CHAPTER 13

Gender and Interaction

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Gender is a system of social practices within society that constitutes people as different in socially significant ways and organizes relations of inequality on the basis of the difference. Like other systems of difference and inequality, such as race or class, gender involves widely shared cultural beliefs and institutions at the macro-level of analysis, behaviors and expectations at the interactional level, and self-conceptions and attitudes at the individual level of analysis. Although each component is important, events at the interactional level may be especially important for the maintenance or change of the gender system. Compared to people on opposite sides of class and racial divides, men and women in the United States interact with one another frequently, often on familiar, even intimate terms.

1. THE GENDER SYSTEM AND INTERACTION

Unlike most social differences, gender divides people into two groups of roughly equal size. Since whom you interact with is partly determined by who is available, two equal sized groups creates the maximum structural likelihood that people in both groups will have ample contact with the other group (Blau & Schwartz, 1984). The relevance of one's sex category for sexual behavior and reproduction also increases the rate of interaction between most men and women. Finally, unlike race or class, gender almost always cross-cuts kinship. Most people have opposite sex family members with whom they interact, be

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they spouses, parents, children, or siblings. Given all the forces that keep men and women interacting with one another, the gender system of difference and inequality would be impossible to sustain if interactional events were not organized to support it.

Not only does the high rate of interaction between the sexes make the interactional level important for the gender system as a whole, but it also has significant consequences for the way gender shapes behavior in interaction. Gender appears to be deeply entwined with the basic cultural rules people use to organize their interaction with others (Ridgeway, 1997; West & Zimmerman, 1997). Coordinating interaction requires at least a minimal cultural definition of "who" self and other are. Perhaps because it is a simple, quick, habitually used cultural dichotomy, evidence suggests that people employ gender this way even when other definitions are available (e.g., employer–employee). Social cognition research has shown that people automatically sex categorize (i.e., label as male or female) any other with whom they interact (Brewer & Lui, 1989). Sex category is one of only two or three "primary" social categories that our culture has constituted as necessary to make sufficient sense out of another in relation to self so that interaction can proceed. When self and other are categorized on other social dimensions as well (e.g., occupation) those conceptions are nested within the prior understanding of self and other as male or female, often with subsequent consequences for expectations and behavior (Brewer & Lui, 1989).

Sex categorization may seem a "natural" process but ethnomethodologists have shown it to be substantially socially constructed (Kessler & McKenna, 1978; West & Zimmerman, 1987). In everyday interaction people sex categorize each other based on appearance and other cues that are culturally presumed to stand for physical sex differences. Automatic, taken-for-granted sex categorization of actors seems to be a fundamental part of organizing interaction.

The high rate of interaction between men and women has other consequences for the way gender shapes behavior. The continued, everyday acceptance of the gender system requires that men and women be understood as sufficiently different in ways that justify men's greater power and privilege. The problem of accomplishing this despite constant contact and opportunities for mutual influence probably contributes to the unusually prescriptive nature of the gender stereotypes that shape people's behavior in interaction, compared to race or class stereotypes (Fiske & Stevens, 1993; Jackman, 1994). People feel freer to criticize and otherwise sanction perceived violations of gender expectations than they do violations of race or class expectations (Fiske & Stevens, 1993).

The deep involvement of gender in the organization of interaction raises complex issues for studying its impact on behavior. In interaction, people are always many things in addition to their sex. Simple, dichotomous sex categories may make easy starting places, but, by the same token, they are too diffuse to adequately frame behavior in most contexts. People virtually always classify self and other in additional and more specific ways such as age, ethnicity, and institutional role. As a result, the interactional conduct of gender is always *enmeshed* in other identities and activities. It cannot be observed in a pure, unentangled form.

This complexity is a challenge for theories of gender and interaction. It also raises significant methodological issues for empirical studies. In drawing conclusions about gender differences in interaction, for instance, we must be careful not to attribute to gender behavioral effects that are caused by actors' other social positions and differences. Given the widespread division of labor and authority by sex in our society, male and female interactants are frequently unequal in important ways besides gender. As a conse-

quence, commonly observed gender differences in interaction are often deceptive and misleading. Close attention to the context in which interaction occurs is necessary when interpreting the evidence for gender effects.

We begin by reviewing five current theoretical approaches that seek to explain how gender shapes behavior in interaction and how, in turn, the recurring patterns or structures of interaction that emerge from this behavior sustain (and potentially could undermine) the gender system. Absent from our survey is the familiar approach that attributes gendered behavior in interaction to stable differences in men's and women's personalities or traits (e.g., dominance or nuturance) that they have acquired through socialization (e.g., Parsons & Bales, 1955). In recent years, evidence has accumulated that men's and women's gender-related behavior varies substantially with changes in the situational context. A woman who is a tough taskmaster at work may be deferential and passive with her husband. As a result, researchers have increasingly turned away from a simple, socialized-trait approach (see, e.g., Aries, 1996; Deaux & Major, 1987; Eagly, 1987; Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1977; Ridgeway, 1992 for reviews). It is not that gendered selves, attitudes, or beliefs do not develop through socialization or that they have no impact on interaction. Rather, conceptualizing gendered selves as stable traits or dispositions that exert a constant effect on behavior across situations does not appear to be an adequate way to account for the impact of gendered selves on interaction. After surveying current theoretical approaches to gender and interaction we will turn to the empirical evidence for gender's effects on patterns of interaction.

2. THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO GENDER AND INTERACTION

2.1. The Two-Cultures Approach

Drawing an analogy from studies of interethnic communication, Maltz and Borker (1982) propose that men and women learn different cultural rules for engaging in interaction and interpreting their own and others' behavior. They argue that people acquire rules for interacting with peers (i.e., those who are not formal superiors or subordinates) from childhood peer groups. Because children's peer groups tend to be gender segregated and because children accentuate stereotypic gender differences in the process of learning gender roles, these peer groups develop different gender-typed cultures. As a result, boys and girls learn different cultural rules for interaction. Boys learn to use speech to compete for attention in the group and assert positions of dominance. Girls learn to use speech to maintain close, equal relations, to criticize in nonchallenging ways, and to interpret accurately other's intentions (Maccoby, 1990; Maltz & Borker, 1982). These taken-for-granted rules of interaction carry into adulthood, shaping men's and women's interaction.

In mixed-sex interaction, the result can be miscommunication because men and women have learned to attribute different meanings to the same behavior (Maltz & Borker, 1982). However, the effort to accommodate each other's different interactional goals in conversation modifies men's and women's behavior slightly, reducing gender differences. In same-sex interaction, on the other hand, gendered styles of interaction are reinforced. Thus the two cultures approach predicts that gender differences in behavior will be greater between men and women in same-sex contexts than in mixed-sex contexts.

The two cultures argument has gained wide attention thanks to popular presentations, such as Tannen's (1990) *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversa-*

tion. However, criticism of this work among researchers has grown. Aries (1996), who earlier found the approach persuasive, concludes from her recent review of the evidence that it is seriously flawed. Some problems are logical. Since adult men and women (in contrast to members of different ethnic groups) interact daily, and mixed-sex interaction moderates gender differences, why don't men's and women's different cultural rules eventually break down, especially since they cause misunderstandings and problems in interaction? Also, since many children interact closely with opposite sex siblings in addition to same-sex friends, could separate cultures really develop at all?

Other problems are empirical. There is no consistent pattern of greater gender differences between same-sex groups than within mixed-sex groups—the results are contradictory depending on the behavior and context (Aries, 1996). Also, there is little reliable evidence that men and women consistently misunderstand one another or that they cannot understand each other quite well in long-term relationships. Thorne's (1993) studies of children's play groups suggests as well that they are more diverse in their rules of interaction than is represented in the two cultures approach.

