opportunity is difficult if women are sick, barefoot, and/or pregnant. Women’s health issues have been a central concern in the women’s movement from its inception, evidenced by the impact of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (Boston Women’s Health Collective, first published in 1971, last

published 2005). Similarly, women's health—physical and mental—has been a central concern in feminist psychology in particular (Travis, Grassley, & Crumpler, 1991). Feminist psychologists have been leaders in challenging traditional biomedical disease-oriented models and broadening the discussion to encompass psychological, social, and behavioral factors that influence treatment and prevention (Gallant, Keita, Royak-Schaler, 1997; Travis & Meltzer, 2009; Worell & Goodheart, 2006).

Health issues have united women across lines of social difference, but even though we share "female bodies" the need to understand the implications of diversity for women's health is reflected in pervasive health disparities, that is, differences in health outcomes that reflect psychological, social, economic, and political processes. In particular, the health status of women of color continues to be shaped by the intersection of gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. As Bayne-Smith (1996) has pointed out, access to type and quantity of resources, as well as the manner in resources are provided, is determined by race/ethnicity, gender, and the Western medical model of health services delivery. The chapters in Section III of this handbook offer but a brief window into the burgeoning literature related to women's health and health disparities among diverse women (e.g., Goodheart & Worell, 2006).

In Chapter 9, Nancy Felipe Russo provides an overview of diversity and mental health issues, with a particular focus on mental health and well-being. She examines how cumulative adversity, including experience of discrimination, exposure to violence, reproductive events, sexualized objectification, and stigma undermine women's physical and mental health.

In Chapter 10, Faith-Anne Dohm, Melanie Brown, Fary M. Cachelin, and Ruth H. Striegel-Moore consider interrelations among ethnicity, disordered eating, body image, and body dissatisfaction in more depth. This chapter provides an important correction to the myth that women of color are "immune" to eating disorders, which have been viewed as problems primarily affecting White women and girls and studied in clinical samples (where women of color are underrepresented). It also provides a concrete example of how research biases shaped by the norms and values of the dominant culture can affect psychological theory and method. Body image concerns are indeed found across cultures and ethnic groups, but the reasons and forms of such concerns vary. For example, if the research lens only focuses on what began as a Western White women's obsession with being thin, aspects of the body of more central concern to diverse women may be missed. The implication that mental health problems (in this instance, disordered eating) cannot be fully comprehended unless their psychological components are understood in cultural context, has broad application beyond disordered eating.

Interrelationships among behavioral, mental, and physical health issues are examined more closely in Chapter 11 and 12.

As Ulrike Boehmer and Deborah Bowen point out in Chapter 11, "the cancer burden has long been recognized as unequally distributed among the population" (p. 313). They examine disparities in breast and cervical cancer, focusing on disparities due to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation, but also emphasize that there are many groups of women who are socially disadvantaged with regard to these and these and other health concerns, including women with disabilities, rural women, immigrant women,

and women not proficient in English. Although the impact of biological factors is recognized, many risk factors are modifiable, including exposure to environmental toxins, and personal health behaviors, including smoking, physical inactivity, and poor nutrition. Unfortunately, there is an unmet need for culturally appropriate psychological interventions and support programs for cancer survivors, and insufficient knowledge to inform such programs. Boehmer and Bowen also emphasize the importance of moving beyond simply documenting the existence of health disparities to understanding and eliminating them.

In Chapter 12, Jane Simoni and her colleagues review risk factors for HIV infection at multiple levels—historical, structural, and community—for women of color and sexual minorities. Their rich analysis elucidates why programs aimed at preventing HIV infection among women of color must “be contextualized within the historical and contemporary realities that are rooted in colonialism, racism, and gendered violence” (p. 336). They articulate how cultural norms, power inequities, substance abuse, and victimization increase HIV risk and offer areas of focus for intervention that build on resilience and protective factors among ethnic women. In doing so, they provide a model for contextualizing an analysis of a health problem such that the similarities and differences across groups are illuminated. Gendered inequities in power, privilege, and entitlement have long been a central feminist theme, and Simoni et al. provide a model for the discussion of power dynamics. Their discussion of the profound role that gendered violence plays in creating HIV risk complements and expands on Russo’s discussion of intimate violence and mental health in Chapter 9, and provides a foundation for more in-depth consideration of violence found in Section IV.

