The “woman question” is not just one among many raised by injustice, subordination, and differentiation. It is basic. The denigration and segregation of women is a major mechanism in reinforcing male bonds, protecting the institutions that favor them, and providing the basic work required for societies to function. To ignore this great social divide is to ignore a missing link in social analysis.

I will not illustrate my thesis about the persistence of the worldwide subordination of the female sex with pictures, graphs, or charts. Instead I call on readers’ imaginations to picture some of the phenomena that illustrate my thesis. Imagine most women’s lifetimes of everyday drudgery in households and factories; of struggles for survival without access to decent jobs. Imagine the horror of mass rapes by armed men in ethnic conflicts, and of rapes that occur inside the home by men who regard sexual access as their right. Imagine also women’s isolation and confinement behind walls and veils in many societies. Some examples are harder to imagine—for example, the 100 million women missing in the world, first brought to our attention by the economist Amartya Sen (1990), who alerted us to the bizarre sex ratios in South Asia, West Asia, and China. He pointed to the abandonment and systematic undernourishment of girls and women and to the poor medical care they receive in comparison to males. International human rights groups have alerted us to the selective destruction of female fetuses. It is estimated that in China and India alone, 10,000,000 females were aborted between 1978 and 1998 (Rao 2006). Also hidden
are the child brides who live as servants in alien environments and who, should their husbands die, are abandoned to live in poverty and isolation. And there are the millions of girls and women lured or forced into sex work. In the Western world, only the occasional newspaper article brings to view the fact that African women face a 1 in 20 chance of dying during pregnancy (half a million die each year). The persistent segregation of the workplace, in even the most sophisticated societies, in which girls and women labor in sex-labeled jobs that are tedious, mind-numbing, and highly supervised, is out of view. Unseen too are the countless beatings, slights, and defaminations women and girls endure from men, including intimates, every day all over the world.

Insistence and Persistence on “Natural Differences”

These patterns are largely explained in the world as consequences stemming from natural causes or God’s will. Here, I limit analysis mainly to the view of natural causation as the master narrative—the narrative that attributes role division of the sexes to biology. Some believe that early socialization cements the distinction. It is clear that strong religious beliefs in the natural subordination of women determine the role women must play in societies.

Biological explanation is the master narrative holding that men and women are naturally different and have different intelligences, physical abilities, and emotional traits. This view asserts that men are naturally suited to dominance and women are naturally submissive. The narrative holds that women’s different intellect or emotional makeup is inconsistent with the capacity to work at prestigious jobs, be effective scholars, and lead others. Popularized accounts of gender difference have generated large followings.

But the set of assumptions about basic differences are discredited by a body of reliable research. Although there seems to be an industry of scholarship identifying sex differences, it is important to note that scholarship showing only tiny or fluctuating differences, or none at all, is rarely picked up by the popular press. Most media reports (e.g., Brooks 2006, Tierney 2006) invariably focus on sex differences, following the lead of many journals that report tiny differences in distributions of males and females as significant findings (Epstein 1991, 1999). Further, the media rarely reports the fact that a good proportion of the studies showing any differences are based on small numbers of college students persuaded to engage in experiments conducted in college laboratories and not in real world situations. Or, in the case of studies indicating the hormonal relationship between men’s aggression and women’s presumed lack of it, a number of studies are based on the behavior of laboratory animals. Other studies compare test scores of students in college, rarely reporting variables such as the class, race, and ethnicity of the population being studied. Even in these settings, the systematic research of social scientists has proved that males and females show almost no difference or shifting minor differences in measures of cognitive abilities (Hyde 2005) and emotions. . . . We can conclude that under conditions of equality, girls and women perform and achieve at test levels that are the same as or similar to male—and, in many cases, they perform better.