2.2. Doing Gender

"Doing gender" is an ethnomethodological perspective that claims that gender itself is an interactional accomplishment, something that must be continually achieved in local interactional contexts to persist as a social phenomenon (West & Fenstermaker, 1993; West & Zimmerman, 1987). Institutionalized cultural norms dictate that there are two and only two sexes, each with certain "inherent" natures that imply and justify male dominance. However, the maintenance of these norms requires that people present themselves in interaction in culturally defined ways that allow others to sex categorize them unequivocally as male or female and hold them accountable for behaving in ways that are normatively appropriate to their sex category.

Gender, as opposed to sex (cultural rules for sex assignment, usually at birth) or sex categorization (labeling as male or female in everyday interaction), is the local management of conduct in relation to normative conceptions of appropriate behavior and attitudes for one's sex category (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Thus gender is an adverb rather than a noun in this perspective, something one "does" rather than "is." It is a quality (i.e., "womanly" or "manly") with which a person carries out any behavior during interaction. To be effective, this quality must be recognized as a culturally competent gender performance by others present. Sex category is "omnirelevant" in interaction, so that one can be held accountable for engaging in any activity in a gender-appropriate way, even in situations that are not institutionally gendered: a woman may be a physician and acknowledged as such in the situation, but she can still be held accountable for being womanly in her conduct as a physician.

The concept of gender as something one *does* has been very influential, as has the recognition that sex categorization in interaction is a distinct and important aspect of the gender process. However, the "doing gender" approach has been more important as an orienting perspective than as a predictive theory of gender's impact on behavior in interaction (but see Brines, 1994 for a predictive application to the household division of labor). Perhaps this is because the "doing gender" approach offers no explicit guidelines for the circumstances under which the salience of gender (i.e., the situated pressures for gender accountability) will vary, producing stronger or weaker gender differences in behavior.

2.3. Eagly's Social Role Theory

Eagly (1987; Eagly & Wood, 1991) has proposed a broad theory of gender differences that locates their source in the situational roles that men and women play. In our society, homemaker roles are assigned almost exclusively to women while powerful, higher-status work roles are occupied disproportionately by men. People form their gender role expectations from observing men and women around them. They see men, because of the requirements of their more powerful work roles, engaging in more *agentic* (instrumental, assertive) behaviors than women and women, owing to their homemaker roles, enacting more *communal* (friendly, concerned with others, emotionally expressive) behaviors. Besides creating stereotypic gender role expectations, society's gender division of labor creates gender-typed skills and beliefs by providing men and women with different experiences.

Behavior in general is determined by the social roles that are most salient in a given situation. Thus when a male physician and a female nurse interact in a hospital, their behavior is shaped by the power, status, and norms of their work roles rather than by gender, *per se*. In the same formal role (e.g., CEO), the theory predicts that men and women will act similarly. Evidence supports this in the case of leadership behavior in management roles (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Johnson, 1994).

Gender role expectations shape behavior directly only when other roles are ambiguous. Eagly (1987) argues that this is the case in most laboratory research settings and accounts for the gender differences observed in many laboratory studies. Anything that makes gender roles more salient in a situation (e.g., a mixed-sex setting, a culturally gendered context) increases their impact and thus the likelihood that men's and women's behavior will differ in stereotypic fashion (Eagly & Wood, 1991). However, gender can also indirectly affect how men and women enact other roles by shaping the skills and beliefs individuals have acquired over their lives. Thus when an interactional task requires communal skills, women will generally perform better than men and be more influential in that setting (Wood, 1987). When the task is heavily agentic, both men and women will act more agentically, but men's past experiences will give them the advantage.

Thus social role theory predicts that if we look around us we will often see men acting more agentically in interaction than women and women acting more communally than men. In most settings, however, these differences will be due to differences in the situational roles that men and women are playing rather than to gender. Only in situations where gender is highly salient or the task draws on sex-typed skills will such differences be attributable to gender itself. Furthermore, when women are in agentic situational roles (e.g., boss), or when men are in communal roles (e.g., flight attendant) each will act in a counter-gender manner in accord with the requirements of his or her role. Because of its generality and sensitivity to situational variation and context, Eagly's role theory is widely cited in the research literature.

2.4. Status Characteristics and Expectation States

Another widely cited and well documented theory is expectation states theory. It argues that many, although not all, of the effects of gender on interaction are attributable to the greater status value attached to being male rather than female in western culture (Berger, Fisek, Norman, & Zelditch, 1977; Carli, 1991; Ridgeway, 1993; Wagner & Berger, 1997). Gender stereotypes not only associate men and women with different specific skills (e.g.,

child care or mechanics) they also attach greater status worthiness and general competence to men than women, making gender a status characteristic (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972).

Expectation states is not a theory of gender, *per se*, but a theory of the way characteristics of people that carry status value in the surrounding society shape the power and prestige hierarchies that emerge when they interact. It addresses interactions in which actors are oriented toward the accomplishment of a shared goal and seeks to explain behaviors, such as influence, participation, evaluation and allocation of rewards, that are related to inequalities in power and prestige in the situation. It acknowledges socioemotional behaviors, but considers them outside the pervue of the theory. Influence and power in interpersonal relations, particularly in goal-oriented situations, have important consequences for the social positions of wealth and power that individuals attain. Consequently, this theory claims to explain a range of gender differences in interaction that are especially important for understanding gender inequality.

When people are focused on a collective goal, they look for ways to anticipate the likely usefulness of their own suggestions, compared to those of others, in order to decide whether to speak up, whom to listen to, and with whose choices to agree. They form implicit *performance expectations* for each actor in the situation compared with the others. When gender stereotypes and the status beliefs they entail are *salient,* because they provide a basis for distinguishing the actors (i.e., a mixed-sex context, see Cota & Dion, 1986), or are *relevant* to the situation because they are linked by cultural beliefs to skill at the shared goal (e.g., a gender-typed task), they affect the actors' expectations for each other's performance in that situation. Performance expectations, in turn, shape behavior and others' reactions in a *self-fulfilling* manner. When gender status is salient, both a man and a woman will implicitly assume that he is a little more competent and has a little more to offer than she. Lower performance expectations for her compared to him make her less likely to offer task suggestions and more likely to ask for his ideas, to evaluate his ideas positively and her's negatively, and to accept his influence in task decisions, creating a behavioral power and prestige order that advantages him over her.

Because of the effects of gender status beliefs, the theory predicts that in mixed-sex interactions between men and women who are otherwise equals, men will, on average, be more influential, tend to offer more task suggestions, act more confidently and assertively, be evaluated as more competent for the equivalent performance, and expect and receive greater rewards than the women. Evidence supports this (Carli, 1991; Dovidio, Brown, Heltman, Ellyson, & Keating, 1988; Pugh & Wahrman, 1983; Wagner & Berger, 1997; Wood & Karten, 1986). Men's advantage over women will be increased further if the task is stereotypically masculine (Carli, 1991; Dovidio et al., 1988). When the task is stereotypically feminine, *women* should have a performance expectation advantage over men and be more influential and assertive than them, as Dovidio et al. (1988) and Wagner, Ford, and Ford (1986) have shown.

The theory predicts that in same-sex interaction, gender will shape performance expectations only when the task is gender typed in the culture. A "feminine" task will encourage women's assertive, task-related behavior and discourage men's in same-sex groups, while a "masculine" task will produce the opposite effects. When the task is gender neutral, men and women in same sex groups should not differ in their absolute rates of task behavior, as evidence indicates (Johnson, Clay-Warner, & Funk, 1996; Wagner & Berger, 1997).

One of the strengths of this theory is that it explicitly attends to other status-related attributes of actors (e.g., race, occupation, education, expertise) that may be salient in the situation besides gender. It argues that actors combine the positive and negative implications of all salient status information, weighted by the relevance of each to the situational task, to form aggregated performance expectations for self and others, which in turn shape each person's task behaviors, power, and prestige. As a result, the effects of gender on actors' influence and standing in the situation may be overwhelmed (or exacerbated) by countervailing factors (Wagner et al., 1986). Thus gender is not a master status in this approach. Its effects are situationally variable, but predictably so, advantaging men not over all women but over women who are otherwise their equals in most situations.

