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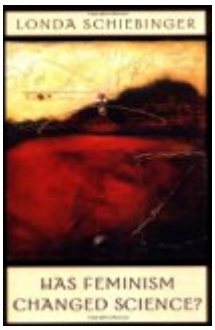

Londa Schiebinger. *Has Feminism Changed Science?.* Cambridge, Mass and London: Harvard University Press, 1999. x + 252 pp. $27.95, cloth, ISBN 978-0-674-38113-1.

Reviewed by Doreen Valentine

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When dozens of book titles answer a query of "women in science," it is natural to ask what makes Londa Schiebinger's recent contribution to the subject worth reading. Surely, we know already, especially if we've experienced it firsthand or read even a couple of these texts, that science has changed since the 1970s to encourage women's participation and to permit analyses of scientific norms and assumptions in terms of gender. But the question posing as the title for Schiebinger's work is not merely a rhetorical one; rather, it reminds us that change is not inevitable, that it happens unevenly and by degrees, and that more work, particularly in the arena of science knowledge, is required before equity and objectivity are possible.

Where other texts on the subject offer (separately) statistics and anecdote, historical perspectives, biographical portraits of the (few) great women scientists, or highly-theoretical critiques of the culture of science, Schiebinger's tack is to adopt every tool within reach to address the question of gender in science. The matrix of analysis she constructs is developed across time and across disciplines, providing a comparative framework for considering why certain fields, such as primatology, are now strongly and positively influenced by women's participation, and why others, such as physics, mathematics, and the other "hard sciences," remain bastions of male-dominance. Indeed, the third section of this book applies the kit of analytical tools to a broad set of scientific disciplines (medicine, primatology, archaeology, and human origins, biology, and physics and math) to reveal disparities between soft and hard, and applied and basic sciences in their progress toward incorporating women as participant and gender as subject.

But perhaps here Schiebinger isn't as exhaustive nor as specific as one would like: how, for example, do we reconcile the majority representation of women in primatology where the field focuses on social behavior through field observation with the fact that women are scarce in neuroscience labs that use primate brains as their model system? And speaking of neuroscience, where is the critical discussion of whether female and male brains are differentially wired to bias the ex-

pression of gender differences in behavior and cognitive ability? Such an analysis, placed in the context of cognitive science, evolutionary psychology, and history of science, and in the capable hands of Schiebinger, would help elucidate the still controversial question of whether there is a feminine style operating in the production of knowledge. Concerning gender differences in mathematical performance on standardized tests, such as the SAT, Schiebinger buries this ever-burning issue in the penultimate chapter on physics and math. Other pivotal issues are also embedded in the section on disciplines, and thus are lost to the synoptic chapters at the beginning and end of the book.

For its range, lucidity, and erudition, ***Has Feminism Changed Science?***, reaches beyond many of its competing volumes for the reader seeking the big picture. The picture, however, is colored gray for many fields and at many institutions. As Schiebinger describes, it is also firmly situated, in its daily practice and its ethic, in a masculine model of professionalism that divides work into public and domestic spheres. Women's careers in science, then, are often caught in a snare between these spheres, forcing demands on her time and attention that can derail a climb to the top of her field, or, in the worst case, spur an exit from science altogether. But gender is only one signifier of science and scientist, race and class being two others that Schiebinger only mentions in passing. What a truly rich and comprehensive book this would have been had these variables, too often overlooked, been taken up as well. Nonetheless, advocates for change armed with Schiebinger's prescriptive, which is spelled out in the final chapter, are poised to graft fundamental and profound changes to both the heart of science and the culture of professional work.

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