The American Psychological Association (APA) has reported officially that males and females are more alike than different when tested on most psychological variables. The APA’s finding is based on Janet Hyde’s 2005 analysis of 46 meta-analyses conducted recently in the United States. They conclude that gender roles and social context lead to the few differences. Further, they report flat sex differences, though believed to be immutable, fluctuate with age and location. Women manifest similar aggressive feelings although their expression of them is obliged to take different forms (Prodi, Macaulay, and Thome 1977). A 2006 report from the National Academy of Sciences found that after an exhaustive review of the scientific literature, including studies of brain structure and function, it could find no evidence of any significant biological factors causing the underrepresentation of women in science and mathematics. Sociologists too have found women’s aspirations are linked to their opportunities (Kaufman and Richardson 1982). I observe that like men, women want love, work, and recognition. So, given similar traits, do women prefer dead-end and limited opportunity jobs; do they wish to work without pay in the home or to be always subject to the authority of men? In the past, some economists thought so. The Nobel Laureate Gary Becker (1983) proposed that women make rational choices to work in the home to free their husbands for paid labor. A number of other scholars follow the rational-choice model to explain women’s poorer position in the labor force. Not only has the model proven faulty (England 1989, 1994), but history has proven such ideas wrong. The truth is that men have prevented the incursions of women into their spheres except when they needed
women’s labor power, such as in wartime, proving that women were indeed a reserve army of labor. As I found in my own research, when windows of opportunity presented themselves, women fought to join the paid labor force at every level, from manual craft work to the elite professions.

Social and economic changes in other parts of the West, and in other parts of the world, provide natural field experiments to confirm this data from the United States. In the West, where women have always been employed in the unpaid, family workforce, a revolution in women’s interest and participation in the paid workplace spiraled after the First World War. In the United States, from 1930 to 1970 the participation of married women ages 35 to 44 in the labor force moved from 30 percent to 46 percent and today it is 77 percent (Goldin 2006). The opening of elite colleges and universities to women students after the 1960s led progressively to their increased participation in employment in the professions and other top jobs. This was the direct result of a concerted effort to use the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to force the opening of these sectors. Ruth Bader Ginsburg and her associates in the Women’s Rights Project of the ACLU fought and won important battles in the Supreme Court and Judge Constance Baker Motley, the first African American woman to become a federal judge, ruled that large law firms had to recruit women on the same basis as men to comply with the equal treatment promised by the Civil Rights Act.

Yet even as the ideology of equality became widespread and brought significant changes, the worldwide state of women remained subordinate to that of men. Stable governments and a new prosperity led to something of a revolution in women’s statuses in the United States and other countries in the West, notably in Canada with its new charter prohibiting discrimination. There was also an increase in women’s employment in the paid labor force in the 15 counties of the European Union, including those countries that traditionally were least likely to provide jobs for women, although the statistics do not reveal the quality of the jobs (Norris 2006). And, of course, women’s movements have been instrumental in making poor conditions visible. In countries of the Middle East, the East, and the Global South, women are beginning to have representation in political spheres, the professions, and commerce, although their percentage remains quite small. Women’s lot rises or falls as a result of regime changes and economic changes and is always at severe risk. But nowhere are substantial numbers of women in political control; nowhere do women have the opportunity to carry out national agendas giving women truly equal rights.

Structural gains, accompanied by cultural gains, have been considerable in many places. Most governments have signed on to commitments to women’s rights, although they are almost meaningless in many regimes that egregiously defy them in practice. And, of course, in many societies women have fewer rights than do men and find themselves worse off than they were a generation ago. . . .

Many women in newly industrializing countries experienced a benefit from employment created by transnational corporations in the 1980s and ’90s. They received income and independence from their families, but they remained in sex-segregated, low-wage work, subject to cutbacks when corporations sought cheaper labor markets. As to their suitability for heavy labor, it is common to see (as I have personally witnessed) women hauling rocks and stones in building sites in India and other places. Throughout the world, where water is a scarce commodity, it is women who carry heavy buckets and vessels of water, usually on foot and over long distances, because this has been designated as a woman’s job and men regard it as a disgrace to help them. Apparently in much of the world, the guiding principle of essentialism labels as women’s jobs those that are not physically easier, necessarily, but rather those that are avoided by men, pay little, and are under the supervision of men. . . .

I first started research on women in the legal profession in the 1960s, when women constituted only 3 percent of practitioners (Epstein [1981] 1993). When I last assessed their achievements (Epstein 2001), women composed about 30 percent of practicing lawyers and about half of all law students. The same striking changes were happening in medicine (they are now almost half of all medical students [Magrane, Lang, and Alexander 2005]), and women were moving into legal and medical specialties once thought to be beyond their interests or aptitudes, such as corporate law and surgery. Yet, even with such advances they face multiple glass ceilings (Epstein et al. 1995). Only small percentages have attained high rank. And it should come as no surprise that men of high rank, the popular media (Belkin 2003), and right-wing commentators (Brooks 2006; Tierney, 2006) insist that it is women’s own choice to limit their aspirations and even to drop out of the labor force. But this has not been women’s pattern. Most educated women have continuous work histories. It is true, however, that many women’s ambitions to reach the very top of their professions are
women to get a higher education, but this is to prepare them for work in segregated conditions where they serve other women.

