

Gender Discriminatory Behavior During Adolescence and Young Adulthood: A Developmental Analysis

Thalma E. Lobel,¹ Nohar Nov-Krispin,² Daniela Schiller,³
Orly Lobel,⁴ and Amit Feldman⁵

Received March 17, 2003; revised March 29, 2004; accepted April 2, 2004

The study investigated gender discriminatory behavior from a developmental perspective by examining 3 age groups: early adolescents, late adolescents, and young adults. In addition the study investigated the relationship between self-perception of traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics and gender discriminatory behavior across these 3 age groups. We predicted that due to gender intensification and conformity, that are characteristics of adolescence, adolescents would evidence greater gender discriminatory behavior than young adults. Early and late adolescent males and young adult males ($n = 3233$) were given a description of either an average or outstanding male candidate behaving stereotypically or counter-stereotypically and were asked to indicate their personal election choice, the likelihood that others would choose each candidate and how successful he would be should he be elected. They were also asked to indicate their affinity and perceived similarity to the candidate. In addition, they completed an adapted form of the BSRI [Bem (1974). *J. Consult. Clin. Psychol.* 42: 155–162], measuring their self-perception of traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics. As predicted, adolescents exhibited greater discriminatory behavior than young adults. No differences were found between the 2 stages of adolescence. In addition, feminine males evidenced less discriminatory behavior towards the counter-stereotypic male than the other gender role groups. The results are discussed within the framework of developmental changes.

KEY WORDS: gender role; discriminatory behavior; young adulthood; adolescence; gender stereotypes.

Adolescence is a stage that begins in puberty and ends in adulthood. Sexual maturation begins in early adolescence and is marked by the appearance of rapid physical changes such as secondary sex characteristics. These physical changes and others' reactions to them increase the saliency of gender and adolescents may feel compelled to behave according to gender stereotypes (Huston and Alvarez, 1990). Thus, at this age there is an increased sensitivity to gender stereotypes and an adherence to them,

which is referred to as gender intensification (Hill and Lynch, 1983). This gender intensification makes any deviation from the expected traditional masculine or feminine norm more salient and it is more severely judged. Indeed, it has been shown that young adolescents judge, accept, and reject one another on the basis of these gender stereotypes (Lobel, 1994; Lobel *et al.*, 1993b).

An additional characteristic of adolescence that seems to be relevant to discriminatory behavior is social conformity. The importance of peers and their approval and

¹Professor at the Department of Psychology and the Dean of Student at Tel Aviv University, Israel. Her major research interests are the development of gender identity and gender differences in youth and adolescence. To whom correspondence should be addressed at Department of Psychology, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv 69697, Israel; e-mail: talma@Post.tau.ac.il.

²PhD and currently serves at the Department of Psychology, Tel Aviv University, Israel. Research interests are gender role and gender discriminatory behavior.

³PhD and currently serves at the Department of Psychology, Tel Aviv University, Israel. Major research interests are attentional deficits of schizophrenia.

⁴SJD (expected 2005), Harvard Law School, USA. Major research interests are social welfare and public policy.

⁵PhD student at the Department of Psychology, Tel Aviv University, Israel. Major research interests are gender discriminatory behavior and adolescents' psychotherapy.

social acceptance increases during adolescence (Berndt, 1979; Berndt and Keefe, 1995; Constanzo and Shaw, 1966; Newcomb and Bagwell, 1995; Vitaro *et al.*, 1997) and conformity pressures reach their peak (Berndt, 1979). As a result, adolescence is characterized by an increase in prejudice and discriminatory behavior towards individuals exhibiting behavior deviant from their social group norms (Hurlock, 1973). On the basis of these 2 characteristics (gender intensification and social conformity), adolescents would be expected to be less flexible than young adults. Indeed, studies comparing adolescents and young adults have shown that, with the onset of young adulthood, there is a decrease in stereotyping and an increase in gender flexibility (Plumb and Cowan, 1984; Urberg, 1979). The present study examined developmental patterns in a specific aspect of gender behavior, that of gender discriminatory behavior. Specifically, the question that was investigated in this study was whether discriminatory behavior changes during the transition from early to late adolescence and then to young adulthood.

Whereas studies are consistent as to the differences between adolescents and young adults regarding their gender flexibility, they are less consistent regarding the differences between early and late adolescents. Several researchers have examined how gender related attitudes change during adolescence (e.g., Alfieri *et al.*, 1996). Two processes that take place during adolescence, gender intensification, and cognitive maturation lead to contradictory predictions. On the one hand, gender intensification led many researchers to predict that gender flexibility will decrease during this period (Hill and Lynch, 1983; Katz, 1979). In contrast, since adolescence is marked by an increase in cognitive maturation, other researchers have predicted that gender flexibility would increase during this period (Carter and Patterson, 1982; Eccles, 1987; Stoddart and Turiel, 1985). Both the above predictions have received support in the literature. Some studies supported the cognitive maturation prediction and showed that gender flexibility increases during adolescence (Carter and Patterson, 1982; Katz and Ksansnak, 1994; Nelson and Keith, 1990) whereas other studies supported the gender intensification prediction, showing that flexibility decreases during adolescence (Biernat, 1991; Hill and Lynch, 1983). Alfieri *et al.* (1996) showed that gender flexibility does not change only as a function of age during adolescence but also depends on the social environment an individual lives in. They found that gender flexibility increased after the transition into junior high school and then decreased again.

Most studies that examined the development of gender flexibility used measures that presented participants with various characteristics and asked them to indicate

whether the characteristics were associated with males, females, or both (e.g., Signorella *et al.*, 1993). The present study examines the development of another aspect of gender development, namely gender discrimination. Studies investigating gender discrimination have shown that individuals may discriminate on the basis of one's gender (i.e., whether they are male or female, Frable, 1989), or on the basis of individuating information (i.e., whether they behave stereotypically or counter-stereotypically; e.g., Rajecki *et al.*, 1992), and that individuals behaving counter-stereotypically are assigned negative evaluations or penalties (Appleton and Gurwitz, 1976; Berndt and Heller, 1986; Costrich *et al.*, 1975; Tilby and Kalin, 1980). Most studies investigating gender discriminatory behavior have investigated adult populations and no study has examined gender discrimination from a developmental perspective. The major purpose of the present study was to focus on gender discriminatory behavior towards males behaving counter-stereotypically from a developmental perspective across 3 stages: early adolescence, late adolescence, and young adulthood. The secondary purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between self-perception of traditionally masculine and feminine characteristics and discriminatory behavior for these 3 age groups.