From its inception, challenging and re-visioning psychotherapy has been a major task for feminist psychology (Gilbert & Osipow, 1991). There is now a substantial body of work related to feminist counseling and therapy with women that is informing the practice of therapy in general (Ballou, Hill, & West, 2008; Brabeck & Brown, 1997; Franks & Burtles, 1974; Wyche & Rice, 1997). In Chapter 13, the final chapter in this section, Carolyn Zerbe Enns and Angela Byars-Winston provide a rich portrait of the goals, principles, and applications of multicultural feminist therapy, while at the same time pointing out potential challenges to the integration of feminism and multiculturalism. In considering the shared principles of multicultural feminist therapy (therapist self-awareness; a coping and strength perspective; and ecological and biopsychosocial perspectives), the chapter describes how therapist self-awareness applies to all therapists regardless of social difference, articulating how the positionalities and sociocultural identities of White women as well as women of color may affect the interactions with colleagues and clients. They also emphasize that knowledge of oppressions experienced by women of color must be combined with a knowledge of their strengths and coping resources. Lacking such knowledge may lead to an inaccurate assessment (underestimating or overestimating) of their ability to deal with life stressors, which should be considered in a multi-level biopsychosocial context.

Enns and Byars-Winston also articulate principles related to critical consciousness or consciousness-raising, social identity assessment, empowerment goals, the integration of traditional psychotherapy systems with multicultural feminist principles, and the challenges of working within intercultural dyads.

Their illustration of concepts with concrete examples of myths and fallacious assumptions make for a rich and powerful description of how oppression may be manifested in ethnic client's lives. They close with a summary of what multicultural feminist therapy can offer clients—ways to integrate diverse aspects of their identities; identify interconnections between their internal and ethno-sociocultural realities; deal with anger related to oppression they experience; and become change agents on their own behalf as well as that of society. In brief, while recognizing potential conflicts among multicultural and feminist perspectives, this chapter illustrates application of feminist principles and of provides a solid foundation for the further development of multicultural feminist therapies. The key role that inequities of power, status, and privilege play in the oppression of women is reflected throughout the chapters in this book. In this section, gender-based violence has been indicted as a major threat to women's physical and mental health and the ability of women to participate fully in public life. They have also emphasized the fact that developing programs aimed at prevention and intervention requires contextualized knowledge about the lives and circumstances of women (White & Frabutt, 2006).

## Violence and Harassment

In the Platform for Action of the United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing (Beijing Conference, 1995), gender-based violence was defined as "any act that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life" (United Nations, 1995, Platform for Action, Section D.113). The Beijing Conference definition represents an international consensus on how to conceptualize the dynamics of gender-based violence.

Gender violence takes many forms over the life cycle, including physical and sexual abuse, rape, and intimate partner violence, among others (see Exhibit 1.2 on Gender-Based Violence: From Birth to Death). Unfortunately, space precludes providing specific discussions for all of them. Three inter-related forms of violence are considered: sexual assault, intimate partner violence (IPV), and sexual harassment.

In Chapter 14, Antonia Abbey, Angela Jacques-Tiura, and Michele Parkhill present a detailed review of the sexual assault victimization literature among diverse populations of adult women, including women of color, poor women, women with disabilities, and lesbian and bisexual women. In addition to identifying risk factors, they consider treatment issues, gaps in the literature, and recommendations for future research. They show how both unique and distinctive cultural and personal experiences of assault victims shape disclosure, help-seeking, institutional responses, and post-assault recovery. The usefulness of the material is enhanced by supplementing the presentation of unique challenges for assault survivors with summaries of treatment suggestions. They describe the studies judged to make the most significant contributions to knowledge about diverse women in more detail, articulating methodological issues, including sampling strategies, data-gathering techniques and measurement issues that need to be addressed.

