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## Change in female adolescent's sex role attitudes as a function of women's study course

Carol L. Lewis Wintrode

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CHANGE IN FEMALE ADOLESCENTS' SEX ROLE ATTITUDES  
AS A FUNCTION OF A WOMEN'S STUDY COURSE

---

A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State College  
San Bernardino

---

In Partial Fulfillment of  
the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Psychology

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by  
Carol L. Lewis Wintrobe  
March 1978

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Approved by:



Chairperson





5-15-78

Date

## ABSTRACT

Changes in female adolescents's perceptions and attitudes toward their sex roles as a function of participating in a course on women's role in society was assessed, using a pre-post experimental design. As predicted, the students "Ideal Self" sex role concept became more androgynous as compared to the control group not enrolled in the course. The hypothesis that the student's attitudes toward women would become more liberal as a result of the educational experience was also confirmed. Contrary to prediction, the students' "Real Self" sex role concept did not become more androgynous as a result of the course. The relationship between female adolescents's perceptions of their sex roles and successful resolution of the adolescent identity crisis was discussed, as well as the necessity of supportive experiences to aid the adolescent in integrating a more androgynous identity.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	vi
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	viii
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Feminism and Today's Adolescent . . . . .	4
The Importance of School and Home Socialization on Sex Role Concepts . . . . .	7
From Sex Stereotyping to Androgyny . . . . .	9
Hypotheses . . . . .	12
METHOD . . . . .	14
Subjects . . . . .	14
Materials . . . . .	14
Procedure . . . . .	18
RESULTS . . . . .	23
Findings . . . . .	23
Evaluation of the Course Questionnaire . . . . .	31
DISCUSSION . . . . .	33
Self Concept and Attitude Change . . . . .	33
Adolescent Cognitive Development and Social Environment . . . . .	34
Feminine Role in Society Course . . . . .	36
Implication for Future Research . . . . .	37
. . . . .	

## APPENDIX

A. COPY OF OUTLINE OF FEMININE ROLE IN SOCIETY COURSE . . . . .	39
B. BSRI I . . . . .	43
C. BSRI II . . . . .	45
D. ATTITUDE TOWARD WOMEN SCALE . . . . .	47
E. EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE FEMININE ROLE IN SOCIETY COURSE . . . . .	52
REFERENCE NOTES . . . . .	53
REFERENCES . . . . .	54

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Polygraph Frequency Distribution for  
Experimental Group on Evaluation of  
Course Questionnaire . . . . . 32

## LIST OF TABLES

1. Evaluation Questionnaire for Feminine Role Course . . . . .	19
2. Outline of Feminine Role in Society Course . . . . .	20
3. Covariance Analysis of Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny Scores for the BSRI I (Real Self) for Experimental and Control Groups . . . . .	24
4. Means, Standard Deviations and Adjusted Means for the Masculinity, Femininity and Androgyny Scores for BSRI I (Real Self) for Experimental and Control Groups . . . . .	25
5. Analysis of Covariance of Masculine, Feminine, and Androgyny Scores for the BSRI II (Ideal Self) for Experimental and Control Groups . . . . .	27
6. Means, Standard Deviations and Adjusted Means for Femininity, Masculinity, and Androgyny Scores on the BSRI II (Ideal Self) for Experimental and Control Group . . . . .	28
7. Analysis of Covariance of ATWS for Experimental and Control Groups . . . . .	30
8. Means, Standard Deviations and Adjusted Means on the ATWS for the Experimental and Control Groups . . . . .	30
9. Total Sample Descriptive Statistics for Evaluation of Course Questionnaire Scores . . . . .	31



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest appreciation to Ms. Chauvez, the teacher at Pacific High School, whose diligent efforts to offer this course made this research possible. Also, many thanks to the enthusiastic students who served as my subjects.

My sincere appreciation to Dr. Gloria Cowan, my thesis advisor, for her assistance through all the stages of this thesis and to my committee members, Dr. Linda Warren and Dr. Chuck Hoffmann, for their cooperation.

My special appreciation to my family: My husband, John, and my children, Dawn and Daren, for their patience; my mother, Vera Lewis, for her understanding, and my friends Betty Morse, Gerri Olin, JoAnne Hurowitz, and Gene Ross for their intelligence and support.

I wish to dedicate this thesis in the memory of my Father, Roy Lewis.

## INTRODUCTION

Adolescents's attitudes and perceptions of sex roles are an important element in their identity formation because sex roles are learned early and are closely related to how one defines oneself in relation to the rest of society (Matteson, 1975).

Traditionally, our social and educational institutions have reinforced stereotypic sex role behaviors and attitudes. According to adolescent identity formation studies by Dovan and Adelson (1966), the female adolescent's search for identity is only positively tolerated by her social and educational environment if it begins and ends with her acceptance of the "feminine role" with all its restrictive attitudes and limitations on personal identity growth. Dovan and Adelson found that the female adolescent was less apt than a male to integrate a personal identity which they defined as involving internalizing of controls, developing autonomy, and discriminating personal standards and controls. In her interview studies with female adolescents, Dovan (1971) found that the female adolescent had another oriented, incomplete and malleable identity and that this resulted in a romantic, unrealistic, and diffused view of her future life. Often when the young female was asked

to imagine herself as an elderly person she was unable to project herself beyond youthful physical attributes and her child-bearing years. Beyond cursory preparation for primarily "helping" jobs, she did not seem to exist as an individual identity.

This fantasy view by the adolescent females of their future life appears to be unrealistic and unhealthy for society in view of the realities of our modern complex society. According to the 1975 census figures of women with school-age children and husbands present, the percentage who are employed passed the 50% mark in 1972 and has been steadily climbing at each reading since (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1976). Employment rates for mothers of preschoolers almost tripled during that same period, and currently, over 36% of the mothers of preschoolers with husbands present are employed. These figures are even higher when one considers female-headed households. The 1972 data show that 62% of the divorcees with preschool children are employed (Hoffman & Nye, 1974). Experts in the women's field believe that women are going to play an even more important part in the labor force and that their years of working will continue to increase (Bernard, 1974; Hoffman, 1977; Lewis, 1968; New York Times, September 12, 1976).

In view of these labor statistics the total acceptance of a noninstrumental stereotypic sex-role image is unrealistic. Several studies indicate that sex typing may also be

psychologically unhealthy in our modern complex society. Hoffman & Nye (1974) suggest that the full-time housewife whose children are all in school is generally low in self-esteem and high in psychological symptoms. Other researchers currently examining the negative effects of stereotyping suggest that the sociocultural stereotypic conceptions of femininity, and to some degree masculinity, appear to have impaired the physical and mental health of women and men (Bernard, 1975; Chester, 1972). Horner (1968) has documented the negative effect stereotyping has on achievement values. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) summarize the negative effects stereotyping has on both the intellectual and creative skills of children, with both skills poorer for sex-typed children than for those who have a combination of masculine and feminine traits. Studies on social adjustment indicate that healthy social adjustment requires flexibility in behavior and that a high degree of sex typing does not facilitate this flexibility (Cosentino & Heilbrun, 1964; Gotts & Phillips, 1968; Mussen, 1961; Sears, 1970; Webb, 1963).