The sex segregation of labor as measured by sophisticated sociologists and economists does not even acknowledge women's labor outside the wage-earning structure. Women and girls labor behind the walls of their homes, producing goods that provide income for their families, income they have no control over. Thus, millions of girls and women are not even counted in the labor force, although they perform essential work in the economy (Bose, Feldberg, and Sotoloff 1987).\textsuperscript{5}

In addition, females can be regarded as a commodity themselves. They are computed as a means of barter in tribal families that give their girls (often before puberty) to men outside their tribe or clan who want wives to produce children and goods. Men also trade their daughters to men of other tribes as a form of compensation for the killing of a member of another tribe or other reasons.\textsuperscript{9} Harmony is re-equilibrated through the bodies of females.

There is much more to report about the roles and position of women in the labor force worldwide—my life's work—but there are other spheres in which females everywhere are mired in subordinate roles. Chief among them are the family and the social and cultural structures that keep women both segregated and in a state of symbolic and actual "otherness," undermining their autonomy and dignity. Nearly everywhere, women are regarded as "other."\textsuperscript{10}

Mechanisms Creating "Otherness"

To some extent, women are subject to the process of social speciation—a term that Kai Erikson (1996) introduced (modifying the concept of pseudospeciation offered by Erik Erikson) to refer to the fact that humans divide into various groups who regard themselves as "the foremost species" and then feel that others ought to be kept in their place by "conquest or the force of harsh custom" (Erikson 1996:52). Harsh customs and conquest certainly ensure the subordination of girls and women. I shall consider some of these below.

Kin Structures. In many societies brides are required to leave their birth homes and enter as virtual strangers into the homes of their husband's and their husband's kin. Because of the practice of patrilocality, they usually have few or no resources—human or monetary. Marrying very young, they enter these families with the lowest rank and no social
supports. About one in seven girls in the developing world gets married before her 15th birthday according to the Population Council, an international research group (Bearak 2006). Local and international attempts to prevent this practice have been largely unsuccessful.10

In exploring the actual and symbolic segregation of women, I have been inspired by the work of Mounira Charrad in her 2001 prizewinning book States and Women’s Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The work of Val Moghadam (2003) and Roger Friedland (2002) also informs this analysis. Writing of the relative status of women, Charrad points to the iron grip of patrilineal kin groups in North African societies. She notes how Islamic family law has legitimized the extended male-centered patrilineage that serves as the foundation of kin-based solidarities within tribal groups so that state politics and tribal politics converge. This supports the patriarchal power not only of husbands, but also of all male kin over women so that the clan defines its boundaries through a family law that rests on the exploitation of women. Her study shows how Islamic family law (Sharia) “provides a meaningful symbol of national unity in the countries of the Maghreb.

This has changed in Tunisia, but it remains the case for other societies—Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Afghanistan, southeastern Turkey, parts of Iran, and southern Egypt. As Moghadam (2003) points out, the gender dimension of the Afghan conflict is prototypical of other conflicts today. During periods of strife, segregation and subordination of women becomes a sign of cultural identity. We see it clearly in the ideologies of Hamas and Hezbollah, Iran, Chechnya, and other Islamic groups and societies, and in the ideologies of fundamentalist Christian and Jewish groups. Representations of women are deployed during processes of revolution and state building to preserve group boundaries within larger societies with competing ideologies, and when power is being reconstituted, linking women either to modernization and progress or to cultural rejuvenation and religious orthodoxy.

Few social scientists have paid attention to the role of kin structures and their accompanying conceptual structures in the minds of players in national and international politics, but I believe this negligence persists at our peril as we experience conflicts between kin-based collectivities in the world.

Of course, human sexuality has much to do with the cultural sex divide. The fact that men desire women sexually, and that women also desire men, means that they are destined to live together no matter what the culture and family structures in which they live. And sexuality could, and can, create equality through bonds of connection and affection. As William Goode (1959) points out in an important but perhaps forgotten paper, “The Theoretical Importance of Love,” love is a universal emotion. As such it threatens social structures because the ties between men and women could be stronger than the bonds between men. Thus, everywhere the affiliations made possible by love are contained in various ways.