In addition to creating differences in the likelihood of becoming influential, expectation states theory argues that gender status beliefs, when salient, can affect the extent to which men and women are perceived to have a *right,* based on cultural expectations, to hold a position of influence and respect in the setting. Gender status beliefs can cause actors to assume implicitly that men are more legitimate candidates for high standing in the situation than equivalent women (Ridgeway, Johnson & Diekema, 1994). Such *legitimacy* effects add a prescriptive element to gender-based performance expectations. In trying to overcome others' low expectations for her by acting assertively in regard to the task, a woman may elicit a negative reaction unless she compensates by emphasizing her cooperative interest in helping the group (Carli, 1990; Carli, LaFleur, & Loeber, 1995; Ridgeway, 1982). A woman who attains leadership by virtue of her expertise may meet more resistance than a similar man if she tries to go beyond persuasion to exercise directive power in the group (Butler & Geis, 1990; Eagly, Makhijani & Klonsky, 1992).

Recently, expectation states theorists have also shown that the enactment of positions of higher or lower power and prestige in ongoing interactional situations causes the participants to attribute more dominant, instrumental traits to those in the high-ranking positions and more submissive, emotionally expressive traits to those in lower-ranking ones (Gerber, 1996; Wagner & Berger, 1997). This occurs regardless of whether the participants are men or women. The effect of gender status beliefs on interaction, however, results in men more frequently achieving high power and prestige positions than women. As a consequence of this interactional power and prestige advantage, men should more frequently be perceived as dominant and instrumental and women as expressive and submissive, contributing to gender stereotypes (Wagner & Berger, 1997).

Expectation states theory, then, argues that if we look around, we will usually see men acting more assertively, being more influential, and being perceived as more competent than women. However, these differences are not basic to men and women. They result from the self-fullfilling effects on interaction of cultural stereotypes that ascribe greater status and competence to men. When salient in the situation, these status beliefs create gender differences in behavior and leadership. But when they are not salient or are overwhelmed by other information in the situation, men and women will be similarly assertive, competent, and influential.

Note that expectation states theory and social role theory make many similar predictions. Expectation states theory is more precise and accurate in predicting how gender affects influence and task-related behaviors, particularly in combination with actors' other differences such as race or occupation. Role theory makes more specific predictions about gender's impact on communal, socioemotional behaviors.

2.5. Identity Theories

Perhaps the closest modern analogue to older gender role socialization approaches are the identity theories developed within the structural symbolic interactionist perspective. These theories argue that people learn a set of meanings that serve as an *idenity standard,* guiding behavior in situations where that identity is evoked. In the case of gender identities, conceptions of masculinity and femininity are based on cultural meanings associated with being a man or woman in society (Burke, 1991). Researchers in this tradition often see gender as a "master identity," a set of meanings that applies to the self across situations rather than as evoked only by specific institutional contexts (Stets & Burke, 1996). Given that some variants of identity theory posit a contrastive definition of masculinity and femininity (Burke, 1991)—being masculine as being not feminine—the idea that men and women act out master gender identities across situations seems quite close to the more traditional socialization theories.

The crucial difference is the new conceptualization of identity-driven behavior as a control system (Burke, 1991; Burke & Reitzes, 1981; Heise, 1979; Smith-Lovin & Heise, 1988). Rather than conceiving of identity as either something that is fluid and constructed anew in each situation (as in the doing gender perspective) or as stable across situations (as in the traditional socialization approaches), identity theories now posit a control process that leads to both stability and change in identity-driven behavior. Gender meanings are learned from societal definitions, and function as a standard of reference for interpreting the implications of interaction. In their interactions with others, people modify their behavior to control the perceptions of self-relevant meanings. Therefore, if the interaction is making one seem more feminine than one's fundamentally held gender identity standard, then masculine, assertive behavior might result (even if the identity standard were quite feminine). On the other hand, a situation such as a work setting that produced behavior that was too masculine in relation to that same identity standard, would produce behavior that re-affirmed the identity standard by emphasizing traditional femininity. In other words, the gendered behavior varies depending on how the meanings generated by the interaction relate to the fundamentally held identity standard; people produce a wide variety of gendered behavior to maintain their identity meanings.

Smith-Lovin and Robinson (1992) use affect control theory (Heise, 1979; Smith-Lovin & Heise, 1988), one of the identity control theories, to look at how gender identities are maintained in group conversations. They argue that both socialization and peer-group interaction lead boys and girls to develop gender identities with rather different values on evaluation (niceness), potency (powerfulness), and activity (expressiveness). These identities then affect cross-sex interaction and modify other social positions that males or females come to occupy (such as male student and female student). Using the meanings of these identities and of common conversational behaviors such as "interrupt" and "talk to," they modeled the participation and interruption structure of interaction in six-person groups.

Burke and Stets (1996), using Burke's version of identity theory (Burke, 1991a, 1991b; Burke & Reitzes, 1981) analyze positive and negative behavior among married couples who are trying to resolve a disagreement. They predict and find that those with a more masculine identity will be more likely to use negative behavior in interaction, while those with a more feminine identity will be more likely to use positive behavior. Interestingly, the results of being masculine/feminine are different from the results of being male/female. They argue that the status effects of being male or female are separate and differ-

ent in direction from the meanings of masculinity and femininity. This point is supported by Stets (1997), who shows that other low-status positions—age, education, and occupational status—operate in the same way.

Within this tradition, Burke and Cast (1997) have also explored the ways in which people's "reference standard" for gender identity meanings can be shaped by major life events. They study the gender identities of newly first-married couples over a 3-year period, focusing on the birth of a new child. They find that parental status alters gender identity meanings to increase the differences between masculinity and femininity, but that role-taking processes lead to convergence of gender roles.

The strength of the control-system formulations of identity theory is that they combine two insights about gendered behavior in interaction: interactions are based on what we learn about societies' definitions of maleness and femaleness, but these behaviors are also situated and flexible; gender is displayed and maintained in different ways in different situations. The theory also allows specification of the conditions under which gender meanings are likely to change, as a result of life events or societal change. Therefore, these perspectives bring a much needed dynamic, processual element to the older gender socialization ideas.

In differing ways, each of the theoretical approaches we have discussed emphasizes the importance of societal beliefs or stereotypes of men and women for expectations and behavior in interaction. We must keep in mind, however, that although there is a culturally hegemonic form of these stereotypes, based on the experiences of white middle-class Americans, there are also differences in gender stereotypes by class and race (Connell, 1995 Filardo, 1996; Messner, 1992; West & Fenstermaker, 1995). Although we have enough evidence to recognize that subcultural differences in gender conceptions exist and probably affect interaction, there are few detailed studies based on any but white middle-class participants. This must be kept in mind in considering the research findings we discuss next.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

There is a voluminous body of research on gender and interaction within the disciplines of sociology, psychology, and communications. Since we cannot be encyclopedic, we focus on well-established topics and findings and key studies that illustrate them.

3.1. Women's and Men's Interactional Networks

We begin with studies of the frequency and types of interactions among men and women. The facts that men and women are roughly equal sized groups and have necessary contact through kin and romantic ties ensure high rates of interaction. However, the network literature makes clear that this interaction is patterned in ways that are significant for the character and content of gender relationships, maintaining difference and inequality. We review the life course differentiation, organizational contexts, and status configurations in which interactions between men and women occur.