Since adolescence is a special period of intensified concern over sex-appropriate behavior, there is more peer pressure on this age group to adopt appropriate sex-role behavior (Matteson, 1975). Girls, more than boys, are judged prestigious for their ability in their social relationships (Iscoe & Carden, 1961; Schoeppe, Haggard, &

Havighurst, 1953). Their popularity is associated with their ability to get along with the opposite sex much more than it is for males; they are also more concerned with male approval than vice versa (Bean & Levy, 1976; Calderwood, 1963). These studies suggest that those female adolescents who integrate the feminine concept receive more acceptance and reinforcement from their immediate environment; but, as previously cited studies noted, this peer acceptance does not negate the unhealthy restrictive and unrealistic aspects of sex stereotyping on the future lives of young males and females.

The present study received its impetus from the previously cited literature which documents theoretically the detrimental effects of stereotypic sex-role conditioning on the female adolescent's successful integration of a personal identity which would better prepare her, psychologically and socially, for the complex roles she will be expected to face as an adult.

#### Feminism and Today's Adolescent

In previously cited studies it has been noted that the female's resolution of her adolescent identity crisis has been synonymous culturally with her acceptance of the stereotypic feminine role.

Jessie Bernard, however, suggests in her recent book, Women, Wives and Mothers (1975) that much of the previous

research on which our knowledge of adolescence rests does not fit the new generation. Since little social science research has been done at this point on the modern female adolescent, Bernard supports her analysis on the basis of the unique experiences of the modern female adolescent:

The female adolescent born in the late 1950's is the first to experience abortion as a political issue, have free access to contraceptives, to learn of zero-population growth, first to be exposed to ecological movement and to see her older sisters deciding to live on the basis of the quality of the air as well as the quality of the schools. Born at the crest of the so-called feminine mystique era they are the first to see sex books challenged for sexism in athletics, first to hear about respectable women deliberately having illegitimate babies and the first to see the middle class myth in process of devaluation to the status of a luxury to be taxed.

The latest statistics lend support to Bernard's observations.

The Monthly Vital Statistics Report (October 24, 1974)

indicates that the 1970 adolescent is the first generation since 1958 to express less interest in marriage. Sorenson (1973) found in his survey of sex-role attitudes of high school students that 7% of the female students replied "false" to the statement, "Someday I will probably want to get married and have children." The 1970 Census reported 68,000 fewer marriages from August 1973 to August 1974, a decline of 3% in the marriage rate for that period. In terms of motherhood, although the percentage of females

who say they do not want children is still small, the Bureau of Census (1972) reports that this attitude has tripled from the 1969 Census figures. The trend in smaller families is clearly on the increase. In 1960, 25% of the married women under 40 expected to have 2 children (Whelpton, Campbell, & Patterson, 1966); in 1974, 43% had this expectation (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975).

Even though "feminist" concepts are still alien to most female adolescents (Marine, 1972; Matteson, 1975), high school groups since 1970 have asked increasingly for speakers on the subject of feminism (Cardin, 1973). Sorenson's (1973) survey found that age was also a contributing factor in young women's approval of feminism. Thirty-two percent of the females aged 13 to 15 believed that the feminism movement was good for women, whereas 42% aged 16-19 felt it was good for women. Sorenson also found that young males and females are starting to question the double standard in our society. When they were asked, "So far as sex is concerned I think that what is morally right for boys is morally right for girls too," 69% of the boys and 71% of the girls responded affirmatively.

The observations cited above suggest that the modern female adolescent has a new social awareness of her previously restricted stereotypic feminine role. This attitude change creates new socialization possibilities, but unless her attitude changes are supported by institutional

changes the female adolescent will be no better prepared for the realities of womanhood than she was with the fantasy vision of the child woman who is cared for all of her life. Because social change can occur more rapidly than role and institutional change, the modern adolescent runs the risk of a role lag crisis. Barbara Kay (1961) defines role lag as the discrepancy between what the female believes to be the equal position of women in the United States today and her actual status in relation to males in the society. Educational experiences offered to the female adolescent should not only increase her awareness of opportunities for her future, but also should introduce her to the realities of the double standard.

The Importance of School and Home  
Socialization on Sex Role Concepts

The effect of changing attitudes regarding sex roles on child rearing philosophies has been largely ignored by researchers. Even though the working mother has changed the structure of the family, thus representing a new role model, most of the previous research has considered only the negative effects of female employment on the family rather than the change, if any, on the attitudes and perceptions of sex roles (Hoffman, 1974).

Hoffman (1977) in a review of the literature on working mothers has shown that maternal employment does affect sex



role perceptions of children. Results of studies she reviewed indicate that daughters of employed mothers have less traditional sex role concepts, more approval for female employment and higher evaluation of their mothers' competency. Hartley (1961) also reports her findings that girls whose mothers worked demonstrated greater equalitarianism toward the role of women than did daughters of full-time housewives. At this time the finding which has the most support is that daughters of professional women are more likely to have more ambitious career goals than daughters of nonworking mothers (Almquist & Amgrist, 1971; Birnbaum, 1971; Ginzberg, 1971; Stoltz, 1960). Stoltz (1960) suggests, however, that this finding may or may not indicate an internalization by the daughter's of more expansive sex role identities.

Few studies have been conducted on changing sex role perceptions affecting the attitudes and structure of the school socialization and educational process. A study by Minuchin (1965) comparing attitudes and sex-typed reactions of 105 fourth grade children from traditional and modern homes and schools departed most from conventional expectations. Modern homes and schools are defined as environments that foster individual development, mastery of problems, and use is made of accumulating knowledge of personality, temperament and motivational development. Traditional homes and schools are more apt to stress competitive learning, enforce

established facts and stereotypic concepts of sex role appropriate roles and behavior.

### From Sex Stereotyping to Androgyny

Historically, psychologists have advanced the general assumption that mental health involves internalization of traditional concepts of masculinity and femininity (Kagan, 1971). Many psychologists are now offering an alternative view that illuminates the potential benefits of an androgynous personality. Meda, Hefner, and Oleshansky (1976) refer to a developmental model of sex role transcendence. Rossi (1969) refers to a hybrid model of personality and Kaplan and Bean (1976) refer to an androgynous personality as one that is "on-going" or openended, not a union of hyperaggressive or hyperpassive traits, but as a concept that has no final closure. They postulate:

There is no final closure in androgyny; conflict and disequilibrium are important components, a model that predicts new configurations of person fulfillment.

