Seminar: Women’s Brains and Mehl et. al.’s studies.

Nick / Chris: Gave background in ten minute presentation about Gould’s article.

* Nick started with general ethos, background.
* Chris: Persuasion essay—trying to disprove the arguments of scientific folks… main point is to persuade. He refutes the studies of Broca (not a large enough study). Not too flamboyant in expressing what he thinks.
* Nick Reed: He says that he respects those with the opposite viewpoint. Then discussed the element of mass / intelligence with Paul Broca.
* Chris: At the cave… nine males, females (small sample size).
* Showed a picture of Paul Broca, then went to initial data from research.
* Nick Reed reviewed the data from research, Broca’s inability to incorporate height, type of death,
* Chris on Broca and evolution. Small sample size. Difference = pretty small.
* Nick: Gave explanation of the part of the brain he was measuring.
* Nick Reed went to Gustave Le Bon’s vicious attack on women. Gave the line of “distinguished women” and Le Bon’s comparison with gorillas with two heads.
* Chris: Women = children or small savages.
* Nick Reed: Gould re-did Broca’s study, changed his argument. **Mistook Montessori and Manouvrier…**
* Nick Reed: Went to Montessori, who claimed the opposite of Broca—that women are actually superior to men.
* Chris: Machines negate male strength advantage.
* Nick Reed: Interesting pictures we found online. Gave some stereotype-based depictions of the brain.
* Chris: Do they follow the ideas? Spoke about truth, satire with the brain depictions.
* Nick Reed went to “Are Women Really More Talkative Than Men?”
* Chris Asgian: Mehl’s EAR system.
* Nick Reed: Used university students… could mean “different things.” Depending on age, one could talk more or less. Not enough to say that women are definitively more talkative than men.

Nick Reed: Question about Gould’s praise of Broca strengthen or weaken his argument? Why?

* Chandler: He praised the meticulous work… gave a paraphrase of Gould’s idea—numbers were there, but interpretation wasn’t.
* Schumacher: Comment wasn’t meant to strengthen or weaken Gould’s argument. He doesn’t want to make this look like he’s attacking Broca. Instead, he’s attacking the preconceptions of his time. Broca was scrupulous in getting his data, but didn’t interpret it well.
* Carmichael: This is showing what Gould is doing… I read it as “I’m finishing the work.” Explaining what he’s doing.
* Paul Hanna: Counterargument… Broca did a good job with his experiment, but his work / interpretation is “crazy.”
* Eble read that quote.
* Kunkel: Spoke about different studies, how this went wrong… quotes from George Eliot’s reading… but refuting old studies. I didn’t know what to make of old studies. Seems like he’s refuting more than making his own point.
* Henry: (In response) Null hypothesis (similarity of men / women’s differences). Thus, Gould has to prove his point via proving that the other point is wrong.
* Kunkel: Not sure…
* **Nick Reed** asked a clarifying question: “What do you mean by that?”
* Kunkel: Focused more on the other scientists being incorrect.
* Chandler: Much time spent on brain sizes. Where’s the hard science that demonstrates the idea that larger brain size demonstrates greater intelligence?
* Kellis: Using brain size as a direct measure of intelligence. Eventually shifted away from this.
* Wheat: So what’s the point here? Why make this argument? If it’s been disproven, why focus?
* Schumacher: Montessori used the same type of logic to show that women are superior. Read from the last paragraph… **Excellent** work focusing discussion. His own conclusion= none of this makes any sense.
* Shaffer: Throw anything they did under the bus… this is how sexist people are… they use a measure to demonstrate an idea that they believed.
* Carmichael: Intelligence as superior? Intelligence doesn’t match superiority… I see that in today’s world, intelligence is a marker… perhaps Gould was showing that Montessori was making the comment about strength and intelligence. Why does intelligence automatically mean superiority?
* Pappalardo: Men = physical strength, should also be superior in mental strength.
* Wheat: Intelligence as almighty factor. Paleolithic times… intelligence…
* Hanna: Size isn’t everything? Situation comes into play. Intelligence has many meanings.
* Carmichael: Maybe Gould should have qualified…
* Eble: Does that matter?
* Paz: Where do you see that? Irrelevant to the point… brought this up as a recourse, as a history behind the debate.

Eble: So… what is the thrust of the writing?

* Carmichael: Difficult to tell…writing about something that he disqualified.
* Asgian: Main claim= men, women aren’t more superior… one definitive study doesn’t say so. Recognizes cases of “science” being used to “prove” a point about one gender or another.
* Pappalardo: Indians, resettlement… people write books, kind of apologize. Showing debates of the time.
* Hanna: Trying to get people to try to use “scientific evidence” in order to demonstrate gender-based stereotypes.
* Orkwis: Creates gaps…
* Schumacher: To Carmichael’s point…still a story worth telling. Demonstrates the source of ideas… you still learn about Freud
* Shaffer: Still affects us today.
* Orkwis: White European male has tried to separate itself from others…

Nick Reed: Next question… What is Gould’s point in extending his conclusion to other groups of people?

