

SOME CONTRIBUTIONS OF PIONEERING WOMEN PSYCHOLOGIST TO GENDER EQUITY

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We present a brief summary of contributions of several women pioneers in Psychology, who dared to change the negative image of the female sex, the biased view of many of their professors about the morality and capabilities of women, or their masculine point of view.



Helen Thompson Woolley
 (USA 1874 - 1947)

We can consider her a pioneer in gender psychological studies, because in 1900 she defended her PhD cum laude at the Univ. of Chicago, with an experimental research on psychological differences between women and men showing that these are mainly socio-educational.



Helene Deutsch (Poland
 1884-USA 1982)

First psychoanalyst to expand and partially refute Freudian ideas about women. Published *Psychoanalysis of the Sexual Functions of Women* (1925) and *Psychology of Women* (1943-5). Her concept of personality *as-if*, highlights the ability of women to identify with others.



Karen Horney (Hamburg
 1885 - New York 1952)

The envy of womb and motherhood is the key to understanding the attitude of fear of men toward women, and this is what is disguised and projects by inventing in the women penis envy. She was expelled from the New York Psychoanalytic Institute.



Leta Stetter Hollingworth
 (USA 1886 - 1939)

In her PhD *Functional Periodicity* (1916), compared the mental and motor skills of men and women for a period of three months, to find out that there was not recorded a decreased performance in women during the menstrual period, as it was until that time believed



Catherine Morris Cox
 Miles (USA 1890 - 1984)

Author, with Lewis Terman, of *Sex and Personality* (1936) in 1935 in *Social Psychology of Sex* she differed in its emphasis on female embodiment, respect for the emerging tradition of the sex survey, and its opinions about the determinants of marital happiness, and the variability of intelligence.



Mercedes Rodrigo Bellido
 (Spain 1891-Puerto Rico 1982)

"Psychology has been humanized by the beneficial influence of women in these studies. Eg. in *Archives de Psychologie* (Geneva) between 1990-1936 only 6% of articles were of women, but in *Mental Hygiene* (New York) in 1945 they were already 20%" (*Introducción al estudio de la Psicología*, Universidad de Bogotá 1949)



Marie Langer (Austria
 1910 - Argentina 1987)

Anticipating contemporary feminist psychoanalytic concerns, she argues economic institutions and cultural values must be altered to permit women full participation in creative and productive activities if women are to accept their maternal role without conflict or resentment.



Carolyn Wood Sherif
 (USA 1922 - 1982)

Work on gender bias, roles and identity and considered social constructs. She created the 1st Women's Studies course, and worked in 1st Postgraduate Seminar on Women's Psychology at Penn State (1972). Founded 35 APA Division, which later created a prize in its honor for those who excel in Women's Psychology.



Florence Harriet Levin
 Denmark (USA 1931)

Founding member and leader of numerous associations (ICP, APA...), in *Women and Psychology* (1998) notes that gender gap has diminished, but there is still a lot to do. Among other things, she works to overcome the gender bias among the participants in psychological studies.



Carol Gilligan (USA 1936)

In 1982, she differs from Lawrence Kohlberg's interpretation of the supposed differential moral development among adolescents who attribute moral weakness to girls. She argues that from male parameters, he did not understand that girls had a more elaborate moral vision, the *ethics of care* versus the fulfillment of abstract duties of boys.

These are just a symbolic sample and a tribute to the many women psychologists of yesterday and today, who internationally fought and continue to fight for the necessary equality between women and men in society, and in teaching and research in Psychology.

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Scarborough, Elizabeth & Furumoto, Luarel (1989.) *UNTOLD LIVES. The First Generation of American Women Psychologists*. Columbia Univ. Press.

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