These abstract developmental definitions of androgyny connote people who develop from childhood in an individual manner in accordance with their own temperament and abilities and conform or nonconform to environmental demands in accordance with their own attributes.

Most psychological measurements of masculinity and femininity employ stereotyped trait scales that regard masculine and feminine as opposite poles of a single

dimension. Further, sex traits assessed by the scales, and interpretation of the scales, often suggest that masculinity is the positive pole and femininity is the negative pole (Guilford & Zimmerman, 1949; Gough, 1957; Hathway & McKinley, 1951). Sandra Bem (1972, 1974), by developing a new sex role inventory, eliminates the unidimensional interpretations of masculinity and femininity. Her scale provides independent dimensions of masculinity, femininity and androgyny. She defines androgyny as combining the best of masculine and feminine traits and responding to the environment in a flexible manner, regardless of situational cues that might encourage a stereotypic masculine or feminine response. Bem hypothesizes that sex typing can produce defensive, trait-like consistency in behavior and that the flexibility or rigidity of an individual's sex role may be an important factor in determining the range of behaviors available to him or her in moving from situation to situation. In addition, she hypothesizes that this stereotypic behavior is not conducive to mental health or adjustment. To verify these hypotheses, Bem (1975) has conducted several experiments assessing the traits of instrumentality, nurturance, and expressiveness. Using situations designed to elicit masculine, feminine, or androgynous behavior, Bem's results indicate that the androgynous male and female perform effectively in all domains tested to date. Both the androgynous and masculine

female do well in the expressive domain, the masculine male performs well only in the instrumental domain, and the feminine male only in the expressive domain. The feminine woman fares less well than other groups, except in a situation designed to elicit affective listening. She appears reluctant to initiate any behavior that is unspecified or ambiguous. Bem postulates that this passivity and reticence to take any initiative is psychologically harmful to the feminine female as is the stereotypic masculine behavior for the male.

In summary, Bem's work on the concept of androgyny gave impetus to this study. A review of the literature has revealed the potentially detrimental effects of stereotypic role conditioning on the psychological, mental, and social potential of individuals. In view of the identity struggle inherent in adolescence, this period is a critical time for research on sex role perceptions and attitudes. Previously, the adolescent female has been encouraged to resolve her identity crisis by integrating a role rather than pursuing the more complex development of a personal, autonomous identity. As previously cited, the more flexible attitudes in child rearing, exposure to the women's movement, and the instrumental activities of her older sisters and her mother has affected the female adolescent's attitudes towards her previously restricted sex role. No research, however, has been conducted in the context of the school

environment, which has been notoriously resistant to social change (Marine, 1972). In the school environment where there is an intensified concern with sex roles, there is little evidence that the female adolescent is being encouraged to experiment with, or validate new perceptions of her role. The modern adolescent is generally confronted with the same emphasis on adaptation to the feminine role that confronted her mother 20 years ago (Marine, 1972; Matteson, 1975). She has encountered curriculum restrictions based on sexism, little vocational counseling, and few educational experiences offering her information on her new and expanding role.

A local school offering a course for high school students on women's role in society afforded this researcher an opportunity to research sex role attitudes and perceptions of modern female adolescents. Using the psychological concept of androgyny as a measure of change in the student's sex role perceptions, the effect of this educational experience on the adolescents' perceptions of their female role was explored.

The following hypotheses were formulated for the purpose of this study.

### Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis 1

The self-concept of the female adolescents enrolled in a course entitled, "Feminine Role in Society," will

become more androgynous as a result of this educational experience.

### Hypothesis 2

The ideal self-concept of the female adolescents enrolled in the "Feminine Role in Society" course will become more androgynous as a result of this educational experience.

### Hypothesis 3

The female adolescents enrolled in the "Femine Role in Society" course will become more liberal in their attitudes towards women's sex roles as a result of this educational experience.

## METHOD

A pre-post design was employed to assess attitude change toward women's role and sex stereotyping as a function of participating in a "Feminine Role in Society" course. The female population in this study were students at Pacific High School in San Bernardino, California. Group I, the Experimental Group, enrolled in the course as a five-unit history elective. Group II, the Control Group, consisted of female adolescents enrolled in two Spanish classes, an elective language course.

### Subjects

The Experimental Group consisted of 22 adolescent females ranging in age from 15 to 17. There were only 2 males enrolled in the course, so the sample was restricted to females.

The Control Group consisted of 22 female adolescents enrolled in two Spanish I classes. The age range was 15 to 17. Two Spanish classes were used to achieve the number of 22. The same instructor taught both the Feminine Role in Society Course and the two Spanish I classes.

### Materials

#### Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI I & BSRI II)

The BSRI, developed by Sandra Bem (1972) consists of 60

self-descriptive adjectives, 20 of which represent "masculine" characteristics, 20 of which represent "feminine" characteristics, and 20 of which are included as a measure of social desirability response sets. All items on the Inventory are considered to be positive characteristics except for half of the social desirability scale items (see Appendix A).

Respondents were instructed to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 7 indicating the extent to which they believed an item to be characteristic of them. For purposes of comparison with idealized sex role concept, the BSRI was first administered with instructions to respond, "as you really are" and then administered again with instructions to respond, "as you would ideally like to be." For clarification the BSRI is labeled BSRI I (Real Self) and BSRI II (Ideal Self). (See Appendix B.)

### Scoring

Following Bem's suggestion, separate independent scores for masculinity and femininity were obtained. Scoring can be done either by using the mean self rating difference for all masculine and feminine items, with the androgyny score defined as Student's  $t$ -ratio for the difference between an individual's masculine and feminine scores normalized with respect to the standard deviation of his or her masculine or feminine scores. Bem has indicated that one can utilize the simple androgyny score, feminine minus masculine, as the



index of androgyny because empirically the difference score was found to be virtually identical ( $r = .98$ ) to the  $t$  ratio index of androgyny (Bem 1972). The present study uses the simple difference scores as an index of androgyny.

#### Attitude Towards Women Scale (ATWS)

The ATWS is an instrument which measures liberalism of attitudes toward the rights and roles of women in contemporary society. Developed by Janet Spence and Robert Helmreich (1972), the scale centers around the belief in a "double standard" in one's attitudes toward men and women. An illustrative item is "A woman should not expect to go exactly the same place or to have quite the same freedom as a man." (See Appendix D.)

#### Scoring

The scale contains 55 items, each one consisting of a declarative statement with four response alternatives: agree strongly, agree mildly, disagree mildly and disagree strongly. Each item is given a score from 0 to 3, with 0 representing the most conservative traditional attitude and 3 representing the most liberal pro-feminist attitude. The score for each item is summed, thus giving an individual total score, which may range from 0 to 165 with a low score indicating a conservative attitude and a high score indicating a liberal attitude.