Many researchers claim that the self-perception of traditionally masculine and feminine traits is an integral part of the self-concept of masculinity and femininity (Bem, 1981; Frable, 1989; Markus *et al.*, 1982). According to Bem (1974, 1981), individuals can be categorized into 4 gender-role orientation groups on the basis of their self-perception of traditionally masculine and feminine traits. Those who endorse a large number of traits stereotypic of their own gender and a small number of traits stereotypic of the other gender are sex-typed individuals. Those who endorse a large number of both traditionally masculine and feminine traits are androgynous individuals, whereas those who endorse a small number of both traditionally masculine and feminine traits are undifferentiated individuals. Finally, those who endorse a small number of traits stereotypic of their own gender and a large number of traits stereotypic of the other gender are cross-sex-typed individuals.

The claim that self-perception of traditionally masculine and feminine traits is indicative of a personality disposition referred to as either gender schematicity, gender role orientation, or gender typing, has aroused a great deal of opposition (e.g., Archer, 1991; Deaux *et al.*, 1985; Spence, 1984, 1993). According to Spence (1984, 1993), the scales that measure self-perception on these traits are a measure of desirable aspects of instrumentality and expressivity and not a measure of gender typing, masculinity

and femininity, or gender schematicity. However, recent findings on cross-sex-typed individuals (feminine males or masculine females; Frable, 1989; Lobel, 1994) raise the possibility that although, as suggested by Spence, the self-endorsement of these traits is not a measure of gender schematicity, it does tap, at least for some people, into some aspect of self-perception related to gender. Lobel (1994) found early adolescents categorized as feminine males solely on the basis of their self-perceptions of traditionally feminine or masculine characteristics, demonstrated unique emotional and motivational judgments (e.g., affinity and willingness to engage in activities) toward the male target evidencing stereotypical feminine behavior. These results indicate that, for males, the self-perception of gender counter-stereotypic characteristics does tap into a more pervasive feeling of femininity.

The question of the relationship between self-perception and discriminatory behavior was investigated by Frable (1989), who presented undergraduates from the 4 gender role groups with either outstanding or average male and female job applicants. Frable (1989), however, used only adult populations and only took the candidates' gender into consideration, that is, did not compare between gender stereotypic and counter-stereotypic targets of the same gender.

In our study, participants from 3 age groups, early adolescents, late adolescents, and young adults, and from the 4 gender role groups, were presented with descriptions of an average or outstanding male candidate for student representative. The candidate was either traditionally feminine or traditionally masculine. Participants were asked what the likelihood was that each candidate would be chosen by them for the position, how likely they thought it was that others would choose each candidate for the position, and how successful they believed each candidate would be in his new role. Participants were also asked to make emotional-motivational judgments by rating their affinity for each candidate, and how similar they perceived themselves to be to each candidate.

On the basis of the 2 aforementioned characteristics of adolescents that were assumed to be relevant to discriminatory behavior (i.e., gender intensification and social conformity), we predicted that different patterns of behavior would emerge for adolescents and young adults. We hypothesized that since for adolescents any deviation from the gender norm is more salient and is more harshly judged, discriminatory behavior against feminine males would be significantly more evident among them than among young adults. We expected all gender role groups of adolescents beside feminine males to discriminate against the feminine candidate and predicted that they would prefer in their personal election choice the mascu-

line candidates (both average and outstanding) to the outstanding feminine candidate. Thus, they would prefer the masculine candidate even when the feminine candidate was better qualified. In contrast, we expected the feminine adolescents to show no preference for the masculine candidates and prefer the 2 outstanding candidates to the average candidate. We further expected that every gender role group, including the feminine males, would attribute others with discriminatory behavior against the feminine candidate. With regard to the young adult sample, we predicted that no gender role group would explicitly exhibit a preference for a lesser or equally qualified, but masculine candidate. Their own election choice was therefore expected to be based on merit. Specifically we expected them to give higher election scores to the outstanding feminine candidate than to the average masculine candidate, and equal election scores to both outstanding candidates (masculine and feminine). We did predict, however, that a strong cognizance of societal discrimination against male femininity would result in the average masculine candidate being given equal or higher chances for election by others.

With respect to the question of each candidate's expected success should he be elected, we hypothesized that adolescents (with the exception of feminine males), would predict less success for the feminine candidate than for the masculine candidates, regardless of their qualifications. Feminine males would predict success according to the candidates' qualifications. In contrast, all young adults were expected to base the predicted success of every candidate on merit and not on the masculinity or femininity of the candidates.

Regarding affinity and perceived similarity, we expected that all gender role groups of adolescents, aside from the feminine males, would perceive themselves as more similar to, and show a greater affinity for every masculine candidate (average and outstanding) over the feminine candidate. In contrast, we expected feminine adolescents to like the feminine candidate more and to perceive him as more similar to themselves. As for young adults, we expected similar results regarding perceived similarity. Thus, all gender role groups would perceive the masculine candidates as more similar to themselves than the feminine candidate, but the feminine males would perceive the feminine male as more similar to themselves. In contrast to adolescents we expected all gender role groups of young adults beside feminine males to show similar affinity for the various candidates. This prediction was based on the assumption that young adults nowadays are more aware of the politically correct norms and therefore would not admit that they like less a person just because he is interested in "feminine activities." In contrast, feminine

young adults are those who perceive themselves as more feminine than masculine, which is not according to the social norms. We therefore predicted that they would like the feminine candidate more and perceive him as more similar to themselves.

As for the differences between early and late adolescents, since, as aforementioned, the findings regarding the development of gender flexibility during adolescence are inconsistent, we did not make specific predictions.

METHOD

Participants

Three thousand two hundred and thirty-three male and female participants, 954 7th and 8th graders, 1558 11th and 12th graders, and 721 undergraduates, completed a version of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1974). The adolescents completed a revised version, which was adapted for their age and to the Israeli culture (Lobel *et al.*, 1989), and the young adults completed a revised version that was adapted for Israeli adults (Lobel *et al.*, 1993a). The adolescents' version contains 9 traditionally masculine items (e.g., aggressive, assertive, acts as a leader), 7 traditionally feminine items (e.g., tender, gentle, affectionate, doesn't use harsh language), and 10 neutral items. The scale has high reliability, Cronbach alpha = 0.77 for the femininity scale and 0.81 for the masculinity scale. The adult version contains 13 traditionally masculine items (e.g., assertive, aggressive, acts as a leader, competitive), 12 traditionally feminine items (e.g., affectionate, doesn't use harsh language, tender), and 12 gender-neutral items. Most of the items in both the adolescent and adult versions were identical. This scale too has a high reliability with Cronbach alpha = 0.77 for the femininity scale and 0.84 for the masculinity scale.