3.1.1. Networks in Childhood. By the time children enter school, they have learned that sex is a permanent personal characteristic. At about the same developmental stage,

researchers first observe homophily (the choice of similar companions) in play patterns and tendency for girls to play in smaller groups than boys (Block, 1979; Lever, 1978). Hallinan studied young children's peer relationships, focusing on transitivity in sentiment relations and how intransitive relations get resolved. An intransitive sentiment relation is one in which, for any three people in a group, A likes B and B likes C, but A does not like C (Hallinan, 1974). Although all children show less tolerance for intransitivity as they get older (Hallinan, 1974; Leinhardt, 1973), there are gender differences in how intransitivity is usually resolved. Eder and Hallinan (1978) found that girls are more likely to resolve intransitivity by deleting friendship choices, while boys are more likely to add them. For example, if A likes B and B likes C, a young boy would be more likely to form an A–C relation to resolve the intransitivity, while a young girl would be more likely to drop B as a friend. Furthermore, youths are more likely to delete a friendship choice than to resolve the intransitivity by adding a cross-sex friend (Hallinan & Kubitschek, 1990).

Hallinan's results have important implications for the emergence of cliques and larger peer group interactions. Youths tend to have friends who are popular peers of the same sex; this tie is likely to be reciprocated if both youths are popular. This stable dyad is most likely to expand to a stable, transitive triad if the third person is also of the same sex, is popular, and reciprocates the choice. These transitive triads are likely to continue adding people (creating more triads) to create cliques of the "popular crowd" of same sex people (Hallinan & Kubitschek, 1988, p. 91). Since each new member of a clique creates an intransitive structure that must be resolved by adding ties if the clique is to grow, girls are less likely to join larger cliques; they tend to resolve intransitivity by dropping, rather than adding, friendships. Thus, girls are less likely to extend or receive friendship. Simple, small tendencies toward homophily and differences in resolving problems in the structure of their relationships mean that boys and girls will move toward very different kinds of peer social circles. Their worlds become gender segregated, with boys in larger, more heterogeneous cliques.

Networks and knowledge coevolve, with the connections between individuals creating shared knowledge which, in turn, shifts interaction propensities (Carley, 1986a, b). Over time, knowledge overlap increases between interaction partners and decreases between people not connected in the network. As peer interactions become more organized around gender, strong perceptions of gender differences are likely to be created from in-group/out-group phenomena and from the different stores of information that these relatively isolated cliques develop. Except for siblings, cross-sex contacts will be embedded in more formal authority relations (e.g., teachers, parents), where youth occupy low-status positions within the interactions. Interactions among status equals in youth (excepting those who are thought of in romantic, sexual terms) are almost entirely same-sex interactions.

3.1.2. PERSONAL NETWORKS IN THE ADULT YEARS. In adult life men and women usually have networks of similar size (Fischer, 1982; Marsden 1987), but women have fewer ties to non-kin (Fischer & Oliker, 1983; Marsden, 1987; Wellman, 1985). Networks in adulthood show strong sex homophily as well as homophily in race, ethnicity, religion, age, and education (Marsden, 1988). Women typically interact more with kin and neighborhood contacts, which tends to increase the age and sex heterogeneity of their interactions while reducing racial, ethnic and religious diversity. Men, on the other hand, have more ties to co-workers and voluntary group members, which decreases age and sex diversity in their ties (Marsden, 1992).

Fischer and Oliker (1983) found that life course factors are particularly important in the development of gender differentiated networks (see also Marsden, 1987, footnote 15). Young, unmarried women and men have similar patterns of interaction. Gender differences accumulate, however, as young adults move into marriage and childbearing years. Married women, especially those with children, have fewer people that they can count on for support such as personal advice, help with odd jobs, or lending money. The exclusivity with which infant care is delegated to women may be a fundamental factor; by the time men become involved with childrearing of older children, women's networks may be fundamentally altered (Smith-Lovin & McPherson, 1992). Wellman (1985) found that having children significantly reduced cross-sex contacts for women, moving them into a female world of play groups and PTAs. Munch, McPherson, and Smith-Lovin (1997) showed that having a young child in the family restricts women's interactions with others, but also increases men's embeddedness in female, kin-oriented interactions. A study by Lynne Zucker (reported in Aldrich 1989, p. 24) using the "small world" technique showed that female networks were more densely interconnected, while men's are more extensive and less tightly linked. Interconnectedness has important implications for the usefulness of networks; Burt (1992) argued that nonredundancy of ties is more important than tie strength in promoting occupational success and other functional benefits of networks.

Fischer and Oliker (1983) found that women are much more likely to know people through their husband's co-worker networks than men are to know their wives' work friends. On the one hand, this finding implies that women benefit more from their spouses' network position than do men by using their husbands' work contacts to extend their own ties. On the other hand, Aldrich (1989) suggests that the pattern may indicate that women are more supportive of their husbands' networks than vice versa. Contacts that women make through their husbands may be less useful to women in work-related spheres, and supportive only of their roles as wives.

In a study of recent job changers in four white-collar occupations, Campbell (1988) reinforced the view that women are less tied to work peers and more affected by life course factors and geographic mobility than men. She found that women interact with people in fewer occupations than men; in particular, their networks have a "floor" that eliminates lower status occupations. Women's occupational networks are negatively affected by their having children under 6 years of age and by changing jobs in response to their spouses' mobility. When the women in Campbell's study moved with their husbands, their networks reached fewer high-status and fewer low-status occupations.

3.1.3. Organizations and the Interactions Embedded in Them. McPherson and Smith-Lovin (1982) argued that voluntary group activities create an opportunity structure for social interaction and tie formation. Earlier research has shown that members who become acquainted through organizational activities influence one another's behavior (Whiting, 1980) and provide information about matters outside their immediate environments (Jones & Crawford, 1980).

Women belong to fewer organizations than men (Booth, 1972). Perhaps more importantly, however, they belong to much smaller groups and to groups that are organized around social and religious activities rather than work-related activities (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1982), The peer interactions created by voluntary organization memberships are, if anything, more gender segregated than the world of work. Nearly one half of the organizations in a study of 10 communitics were exclusively female, while one fifth

were all male (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1986). From the point of view of the individual, the typical female membership in a voluntary organization generates face-to-face interaction with about 29 other members, fewer than four of whom are men. Male memberships, on the other hand, produce contact with over 37 other members (because their organizations are larger), eight of whom are women. Men's contacts are both more numerous and more heterogeneous. Business-related and political groups (where men are likely to occupy higher status positions than women) are more likely to be gender integrated than social, child-centered, or religious groups. Far from integrating men and women, interactions within the voluntary sector tend to lower the diversity of contacts (Marsden, 1992; McPherson & Smith-Lovin; 1987). McPherson and Smith-Lovin (1987) show that choice of friends within the groups is a relatively unimportant factor; it is the opportunity structure created by the groups' composition that leads to most gender segregation.

3.1.4. NETWORKS WITHIN WORK ORGANIZATIONS. Although not as segregated as voluntary organizations, work settings also create an opportunity structure for interaction that differentiates men and women. Women and men historically have worked in different occupations; sex segregation is even stronger at the firm level where workers actually interact (Baron & Bielby, 1984). Women are found in positions with shorter career ladders, less authority, and less discretionary power (Kanter, 1977; Miller, 1975; South, Bonjean, Corder, & Markham, 1982). While they may interact with men in other occupations (e.g., nurses with doctors or with orderlies, secretaries with managers or with janitors), cross-sex contacts are unlikely to be peer, status-equal interactions. In addition to these gender differences in the interaction opportunities created by formal position, women are usually less central in informal communication, advice, friendship, and influence networks at work (Ibarra, 1989, 1990; Lincoln & Miller, 1979; Miller, Labovitz, & Fry, 1975). This finding is understandable since women are underrepresented at upper ranks in businesses, and rank is correlated with centrality in informal interaction. There is substantial evidence, however, that even controlling for rank, women are less well connected in the informal structure.

Women in high ranks are more likely to be in a distinct minority and their token position puts them under special interactional pressures (Kanter, 1977). Brass (1985) argued that, if high-status women are usually gender minorities, they may be less central in informal networks simply because they are different. In fact, Brass (1985) found that men and women were equally central in informal networks in an organization where women were fairly equally represented. These informal networks were quite gender segregated, however, so that the women were central in networks of other women.