### Evaluation of the Feminine Role Course Questionnaire.

A course evaluation questionnaire was developed by this researcher to determine the student's perceptions of the effectiveness of the course. In effect, the course evaluation is a "take" measure of the treatment, i.e., for attitude change to be affected, the course would have to have been seen favorably by the students. The questionnaire contains questions concerning the attitude of the students toward the course. An illustrative item from the questionnaire is, "Would you recommend this course to a girlfriend?" There are 4 response alternatives for each of the 9 questions which indicate the degree of endorsement of the course by the students. (See Table 1 and also Appendix D for complete questionnaire.)

### Scoring

Each one of the responses was rated from 1 to 4 and then summed to determine the total assessment of the course by each student. The lowest score of 9 was the strongest endorsement of the course and the highest score of 36 was the lowest endorsement of the course.

### Description of Feminine Role In Society Course

The course instructor was bilingual. The course was heavily oriented toward a cross cultural, ethnic perspective. The instructor's brief description of the course is as

follows:

This course is designed to explore women's position in society throughout history. The woman's experience will be studied from a historical perspective beginning with the suffrage movement, up to and including the modern women's movement. The course will also have a cross-cultural sociological perspective, with emphasis on diverse family structures and the psychological effect these cross-cultural family structures have on their attitudes towards women's role. Each student will participate in an analysis of the lives of famous women throughout U.S. History. The student will be exposed to culinary arts and ethnic handicrafts of English and Spanish speaking United States culture. Resource people from the community will be included whenever possible.

The course was divided into twelve major units of instruction. Table 2 gives a brief outline of the course. (See Appendix A for a more complete outline of course content, materials used, and goals set by instructor.)

#### Procedure

BSRI I (Real Self), BSRI II  
(Ideal Self), ATWS

The measures were administered in a group setting. The instructions were read from the face sheet of the test by the Experimenter. It was necessary to define some of the adjectives from the BSRI for the subjects. This was done orally by the experimenter upon request. Common dictionary definitions were employed and items were defined consistently. Prior to the testing the students were told that the results would be used for a master's thesis and that the tester was a psychology graduate student. No other reason

Table 1

## EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEMININE ROLE COURSE

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1.	Would you recommend this course to a girlfriend?			
	Strongly Recommend	Recommend	Not Recommend	Strongly Not Recommend
2.	Would you recommend this course to a boyfriend?			
	Strongly Recommend	Recommend	Not Recommend	Strongly Not Recommend
3.	Do you feel differently about yourself as a result of taking this course?			
	Strongly Different	Somewhat Different	Not Different	Strongly Not Different
4.	Do you feel differently about men and women as a result of taking this course?			
	Strongly Different	Somewhat Different	Not Different	Strongly Not Different
6.	Do you feel closer to the other members of the class as a result of this course?			
	Strongly Closer	Somewhat	Not Closer	Strongly Not Closer
7.	How do you feel about your involvement in this class?			
	Strongly Involved	Somewhat Involved	Not Involved	Strongly Not Involved
8.	Do you feel that the information offered in this class is pertinent to your life?			
	Strongly Feel it is	Somewhat Feel it is	Do Not Feel it is	Strongly Do Not Feel it is
9.	Do you feel overall that this course was a positive experience for you?			
	Strongly Feel It Is	Somewhat Feel It Is	Do Not Feel It Is	Strongly Do Not Feel It Is

---

Table 2

---

---

OUTLINE OF FEMININE ROLE IN SOCIETY COURSE

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The course was divided into twelve major units of instruction.

- I. Western Civilization's Views
  - II. The Colonial Period
  - III. The Revolution
  - IV. Intellectual Life (1800-1850)
  - V. The Nation Divided
  - VI. The "Pioneer" Woman
  - VII. The Beginnings of Reform
  - VIII. Women in the Literary Scene
  - IX. The "Gay Nineties"
  - X. The Drive for the Vote--Individuals
-

was given concerning the purpose of the study to prevent biasing of results. The students were informed that these were group tests and not individual assessment and were anonymous. Telephone numbers and addresses were included for those desiring results of the study.

#### Group I

The test was administered to the students in the Experimental Group during one class period at the beginning of the course. Three months later, during the last week of the course, the posttest was administered during one class period. The same instructions given in the pretesting were used in the posttesting.

#### Group II

Students in the Control Group were randomly selected from two Spanish I classes in order to obtain an equal number of subjects in the experimental group. The pretesting was administered in one class period during the first week of class and the posttesting was done three months later in the last week of the semester during one class period. The same instructions were given for the Control Group in the pre-posttesting as were given to the Experimental Group.

The course evaluation questionnaire was given to the Experimental Group at the end of the course. The students were requested to respond to 9 questions about the course with a selection of four responses. They were requested to be as truthful as possible in their evaluation and were told

that their assessment of the course would be kept confidential. This questionnaire was given during one class period after the students had completed the posttests, BSRI I, BSRI II, and the ATWS.

## RESULTS

A statistical analysis of covariance was performed on the posttest scores to determine support for the previously stated hypotheses. Kirk (1968) recommends the use of covariance analysis in educational research as a method of statistical control over heterogeneous differences between intact groups because the analysis of covariance adjusts posttest scores for pretest levels.

### Findings

#### Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis I, stating that the female adolescents' real self-concept would become more androgynous as a result of this educational experience, was not confirmed. Table 3 which presents the analyses of covariance for the masculinity, femininity and androgyny scores on the BSRI I (Real Self) for the Experimental and Control Groups, show no significant effects for the three variables. Table 4, which presents the means, standard deviations, and adjusted means for the masculine, feminine and androgyny scores on the BSRI I, indicate little difference in the unadjusted and adjusted means between the experimental and control group. The increase from pre- to posttesting in the unadjusted means for femininity was 2 units for the experimental group and 2.91



Table 3

Covariance Analyses of Masculinity,  
Femininity and Androgyny Scores for the BSRI I  
(Real Self) for Experimental and Control Groups

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Masculine				
Btwn Gps, Badj:	3.82	1	3.82	.04
Withn Gps, Sadj:	3337.63	41	81.40	
Feminine				
Btwn Gps, Badj:	84.01	1	84.01	.86
Withn Gps, Sadj:	3997.98	41	97.51	
Androgyny				
Btwn Gps, Badj:	.60	1	.60	.38
Withn Gps, Sadj:	63.51	41	1.54	

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations and Adjusted Means for Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny Scores on the BSRI I (Real Self) for Experimental and Control Groups

	Experimental				Control			
	Pre Mean	<u>Sd</u>	Post Mean	<u>SD</u>	Pre Mean	<u>SD</u>	Post Mean	<u>SD</u>
Feminine:	101.59	10.10	103.59	8.74	100.90	8.86	103.81	11.28
Masculine:	93.54	15.39	97.81	13.94	90.36	14.23	98.81	11.16
Androgyny:	8.05	17.94	5.78	15.87	10.54	15.32	5.07	13.83
Adjusted Means:								
	Experimental				Control			
Feminine:	96.92				99.70			
Masculine:	103.40				103.99			
Androgyny:	.74				.50			

units for the control group. The unadjusted masculinity means increased 4.27 units for the experimental group and 8.45 for the control group. The decrease in the unadjusted androgyny means was 2.27 for the experimental group and 5.47 for the control group. This increase of 4.18 on the masculinity means for the control group and a decrease of 3.20 units in the androgyny means for the control group indicates a masculine, androgynous trend in the control group on the BSRI I. The collapsed, or adjusted, means suggests a more androgynous trend in the control group, with the control mean decreasing .24 units more than the experimental group.

### Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2, stating that the ideal self-concept of the female adolescents would become more androgynous as a result of the educational experience, was confirmed at the .05 level of significance. Table 5, which presents the analysis of covariance for Masculinity, Femininity, and Androgyny scores on the BSRI II (Ideal Self) for the Experimental and Control Groups shows the experimental group changed in the direction of greater androgyny. Table 6, which presents the means, unadjusted and adjusted, plus the standard deviations for the femininity, masculinity and androgyny scores on the BSRI II, for the experimental and control groups, indicated that the significant trend

Table 5

Analysis of Covariance of Masculine, Feminine  
and Androgyny Scores for the BSRI II (Ideal Self)  
for Experimental and Control Groups

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Masculine				
Btwn Gps., Badj:	1.44	1	1.44	.01
Withn Gps., Sadj:	2735.38	37	73.92	
Feminine				
Betwn Gps., Badj:	196.04	1	196.04	1.66
Withn Gps., Sadj:	4349.06	37	117.54	
Androgyny				
Btwn Gps., Badj:	5.85	1	5.85	4.28*
Withn Gps., Sadj:	56.27	37	1.36	

\* $p < .05$ .

Table 6

Means, Standard Deviations and Adjusted Means for Femininity,  
Masculinity and Androgyny Scores on the BSRI II (Ideal Self)  
for Experimental and Control Groups

	Experimental				Control			
	Pre Mean	<u>SD</u>	Post Mean	<u>SD</u>	Pre Mean	<u>SD</u>	Post Mean	<u>SD</u>
Feminine:	108.00	7.82	110.10	9.32	105.80	12.76	110.20	12.61
Masculine:	104.95	12.51	110.60	11.35	102.00	12.13	105.60	7.85
Androgyny:	3.05	16.81	-.5	12.65	3.8	11.59	4.6	10.84
Adjusted Means								
	Experimental				Control			
Feminine:	110.57				106.12			
Masculine:	109.95				110.34			
Androgyny:	-.12				.64			

in androgyny scores resulted from an increase in masculinity scores, with less of an increase in femininity scores, for the experimental group from pre- to posttesting. The unadjusted pre-post means in masculinity scores increased 6.65 points for the experimental group as compared to an increase of 3.6 points for the control group. The pre-post unadjusted means in the femininity scores increased 2 points in the experimental group as compared to 4.6 points for the control group. The pre-post unadjusted means for the androgyny scores decreased 3.55 points for the experimental group as compared to a decrease of only .75 for the control group.

### Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3, stating that the female adolescents enrolled in the course would become more liberal in their attitudes toward sex roles as a function of participating in the course, was confirmed at the .05 level of significance. The results of ATWS covariance analysis presented in Table 7 show a significant  $F$  of 6.68. Table 8, which presents the means, unadjusted and adjusted, plus the standard deviations, indicates a significant difference in the experimental and control group from the pre- to posttesting. The higher means indicate an increase in liberal attitudes, thus there was an increase in the pre-post means of 6.40 for the experimental group and a decrease of 1.25 for the control group.

Table 7

Analysis of Covariance of ATWS for  
Experimental and Control Groups

Source	<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
Btwn Gps., Badj:	695.21	1	695.21	6.86*
Withn Gps., Sadj:	3748.68	37	101.31	

\* $p < .05$ .

Table 8

Means, Standard Deviations and Adjusted Means  
on the ATWS for the Experimental and Control Groups

Experimental				Control			
Pre Mean	<u>SD</u>	Post Mean	<u>SD</u>	Pre Mean	<u>SD</u>	Post Mean	<u>SD</u>
110.05	22.18	116.45	20.42	105.10	23.23	103.85	23.15
Adjusted Means							
Experimental				Control			
114.35				104.55			

Evaluation of the Course Questionnaire

Table 9 gives the descriptive statistics for the evaluation of the course questionnaire. The highest possible endorsement of the course was a score of 9 and the lowest possible evaluation was a score of 36. The mean endorsement of the course was 16.90, median, 17.90, and the mode was 20. These results indicate that the course received only medium endorsement from the students. However, there was considerable variation in the endorsement as is evidenced by the standard deviation of 4.07. Figure 1, a polygraph of frequency scores, illustrates a flat distribution, thus indicating lack of concensus on the value of the course.

Table 9

Total Sample Descriptive Statistics for  
Evaluation of Course Questionnaire Scores

Group	Mean	Mode	Median	<u>SD</u>	Range
Experimental Group	16.90	20	17.5	4.07	27-10