I shall now focus on some other symbolic uses of sex distinctions that facilitate the subordination of women.

Honor. Females are designated as carriers of honor in many societies. Their “virtue” is a symbolic marker of men’s group boundaries. As we know from Mary Douglas (1966) and others, we can think about any social practice in terms of purity and danger. In many societies, females are the designated carriers of boundary distinctions. Their conformity to norms is regarded as the representation of the dignity of the group, while males typically have much greater latitude to engage in deviant behavior. To achieve and maintain female purity, women’s behavior is closely monitored and restricted. As Friedland (2002) writes, religious nationalists direct “their attention to the bodies of women—covering, separating and regulating” (p. 396) them, in order “to masculinize the public sphere, to contain the erotic energies of heterosexuality within the family seeking to masculinize collective representations, to make the state male, a virile collective subject, the public status of women’s bodies is a critical site and source for religious nationalist political mobilization” (p. 401).

The idea that girls must remain virgins until they marry or their entire family will suffer dishonor is used as a mechanism for women’s segregation and subordination all over the world. It is also used as justification for the murder of many young women by male family members claiming to cleanse the girls’ supposed dishonor from the family.12 In particular, we see this at play in parts of the Middle East and among some Muslim communities in the diaspora.

When a woman strap from her prescribed roles, seeks autonomy, or is believed to have had sex with a man outside of marriage, killing her is regarded as a reasonable response by her very own relatives, often a father or brother. In Iraq, at last count, since the beginning of the present war, there have been 3,000 honor killings (Tarabay 2006), and United Nations officials estimate 5,000 worldwide (BBC 2003). In the summer of 2006, the New York Times reported that in Turkey, a society becoming more religiously conservative, girls regarded as
errant because they moved out of the control of their parents or chose a boyfriend, thus casting dishonor on the family, are put in situations in which they are expected and pressured to commit suicide. Suicide spares a family the obligation to murder her and face prosecution (Bilefsky 2006). Elsewhere, such murders are barely noted by the police.

Female circumcision is also intended to preserve women’s honor. In many areas of the African continent, girls are subjected to genital cutting as a prelude to marriage and as a technique to keep them from having pleasure during sex, which, it is reasoned, may lead them to an independent choice of mate.

Conferring on women the symbolism of sexual purity as a basis of honor contributes to their vulnerability. In today’s genocidal warfare, the mass rape of women by marauding forces is not just due to the sexual availability of conquered women. Rape is used as a mechanism of degradation. If the men involved in the Bosnian and Darfur massacres regarded rape as an atrocity and a dishonor to their cause, it could not have been used so successfully as a tool of war. Further, we know that the Bosnian and Sudanese rape victims, like women who have been raped in Pakistan, India, and other places, are regarded as defiled, and are shunned, as are the babies born of such rapes.

Clothing as a Symbolic Tool for Differentiation. The chador and veil are tools men use to symbolize and maintain women’s honor. Although men, with some exceptions, wear Western dress in much of the world, women’s clothing is used to symbolize their cultures’ confrontations with modernity, in addition to clothing’s symbolic roles. Presumably worn to assure modesty and to protect women’s honor, the clothing prescribed, even cultural relativists must admit, serves to restrict women’s mobility. Hot and uncomfortable, women cannot perform tasks that require speed and mobility, and it prevents women from using motorbikes and bicycles, the basic means of transportation in poor societies. Distinctive clothing is not restricted to the Third World. Fundamentalist groups in Europe and the United States also mandate clothing restrictions for women.

Of course, clothing is used to differentiate women and men in all societies. In the past, Western women’s clothing was also restrictive (e.g., long skirts and corsets) and today, as women have moved toward greater equality, women and men are permitted to wear similar garb (such as jeans and t-shirts). Of course, fashion prescribes more sexually evocative (thus distinctive) clothing for women than it does for men.