The adolescent participants were recruited from several schools after receiving consent from the Ministry of Education, the school principals as well as the participants' parents. Since only about 5–8% of the population is feminine males (Lobel, 1994), there was a need for a large sample. Although the study focused only on males, the median was determined on the basis of the answers collected from both males and females so that those who were considered to be feminine, for example, perceived themselves as high on femininity and low on masculinity relative to both males and females. We relied on the responses of both genders since we wanted to tap those males who perceive themselves as feminine not only relative to the other males, but relative to females as well. Participants who scored above the median on the masculine scale and below the median on the feminine scale were categorized

as masculine, those who scored above the median on both scales were categorized as androgynous, and those who scored below the median on both scales were categorized as undifferentiated. It should be noted that although the median split method has its deficiencies (those who score close to the median are grouped together with those who score at the extremes), it is still the most widely used and the regression method has no theoretical advantage over it (Spence, 1984).

After completing the BSRI, each participant completed a distraction assignment. The assignment was the digit symbol that is part of the WISC-R. This assignment introduces the participant with a row of symbols and numbers, such that each symbol has an assigned number. The participant is then presented with several rows of numbers and asked to draw, as quickly as possible, the appropriate symbol in the box provided. The purpose of this neutral assignment was to conceal the purpose of the study and to divert the attention from subjects related to gender.

The second part of the study started 15 min after completion of the distraction assignment and included only the male subjects. In this part there were 443 7th and 8th grade males with a mean age of 13 years and 3 months (ranging from 12 to 14 years of age), 459 11th and 12th grade males with a mean age of 16 years and 3 months (ranging from 15 and 9 months to 18 years of age), and 371 young adult males with a mean age of 23 years and 6 months (ranging from 21 to 25 years of age). Among these participants there were 684 sex-typed, 234 androgynous, 259 undifferentiated individuals, and 96 cross-sex typed. The reason for the unequal number of participants for each gender role group was due to the relatively small number of feminine males in the population. However, we should note that although there were only 96 cross-sex-typed individuals sampled, there were more than 10 participants per cell. We decided to examine the entire sample and not to randomly select only part of each gender role group since the statistical analysis that we used took the unequal sizes of the cells into consideration.

Materials and Procedure

Candidacy Questionnaire

On the basis of a pretest, 3 descriptions of male candidates for class representative were composed in which 1 candidate was average masculine, 1 was outstanding masculine, and 1 was outstanding feminine. The pretest was conducted in order to detect (1) characteristics considered by participants to be important for a successful student representative but also gender-neutral; and (2) characteristics

considered by participants to be traditionally masculine or traditionally feminine but irrelevant to the success or failure of student representative. The pretests were conducted separately for each age group. There were enough items that were deemed suitable for all 3 age groups, so that the final stories were identical, with few changes in wording making them age appropriate. On the basis of these pretests, 3 descriptions were composed of candidates for student representative: average masculine, outstanding feminine, and outstanding masculine. All 3 candidates were described with 10 characteristics obtained by the pretest. The outstanding candidates were attributed with 6 gender-neutral characteristics considered by participants to be important for the position of student representative (e.g., socially active, gets on well with professors and students, honest); the average candidate was attributed with 3 gender-neutral characteristics considered important for the position of student representative. The other 3 characteristics of the average candidate were also gender-neutral but were considered irrelevant to the position of student representative (e.g., brown eyes, has 2 brothers etc.). The remaining 4 characteristics for all candidates were either those perceived as masculine or those perceived as feminine, and irrelevant to candidacy (e.g., plays football and has a broad shouldered build versus takes ballet lessons and has a slight build). Each subject was presented with 1 description of a candidate and was told: "You will be presented with a description of a candidate that runs for the role of class representative. Please read carefully the description of the candidate and then answer several questions."

Following each description, participants were asked to complete the following tasks:

Task 1: Personal election choice. Participants were asked to rate how likely they would be to elect the candidate on a 5-point scale, ranging from 5 (definitely would) to 1 (definitely would not).

Task 2: Predicted choice of others. Participants were asked to rate how likely the candidate was to be elected by others on a 5-point scale, ranging from 5 (definitely would be elected) to 1 (definitely would not be elected).

Task 3: Candidate chances for success if elected. Participants were asked to rate on a 5-point scale how likely the candidate was to succeed if elected, ranging from 5 (would be very successful) to 1 (would not be successful at all).

Task 4: Predicted popularity among others. Participants were asked to rate on a 5-point scale (1) how popular the candidate would be among other males; and (2) how popular the candidate would be among other females, ranging from 5 (very popular) to 1 (very unpopular).

Task 5: Affinity for candidate. Participants were asked to rate on a 5-point scale how much they liked the candidate, ranging from 5 (very much) to 1 (not at all).

Task 6: Perceived similarity to candidate. Participants were asked to rate on a 5-point scale how similar they perceived themselves to be to each candidate, ranging from 5 (very similar) to 1 (not at all similar).

Procedure

The study's design was a between subject design. Participants from each age group and from each gender role group were divided randomly into 3 groups, and each one was presented with only 1 candidate. Participants completed the questionnaires in a group session.

RESULTS

In order to examine our hypotheses, we conducted 3-way ANOVAs, of 3 (candidates: average masculine, outstanding masculine, outstanding feminine) \times 3 (age: early adolescents, late adolescents, young adults) \times 4 (gender roles) on each of the dependent variables. Since we ran separate 6 ANOVAs and wanted to avoid type I error, we divided the alpha level of 0.05 by 6, yielding a value of 0.008. Consequently, we did not regard alpha level of 0.05 as significant and treated alpha level of 0.01 as marginally significant.

The ANOVA on the personal election choice revealed a main effect of the candidate, $F(2, 1269) = 13.42$, $p < 0.001$. The predicted interaction between candidate and age, $F(4, 1269) = 3.307$, $p < 0.01$ was marginally significant, and the predicted interaction between gender-role and the candidate, was significant $F(6, 1269) = 4.322$, $p < 0.001$.

Post hoc comparisons regarding the first interaction showed that both early and late adolescents gave the outstanding masculine candidate higher scores than to the other 2 candidates, $F(2, 441) = 9.246$, $p < 0.001$; $F(2, 704) = 8.418$, $p < 0.001$, respectively. In contrast, young adults gave the 2 outstanding candidates almost equal scores, and gave the average masculine candidate lower scores than to the 2 outstanding candidates, but this difference did not reach significance level ($p < 0.05$). In addition, the difference between young adults and early and late adolescents tended to be significant, $F(2, 458) = 5.003$, $p < 0.01$, where the outstanding feminine candidate received higher scores by the young adults than by early and late adolescents. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 1.