## Exhibit 1.2

### Gender-Based Violence: From Birth to Death

#### *Infancy and Childhood*

Child physical and sexual and neglect  
 Child prostitution  
 Female infanticide  
 Female genital mutilation  
 Malnutrition

#### *Adolescence*

Forced prostitution  
 Forced early marriage  
 Dating violence  
 Psychological abuse  
 Sex trafficking  
 Peer sexual harassment  
 Rape

#### *Reproductive Years*

Honor killings  
 Dowry killings  
 Acid attacks  
 Homicide  
 Sex work and trafficking  
 Rape and sexual harassment  
 Stalking  
 Forced abortion and sterilization  
 Marital rape and intimate partner violence

#### *Elder Years*

Elder/widow abuse  
 Homicide

*Source:* Adapted with permission from Russo, N.F. (2006). Violence against women: A global health issue. In Q. Jing, M. R. Rosenzweig, G. d'Ydewalle, H. Zhang, H. Chen, & K. Zhang (Eds.). *Progress in Psychological Science Around the World, Vol. 2: Social and Applied Issues* (pp. 181–198). New York: Psychology Press.

In Chapter 15, Irene Frieze and Karen Chen focus on intimate partner violence, pointing out that violence may vary from “low” (pushing and shoving) to extreme levels that involve serious injury. As their analysis reveals, the distinction is important because the dynamics of violence at various levels may differ. Severely violent relationships involving a violent man and a battered woman have received substantial attention by researchers as well as the media. Although this is not the most common form of violent relationship, the physical, mental, and social effects of the violence are substantial. Less violent forms of aggressive behavior in married couples as well in same-sex and heterosexual co-habiting couples have begun to receive more attention, as has female violence against male partners (couple violence). It is important to be clear about how violence is operationalized when drawing conclusions from such studies. Overall violence level, violence frequency, and level of injury are all important dimensions to consider when investigating violence dynamics. Couple violence largely consists of “lower” level physical aggression such as hitting, slapping, and shoving. When injuries occur, it is most likely that the female partner has experienced them. The physical, mental, and social effects of this “minor” violence have yet to be fully investigated.

Frieze and Chen examine what is known about women’s experience of violence depending on socioeconomic status, race, immigrant status, sexuality, and disability, highlighting similarities and differences. As they point out, few studies have examined intersectionalities of race, social class, and sexual orientation, let alone other dimensions of social difference. Research informed by multicultural feminist theory designed to develop a knowledge base that can inform prevention as treatment services is especially needed.

In Chapter 16, after reviewing legal, behavioral, and psychological definitions of sexual harassment, NiCole Buchanan and Carolyn West examine research on racial/ethnic differences in the frequency, perceptions, psychological consequences, and coping strategies related to sexual harassment among women of color. Specifically, they focus on African American, Latina, and Asian American women. They distinguish racialized sexual harassment from racial or sexual harassment (e.g., calling someone a “Black whore” [p. 450] or a “hot Latina” [p. 462]). Their analysis points to the need to examine how the perceived meaning and impact of acts may vary across diverse groups and can be affected by the characteristics of the target, the perpetrator, and the harassing behavior, as well as contextual factors specific to the organization. Among the factors that vary across diverse groups include the context and nature of sexualized stereotypes and how such stereotypes have been used to justify sexual violence (e.g., the Jezebel stereotype historically applied to justify violence against Black women).

Buchanan and West offer several recommendations for future research, including emphasizing need to assess variations in the frequency and prevalence rates, perceptions and definitions of sexual harassment, and the psychological, physical, and job-related consequences across diverse populations as well as diverse settings. They emphasize the links between harassment and power inequities, eloquently concluding, “for women of color, sexual harassment is often racialized, rooted in a long history of discrimination and sexual violence, and fostered by the current inequities in the workplace and academic settings” (p. 468).

Taken as a whole, the chapters in this section identify both distinctive and shared features of violence experienced by diverse women. The forms of violence considered here are clearly not confined to a particular group of women, but are found across social and economic levels. They are interrelated with each other as well as with other forms of violence (e.g., childhood sexual abuse is a consistent predictor of later victimization, including sexual assault and intimate partner violence). The findings reported in this section underscore the need for methodologically rigorous qualitative and quantitative research aimed at filling current knowledge gaps about how the experience of and recovery from various forms of interpersonal violence is shaped by the intersections of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, poverty, disabilities, and other dimensions of social diversity. Finally, for services to be used, they must be accessible and culturally appropriate. Service providers need to understand cultural gender norms and modify procedures if needed. In particular, the need to address violence in the lives of poor women, who, when homeless, may have housing issues, is striking. Individual-level intervention will clearly not be sufficient—as Corral and Landrine emphasize in Chapter 4, and as reinforced in these chapters—macro-level solutions are also required if poor women are to relocate from high-risk environments and gain access to social, medical, and mental health services. Violence against women is ubiquitous, manifests in multiple and interrelated forms, and produces a host of negative physical, psychological, social, and societal effects. How “racism and other forms of oppression carve unique contours into an otherwise common experience” (Buchanan & West, Chapter 16, p. 468) has yet to be