Ibarra and Smith-Lovin (1997) pointed out the importance of these gender interaction patterns for role modeling and identity maintenance. Women are unlikely to have good models of how people like them cope with work challenges, especially at levels above their own. They have to reach outside their own work groups to find homophilous contacts with other women, while mentor relationships with higher status co-workers are likely to be opposite sex. Women are less likely than men to have multiplex, close ties with same-sex co-workers or to have gender homophilous relationships with successful role models. All of these findings support the general image developed by Kanter (1977) and Miller (1986) that women and men find very different interactional environments within work organizations, even when they have the same rank or title.

To summarize, we find that at all life stages women and men are most likely to have

status-equal, peer interactions with same-sex others. Cross-sex interactions are most likely to be embedded in formal, institutional role relationships (such as kinship or work relationships), which are often also status differentiated. Furthermore, women are more likely to occupy the low-status position in these interactions. With this understanding of women's and men's networks in hand, we turn to behavior within interactions and within friendship ties.

3.2. Bales' Task and Socioemotional Behavior

Some of the earliest systematic studies of gender and interaction developed from Bales' effort to analyze group dynamics in terms of an instrumental task dimension, consisting of behaviors directed toward achieving group goals, and a socioemotional dimension, composed of behaviors concerned with solidary relations among the actors (Parsons & Bales, 1955; Strodtbeck & Mann, 1956). Perhaps because of this, coding interaction according to Bales' (1950, 1970) interaction process analysis (IPA) continues to be a common way to examine gender differences in behavior. Each speech act is coded in terms of who said it, to whom it was directed, and whether it was task oriented (task suggestions, information, opinions, and questions asking for these) or socioemotionally oriented (agreeing/disagreeing, friendly/unfriendly, jokes or dramatizes).

While a usefully broad coding scheme, IPA has two problematic characteristics that should be kept in mind in interpreting gender differences based on it. First, acts are classified as socioemotional if they contain any socioemotional elements. Thus if a woman (or man) accompanies a task suggestion with a smile and laugh, that will be coded as a socioemotional, not a task act. Second, results are represented in terms of the proportion of a person's acts that are task or socioemotionally oriented which can be misleading. If a person speaks up only twice, but each time with a task suggestion, his or her behavior will be classified as 100% task oriented. Another, who speaks up ten times, six times with a task idea and four times to agree, disagree, or joke, will be classified as only 60% task oriented, despite having made three times the task contributions of the first person.

IPA studies of task-oriented discussion groups generally show men to have slightly (6% to 9%) higher percentages of task behavior and women to have somewhat (5% to 8%) higher proportions of socioemotional behavior and that these differences are about 3% larger between men and women in same-sex groups than between men and women in mixed-sex groups (Anderson & Blanchard, 1982; Carli, 1989, 1991; Piliavin & Martin, 1978). These findings are often cited in support of basic gender differences in interactional style, such as those predicted by the two-cultures approach. However, as several have pointed out, it is misleading to interpret them this way (Aries, 1996; Carli, 1991; Wheelan & Verdi, 1992; Wood & Rhodes, 1992). The problem is that studies examining total numbers of task behaviors, instead of relative proportions, find no differences between men and women in same sex groups (Johnson et al., 1996; Wagner & Berger, 1997), contrary to the two-cultures prediction. In these task-oriented settings, women as well as men are mostly task oriented rather than socioemotional in behavior. When Carli (1989) appointed women to the role of persuading others, their percentage of IPA behaviors resembled men's, suggesting that their interactional styles are situationally variable.

Given that IPA codes an act as socioemotional if it contains *any* socioemotional element, it seems likely that the pattern of gender differences found in IPA studies is due to women's greater display of socioemotional cues rather than their lesser propensity to

engage in task behaviors (Carli, 1990; Carli et al., 1995: Dovidio et al., 1988; Hall, 1984; Wood & Rhodes, 1992). Johnson et al. (1996) found no gender differences in task behaviors in same-sex groups but some differences in expressions of social agreement versus counterarguing. Carli (1990) reports greater gender differences in mixed-sex than same-sex groups for task-oriented aspects of language but larger gender differences in same than mixed-sex groups for verbal reinforcers and intensifiers (socioemotional behaviors). Gender stereotypic expectations for greater communality and efforts to overcome the legitimacy problems created by their lower gender status (when it is salient) are among the explanations offered for women's higher rates of socioemotional behavior in mixed-sex task groups. Socioemotional behavior has been neither theorized nor studied with the care that task behavior has. We need a better understanding of the way it is affected by situational context.

3.3. Speech and Gesture Behavior in Interaction

While work within the Bales paradigm continued, a new tradition of conversational analysis began exploring the structures of women's and men's speech. In summarizing this literature, we rely heavily on two excellent reviews, by James and Clarke (1988) and by Aries (1996).

The conversational analysis literature draws heavily on the "two-cultures" perspective, taking as its point of departure an assumption that, because of their socialization in sex-separate peer groups, females and males come to have different conversational goals and styles. Much of this literature also has incorporated assumptions about the higher status and power of males relative to females, using ideas from the expectation states and doing gender perspectives.

3.3.1. SUPPORTIVE SPEECH AND BACKCHANNELING. Whether in task groups or in everyday conversation, women seem to encourage communication and disclosure on the part of others. Conversational analysts have concentrated on variables that constitute verbal stroking of conversation partners. They found that women are more likely than men to express agreement or ask for another's opinion (Eakins & Eakins, 1978; see also the Bales literature reviewed previously), to acknowledge points made by the other speaker at the beginning of a turn, to provide backchannel support for other speakers by inserting small injections such as "mm-hum" to pause to give another the floor, and to use other conversational devices that serve to draw out one's conversational partner (McLaughlin et al., 1981). Men are more likely to use a delayed minimal response after an interaction partner ends an utterance (Zimmerman & West, 1975), which is often interpreted as lack of support for the speaker. Other studies showed that cooperative conversations have more backchannels and fewer minimal responses than competitive ones, confirming researchers' assumptions about the functions of these speech forms. They also found that gender interacted with dominance and power: men showed more backchanneling when they were in a subordinate position, while women's supportive speech patterns were less affected by their power position (Aries, 1996, pp. 123–126).

Other scholars working in this sociolinguistic tradition have highlighted the inequality implied by the patterns of men's and women's speech styles. They emphasized that women's talk is not only supportive of others, but also unassertive. Robin Lakoff

(1975), for example, reported that the communication style of women was characterized by tentative, unsure, and deferential patterns of speech, while men's conversational style was stronger and more direct. Researchers investigating these gender differences in linguistic features found that women are more likely to use questions (especially tag questions) (Brouwer, Gerritsern, & De Haan, 1979; Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Eakins & Eakins, 1978; McMillan, Clifton, McGrath, & Gale, 1977), hedges, qualifiers, disclaimers, and other linguistic forms conveying uncertainty (Bradley, 1981; Carli, 1990; Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Eakins & Eakins, 1978). Women also more frequently use hypercorrect grammar, including "superpolite" forms, lengthened requests, and modal constructions (Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Lakoff, 1975; McMillan et al., 1977). Tannen (1990) argued that such gendered conversational patterns represent fundamental understandings about social interaction that may evoke emotional responses in spite of our intellectual awareness of different conversational codes. Men may respond to women's supportive conversational styles by talking more and dominating the floor; women may respond to men's lack of that style by lower participation. (The literature on participation task-oriented discussions is reviewed in the section on influence. Time talking in personal conversations has not been studied as extensively; the fact that men talk more in these non-task conversations is implied, however, in the studies of topic control, also reviewed later.)

3.3.2. Interruptions: Frequency and Functions. A classic paper on turn-taking in conversation by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) led Zimmerman and West (1975) to concentrate on gender differences in interruptions, places where the smooth transfer of speakers was disrupted by an apparent violation of turn-taking norms. Zimmerman and West (1975) found few interruptions in same-sex conversations, but a high proportion of men interrupting women in mixed-sex conversations, leading them to make strong statements about the male dominance of male-female conversation. Other conversational analytic studies using small numbers of relatively short conversations often confirmed the Zimmerman and West finding, but later studies with larger samples of speech and more conversations have found few gender effects (see Aries, 1996, pp. 79-101 and James & Clark, 1988 for reviews of specific studies). These findings led researchers to reexamine the functions of interruptions and the conditions under which they occur.