Time and Space. How can we speak of the otherness and subordination of women without noting the power of the variables of time and space in the analysis? In every society the norms governing the use of time and space are gendered (Epstein and Kalleberg 2004). People internalize feelings about the proper use of time and space as a result of the normative structure. Worldwide, the boundaries of time and space are constructed to offer men freedom and to restrict women’s choices. In most of the world, women rise earlier than do men and start food preparation; they eat at times men don’t. Further, sex segregation of work in and outside the home means a couple’s primary contact may be in the bedroom. If women intrude on men’s space they may violate a taboo and be punished for it. Similarly, men who enter into women’s spaces do so only at designated times and places. The taboo elements undermine the possibility of easy interaction, the opportunity to forge friendships, to connect, and to create similar competencies. In the Western world, working different shifts is common (Presser 2003), which also results in segregation of men and women.

There are rules in every society, some by law and others by custom, that specify when and where women may go, and whether they can make these journeys alone or must appear with a male relative. Some segregation is to protect men from women’s temptations (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Iran, the Satmar sect in Monsey, NY) and some to protect women from men’s sexual advances (e.g., Mexico, Tokyo, Mumbai). But the consequence is that men overwhelmingly are allotted more space and territorialize public space.

A common variable in the time prescription for women is surveillance; women are constrained to operate within what I am calling role zones. In these, their time is accounted for and prescribed. They have less free time. In our own Western society, women note that the first thing to go when they attempt to work and have children is “free time.” Free time is typically enjoyed by the powerful, and it gives them the opportunity to engage in the politics of social life. Most people who work at a subsistence level, refugees, and those who labor in jobs not protected by the authority of the dominant group don’t have free time either. Slave owners own the time of their slaves.

A Theory of Female Subordination

All of this leads me to ask a basic sociological question. Why does the subordination of women and girls persist no matter how societies change in other ways? How does half the world’s population manage
to hold and retain power over the other half? And what are we to make of the women who comply?

The answers lie in many of the practices I have described and they remain persuasive with a global perspective. I propose an even more basic explanation for the persistence of inequality, and often a reversal to inequality, when equality seems to be possible or near attainment. In Deceptive Distinctions (1988), I proposed the theory that the division of labor in society assigns women the most important survival tasks—reproduction and gathering and preparation of food. All over the world, women do much of the reproductive work, ensuring the continuity of society. They do this both in physical terms and in symbolic terms. Physically, they do so through childbirth and child care. They do much of the daily work any social group needs for survival. For example, half of the world's food, and up to 80 percent in developing countries, is produced by women (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations n.d.; Women's World Summit Foundation 2006). They also prepare the food at home, work in the supermarkets, behind the counters, and on the conveyer belts that package it. In their homes and in schools, they produce most preschool and primary school education. They take care of the elderly and infirm. They socialize their children in the social skills that make interpersonal communication possible. They are the support staffs for men. This is a good deal—no, a great deal—for the men.

Controlling women's labor and behavior is a mechanism for male governance and territority. Men's authority is held jealously. Men legitimate their behavior through ideological and theological constructs that justify their domination. Further, social institutions reinforce this.

I shall review the mechanisms:

We know about the use and threat of force (Goode 1972). We know as well about the role of law and justice systems that do not accord women the same rights to protection, property, wealth, or even education enjoyed by men. We know that men control and own guns and the means of transport, and they often lock women out of membership and leadership of trade unions, political parties, religious institutions, and other powerful organizations. We know too that huge numbers of men feel justified in threatening and punishing females who deviate from male-mandated rules in public and private spaces. That's the strong-arm stuff.

But everywhere, in the West as well as in the rest of the world, women's segregation and subjugation is also done culturally and through cognitive mechanisms that reinforce existing divisions of rights and labor and award men authority over women. Internalized cultural schemas reinforce men's views that their behavior is legitimate and persuade women that their lot is just. The media highlight the idea that women and men think differently and naturally gravitate to their social roles. This is more than just "pluralistic ignorance" (Merton [1949] 1963). Bourdieu ([1979] 1984) reminds us that dominated groups often contribute to their own subordination because of perceptions shaped by the conditions of their existence—the dominant system made of binary oppositions. Using Eviatar Zerubavel's (1997) term, "mindscapes" set the stage for household authorities and heads of clans, tribes, and communities to separate and segregate women in the belief that the practice is inevitable and right. Such mindscapes also persuade the females in their midst to accept the legitimacy and inevitability of their subjection, and even to defend it, as we have seen lately in some academic discourses.