Post hoc comparisons regarding the second interaction showed that feminine males gave significantly higher

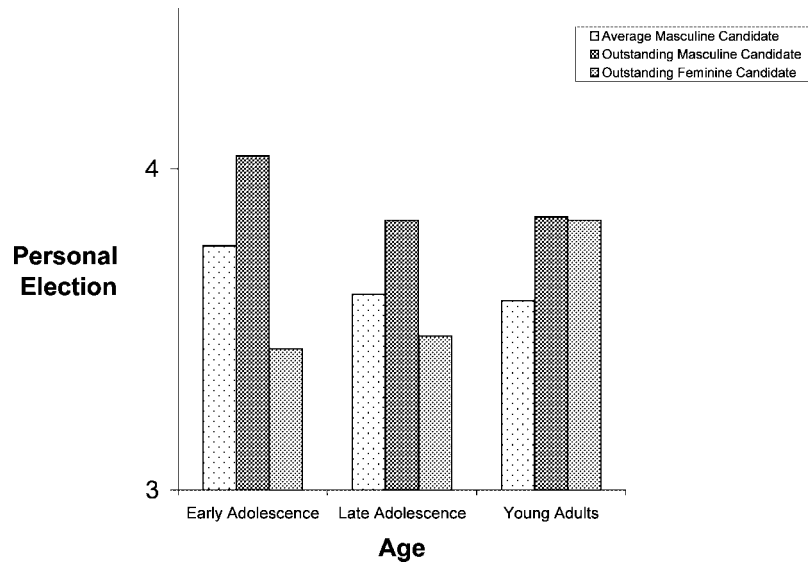


Fig. 1. Personal election choice according to participants' age and type of candidate.

scores to the outstanding feminine candidate than did all the other gender role groups, $F(3, 384) = 8.7428$, $p < 0.0001$. In addition, masculine males gave the masculine candidates (both average and outstanding) significantly higher scores than to the feminine candidate, $F(2, 682) = 21.383$, $p < 0.001$. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 2.

The ANOVA on the participants' prediction of the candidates' chances for election yielded a main effect of the candidate, $F(2, 1270) = 69.761$, $p < 0.001$ and an interaction between candidate and age, $F(4, 1270) =$

4.493, $p < 0.001$. The 3-way interaction between candidate, age, and gender role did not reach our sever significance level, $F(12, 1270) = 1.891$, $p < 0.05$. However, since we had specific hypotheses, we conducted planned comparisons. These comparisons showed that for early and late adolescents, all gender roles believed that others would chose more often the masculine candidates (both outstanding and average) than the outstanding feminine candidate, $F(2, 1555) = 179.396$, $p < 0.001$. For young adults, feminine participants believed that others would equally chose all candidates, and masculine participants

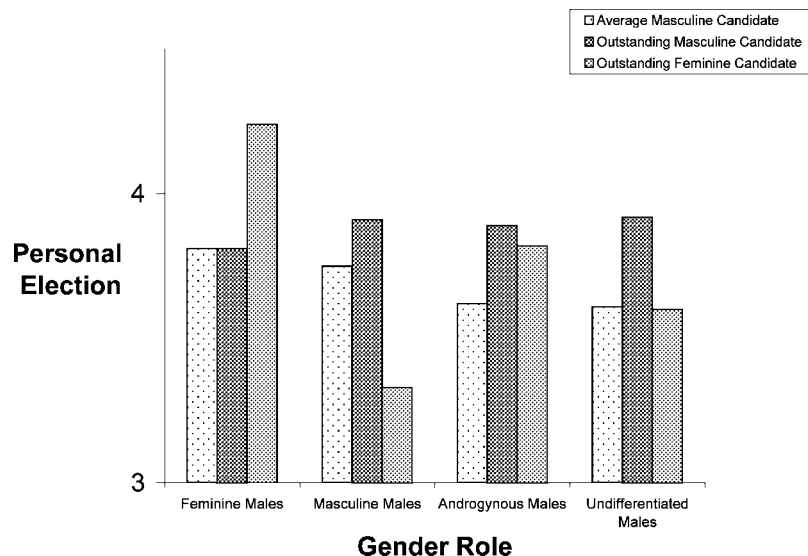


Fig. 2. Personal election choice according to participants' gender role and type of candidate.

Table I. Means and Standard Deviations for Chances for Election According to Candidate, Age, and Gender Role

Age	Candidate					
	Outstanding masculine		Average masculine		Outstanding feminine	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Early adolescents						
Feminine	4.4444	0.7265	3.7857	0.8926	3.8333	0.5774
Undifferentiated	4.2500	0.7164	4.1892	0.7007	3.2143	0.8926
Androgynous	3.9500	0.7164	4.0000	0.7670	3.5000	1.2485
Masculine	4.0192	0.8964	4.1067	0.8633	3.4894	1.0809
Late adolescents						
Feminine	4.333	0.9847	4.5000	0.5345	3.1667	1.1146
Undifferentiated	4.2985	0.6111	4.2051	0.6147	3.1750	0.9306
Androgynous	4.1667	0.9411	3.8667	0.9732	3.3548	0.9848
Masculine	4.1360	0.7223	3.9316	0.7848	3.4386	1.0222
Young adults						
Feminine	3.8000	0.7888	4.4444	0.5270	3.7000	0.4830
Undifferentiated	3.8800	0.7810	3.7917	0.5090	3.8571	0.4781
Androgynous	4.0000	0.6667	3.8889	0.5830	3.7222	0.9583
Masculine	4.0179	0.5557	3.8163	0.4862	3.5625	0.7118

believed that others would choose more often the outstanding masculine candidate than the outstanding feminine candidate, $F(2, 152) = 7.712, p < 0.001$. In addition, feminine young adults tended to give higher scores to the average masculine candidate than did the other gender role groups did, $F(3, 99) = 4.116, p < 0.01$. For adolescents, both early and late, no differences were found between the various gender role groups. The means of this interaction are presented in Table I.

The ANOVA on the candidates' chances to succeed should they be elected yielded a main effect of the candidate, $F(2, 1267) = 13.495, p < 0.001$. The interaction between candidate and gender role did not reach our sever significance level, $F(6, 1267) = 2.175, p < 0.05$. However, since we had specific hypotheses, we conducted planned comparisons. These comparisons showed that feminine participants attributed greater success to the outstanding feminine candidate should he be elected more than did the masculine participants, $F(3, 384) = 4.062, p < 0.01$ (marginally significant). In addition, the feminine participants believed that the feminine candidate would succeed more than the 2 other candidates, should he be elected, $F(2, 95) = 5.699, p < 0.005$, whereas for the masculine participants, there was no difference between the predicted success of the candidates. The means of this interaction are presented in Table II.