Several patterns emerge from the large body of literature that has developed. First, all simultaneous speech is not interruption and not all interruptions are negative. Backchannels, as discussed above, represent support for, rather than intrusion into another person's speech. Overlaps at the end of a turn show weaker patterns than breaks into the middle of another speaker's utterance and probably represent timing errors rather than a true attempt to take the floor. Even structural interruptions (i.e., speech that intrudes into another's utterance and prevents him or her from completing it) need not always be unsupportive. Many interruptions express agreement, signal a need for more information or otherwise express active listenership (Kennedy & Camden, 1983; Murray, 1985; Sayers & Sherblom, 1987; Smith-Lovin & Brody, 1989; Tannen, 1983). All-female groups and supportive, lively conversations can sometimes show high levels of interruption without being negative.

Second, power or dominance typically leads to higher rates of interruptions, especially successful, negative intrusions into another's speech (Drass, 1986; Kollock, Blumstein, & Schwartz; Roger & Nesshoever, 1987; Roger & Schumaker, 1983). Such interruptions are more common in conflictual, task-oriented talk and seem to be less

common in personal, intimate conversations (Trimboli & Walker, 1984). To the extent that men have positions of higher status and power in society, power/dominance effects are often interpreted as gender effects. Furthermore, there seems to be a tendency for men to respond more strongly to power position than women; here, as in the backchanneling research, dominance does not seem to be as closely related to interruption among women (Aries, 1982).

Third, if there is a gender (as opposed to status/power) effect in interruptions research, it does not seem to be in the frequency with which men and women interrupt, but rather in the gender of the person interrupted. Smith-Lovin and Brody (1989) found that men discriminated in their interruptions, interrupting women more often than other men, while women interrupted men and women at the same rate. Women were also more likely to yield the floor to an interrupter than men (see also Smith-Lovin & Robinson, 1992; but note that Kennedy and Camden found no gender differences in yielding). Jose, Crosby, and Wong-McCarthy (1980) found that women were more likely to be interrupted than men in cooperative mixed-sex conversations. In general, men seem to respond more to gender of the speaker with whom they are speaking than do women.

3.3.3. Topic Transitions in Conversations. Several researchers have shifted their attention from interruptions to control of conversational topic. Fishman (1978, 1983) coded successful and unsuccessful topic changes among three heterosexual couples over 12.5 hours of talk. She discovered that men and women raised similar numbers of topics, but that men's topics succeeded 96% of the time, while women's succeeded only 36% of the time. West and Garcia (1988) and Ainsworth-Vaughn (1992) differentiated between collaborative and unilateral/sudden topic shifts, and found that women were particularly disadvantaged in losing topics through sudden or unilateral topic changes. However, here as in other work on interruptions, there are indications that studies using larger samples of speech and more systematic, blind coding methods will find fewer gender effects. Okamoto and Smith-Lovin (1996) found no gender effects on the rate of topic introduction or loss, but a complex pattern of status and group composition effects.

3.3.4. Gestures and Gaze. In addition to speech structures, several researchers have looked at gestures and other nonverbal patterns in interaction. Dovidio et al. (1988), Balkwell and Berger (1996), and others have found that dominance displays such as gazing while talking, gazing while listening, and frequency of gesturing are structured by sex category in a way that indicates a gender status effect. Other gestures such as chin thrusts, smiling, and laughing seem to be gendered behaviors that appear across a variety of situations, even those that are not linked to status.

To summarize, it appears that many of the speech patterns that researchers thought were gendered through cultural or socialization processes are actually indicators of status or power positions within conversations. Since men are usually higher status than women in cross-sex interactions, these status/power structures have often been labeled as gender effects. Some patterns, such as backchanneling, smiling, and laughing, however, seem to be part of a consistent female interaction pattern that occurs across conversations with differing status structures and sex compositions. It also appears that men are somewhat more sensitive to their status/power position and to the gender composition of their conversation than are women, acting more supportive of other speakers when they are in a low-status position but in a more dominant manner when they are in a high-status position or interacting with a woman.

3.4. Influence, Leadership, and Dominance

Whether your thoughts and opinions are taken seriously by those with whom you interact, whether you are influential in the decisions of groups to which you belong, whether you are perceived or accepted as a leader in those groups, and how you act and are reacted to in positions of authority are important parts of the way power and inequality in society are enacted and sustained across a wide range of social contexts, from work organizations to the home. Given the high rate of interaction between men and women, influence and inequality in the interactional arena is likely to be a central site for the production and maintenance of gender difference and inequality. Not surprisingly, then, a great deal of research on gender and interaction has focused on influence, leadership, and dominance. In examining this literature, it is important to distinguish between emergent leadership, in which people form their own influence hierarchy (e.g., in a committee or among co-workers), and formal leadership, in which people have been assigned to formally hierarchical roles in an organization (e.g., manager and employee).

3.4.1. Influence and Emergent Leadership. Emergent leadership has been studied in terms of a complex of behaviors that tend to be highly correlated. Most central are influence over group decisions and opinions and being perceived as a leader. These behaviors are usually also associated with how much a person participates in the interaction.

Studies clearly show that, other things equal, men in mixed-sex groups talk more (Dovido et al., 1988; James & Drakich, 1993), are more influential (Lockheed, 1985; Wagner et al., 1986; Pugh & Wahrman, 1983), and are more likely to be selected as leader than are women (Fleischer & Chertkoff, 1986; Nyquist & Spence, 1986; Wentworth & Anderson, 1984). In contrast, in same-sex groups there are no differences between men and women in rates of participation and task contributions (Carli, 1991; Johnson et al., 1996; Wagner & Berger, 1997) or in willingness to accept influence from others (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983).

In a meta-analysis of 58 studies of leadership emergence in mixed-sex interaction (measured by participation or ratings of leadership, but not influence), Eagly and Karau (1991) found that men were more likely to emerge as leaders when task leadership was assessed (effect size d=.41) and when general or unspecified leadership was measured (d=.32 and .29). These are considered moderate effect sizes. In the small percentage of studies that assessed leadership in maintaining solidary relationships, women were more likely to emerge as social leaders than men (d=-.18, a small effect size). Eagly and Karau interpret these results as supporting the predictions of both social role theory and expectation states theory.

As both these theories also predict, Eagly and Karau (1991) found that the gender typing of the task affected leadership emergence, as did the length of time participants interacted. Men are more likely to emerge as leader on masculine tasks (d=.79, a large effect size) than neutral (d=.58) or feminine tasks d=.26). The longer the period of interaction, the smaller the effect sizes favoring men. Several studies have found that gender differences in leadership emergence disappear or favor women in mixed-sex groups when the h task shifts to one that culturally favors the interests, knowledge, and expected competence of women (Dovidio et al., 1988; Wentworth & Anderson, 1984: Yamada, Tjosvold & Draguns, 1983).

What causes gender differences in leadership emergence? Among people who are

otherwise equals, the mere knowledge of another's sex, independent of the other's behavior, has been shown to affect willingness to accept influence from that person, demonstrating the impact of gender status beliefs. Men increase their resistance to the other's influence when that other is a woman rather than another man. Women decrease their resistance to influence when the other is a man rather than a woman (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983).

However, the knowledge of the other's sex in goal-oriented interaction usually also affects the verbal and nonverbal confidence and assertiveness of people's behavior, which in turn affects how competent and knowledgeable they appear in the setting, as expectation states theory predicts. Carli (1990), for instance, found that when men and women interacted with a same-sex other, there were no gender differences in their use of hedges, disclaimers, and other types of tentative language. When men and women interacted with an opposite sex other, however, women used significantly more tentative language than did men. In a review of eye contact research, Ellyson, Dovidio, and Brown (1992) concluded that men show more visual dominance (which is associated with perceived competence and influence in interaction) than women in mixed-sex interaction, other factors equal. In same-sex interaction, however, there are few gender differences in visual dominance, with both men and women displaying similarly higher visual dominance when in a high- rather than low-status position in the interaction.