The mindscapes that legitimate women's segregation are the cognitive translations of ideologies that range the spectrum from radical fundamentalism to difference feminism; all are grounded in cultural-religious or pseudoscientific views that women have different emotions, brains, aptitudes, ways of thinking, conversing, and imagining. Such mindsets are legitimated every day in conventional understandings expressed from the media, pulpits, boardrooms, and in departments of universities. Psychologists call them schemas (Brewer and Nakamura 1984)—culturally set definitions that people internalize. Gender operates as a cultural "superschema" (Roos and Gatta 2006) that shapes interaction and cues stereotypes (Ridgeway 1997). Schemas that define femaleness and maleness are basic to all societies. Schemas also define insiders and outsiders and provide definitions of justice and equality.

In popular speech, philosophical musings, cultural expressions, and the banter of everyday conversation, people tend to accept the notion of difference. They accept its inevitability and are persuaded of the legitimacy of segregation, actual or symbolic. Thus, acceptance of difference perspectives—the idea that women often have little to offer to the group—may result in rules that forbid women from speaking in the company of men (in a society governed by the Taliban) or may result in senior academics' selective deafness to the contributions of a female colleague in a university committee room.
Conclusion

In conclusion I want to reiterate certain observations:

Intrinsic qualities are attributed to women that have little or nothing to do with their actual characteristics or behavior. Because those attributes are linked to assigned roles their legitimation is an ongoing project. Changing these ideas would create possibilities for changing the status quo and threaten the social institutions in which men have the greatest stake and in which some women believe they benefit.

Is women's situation different from that of men who, by fortune, color of skin, or accident of birth, also suffer from exploitation by the powerful? I am claiming yes, because they carry not only the hardships—sometimes relative hardships—but the ideological and cognitive overlay that defines their subordination as legitimate and normal. Sex and gender are the organizing markers in all societies. In no country, political group, or community are men defined as lesser human beings than their female counterparts. But almost everywhere women are so defined.

Why is this acceptable? And why does it persist?

So many resources are directed to legitimating females' lower place in society. So few men inside the power structure are interested in inviting them in. And so many women and girls accept the Orwellian notion that restriction is freedom, that suffering is pleasure, that silence is power.

Of course this is not a static condition, nor, I hope, an inevitable one. Women in the Western world, and in various sectors of the rest of the world, have certainly moved upward in the continuum toward equality. Thirty-five years ago I noted how women in the legal profession in the United States were excluded from the informal networks that made inclusion and mobility possible. Now, noticeable numbers have ventured over the barriers. Similarly, there has been a large increase in the numbers of women who have entered the sciences, business, medicine, and veterinary medicine (Cox and Aim 2005). This has changed relatively swiftly. Women didn't develop larger brains—nor did their reasoning jump from left brain to right brain or the reverse. Nor did they leave Venus for Mars. Rather, they learned that they could not be barred from higher education and they could get appropriate jobs when they graduated. The problem is no longer one of qualifications or entry but of promotion and inclusion into the informal networks leading to the top. But the obstacles are great. . . .

We know full well that there are stories and master social narratives accepted by untold millions of people that have no basis in what social scientists would regard as evidence. The best examples are the basic texts of the world's great religions. But there are also societywide beliefs of other kinds. Belief systems are powerful. And beliefs that are unprovable or proven untrue often capture the greatest number of believers. Sometimes, they are simply the best stories.

We in the social sciences have opened the gates to a better understanding of the processes by which subordinated groups suffer because the use of categories such as race and ethnicity rank human beings so as to subordinate, exclude, and exploit them (Tilly 1998). However, relatively few extend this insight to the category of gender or sex. The social divide so defines social life, and so many people in the world have a stake in upholding it, that it is the most resistant of all categories to change. Today, Hall and Lamont (forthcoming; Lamont 2005) are proposing that the most productive societies are those with porous boundaries between categories of people. Perhaps there is an important incentive in a wider understanding of this idea. Small groups of men may prosper by stifling women's potential, but prosperous nations benefit from women's full participation and productivity in societies. Societies might achieve still more if the gates were truly open.

Sociologists historically have been committed to social change to achieve greater equality in the world, in both public and private lives . . . . I challenge our profession to take this responsibility in our scholarship and our professional lives; to observe, to reveal, and to strike down the conceptual and cultural walls that justify inequality on the basis of sex in all of society's institutions—to transgress this ever-present boundary—for the sake of knowledge and justice.

