girls places a boy in only the sixty-eighth percentile among boys; among mathematically-precocious students (thirteen years old), a score of 700 is thirteen times more likely to be attained by a boy than by a girl (with equal numbers of boys and girls with similar mathematical backgrounds taking the test). There also seems to be a linear relationship between the importance of logical abstraction to an area and the percentage of those at the highest levels who are men; there has never been a woman at the highest level of mathematics, chess, or composing music (which is not thought of as a macho enterprise), while there have been many women of genius in literature and the performing arts. Women's psychological acuity is more difficult to test, but no less real. There are no doubt ad hoc social explanations of these sexual differences (however implausible), but the mere invocation of the suppression of women is not one of them. Such explanations fail to explain why the effects of suppression have been so much more devastating in areas for which logical abstraction is a necessary condition than in areas in which it is not. Whether or not the differences observed in the stereotype are functions of physiological development is still an open question, but one for which a positive answer is far more likely than contemporary ideology would acknowledge. (The same is true of a female preference for male dominance in male-female relationships—as evidenced by observation of behavior rather than ideological claim—but this plays no part in the theory I present here.)

The differences in dominance tendency and cognitive style I have discussed go far toward covering the core tendencies represented in our stereotypes of men and women. Assuming that we remember that a stereotype is a statistical generalization that must be considered apart from its subjective value judgment (which is often negative) and its explanation of the association of group and behavior (which is often incorrect), we see that the sexual stereotypes now so derided turn out to be basically correct.

Nothing I have written about patriarchy, male attainment, or male dominance implies (or precludes) males' better performing roles once they attain them. Whether the male tendencies increase performance or retard it is another issue (save for the fact that a position must be attained before it can be performed). Similarly, nothing I have written implies the desirability of any particular social or political program. "Is cannot imply ought," and no scientific analysis of how the world works can entail a subjective decision on which of two programs is preferable. We might accept all that I have written and see this as demonstrating the need for an equal rights law limiting the male physiological advantage for attainment. Or we might see the same evidence as justifying a socialization system that provides clear role models by emphasizing the sex differences I discuss. Science is silent on such a choice.\[\]

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**Inevitabilities of Prejudice**

**Cynthia Fuchs Epstein**

Is there any reason to believe that patriarchy is more inevitable than anti-Semitism, child abuse, or any other mode of oppression that has been around for as long as anyone can remember? On the basis of his own experience, Aristotle believed that slavery was inevitable; and although it is still around in some countries, few reasonable people now believe it must be inevitable. Unfortunately, people with credentials for reasonableness, such as a new school of sociobiologists and their popularizers—among them Steven Goldberg—feel comfortable believing that the subordination of women is inevitable, programmed into human nature.

Many forms of oppression seem inevitable because they are so difficult to dislodge. History shows us that. It is easier to maintain oppression than to overthrow it. This is because when a group has a power advantage (which may emerge by chance, or historical accident), even if it is small, it may escalate rapidly if those in power can monopolize not only material resources but the avenues of communication as well. The Nazis did so effectively. Karl Marx cautioned that the owners of production were also the owners of the production of ideas. This means that the values and knowledge of a society usually reflect the views of those who rule, often by convincing those in subordinate statuses that they deserve what they get. The Nazis argued that they belonged to the "master race" and tried to build a science to prove it. They were less subtle than other rulers, but their case is instructive: beware the thesis
of any powerful group that claims its power is derived solely from "divine right" or from its genes.

If anything is inevitable, it is change. Change in history is characteristic of human experience and reflects the human capacity to order and reorder it, to understand the processes of its ordering, and to sweep away old superstitions. As Robert K. Merton pointed out in the American Journal of Sociology in 1984: "What everyone should know from the history of thought is that what everyone knows turns out not to be so at all."

Some twelve years have passed since Steven Goldberg published his book, The Inevitability of Patriarchy, more than a decade which has produced thousands of studies of gender differences and similarities, an extensive re-analysis of the relationship and applicability of primate behavior to human behavior, and debate and analysis of sociobiological interpretation. Goldberg has offered us once again, a view of women's subordination as inevitable simply because it has always existed. The thesis, unchanged from his formulation of a decade ago, is uninformed about the rich body of scholarship that has been published—much of it disproving his assumptions about significant differences in men's and women's emotions, cognitive capacities, and situation in the structure of the social hierarchy. In these intervening years, there have also been changes in the statuses and roles of women in the United States and in other parts of the world—these also invalidate Goldberg's perspective on the constancy and universality of his observations about the subordination of women.

Women in the United States, as elsewhere, have been elected and appointed to positions of power. They have joined the ranks of the prestigious and the powerful in the domains of law and medicine, and are entering specialties and practices to which they were denied admission and discouraged from pursuing only a decade ago. Women are now judges at every level of the judiciary in the United States, as well as prosecutors in the courts engaging in adversarial and assertive behavior, exhibiting what may be termed as "dominant behavior." There is considerable evidence that women perform well, sometimes even better than do men, in examinations that determine admission to all fields in professional and graduate schools, where women constitute from a third to half of all students. Each year sees an increase in the number of women admitted to schools of engineering and science in spite of men's supposed greater social orientation toward careers in these fields.

Women have also become university professors and researchers and have thus been empowered to challenge many biased views about human nature and to fill gaps left by male scholars who have characteristically had little interest or inclination to do research in this field. Therefore, a revised view of what is "natural" or "inevitable" is part of the contemporary intellectual agenda.

Women are also making inroads in blue-collar technical work, heretofore denied them because of restrictions in apprenticeship programs made yet more difficult because of personal harassment. Women have experienced the same exclusionary mechanisms exercised against all minority groups who have had the audacity to compete with white males for the privileged positions guarded by "covenants" instituted by unions and ethnic clusters. According to a 1985 Rand Corporation research study by Linda Waite and Sue Berryman, Women in Non-Traditional Occupations: Choice and Turnover, women behave similarly to men in that they exhibit similar work force commitment and turnover rates once involved in non-traditional jobs such as those of the blue-collar crafts or in the army. These researchers emphasize that policies equalizing work conditions for men and women also equalize commitment to the job.

Many forms of oppression seem inevitable because they are so difficult to dislodge.

Increasing convergence of gender role behavior is also seen in studies of crime. Girls' crime rates show increasing similarity to that of boys. Girls and boys both commit violent crimes and exhibit increasingly similar criminal histories.

Certainly much of the challenge and change is due to the women's movement and the insistence of women on their rights to equality. Sizable numbers of women in every sphere of society have taken an aggressive role in contesting the domination of men in personal, political, and intellectual life. Given the short period of time in which women have been active on their own behalf and in which they have succeeded in engaging the support of sympathetic men, their strides have been great both with regard to social rank and intellectual accomplishment.

This movement has evolved within the historical context still affected by centuries of oppression that have created and perpetuated the sense that women's inequality is natural. Yet no society, no social group, and especially no ruling group, has ever left gender hierarchy (nor any other form of hierarchy) to nature. It has not been women's incompetence or inability to read a legal brief, to perform brain surgery, to predict a bull market, or to make an intonation to the gods that has kept them from interesting and highly paid jobs. The root of discrimination against women, preventing their access to a variety of fields, has been a rule system replete with severe punishments for those who deviate from "traditional" roles. Access is now achieved through political and social action, and not at all through genetic engineering.

Sociobiologists, on the other hand, argue that the division of labor by sex is a biological rather than a social