Wood and Karten (1986) showed that assumptions about competence mediate men's tendency to speak more and engage in more active task behaviors in mixed-sex discussion groups, as expectation states theory argues. Absent more specific information, both men and women assumed that the men were more competent, reflecting gender status beliefs. When men and women were assigned similar scores on a pretest of task aptitude, however, there were no gender differences in participation or task behavior. Instead, high scorers spoke more and were more task active than low scorers, regardless of sex. Thus assertive task behavior not only gives the impression of competence in interaction, but it is itself shaped by prior assumptions about who is more competent in the situation, assumptions that are affected by cultural beliefs about men and women that are salient in mixed-sex settings.

Studies have shown that counteracting competence information can moderate or reverse gender differences in influence in mixed-sex interaction (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983; Wagner, et al., 1986). The effect of cultural assumptions that men are more competent than women does not just go away, however, it seems to combine with the additional competence information in the situation. Thus women must be shown to be more competent than men to be equally influential with them (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983) and a given performance is seen as more indicative of ability in men than women (Foschi, 1996).

These studies of influence and emergent leadership demonstrate the impact of hegemonic cultural stereotypes that paint men as diffusely more competent, status worthy, and agentic than women. The participants in these studies are virtually all white and largely middle class, so it is not surprising that these are the gender beliefs that would affect their behavior. How does gender affect emergent leadership for social groups who may have slightly different stereotypic beliefs about men and women? There are few systematic studies, but a recent one comparing mixed-sex interaction among African-American and white adolescents suggests some general principles.

Filardo (1996) reasons that since African-American women have historically engaged in paid work as well as homemaker roles in greater numbers than white women, gender stereotypes should be less differentiated among African-Americans than among

whites. On this basis, Filardo predicts, following social role and expectation states theory, that there will be greater gender equality of participation and influence in African-American mixed-sex interaction than in such interaction among whites, other factors equal. She matched African-American and white eighth graders on socioeconomic status and academic achievement and assigned them to same race groups of two boys and two girls. Among whites, Filardo observed a typical pattern of boys talking more and engaging in more influence attempts than girls while girls offered more expressions of agreement with others' comments. In African-American adolescent groups, however, there were no gender differences in participation or expressions of agreement, and differences in influence attempts were weaker. These racial differences in interactional equality resulted from white girls' lesser participation and more tentative style and African-American girls' more active, assertive behavior rather than from differences in the boys' behavior. Filardo concludes that white and African-American adolescents may bring to interaction differing cultural expectations about the competence of males and females and their respective rights to be assertive and influential.

3.4.2. Dominance and Emergent Leadership. In addition to cultural stereotypes, a common assumption is that gender differences in emergent leadership may be due to men having personality traits of higher dominance or interest in control over others. Given men's higher status and more authoritative roles in society, one might argue that men are more likely than women to acquire a personality trait of dominance. A series of studies has demonstrated, however, that differences in dispositional dominance do not account for men's leadership emergence in mixed-sex interaction (Davis & Gilbert, 1989; Fleischer & Chertoff, 1986; Megargee, 1969; Nyquist & Spence, 1986). In same-sex interaction, both women and men who are high in dominance are more likely to emerge as leaders than low-dominance individuals. However, in mixed-sex interaction, men are usually chosen as leaders even when they are low in dominance and the women are high. High-dominance women often suggested to their low-dominance partner that he take the lead, showing the impact of cultural beliefs about who is a more legitimate or competent candidate for leadership. Only in the most recent of these studies (Davis & Gilbert, 1989), in which subjects had a period of interaction to get to know one another before turning to the task, did high-dominance women assume leadership over low-dominance men. They still deferred to high-dominance men, however.

Even if individual dominance differences do not determine leadership in mixed-sex contexts, some argue that they do result in men showing more concern than women for hierarchy and power relations in same-sex interaction (see Aries, 1996, pp. 55–60 for a review). Others argue that "doing masculinity" in our culture is doing power, especially with other men, although exactly how one does power/masculinity varies by race and class (Connell, 1995; Messner, 1992). The evidence that men put greater emphasis than women on displaying dominance in same-sex interaction is provocative but based on small samples or case studies. More systematic studies would be useful.

In this light, it is important to note that in task-oriented interaction the display of dominance behavior, defined as behavior that conveys control through threat (e.g., commands, a dismissive or aggressive tone, intrusive gestures) is not a good way to become influential. It is no more successful in this regard than is submissive behavior, whether the participants are all male, all female, or of both sexes (Carli et al., 1995; Ridgeway & Diekema, 1989).

3.4.3. LEGITIMACY, GENDER, AND INFLUENCE. For men in same-sex interaction and for women in same-sex interaction, a confident, active, task-oriented style that conveys competence gains influence and leadership. Yet this same style can elicit resistance when a woman uses it to gain influence over men in mixed-sex task-oriented interaction (Carli, 1990; Carli et al., 1995; Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1977; Ridgeway, 1982). Carli et al. (1995) found that a woman with a confident, assertive nonverbal style was seen as less likeable and was less influential with men than with women or than a man with that style was with either men or women. Carli (1990) also found that women who used tentative language were actually more influential with a male partner than were women who spoke more assertively. These researchers argue, following expectation states theory, that a display of assertive, high-status behavior by women is perceived by men in the situation as illegitimate unless the women also signal that they have no desire to usurp male status. Here we see the prescriptive consequences of gender status beliefs. When women accompany their confident, active bids for influence among men with statements of their cooperative intent or a friendly nonverbal style they can overcome male resistance and become highly influential (Carli et al., 1995; Ridgeway, 1982). Such added "niceness" is not required of men to be influential with either men or women (although it does not detract from influence) or of women to be influential with women.

3.4.4. FORMAL OR ESTABLISHED LEADERSHIP. The evidence clearly indicates that when men or women are placed in positions of similar formal authority, there are very few differences in the way they interact with either same or opposite sex subordinates (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Johnson 1994). In a meta-analysis of 162 studies, Eagly and Johnson (1990) found no differences in how task-oriented male and female leaders are and very slight differences in how interpersonally oriented they are (effect size d=.04). The only appreciable gender difference was a small tendency (d=.22) for women leaders to be more democratic and participatory than men leaders. A subsequent meta-analysis of the evaluation of men and women leaders showed only a very slight overall tendency for women leaders to be evaluated less favorably (d=.05) but a moderate tendency (d=.30) for women leaders to be evaluated unfavorably when using a directive, autocratic style compared to men using this style (Eagly et al., 1992). This suggests again that the prescriptive aspects of gender stereotypes create legitimacy problems for women leaders who try to wield power in a directive manner. Eagly et al. (1992) suggest that an effort to avoid such negative reactions encourages women leaders to be somewhat more democratic in leadership style.

3.4.5. CONCLUSIONS. Men are more likely to be influential and emerge as leaders in mixed-sex interaction (at least among whites), especially when the task is a stereotypically masculine one. When the task is stereotypically feminine men's advantage declines and may be reversed with women emerging as leaders. Supporting expectation states and social role theories, these gender differences appear to be caused by cultural stereotypes that ascribe greater general competence, status worthiness, and agency to men than to women rather than basic gender differences in dominance or interaction style. Among subgroups who hold less differentiated gender stereotypes, there is greater gender equality in mixed-sex task-oriented interaction. When gender stereotypes are not salient, as in same-sex interaction in which the task is not gender typed, men and women are similar in participation and openness to influence. In general, both men and women gain influence and emerge as leaders with a confident, active style that conveys competence without being domineering. There is a revealing exception, however. To be highly influential

with men, women must combine this competent, confident style with signals of friendliness and cooperation that assuage the apparent status illegitimacy of their efforts to claim leadership. In positions of established or formal leadership, men and women behave similarly.