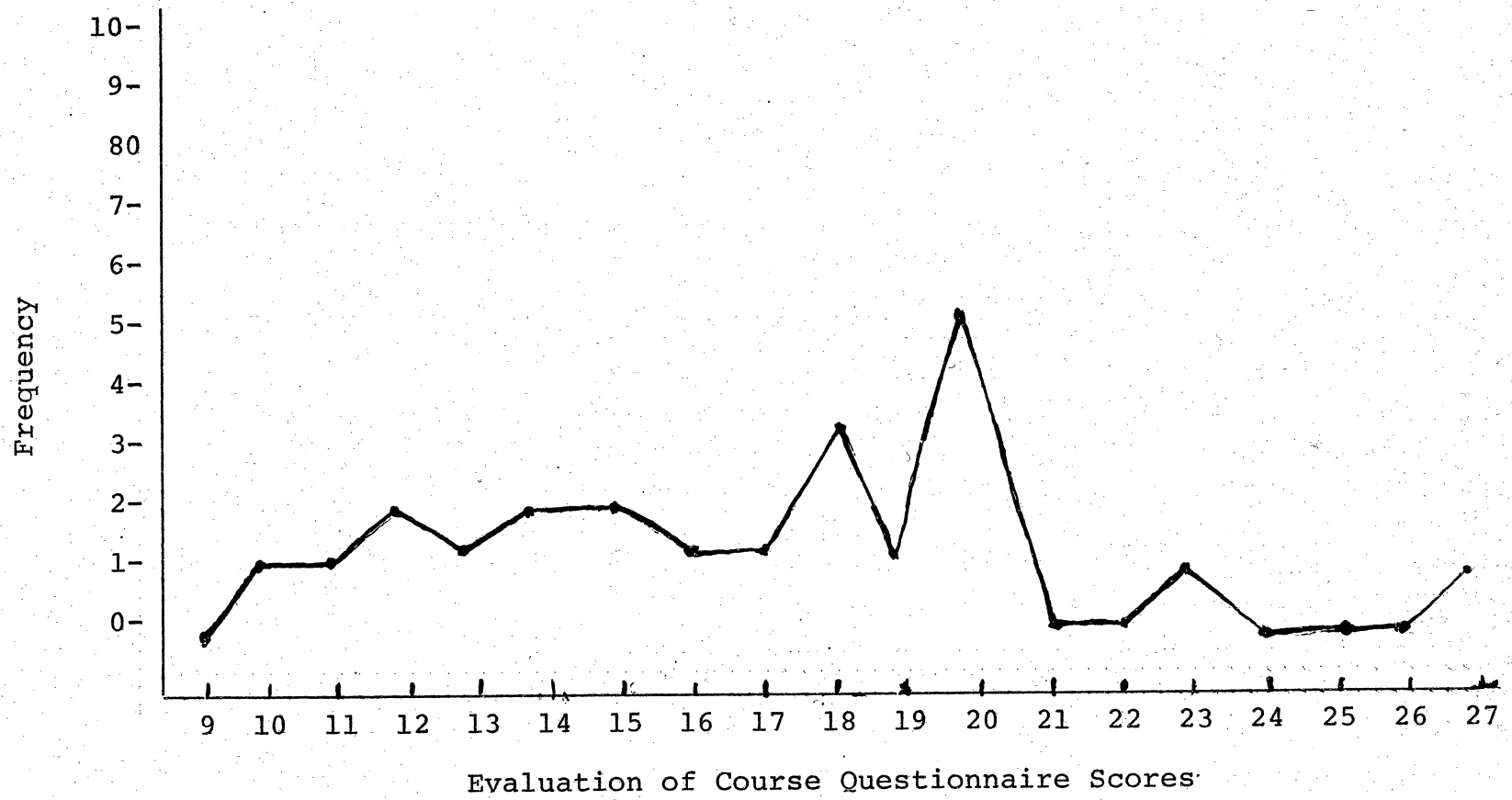


Figure 1. Polygraph Frequency Distribution for Experimental Group.

## DISCUSSION

There was no experimental support for androgynous change in the female adolescents' sex role concept as a result of the womens' study course; however, experimental verification for androgynous change in the female adolescents' ideal self-concept was supported as well as a significant change in more liberal attitudes toward the rights and roles of women.

### Self-Concept and Attitude Change

Lack of change in the self-concept of the female adolescent indicates the difficulty inherent in effecting change in self-concept. Shueman and Sedlacek (1972) confirmed this difficulty in an evaluation of a woman's study course at the University of Maryland. Using the BSRI and the Tennessee Self Concept Scale, they found no significant self-concept change over one semester that was attributable to the course.

Significant change in ideal self-concept and attitudes about women's role indicates that attitudes and ideal concepts may be more easily affected. This may be due to the fact that these concepts do not involve an immediate change in behavior or life style, but merely provide "food for thought." Speizer (1975) lends support to this assumption in his evaluation study of a woman's study course conducted at a

junior college. Using just the ATWS as an effect measure of the course, he found that women who participated in the course as compared to a control group had a significantly greater change in their ATWS scores.

An evaluation study on a consciousness raising course for junior and senior high women by Abernathy et al. (1977) further supports the easier assessibility of attitude change, as opposed to self-concept change. Using the ATWS, TSCS and the Personal Orientation Inventory, they found changes in more liberal attitudes about women's rights and roles as well as increases in several dimensions of self-actualization, but no change in self-concept.

#### Adolescent Cognitive Development and Social Environment

Experimental verification for ideal and attitude change is supported by developmental research which explores the dichotomy that often exists between the adolescents' cognitive development and his/her environment. In a developmental study of the ideal self, Havighurst, Robinson, and Door (1973) found a direct correlation between the ability to abstract the environment and the adolescent development of a more abstract ego ideal. Piaget (Elkind, 1971) says that with this abstract ability the adolescent often develops hypotheses that are in conflict with the realities of his/her immediate environment; thus there is a greater discrepancy between ideal self and real self during this period. There

is also a dichotomy between the values and attitudes the adolescent is developing cognitively and his/her actions. Bean and Levy (1976) support this cognitive theory in a study in which children and adolescents were asked to write stories on androgynous themes. They found that the fantasy stories by the females were more androgynous in character than the behavior of the adolescents; they were able to move beyond sex stereotypes in these fantasy stories. Significant results on the ideal self-concept may indicate that cultural norms for the female adolescent, which give the appearance of status quo role adaptation may be internalized imperfectly and that the ideal perception of self is more competent, autonomous and instrumental than is apparent.

Studies by Kimball (1973) and Robbins and Robbins (1973) also indicate that young people are reassessing their attitudes of sex roles. These studies concentrated on evaluation of college students achievement motivation; it was found that both the sexes are rejecting the traditional concept of success. Males communicated a need to balance personal fulfillment with career achievement, while females sought to integrate family and career. Simple career achievement was not a highly valued goal in and of itself.

However, these new attitudes and idealizations by the modern adolescents are difficult to reinforce due to the endorsement of a stereotypic sex-role image in the adolescent's

social and institutional environment. There is little consensus regarding the benefits of teaching or reinforcing new role concepts for young women. A recent survey by the National Assessment of Education Progress (Sun Telegram, June 17, 1977) reveals how divided the modern teenager is on the role of women in our society. When the 17-year-old males and females were asked to write an essay on their thoughts concerning women working outside the home, 30% wrote that a woman's place is in the home; another 20% said that women should only work under certain conditions. More than half, however, 58%, said that women should work whenever they want. One writer wrote, "Women are human beings, it is their God-given right to pursue whatever career they desire."

#### Feminine Role in Society Course

It is possible that the results, i.e., no androgynous self-concept change, but ideal and attitudinal change was a function of the irrelevance of the course content to the concept of androgyny. The primary emphasis was on exploring the historical role of women in society. The context was a parallel comparison of woman's role in the Anglo and Mexican American culture. This content would not affect one's femininity/masculinity self-concept but could supply information that would change cognitive attitudes and values towards women's role and rights. The heavy emphasis on

Mexican American information prevented the Anglo students from experiencing the course as relevant to their lives. Two of the Anglo students privately said that even though they really liked the Mexican American instructor, they felt her heritage influenced the types and presentation of material such that much of the information was not relevant to Anglos. This is not a criticism of the course, it only indicates that change in self-concept as measured by the subjects sex-role perceptions was not a relevant measure here.