Regarding popularity among boys, the ANOVA yielded a main effect of the candidate, $F(2, 1263) = 203.878, p < 0.001$, a main effect of gender role, $F(3, 1263) = 5.875, p < 0.001$ and a main effect of age $F(2, 1263) =$

Table II. Means and Standard Deviations for Chances to Succeed According to Gender Role and Candidate

Gender role	Candidate					
	Outstanding masculine		Average masculine		Outstanding feminine	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Feminine	3.8065	1.0139	3.7419	0.7288	4.3529	0.6458
Undifferentiated	3.7952	0.8520	3.6600	0.9235	4.1200	0.7704
Androgynous	4.0120	0.7885	3.6341	0.9752	3.9552	1.0650
Masculine	3.8584	0.7942	3.6917	0.8110	3.8469	0.9175

$7.293, p < 0.001$. In addition the interaction between candidate and age was significant, $F(4, 1263) = 9.514, p < 0.001$. Post hoc comparisons showed that all 3 age groups, early and late adolescents, and young adults, attributed more popularity to the 2 masculine candidates than to the feminine candidate, $F(2, 441) = 62.292; F(2, 701) = 148.698; F(2, 365) = 19.253, p < 0.001$, respectively. In addition, both early and late adolescents attributed higher popularity to the masculine candidates than did young adults, whereas young adults attributed higher popularity scores to the feminine candidate than did late adolescents. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 3.

Regarding popularity among girls, the ANOVA yielded a main effect of the candidate, $F(2, 1263) = 23.378, p < 0.001$ and a main effect of gender role, $F(3, 1263) = 6.906, p < 0.001$. In addition the interaction between candidate and age was significant, $F(4, 1263) = 4.681, p < 0.001$. Post hoc comparisons showed that early and late adolescents attributed more popularity to the 2 masculine candidates than to the feminine candidate, $F(2, 439) = 14.449; F(2, 699) = 19.457, p < 0.001$, respectively, whereas young adults did not distinguish between them. In addition, young adults and late adolescents gave higher scores to the feminine candidate than did early adolescents, $F(2, 457) = 7.818, p < 0.001$. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 4.

Regarding liking, the ANOVA yielded a main effect of the candidate, $F(2, 1257) = 52.343, p < 0.001$ and age, $F(2, 1257) = 5.844, p < 0.005$. In addition, it yielded the predicted interaction between candidate and age, $F(4, 1257) = 5.226, p < 0.001$, and the predicted interaction between candidate and gender role, $F(6, 1257) = 5.964, p < 0.001$.

Post hoc comparisons on the first interaction, showed that both early and late adolescents liked the 2 masculine candidates more than the feminine candidate, $F(2, 439) = 34.019; F(2, 699) = 28.893$, respectively, $p < 0.001$. Young adults did not distinguish between the various candidates. The feminine candidate was liked significantly

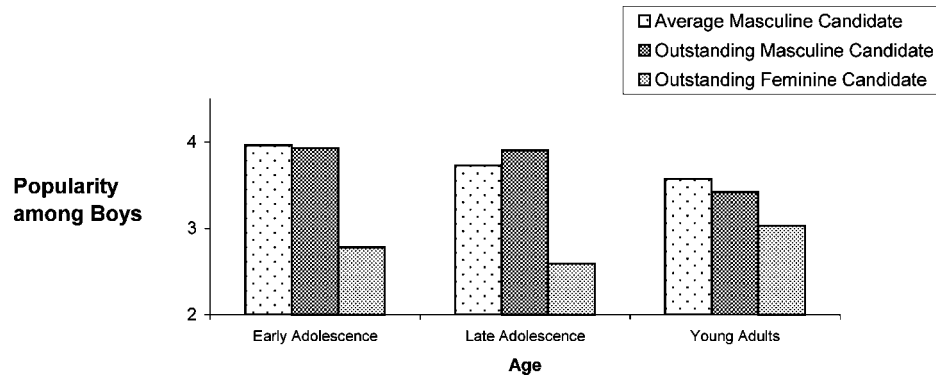


Fig. 3. Perceived popularity among boys according to participants' age and type of candidate.

more by adults than by early and late adolescents, $F(2, 453) = 9.25$, $p < 0.001$. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 5.

Post hoc on the second interaction showed that feminine boys liked the feminine candidate significantly more than others liked him, $F(3, 380) = 9.326$, $p < 0.001$. In addition, only feminine boys did not distinguish in their liking between the various candidates, whereas the undifferentiated and masculine participants, liked the feminine candidate significantly less than they liked the masculine candidates, $F(2, 256) = 15.269$, $p < 0.001$; $F(2, 678) = 49.057$, $p < 0.001$, respectively. It should be noted that although this difference did not reach significant level for the androgynous group, $F(2, 225) = 4.055$, $p < 0.05$, it showed a similar trend. The means are presented in Table III.

Regarding perceived similarity, the ANOVA yielded a main effect of candidate, $F(2, 1268) = 116.388$,

$p < 0.001$ and gender role, $F(3, 1268) = 17.158$, $p < 0.001$. In addition, it yielded the 2 predicted interactions, a significant interaction between candidate and age, $F(4, 1257) = 6.076$, $p < 0.001$, and a significant interaction between candidate and gender role, $F(6, 1257) = 11.318$, $p < 0.001$.

Post hoc regarding the first interaction showed that all 3 age groups perceived the masculine candidates as more similar to themselves than the feminine candidates. The differences between the 3 age groups were either marginally significant or reached alpha level of 0.05 which we did not regard as significant. Early adolescents perceived both masculine candidates, the outstanding and average, as more similar to themselves than did both late adolescents and young adults, $F(2, 525) = 5.249$, $p < 0.01$; $F(2, 531) = 5.645$, $p < 0.05$, respectively. Young adults perceived the feminine candidate as more similar to themselves than did both early and late adolescents,

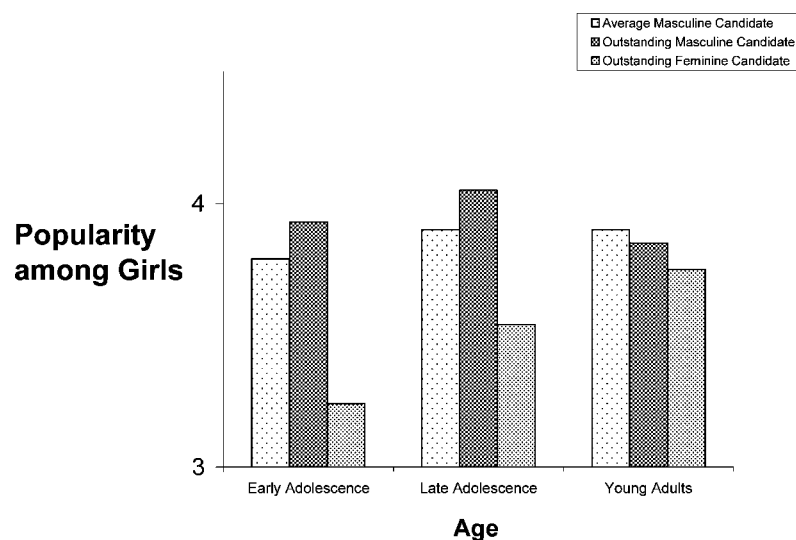


Fig. 4. Perceived popularity among girls according to participants' age and type of candidate.