3.5. Friendship Patterns

Unlike the family, which is based on cross-sex relationships, or work-oriented interaction, which involves a mix of same-and mixed-sex interaction, friendships in the contemporary United States are primarily same-sex ties. Yet friendship interaction, too, is shaped by and works to maintain cultural stereotypes of who men and women are and how they differ and are unequal. As the gender system and the cultural beliefs associated with it have changed over time, so have the nature of men's and women's friendships (Allen, 1989; Nardi, 1992; O'Connor, 1992).

Like all other gendered relations, friendships are situated within and affected by people's other identities, ties, and social positions. They change over the life course and differ by class and race, creating larger differences within than between genders (Nardi, 1992; O'Connor, 1992). Unfortunately, many detailed studies of interaction in friendships focus on small samples or on restricted populations, such as college students, warranting caution in generalizing from them.

Studies of contemporary same-sex friendships conclude that men's are "side-by-side" in that they focus on shared activities, while women's friendships are "face-to-face" in that they center on talking and sharing feelings (Aries & Johnson, 1983; Caldwell & Peplau, 1982; Oliker, 1989; Sherrod, 1987; Swain, 1989; Williams, 1985; Wright, 1982). Researchers often comment on the way these differences enact currently dominant gender beliefs that cast intimacy and feeling as feminine while masculinity requires power, self-sufficiency, and action. Oliker (1989) describes how women "best friends" conduct their relationships through talk and disclosure of feelings. Messner (1992) describes how men form friendship bonds through sports that unite them in displaying and validating their performances of culturally valued images of masculinity while simultaneously supporting their superiority over women and less culturally "ideal" men. This process manages uneasiness over feelings of closeness that could be seen as threats to masculinity.

Several researchers, however, caution against exaggerating the differences between the way men and women interact in same-sex friendships, noting that the differences are often smaller than assumed (O'Connor, 1992; Walker, 1994; Wright, 1988). Self-disclosure is often seen as a central difference between men's and women's friendships. Yet Dindia and Allen (1992), in a meta-analysis of more than 200 studies, found that overall gender differences in self-disclosure are small (effect size d=.18). Gender differences in self disclosure in same-sex interaction, however, are of moderate size (d=.31) while they are quite small in mixed-sex relations (d=.08). The situational variability of self-disclosure suggests that it is not a product of stable personality differences between men and women but a reaction to the social context of interaction. Both men and women disclose more to women.

O'Connor (1992) points out that women's lesser power and control over resources compared to men may be partly responsible for differences in their friendships. Without money and control over one's time, friendship cannot be conducted by going out and doing things together. Such friends are left with conversation, often conducted in a home environment that encourages a focus on more personal topics. Supporting this argument,

Walker (1994) reports that the working-class men she interviewed, who, also lacking resources, socialized with friends in their homes, tended primarily to talk with their friends, often discussing personal relationships. On the other hand, middle-class women who worked in male-dominated professions tended to report a lack of intimacy in their friendships similar to that often described in men's friendships.

Walker (1994) argues that conceptions of women's friendships as shared feelings and men's friendships as shared activities are more accurately viewed as gender ideologies than as observable differences in actual behavior. Most studies ask people global questions about what friendship is or what men's and women's friendship are like (e.g., Caldwell & Peplau, 1982). They also tend to focus on best friends (Oliker, 1989). Walker asked people to name a set of specific friends and describe what they did with each. She found that in response to global questions about friendship, her respondents gave gender-stereotypic answers. But when asked for details about specific relationships, gender differences were few. For instance, a man who listed shared sports events as the basis of a given friendship described most interaction with his friend as telephone discussions of personal problems and sports outings as only occasional events. A woman who described talk and shared feelings as central said that she and her friend regularly went to aerobics classes together and that was their occasion to confide. Following a "doing gender" approach, Walker argues that people interpret their behavior in friendships to conform to gender stereotypes when that behavior is in fact considerably more diverse and less gender differentiated. It would be useful to examine the argument Walker develops from in-depth interviews with data from larger and more representative samples.

4. CONCLUSION

Interactional events are an important link in the intricate web of social forces that constitutes the gender system. Given the necessarily high rate of interaction between men and women, gender difference and inequality would be impossible to maintain if interaction were not organized to reinforce it. Several findings from the literature on gender and interaction show how this organization occurs.

Sex/gender seems to be a fundamental dimension around which interaction is organized in that people automatically sex categorize others to render them as culturally meaningful interactants. Yet while this makes sex/gender stubbornly available as a basis of differentiation in interaction, the direction and size of differences in women's and men's behavior in interaction vary dramatically by situational context.

No one theory yet provides a complete account of these complex effects. Nonetheless, it is clear that widely shared societal stereotypes of (or cultural meanings associated with) men and women, which include gender status beliefs, play a central role in shaping behavior in interaction. There is a culturally hegemonic version of societal gender beliefs, but when people hold subcultural variations on these beliefs, their behavior in interaction is also different.

Societal gender beliefs appear to shape interactional behavior in at least two potentially independent ways. They act as an identity standard that the individual seeks to maintain and they shape others' expectations (and the individual's anticipation of what others expect) about the individual's comparative competence, status worthiness, and agentic or communal qualities in a manner that has self-fulfilling effects on behavior. The impact of societal gender beliefs on behavior through either process depends on the

salience of gender in the situation compared to other social factors and concerns. Gender tends to be most salient and, thus, to produce the most differentiation in men's and women's behavior in mixed-sex contexts or same-sex contexts that are culturally typed in gendered terms, but it can be triggered by events and made salient in almost any situation. When salient, the unusually prescriptive aspect of gender stereotypes can result in actors being called to account by others for acting in gender-appropriate ways.

We may think of these processes as true interactional gender processes. Evidence indicates that they are sufficient in themselves to produce many common forms of gender difference and inequality. They advantage men in influence, leadership, and the appearance of competence in goal-oriented, mixed-sex interaction: they shape same-sex friendships in stereotypical ways; and so on. But these interactional gender processes usually take place within the context of institutional and organizational arrangements that further reinforce and shape them. In that sense, the maintenance of gender difference and inequality in interaction is overdetermined.

The evidence clearly indicates that, although women and men in the United States interact frequently, it is almost never as equals and, in most cases, it is men who enjoy the status/power advantage. This is a joint result of two processes. First, women's and men's networks, which are embedded in the social structures of work and voluntary organizations, usually bring men and women together on formally unequal terms. Second, interactional gender status and identity processes create difference and inequality among those men and women who are formal equals in work groups, family, and elsewhere.

This heavily structured pattern of interaction between men and women creates the daily appearance of men as essentially more agentic and women as essentially more communal in nature. Yet a closer look at the research reveals what a social construction this is. Women and men have diverse repertoires of interactional behavior and are highly reactive to situational constraints. Not only are the actual behavioral differences between men and women relatively modest, even in gender-salient situations, but when men and women are cast in roles with similar constraints, whether it be men who mother or women who manage, they behave in remarkably similar ways.

We have a good, if imperfect, understanding of the way certain differences in interactional style, often attributed to essential gender differences, in fact result from the organization of power and status in interactions. As a result of these processes, men and women differ in task-oriented, agentic behavior primarily in mixed-sex interactions rather than in same-sex ones. Revealingly, the organization of the communal, socioemotional aspect of interaction, culturally linked with women, is less well theorized and studied. The evidence available, however, suggests that both men and women act more communally when in a lower-status position. However, women do appear to engage in a somewhat more supportive, warmer speech style in same as well as mixed-sex contexts, suggesting that engaging or failing to engage in such a style is also part of the process of marking gender identity in interaction rather than just the enactment of inequality. Perhaps the clearest lesson from the study of gender and interaction, however, is that difference and inequality co-determine each other in the gender system.

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