The type of course, i.e., History course as opposed to an experiential course which explores more the social and psychological aspects of being female, may have influenced attitude change, but not self-concept change. The instructor informed the experimenter that she has worked for two years before the course was finally put in the curriculum as a history course, and although she had some freedom in structuring the content of the course, it was limited by necessity of meeting history department requirements. She could not therefore place much emphasis on the consciousness raising exploration of the female experience.

#### Implications for Future Research

Extensive research needs to be done on the educational environment of children and adolescents as a factor in altering attitudes and perceptions of sex roles, e.g., study

of antecedent conditions that will support and alter young females conceptions of a restrictive female identity, e.g., attitudes of teachers and counselors, liberal vs. traditional curriculum, career counseling, etc.

Measurements need to be developed on the adolescent's environmental concerns. The androgynous measure used in this study was normed on college students and therefore may not have been as sensitive to the adolescent's social, cognitive and institutional environment. Since the teen-age environment is oriented toward social approval a measure that employs social situations and evaluates the decisions the adolescent makes in these situations might reveal hidden androgynous attitudes.

We can only speculate that there are androgynous adolescents present in our society now. The concept of androgyny may not, however be applicable to adolescents. It is possible that a period of sex-role typing is a necessary part of personality development--androgynous or not.

If it is assumed that there are "androgynous" teenagers, then it is relevant and necessary for researchers to define what they "look like," we need a clear profile of incident rate, level of adjustment, cognitive styles, support systems, definition, etc., from which to measure.

APPENDIX A

COPY OF OUTLINE OF FEMININE ROLE IN SOCIETY COURSE

DEPARTMENT BI-LINGUAL

NAME OF COURSE FEMININE ROLE IN SOCIETY - BILINGUAL

BRIEF DESCRIPTION:

COURSE IS DESIGNED TO EXPLORE THE POSITION OF WOMAN THROUGHOUT HISTORY. WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE IN RELATION TO MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ATTITUDES. THE STRUGGLE FOR SUFFRAGE AND THE CURRENT WOMEN'S MOVEMENT CROSS-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF DIVERSE FAMILY STRUCTURE FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE. EACH STUDENT WILL PARTICIPATE IN AN ANALYSIS OF THE LIVES AND TIMES OF FAMOUS WOMEN THROUGHOUT U.S. HISTORY AND THE SOUTHWEST. THE STUDENT SHALL BE EXPOSED TO ETHNIC HANDICRAFTS AND CULINARY ARTS. CLOSE ONE-TO-ONE CONTACT WITH SELECT RESOURCE PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY IS INCLUSIVE.

LENGTH OF COURSE: ONE SEMESTER

PREREQUISITE: BILINGUAL

TYPE OF COURSE: ELECTIVE

BASIC TEXT:

- A. BORN FEMALE, 1969
- B. THE AMERICAN WOMAN--WHO WAS SHE?, 1970

SUPPLEMENTARY PRINTED MATERIALS

- A. MS. MAGAZINE
- B. SISTERS IN STRUGGLE (1848-1920), DEBBY WOODROFFE
- C. IS BIOLOGY WOMAN'S DESTINY--EVELYN REED
- D. PIONEERS OF WOMEN'S LIBERTION--JOYCE COWLEY
- E. WOMEN AND THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT--CAROLINE LUND
- F. IN DEFENSE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT & BETSEY STONE
- G. CHICANAS SPEEK OUT--MIRTA VIDAL
- H. BLACK WOMEN'S LIBERATION--MAXINE WILLIAMS & PAMELA NEWMAN



- I. THE FEMALE EXPERIENCE (PSYCHOLOGY TODAY)
- J. THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN--SUSAN C. ROSS
- K. READER'S DIGESTS
- L. NEWSPAPER

#### VISUAL AIDS USED

- A. ALBUMS (BY FEMALE VOCALISTS)
- B. MOTION PICTURES (I.E., WOMEN'S SELF DEFENSE)
- C. TELEVISION PROGRAM--"ADLIB"

STANDARDIZED TESTS USED: NONE

#### FEMININE ROLE IN SOCIETY--BILINGUAL

THIS COURSE WILL BE DIVIDED INTO THE FOLLOWING MAJOR UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:

- I. WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS' VIEWS
- II. THE COLONIAL PERIOD
- III. THE REVOLUTION
- IV. INTELLECTUAL LIFE (1800-1850)
- V. THE NATION DIVIDED
- VI. THE "PIONEER" WOMAN (1700-1910)
- VII. THE BEGINNINGS OF REFORM
- VIII. WOMEN IN THE LITERARY SCENE
- IX. THE "GAY NINETIES"
- X. THE DRIVE FOR THE VOTE--INDIVIDUALS
- XI. TWENTIETH CENTURY WOMAN
- XII. WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT

#### GENERAL GOALS

- A. THE STUDENT WILL FOCUS ATTENTION ON A PARTICULAR THREAD IN THE FABRIC OF WORLD AND U.S. HISTORY--THE FEMALE ROLE--AND RELATE IT TO CURRENT HAPPENINGS IN THE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT.

- B. THE STUDENT WILL FAMILIARIZE HIMSELF/HERSELF WITH THE BACKGROUNDS AND CONDITIONS OF PARTICULAR WOMEN AND EVALUATE THE CURRENT MOVEMENT.
- C. THE STUDENT WILL DEVELOP POSITIVE ATTITUDES IN AWARENESS, APPRECIATION, AND VERSATILITY OF THE ABOVE.

I. WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS' VIEWS

A. COURSE CONTENT

- 1. ANCIENT WORLD
- 2. MEDIEVAL WORLD
- 3. RENAISSANCE
- 4. THE ENLIGHTENMENT

II. THE COLONIAL PERIOD

A. COURSE CONTENT

- 1. CONTEXT
- 2. INDIVIDUALS

III. THE REVOLUTION

A. COURSE CONTENT

- 1. THOUGHT
- 2. ACTION

IV. INTELLECTUAL LIFE (1800-1850)

A. COURSE CONTENT

- 1. THE "GREAT CAUSES"
- 2. THE PRODUCTS

V. THE NATION DIVIDED

A. COURSE CONTENT

- 1. ABOLITIONISTS
- 2. THE SOUTH: WHITE AND BLACK WOMEN

VI. THE "PIONEER" WOMAN (1700-1910)

VII. THE BEGINNINGS OF REFORM

VIII. WOMEN IN THE LITERARY SCENE

- IX. THE "GAY NINETIES"
  - A. COURSE CONTENT
    - 1. LITERATURE
    - 2. THE "FACTORY GIRL"
- X. THE DRIVE FOR THE VOTE--INDIVIDUALS
- XI. TWENTIETH CENTURY WOMAN
- XII. WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT
  - A. COURSE CONTENT
    - 1. CHICANA WOMEN
    - 2. BLACK WOMEN
    - 3. OTHER THIRD WORLD WOMEN
    - 4. LITERATURE--SEXISM
    - 5. LANGUAGE--SEXISM
    - 6. THE MEDIA--SEXISM
    - 7. DISCRIMINATION (EMPLOYMENT, SALARY, ETC.)
    - 8. EQUAL RIGHTS' AMENDMENT
    - 9. FAMOUS WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY

APPENDIX B

BSRI I

DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS YOU THINK YOU ARE

1	2	3	4
NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE	USUALLY NOT TRUE	SOMETIMES BUT INFREQUENTLY TRUE	OCCASIONALLY TRUE
5	6	7	

OFTEN TRUE	USUALLY TRUE	ALWAYS OR ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE
---------------	-----------------	---------------------------------

Self reliant	
Yielding	
Helpful	
Defends own beliefs	
Cheerful	
Moody	
Independent	
Shy	
Conscientious	
Atheletic	
Affectionate	

Reliable	
Analytical	
Sympathetic	
Jealous	
Has leadership abilities	
Sensitive to the needs of others	
Truthful	
Willing to take risks	
Understanding	
Secretive	
Makes decisions easily	

Warm	
Solemn	
Willing to take a stand	
Tender	
Friendly	
Gullible	
Inefficient	
Acts as a leader	
Childlike	
Adaptable	
Individualistic	

Theatrical	
Assertive	
Flatterable	
Happy	
Strong Personality	
Loyal	
Unpredictable	
Forceful	
Feminine	

Compassionate	
Sincere	
Self-sufficient	
Eager to soothe hurt feelings	
Conceited	
Dominant	
Soft-spoken	
Likable	
Masculine	

Does not use harsh language	
Unsystematic	
Competitive	
Loves children	
Tactful	
Ambitious	
Gentle	
Conventional	



Theatrical	
Assertive	
Flatterable	
Happy	
Strong	
Loyal	
Unpredictable	
Forceful	
Feminine	

Compassionate	
Sincere	
Self-sufficient	
Eager to soothe hurt	
Conceited	
Dominant	
Soft-spoken	
Likable	
Masculine	

Does not use harsh language	
Unsystematic	
Competitive	
Loves children	
Tactful	
Ambitious	
Gentle	
Conventional	

APPENDIX D

ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN SCALE

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the role of women in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feelings about each statement by indicating whether you (A) Agree strongly, (B) Agree mildly, (C) Disagree mildly, or (D) Disagree strongly. Please indicate your opinion by marking the column on the answer sheet which corresponds to the alternative which best describes your personal attitude. Please respond to every item.

(A) Agree strongly    (B) Agree mildly    (C) Disagree mildly

(D) Disagree strongly

- A B C D 1. Women have an obligation to be faithful to their husbands.
- A B C D 2. Swearing and obscenity is more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man.
- A B C D 3. The satisfaction of her husband's sexual desires is a fundamental obligation of every wife.
- A B C D 4. Divorced men should help support their children but should not be required to pay alimony if their wives are capable of working.
- A B C D 5. Under ordinary circumstances, men should be expected to pay all the expenses while they're out on a date.
- A B C D 6. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.
- A B C D 7. It is all right for wives to have an occasional casual, extramarital affair.
- A B C D 8. Special attentions like standing up for a woman who comes into a room or giving her a seat on a crowded bus are outmoded and should be discontinued.



- A B C D 9. Vocational and professional schools should admit the best qualified students, independent of sex.
- A B C D 10. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.
- A B C D 11. Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.
- A B C D 12. Husbands and wives should be equal partners in planning the family budget.
- A B C D 13. Men should continue to show courtesies to women such as holding open the door or helping them on with their coats.
- A B C D 14. Women should claim alimony not as persons incapable of self-support but only when there are children to provide for or when the burden of starting life anew after the divorce is obviously heavier for the wife.
- A B C D 15. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.
- A B C D 16. The initiative in dating should come from the man.
- A B C D 17. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.
- A B C D 18. It is insulting to women to have the "Obey" clause remain in the marriage service.
- A B C D 19. There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.
- A B C D 20. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.
- A B C D 21. Parental authority and responsibility for discipline of the children should be equally divided between husband and wife.
- A B C D 22. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.
- A B C D 23. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.

- A B C D 24. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.
- A B C D 25. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.
- A B C D 26. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.
- A B C D 27. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.
- A B C D 28. It is childish for a woman to assert herself by retaining her maiden name after marriage.
- A B C D 29. Society should regard the services rendered by the women workers as valuable as those of man.
- A B C D 30. It is only fair that male workers should receive more pay than women in identical work.
- A B C D 31. In general, the Father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of the children.
- A B C D 32. Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiances.
- A B C D 33. Women should demand money for household and personal expenses as a right rather than as a gift.
- A B C D 34. The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.
- A B C D 35. Wifely submission is an outworn virtue.
- A B C D 36. There are some professions and types of businesses that are more suitable for men than women.
- A B C D 37. Women should be concerned with their duties of childrearing and housetending, rather than with desires for professional and business careers.
- A B C D 38. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

- A B C D 39. A wife should make every effort to minimize irritation and inconvenience to the male head of the family.
- A B C D 40. There should be no greater barrier to an unmarried woman having sex with a casual acquaintance than having dinner with him.
- A B C D 41. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set by men.
- A B C D 42. Women should take the passive role in courtship.
- A B C D 43. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contribution to economic production than are men.
- A B C D 44. The intellectual equality of women with man is perfectly obvious.
- A B C D 45. Women should have full control of their persons and give or withhold sex intimacy as they choose.
- A B C D 46. The husband has in general no obligation to inform his wife of his financial plans.
- A B C D 47. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.
- A B C D 48. Women with children should not work outside the home if they don't have to financially.
- A B C D 49. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.
- A B C D 50. The relative amounts of time and energy to be devoted to household duties on the one hand and to a career on the other should be determined by personal desires and interests rather than by sex.
- A B C D 51. As head of the household, the husband should have more responsibility for the family's financial plans than his wife.
- A B C D 52. If both husband and wife agree that sexual fidelity isn't important, there is no reason why both shouldn't have extramarital affairs if they want to.

- A B C D 53. The husband should be regarded as the legal representative of the family group on all matters of law.
- A B C D 54. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.
- A B C D 55. Most women need and want the kind of protection and support that men have traditionally given them.



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