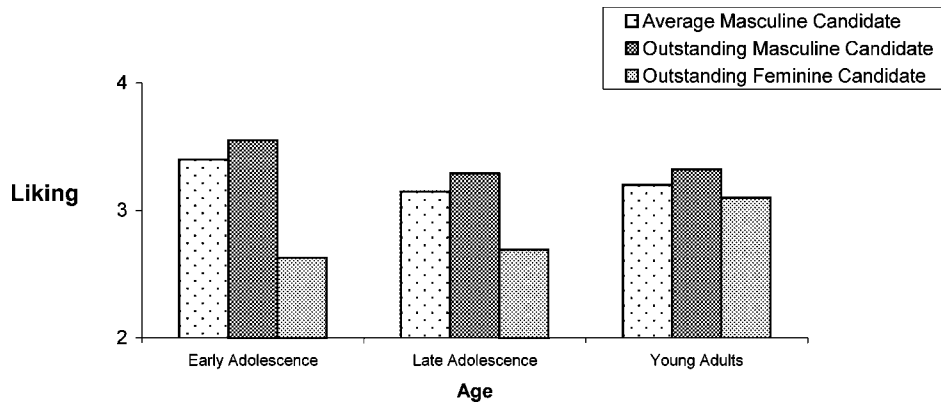


Fig. 5. Liking the candidate according to participants' age and type of candidate.

$F(2, 531) = 5.645$, $p < 0.05$. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 6.

Post hoc comparisons regarding the second interaction showed that only feminine participants did not distinguish between the various candidates, whereas all other gender role groups, undifferentiated, androgynous, and masculine, perceived the feminine candidate as the least similar to themselves, $F(2, 257) = 10.915$, $p < 0.001$; $F(2, 231) = 9.114$, $p < 0.001$; $F(2, 682) = 132.431$, $p < 0.001$, respectively. In addition, masculine and androgynous participants perceived both masculine candidates, the outstanding and average, as more similar to themselves than did the feminine and undifferentiated participants, $F(3, 430) = 12.179$, $p < 0.001$; $F(3, 453) = 16.967$, $p < 0.001$, respectively. In contrast the feminine and androgynous participants perceived the feminine candidate as more similar to themselves than did the masculine and undifferentiated participants, $F(3, 383) = 9.762$, $p < 0.001$. The means of this interaction are presented in Fig. 7.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study evidenced clear age differences regarding gender ideology. As hypothesized, ado-

lescent boys exhibited clear discriminatory behavior, and their election choice and preferences were often based on how stereotypic or counter-stereotypic the candidates' behavior was. In contrast, the election choice of most undergraduates appeared to be based primarily on the merit of the candidates rather than on their masculinity or femininity. In general, the results showed that the most significant differences were found between adults and adolescents while early and late adolescents exhibited similar trends. For example, both early and late adolescents were more likely to elect the outstanding masculine candidate than the outstanding feminine candidate, whereas young adults gave both outstanding candidates (masculine and feminine) similar scores. In addition, early and late adolescents liked the masculine candidates more than they liked the feminine candidate, whereas young adults did not distinguish between the 2. Moreover, the feminine candidate was liked more by the young adults than by the early and late adolescents.

It seems that while egalitarian values have not been incorporated into the norms of adolescents' world, they have penetrated the norms of young adults. As suggested in the introduction, adolescence is characterized by gender intensification (i.e., increased sensitivity to gender stereotypes and adherence to them), and by conformity to social norms. Thus, for adolescents, any deviation from gender role norms is more salient and judged more harshly. Consequently, a male's counter-stereotypic behavior is more salient and is less acceptable to adolescents, and as a result they are more likely to discriminate against him than are young adults. The nondiscriminatory behavior exhibited by young adults may also be a result of their greater awareness of politically correct norms by which they are expected to abide. Interestingly, although the young adults based their own election choice only on merit, they did not attribute the same nondiscriminatory behavior to other participants, suggesting they believed femininity in males

Table III. Means and Standard Deviations of Liking According to Candidate and Age

Age	Candidate					
	Outstanding masculine		Average masculine		Outstanding feminine	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Early adolescents	3.5507	0.8802	3.4026	0.9214	2.6339	1.0178
Late adolescents	3.2925	0.8889	3.1485	0.8428	2.6913	0.9417
Young adults	3.3152	0.6537	3.2045	0.6715	3.1027	0.7860

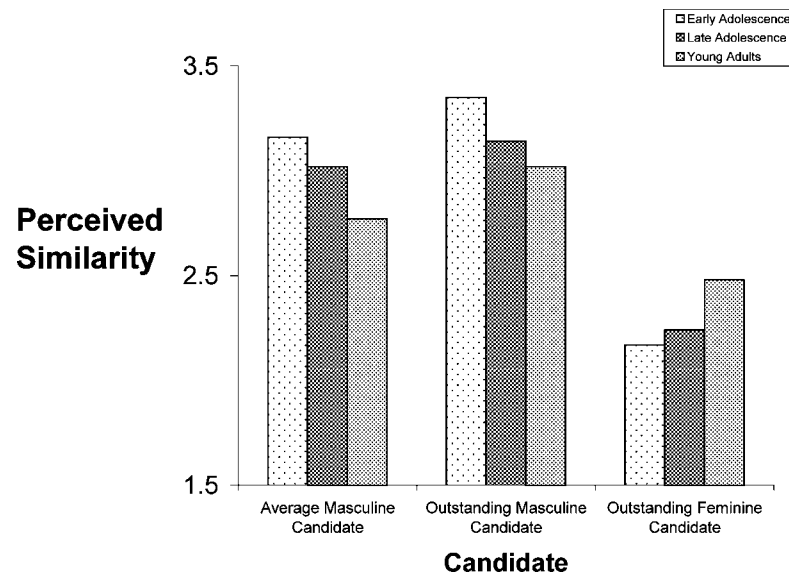


Fig. 6. Perceived similarity according to participants' age and type of candidate.

is an obstacle to election, and masculinity an advantage. This belief that others do discriminate suggests that they have a keen awareness of societal discrimination against feminine males.