fully ascertained, but must be done if prevention of violence against women in diverse populations is to be achieved. They also remind us that inequalities will not be addressed without addressing the social, structural, and political circumstances that reproduce and maintain them. Thus, the final section of this book considers politics, policy, and advocacy issues.

## Politics, Policy, Advocacy

Translating a policy problem into a program for change is highly complex. What is effective for some issues will not be effective in others (for a discussion of complexities, functions, and limitations of public policies affecting psychological well-being of girls and women, see Glied and Kofman, 2006). Programs and policies are often targeted towards populations in need of services. In this section, policy issues are discussed in the context of four neglected and overlapping populations: poor women, women with disabilities, workers, and immigrants/refugees.

As Pamela Reid (1991) so eloquently expressed, for too long, poor women in psychological research were “shut up and shut out” (p. 133). This situation began to change in the 1990s, however, as concerns about racial and ethnic differences in health disparities began to receive national attention. As documented in chapters previously discussed, poor women have multiple burdens and special needs, but little access to social and economic resources to help meet them. In Chapter 17, Heather Bullock, Bernice Lott, and Karen Wyche examine the correlates and consequences of women’s poverty, particularly in relation to family and employment. They argue for more complex and contextualized conceptions of poverty that go beyond establishing a person’s relation to the federal poverty line and consider the context of underpaid and undervalued low-wage work. In the process, they rebut the assumptions about effects of a “culture of poverty” that are used to rationalize forcing poor women to work as a condition for receiving public assistance. They articulate the structures that underlie women’s poverty, including lack of access to affordable health care that compounds problems caused by economic distress. Women’s poverty and poor health are reflected in lower birth weights and reduced chances for the survival of their children. They also discuss the role of stereotypes in justifying class disparity, and the potential of feminist, multicultural analyses to challenge these inequities. They stress attention to intersections of class with race/ethnicity and gender, emphasizing that privilege and oppression do not operate in isolation, and structural inequality goes hand in hand with social vulnerability. Their analysis of Hurricane Katrina’s impact on the women of New Orleans provides numerous concrete examples that illustrate these points. They provide a stark description of how dealing with an inept and aggravating bureaucracy led to poor women “opting” to move into FEMA trailers, creating de facto segregation for the newly formed poor communities.

Their discussion of how race, gender, and class intersect in the “politics of ‘deservingness’” that shaped the public’s response in the aftermath of Katrina reminds us that support for progressive social policies depends on an understanding of how the social structure creates and compounds the problems

of disadvantaged groups. Analyses of media coverage after the hurricane revealed an individualistic, depoliticized portrait of issues combined with negative depictions of the victims, and reminds us of the importance of including media in efforts to eliminate disparities in power and privilege.

Although poor women are more likely to experience physical and mental disability, disability can happen to any woman and is not bound by lines of social difference. In Chapter 18, Margaret Nosek examines how gender is manifested in the disparities and discrimination experienced by women with disabilities and articulates policies and advocacy strategies for change. She describes diversity among women with disabilities not only in terms of age, social class, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation, but also in terms of their disability's nature and severity. The chapter also demonstrates that the lesson, "labels matter," applies in program development and policy advocacy. Nosek emphasizes that disability, like gender in general, is a cultural construct that reflects a social judgment about the interaction of a person with her environment. Nosek's discussion of historical events illuminates how the basis for defining disability has changed over time—from classifying people with disabilities based on their diagnosis (e.g., blindness, deafness) to classifying them based on having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of major life activities. This change in classification has both mirrored and shaped strategies for advocacy.