NOTES
1. For more horrors see Parrot and Cummings (2006).
2. Perhaps the best known eye into this world is that of Nicholas Kristof, the New York Times writer, whose Op Ed articles chronicle the horrors faced by women in Africa and the inaction of Western societies to redress them (for example, the United States cut off funding to the United Nations Population Fund, an agency that has led the effort to reduce maternal deaths, because of false allegations it supports abortion) (Kristof 2006).
3. The works of John Gray (1992), the author of Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus and spin-off titles have sold over 30 million copies in the United States. See also Deborah Tannen's (1990) You Just Don't Understand on the presumed inability of men and women to understand each other on various dimensions, repudiated by the work of the linguistic scholar Elizabeth Aries (1996).
4. There has been a recent flurry over reported differences in male and female brains (cf. Brindell 2006; Bell et al. 2006) and reports of a 3 to 4 percentage difference in IQ.
The brain studies are usually based on very small samples and the IQ studies on standardized tests in which the differences reported are at the very end of large distributions that essentially confirm male/female similarities (see Epstein 1998 for a further analysis).

4. A 1995 New York Times report shows that women are getting more B.A.s than men in the United States. However, in the highest income families, men aged 24 and below attend college as much as, or slightly more than, their sisters, according to the American Council on Education. The article also reports that women are obtaining a disproportionate number of honors at elite institutions such as Harvard, the University of Wisconsin, UCLA, and some smaller schools such as Florida Atlantic University (Lewin 2006). A comparison of female and male math scores varies with the test given. Female scores somewhat lower on the SAT-M, but differences do not exist on the American College Test (ACT) or on timed versions of the SAT-M (Bailey n.d.).

5. Girls perform identically in math until high school when they are channeled on different tracks. In Great Britain, they do better than males, as noted in the ASA statement concerning the remarks of then Harvard President Lawrence Summers questioning the ability of females to engage in mathematics and scientific research (American Sociological Association 2005; see also Boaler and Sengepa-Irving 2006).

6. The panel blamed environments that favor men, continuous questioning of women's ability, and confinement to an academic career, and a system that claims to reward based on merit but instead rewards traits that are socially less acceptable for women to possess (Fogg 2006).

7. Hartmann, Lovell, and Wornicko (2004) show how, in the recession of March to November 2001, there was sustained job loss for women for the first time in 40 years. The economic downturn affected women's employment, labor force participation, and wages 43 months after the start of the recession.

8. In Scandinavian countries, women have achieved the most political representation: Finland (37.5 percent of parliament seats), Norway (56.4 percent of parliament seats), Sweden (45.3 percent of parliament seats), and Denmark (38 percent of parliament seats) (UN, Common Database n.d.). Of course, women in some countries still do not have the right to vote, and in a few, like Kuwait, where they have just gotten the vote, it is unclear whether they have been able to exercise it independently.

9. This is the case in Iran, Iraq, and Uzbekistan. Although in feministic groups have gained power, even in those regimes that are formally secular.

10. The report for women groups in large law firms (those with more than 250 lawyers) in the United States is 15 percent, although women are one-half of the attorneys in these firms (National Association for Law Placement cited in O'Brien 2006; Nicholson 2006).

11. A survey of 1,000 professors (as yet unpublished) at all kinds of institutions in the United States conducted by Neil Gross of Harvard and Solomon Simmons of George Mason University shows that though most professors don't agree that discrimination—intentional or otherwise—is the main reason that men hold so many more positions than women in the sciences (Jassch 2006).

12. In studies of jobs dominated by men that are seen as requiring traits that distinguish men as superior to women in intellect or strength, it is reported that men's pride is punctured if women outperform them (see Chedwick 1999 on firefighters; Collinson, Knights, and Collinson 1999 on managers).

13. For example, when a New York magazine editor Ali Mahmaq returned to Afghanistan in 2004 after a long exile he was imprisoned for raising questions about women's rights in the new "humanitarian" Afghani courts claimed his offense was to undermine the teachings of Islam by printing essays that questioned legal discrimination against women (White 2005).

14. Women have been unpaid workers on family farms or in small businesses, taking in boarders, and doing factory work (see Rose et al. 1989 for the United States; Rose and Acosta-Belén 1995 for Latin America; and Hwang 1996 for Taiwan).