As mentioned above, the results indicate that while there were differences between the young adults and both early and late adolescents, no significant differences were found between the 2 stages of adolescence, early and late. As aforementioned, studies examining differences between early and late adolescents on various measures of gender flexibility (but not directly gender discriminatory behavior) have shown inconsistent results. Our re-

sults suggest that with regard to gender ideology and gender discriminatory behavior, no significant changes occur during the 2 stages of adolescence. Alfieri *et al.* (1996) suggested that gender flexibility during adolescence does not change only as a function of age but also depends on the social environment within which an individual lives such as the transition into junior high school. Since in Israel junior high school and high school are combined we assume that early and late adolescents were exposed to similar social environments. We therefore suggest that unless a significant change in one's social environment takes place during adolescence, gender discriminatory behavior

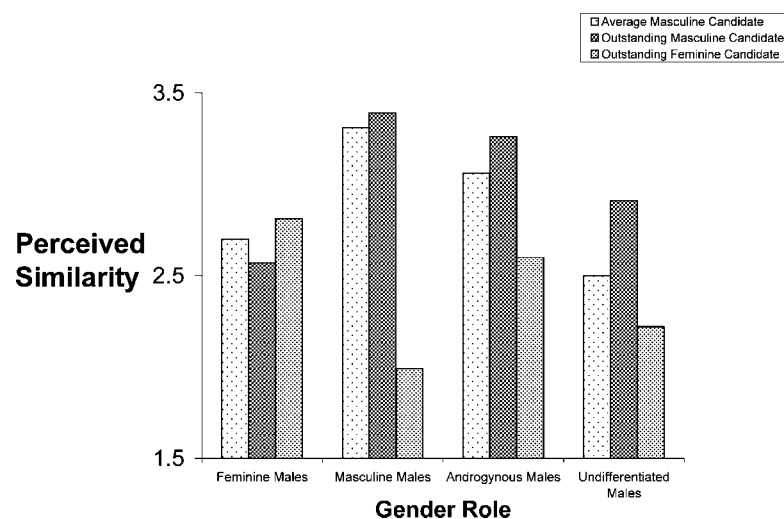


Fig. 7. Perceived similarity according to participants' gender role and type of candidate.

continues throughout adolescence and significantly declines only with the onset of young adulthood. A word of caution, this decline in gender discriminatory behavior in young adulthood may be a developmental change, but also may be due to a change in environment since the young adult participants were university students. However, since the young adult students were all first year students and the study was conducted at the beginning of the year, it is not very likely that the university environment had a major effect on them. In addition, there might be other relevant differences between young adults who do and do not attend university. Further studies should include a group of young adults who do not attend university to allow the results to be more generalized. Future studies should also examine the differences between early and late adolescents in places where junior high and high school are not combined. Alternately, studies should examine 6th graders (who still attend elementary school) in order to see whether these similarities between early and late adolescents still exist despite the difference in the social environment.

Another interesting finding that emerged from this study was that feminine males (i.e., those who attributed to themselves higher scores on traditionally feminine characteristics and lower scores on traditionally masculine characteristics) often exhibited a uniquely different pattern of responses from the other gender role groups. This was true for all age groups. Compared to the participants from the other gender role groups, feminine males gave the feminine candidate higher scores regarding their own personal choice. Furthermore, they liked this candidate and perceived him as more similar to themselves than did participants from the other gender role groups. Moreover, whereas participants from all the other gender role groups perceived the feminine candidate as least similar to themselves, feminine males did not perceive one candidate as more similar to themselves than the others. In addition, while undifferentiated and masculine participants liked the feminine candidate less than they liked the other candidates, and this difference, although not significant, showed a similar trend in androgynous participants, feminine participants did not like one candidate more than the other. Frable (1989) questioned whether feminine individuals are "distinctly egalitarian," suggesting that "in the proper conditions," this characteristic could be elicited (Frable, 1989, p. 106). Our results suggest that feminine males are indeed more egalitarian and discriminate to a lesser extent than the other gender role groups. In contrast, masculine males stood out in that they were at times most extreme in their patterns of discrimination.

The uniqueness of the feminine males and to a lesser extent that of the masculine males is an interesting finding

since in our study, the femininity and masculinity of the candidates was clearly defined in terms of interests and physical appearance (e.g., ballet and slight built, versus football and broad shoulders). These characteristics are totally *unrelated* to expressivity as defined in gender role research as expressing feelings, sensitivity, tenderness, and nurturance or to instrumentality defined with characteristics such as leadership, achievement and competitiveness. In contrast, feminine males were defined on the basis of their self-perception of traditional masculine and feminine characteristics that did not include interests or physical appearance. This finding suggests that this self-perception touches on an inner feeling of femininity and is not just self-perception of desirable aspects of instrumentality and expressivity. This interpretation is supported by previous findings (Lobel, 1994) showing that feminine males evidenced unique emotional and motivational judgments in gender related situations.

It should be noted that the study had some limitations that should be addressed in future studies. First, the presentation of a "political" candidate may have generated more discrimination than would be the case if a feminine male were in a different role. Second, participants were presented with information about only 1 candidate, and it is possible that they would respond differently if they had to compare between 2 candidates. In addition, the present study relied on self-reports of behavior in a hypothetical situation and it could be that different results would emerge in a real-life situation. Finally, this study focused only on males, and it is possible that different results would emerge for females since counter-stereotypic behavior is more acceptable in our society for females than for males (Lobel *et al.*, 1993b). Future studies should address these questions in order to achieve greater generalization and a better external validity.

In sum, the results indicated clear age differences in gender discriminatory behavior, such that young adults discriminated significantly less than did both early and late adolescents. Our results suggest that although previous studies showed differences between early and late adolescents in various aspects, such as parental conflicts and attitudes towards social conventions (Hill and Holbeck, 1985; Kuttler *et al.*, 1999; Smetana, 1988, 1995), no significant changes occur in gender discriminatory behavior during adolescence. It seems that gender intensification and the strict social pressures and demands for conformity that have already been described as characteristic of this age group, continue throughout adolescence and make counter-stereotypic behavior salient and less acceptable. It is only with the onset of adulthood, that individuals seem to judge on the basis of merit more often than on the basis of the masculinity and femininity of the candidate, and

accept counter-stereotypic behavior. Future studies should examine adolescence discriminatory behavior in females as well as using a broader spectrum of ages.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was supported in part by a grant from the Israel Science Foundation.