For women of all ethnicities, disability is deeply rooted in gender- and disability-based discrimination that affects all aspects of a women's experience, including identity and self worth, individual autonomy, connectedness and social support, control of one's body, sexuality, violence and abuse, discrimination, employment and income inequities, and disparities in health and access to health care. Her principles for action, which include organizing, using the power of peers, teaching, and demanding answers, are generalizable beyond disability issues.

The complexities generated by intersections of social identity and circumstance are similarly found in the lives of immigrant women whose diversity in national origin, race/ethnicity, and language proficiency have prominence in national discussions where other dimensions of social difference, such as age and sexuality, are neglected. In Chapter 19, Oksana Yakushko and Oliva Espín articulate diversity among immigrant women, explaining how distinctions among legal, refugee, and undocumented (illegal) statuses result in distinct experiences for legal immigrants, refugees, and undocumented migrant workers. They argue for a view of immigrant women that recognizes resilience and resourcefulness in dealing with the forces of oppression and discrimination they encounter.

Norms, expectations, and circumstances in which women perform their work and family roles continually present challenges that women must negotiate, negotiations made more complex in the immigration context. Yakushko and Espín discuss how family and work roles and circumstances of immigrant women shape migration stresses as well as the psychological impact of acculturation and identity processes. A critical question in working with immigrant and refugee women is: How are the conflicts and incongruities of "modern" ideas about women's choices, roles, rights, and obligations to be negotiated with

the more “traditional” ideas about the roles and status of women? Answering this question, found across societies, becomes more complex as well as “more poignant and dramatic” (p. 552) when applied to acculturation within a new context that itself is also undergoing change with regard to the roles and status of women.

Negotiation among role obligations at home and at work have long been identified as being of central concern to the feminist movement, although the specific issues and conflicts to be negotiated have varied with the intersections of dimensions of difference (Crosby & Sabbatini, 2006; Steinberg, True, & Russo, 2006). The view that breadwinner is a “male” role and that women should stop work when they marry and have children reflects a White middle-class construction of wife and mother—poor Whites and women of color did not have that option. Despite the fact that nearly three-quarters of women between ages 25–54 are in the workforce (USDOL, 2006), the world of work has been slow to recognize alternative family forms, including dual-worker couples, single-headed households, lesbian, gay, and bisexual couples, and other unions involving home life (Steil, 2001; Fassinger, 2000). Difficulties are compounded for families that must resolve work and family conflicts in a context of stigma and discrimination—single-parent families, lesbian, gay, and bisexual couples and families where the wife is the breadwinner (Schultheiss, 2006). Stereotyping and idealization of women’s work and family roles must be replaced with an understanding of women’s diverse realities, and the world of work needs to be realigned to reflect those realities (APA, 2004; Halpern, 2005).

But as Clayton, Garcia, and Crosby point out in Chapter 20, such a realignment cannot be accomplished without taking “a complex perspective, one that is mindful of work for all women, not just those who are White, middle-class, and heterosexual” (p. 559). In addition to examining the ways that work and family can interact for women, they address both attitudes and policies. They also focus on what is needed for change, including addressing the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. They articulate ways that employers who seek to reduce turnover and enhance productivity can create a culture of inclusiveness, foster a positive workplace climate, and counter effects of stereotyping and discrimination. They emphasize that structural changes are needed if the effects of past discrimination are to be overcome, and they discuss the promise and problems of affirmative action as a tool for change. Given that myths about the process and outcomes of affirmative action abound, the information in this chapter will be particularly helpful to policy advocates.

The conclusions of Clayton and her colleagues apply across the chapters, and reinforce basic themes: Biased beliefs and attitudes towards women are shaped by gender stereotypes and reflected in pervasive cultural norms about appropriate traits, roles, and circumstances for women, norms that vary depending on the intersections of social difference and the developmental and social context. While there has been progress in knowledge about the lives and circumstances of different groups of women, the task now is to understand how multiple identities and other expressions of social differences are negotiated over the life cycle in various contexts, including at home, at work, in school, at church, and in various communities.

Taken as a whole, the body of work represented in the first five sections of this book represents the study of diversity in feminist psychology past and present. Later, in Section VI, we will consider future challenges for multicultural feminist psychology as well as strategies and opportunities for meeting those challenges. Meanwhile, we hope you find the contributions of the chapter authors enriching and rewarding—as we have.

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