15. There are numerous references to the Web to the use of women given in marriage to another tribe or group in the reports of Amnesty International, for example, in Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Fiji.

16. The characterization of women as "other" was most notably made by Simone de Beauvoir ([1949] 1953) in her book, The Second Sex.

17. Struggles between human rights activists in and out of government and fundamentalist regimes have shifted upward and downward on such matters as raising the age of marriage of girls. For example, attempts by Afghanistan's King Amanullah in the 1920s to raise the age of marriage and institute education for girls enraged the patriarchal tribes who thwarted his regime. Fifty years later, a socialist government enacted legislation to change family law to encourage women's employment, education, and choice of spouse. The regime failed in the early 1990s due to internal rivalries and a hostile international climate (Moghaddam 2003:270), and the Taliban took power in the early 1990s they exiled women to their homes, denied them access to education and opportunities to work for pay, and even denied them the right to look out of their windows.

18. A United Nations (2001) report found that there were legislative provisions "allowing for partial or complete defense" in the case of an honor killing: in Argentina, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Peru, Syria, Turkey, Venezuela, and the Palestinian National Authority (of course law does not equal practice). For example, in Pakistan and Jordan honor killings are outlawed but they occur nevertheless.

19. In demonstrations in societies led by religious leaders, men typically wear Western style shirts and trousers although their leaders typically choose clerics' robes and turbans. Leaders of countries outside of the Western orbit often choose distinctive dress—robes, beards, open neck shirts, and other costumes for ceremonial occasions or to make political statements.

20. Hella Winston (personal communication, September 30, 2006) told me that in the orthodox Jewish community of New Square in New York State, a recent edict by the Rabbi reminded women that they were to wear modest dress, specifying that "sleeves must be to the end of the bone, and [to] not wear narrow clothing or short clothing." They were not to ride bikes or speak loudly.

21. Where religious law govern such areas of civic life as family relations, inheritance, and punishment for crimes, for example, they invariably institutionalize women's subordinate status.

22. As one of many possible examples: when hundreds of women gathered in downtown Tehran on July 31, 2001, to protest institutionalized sex discrimination in Iran (in areas such as education, custody, employment rights, age of adulthood, and court proceedings where a woman's testimony is viewed as half of a man's), 100 male and female police beat them. Reports also noted a tightening of the dress code and segregation on buses and in some public areas such as parks, sidewalks, and elevators. Another demonstration on March 8, 2006, was dispersed as police dumped garbage on the heads of participants (Stevens 2006).

23. The research of Louise Binse and others (2006), which argues that the female brains are completely different, offering such hazy accounts as "woman is weather, constantly changing and hard to predict" and "man is mountain," has been on the top 10 on the Amazon.com bestseller list and to her prominent placement on ABC's 20/20 and morning talk shows. Thanks to Troy Dyer for passing this on.

24. For example, a recent poll cited in the New York Times (June 8, 2006) indicates that a majority of women in Muslim countries do not regard themselves as unequal (Andrews 2006). Of course, this attitude is widespread throughout the world, including Western societies.

25. Comparing percentages of women attaining doctorates in the sciences from 1979-71 to 2001-2002 the increase were: Engineering: 2.4-17.3; Physics: 2.9-15.3; Computer Science: 2.3-22.8; Mathematics: 7.6-29.

REFERENCES
Bailey, Justin P. M.D. "Man are from Earth, Women are from Earth: Rethinking the Utility of the Mars/Venus Analogy," Retrieved September 28, 2006 (www.framingham.edu/oct/pdf/ [J.Bailey14pdf].)
This eclectic reader, edited by an award-winning teacher, introduces students to sociology's diversity as a science and profession. There are three selections for each of the fifteen major topic areas: a quantitative or theoretical reading, a qualitative or interpretative reading, and a reading that shows how sociology is applied and practiced in the real world. Sixteen articles are new to this edition. New topics include: ethical dilemmas for social research brought up by the Internet; the implications of hooking up in college culture; the human genome and the relationship between culture and genetics; the slowing pace of adulthood creating a new stage in socialization; the Zimbardo Prison Experiment; public schools and their impact on the outcome on the lives of black males; surviving as both an American and a Muslim; and the impact of virtual communities on reality.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How do religion and biology contribute to the global subordination of women?

2. What mechanisms create “otherness” and preserve the superiority of men?