REFERENCES

- Alfieri, T. J., Ruble, D. N., and Higgins, E. T. (1996). Gender stereotypes during adolescence: Developmental changes and the transition to junior high-school. *Dev. Psychol.* 32: 1129–1137.
- Appleton, H. L., and Gurwitz, S. B. (1976). Willingness to help as determined by the sex-role appropriateness of the help-seeker's career goals. *Sex Roles* 2: 321–329.
- Archer, J. (1991). A methodological commentary on gender schema research. *Br. J. Soc. Psychol.* 30: 185–188.
- Bem, S. L. (1974). The measurement of psychological androgyny. *J. Consult. Clin. Psychol.* 42: 155–162.
- Bem, S. L. (1981). Gender Schema theory: A cognitive account of sex-typing. *Psychol. Rev.* 88: 354–364.
- Berndt, T. J. (1979). Developmental changes in conformity to peers and parents. *Dev. Psychol.* 15: 608–616.
- Berndt, T. J., and Heller, K. A. (1986). Gender stereotypes and social inferences: A developmental study. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 50: 889–898.
- Berndt, T. J., and Keefe, K. (1995). Friends' influence on adolescents' adjustment to school. *Child Dev.* 66: 1312–1329.
- Biernat, M. (1991). Gender stereotypes and the relationship between masculinity and femininity: A developmental analysis. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 61: 351–365.
- Carter, D. B., and Patterson, C. J. (1982). Sex roles as social conventions: The development of children's conceptions of sex-role stereotypes. *Dev. Psychol.* 18: 812–824.
- Constanzo, P. R., and Shaw, M. E. (1966). Conformity as a function of age level. *Child Dev.* 37: 967–975.
- Costrich, N., Feinstein, J., Kidder, L., Maracek, J., and Pascale, L. (1975). When stereotypes hurt: Three studies of penalties for sex role reversals. *J. Exp. Soc. Psychol.* 11: 520–530.
- Deaux, K., Kite, M. D., and Lewis, L. L. (1985). Clustering and gender schema: An uncertain link. *Pers. Soc. Psychol. Bull.* 11: 387–397.
- Eccles, J. S. (1987). Adolescence: Gateway to gender role transcendence. In Carter, D. B. (ed.), *Current Conceptions of Sex Roles and Sex Typing*. Praeger, New York, pp. 225–241.
- Frale, D. E. S. (1989). Sex typing and gender ideology: Two facets of the individual's gender psychology that go together. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 49: 459–468.
- Hill, J. P., and Holbeck, G. N. (1985). *Familial Adaptations to Pubertal Change: The Role of Conflict*. Paper presented at the biennial meetings of the Society for Research in Child Development, Toronto.
- Hill, J. P., and Lynch, M. E. (1983). The intensification of gender-related role expectations during early adolescence. In Brooks-Gunn, J., and Peterson, A. C. (eds.), *Girls at Puberty*. Plenum, New York, pp. 201–228.
- Hurlock, E. B. (1973). *Adolescent Development*. McGraw Hill, New York.
- Huston, A. C., and Alvarez, M. M. (1990). The socialization context of gender role development in early adolescence. In Montgomery, R., and Adams, G. R. (eds.), *From Childhood to Adolescence*. Sage, Newbury Park, CA, pp. 156–179.
- Katz, P. A. (1979). The development of female identity. *Sex Roles* 5: 155–178.
- Katz, P. A., and Ksiansnak, K. R. (1994). Developmental aspects of gender role flexibility and traditionality in middle childhood and adolescence. *Dev. Psychol.* 30: 272–282.
- Kuttler, A. F., LaGreca, A. M., and Prinstein, M. J. (1999). Friendship qualities and social-emotional functioning of adolescents with close, cross-sex friendships. *J. Res. Adolesc.* 9: 339–366.
- Lobel, T. E. (1994). Sex typing and the social perception of gender stereotypic and nonstereotypic behavior: The uniqueness of feminine males. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 66: 379–385.
- Lobel, T. E., Agami-Rozenblat, O., and Bempechat, J. (1993a). Personality correlates of career choice in the kibbutz: A comparison between career and noncareer women. *Sex Roles* 29: 359–371.
- Lobel, T. E., Bempechat, J., Gewirtz, J., Shoken-Topaz, T., and Bach, E. (1993b). The role of gender-related information and self-endorsement of traits in preadolescents inferences and judgments. *Child Dev.* 64: 1285–1294.
- Lobel, T. E., Gur, S., and Yerushalmi, H. (1989). Cheating behavior of sex-typed and androgynous children in sex-stereotyped and non-sex stereotyped tasks. *J. Res. Pers.* 23: 302–312.
- Markus, H., Crane, M., Bernstein, S. L., and Siladi, M. (1982). Self schema and gender. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 42: 1119–1134.
- Nelson, C., and Keith, J. (1990). Comparisons of female and male early adolescent sex role attitude and behavior development. *Adolescence* 25: 183–204.
- Newcomb, A. F., and Bagwell, C. L. (1995). Children's friendship relations: A meta-analytic review. *Psychol. Bull.* 117: 306–347.
- Plumb, P., and Cowan, G. (1984). A developmental study of destereotyping and androgynous activity preferences of tomboys, non-tomboys, and males. *Sex Roles* 10: 703–711.
- Rajecki, D. W., De Graaf-Kaser, R., and Lee-Rasmussen, J. (1992). New impressions and more discrimination: Effects of individuation on gender-label stereotypes. *Sex Roles* 27: 171–185.
- Signorella, M. L., Bigler, R. S., and Liben, L. S. (1993). Developmental changes in children's gender schemata about others: A meta-analytic review. *Dev. Rev.* 13: 147–183.
- Smetana, J. C. (1988). Concepts of self and social conventions: Adolescents' and parents' reasoning about actual family conflict. In Gunnar, M. R., and Collins, W. A. (eds.), *Minnesota Symposia on Child Psychology: Vol. 21. Development During the Transition to Adolescence*. Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, pp. 78–122.
- Smetana, J. C. (1995). Parenting styles and conceptions of parental authority during adolescence. *Child Dev.* 66: 299–316.
- Spence, J. T. (1984). Masculinity, femininity and gender related traits: A conceptual analysis and critique of current research. *Prog. Exp. Pers. Res.* 13: 1–97.
- Spence, J. T. (1993). Gender related traits and gender ideology: Evidence for a multifactorial theory. *J. Pers. Soc. Psychol.* 64: 624–635.
- Stoddart, T., and Turiel, E. (1985). Children's concepts of cross-gender activities. *Child Dev.* 56: 1241–1252.
- Tilby, P. J., and Kalin, R. (1980). Effects of sex-role deviant lifestyles in otherwise normal persons on the perception of maladjustment. *Sex Roles* 6: 581–592.
- Urberg, K. A. (1979). Sex role conceptualization in adolescents and adults. *Dev. Psychol.* 15: 90–92.
- Vitaro, F., Tremblay, R. E., Kerr, M., Pagani, L., and Bukowski, W. M. (1997). Disruptiveness, friends' characteristics, and delinquency in early adolescence: A test of two competing models of development. *Child Dev.* 68: 676–689.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.