* Paz: Biological labeling is what he’s trying to claim… more than just women have been oppressed.
* Kunkel: Made a connection with this idea.
* Asgian: Connection with *A Long Way Gone*, how people spoke to Ishmael slowly because he’s a native person.
* Strotman: Ames, Iowa… gave an anecdote… connected to *A Long Way Gone*… dude in Iowa did the same thing to a grandmother.
* Carmichael: Clarification…
* Shaffer: Gave an anecdote of Spain, slow-speaking Spaniards to English folks. Wrote about it in his Stranger in the Photo is Me essay… “my American” and “my Spaniard”
* Carmichael / Paz: Anecdotes about cultural idenfication…

Nick Reed: So…in the last reading about talkativeness, the author makes a point about the number of words spoken a day. But whenever I hear that women are more talkative than men, I think about when they’re in conversation with one another, I think about the nature of the conversation, not necessarily the daily usage?

* Wheat: Psychology and relationships… Paris Guinn’s paper from the Writing Center. It’s easy to piss girls off. No matter the circumstance, there’s an “I’m wrong” mentality. With couples… there’s a hierarchy from the woman’s standpoint… men would rather listen than upset the female.
* Carmichael: Even the way you say it… that’s not making it about women… could piss off anybody.
* Wheat: If you’re just driving around with a girl in the car… generally, she’s talking more often…
* Paz: Depends on the relationship.
* Carmichael: My dad’s anger…
* Wheat: Authority?
* Carmichael: Whoever has the floor… depends on the situation.
* Paz: Difficult to measure this… people have different personality traits. Cool to look at the words, but it seems pointless. There are many different types of people. University students = confounding variable.
* Henry Myers: Men and women have different
* Schumacher: Random sampling accounts for that… always room for error…
* Paz: On average, that’s 16K words = a broad number. I probably vary…
* Rumsey: To truly justify that, I have to put a tape recorder to my mouth… communication isn’t just words said / spoken. Perhaps the stereotype comes from women having more emotional … (Wheat interrupted)
* Wheat: Sensing brain waves… measure the brain impulses of emotion… accounts for all forms of communication.
* Pappalardo: Study = to see if people are more talkative…
* Shaffer: What is talkativeness? People who use many words aren’t always considered more talkative? Hard concept to define. Those words could be monosyllabic…
* Asgian: In the study with the two, the EAR would record on and off, recording little blurbs.
* Shaffer: Mr. Eble might consider a talkative person someone who’s whispering to someone else in class. The definition is different.
* Henry Myers: Everyone’s definition is different, but here it’s the number of words. The essay doesn’t put a claim of value on it.
* Eble: Claim of fact?
* Carmichael: Average days of men versus women?
* Paul Hanna: Over many days…
* Carmichael: On average, I’d probably say that more men might go to work…
* Eble gave sass…
* Asgian: Women talking to girlfriends at home…
* Henry: Men and women can have these jobs…

Eble: Where are we going? Why did I pair these readings?

* Hanna: Stereotypes proven and disproven via science. Thus… Gould versus Mehl, conducting experiments well versus poorly.
* Kunkel: Disproving stereotypes… not evidence to prove / disprove to support…
* Paz: To bolster that—to refute the experiments… disproving actual research.
* Orkwis: Point = we use stereotypes more than we think. They don’t tell the whole story; only a part. Humans are all unique.
* Rumsey: Stereotyping, dehumanizing…
* Carmichael: My question… men = stereotypes… shared a U4U event anecdote.
* Eble: Gender = men, too…

Asgian: Made a segue with misogyny.

Reed: Clarified… does the culture of Moeller promote a misogynistic culture? Or are we actually misogynistic?

* Paz: Encourages, but we don’t actually believe it…
* Carmichael: Relationships in 8th grade versus now… now that we’re seniors, we’re actually seeing women as people.
* Eble: Asked for clarity…
* Carmichael: More people in relationships…
* (Nick let Davis talk) Davis: Student section in football game… (Paul said “Hoes gotta go”)… “Flash or dash” comment. The teachers don’t let that happen… guys haven’t matured…
* Hanna: Scholarly intelligence, superiority. We don’t necessarily believe that. Ursuline = brains on a body.
* Paz: MND = opposite…
* Reed: 4 floors of whores…
* Paul provided a bit more of a scholarly approach…
* Paz: Shared idea of “Women are stupid…” from a student.
* Schumacher: I defend people’s ability to make jokes…that’s usually what it is. Conversation with “girls are dumb.”
* Orkwis: Girl scout cookies… survey, lying about stereotypes. If you actually had a real representation, you might see more noble viewpoints.
* Eble killed conversation.

Shaffer: Idea of coed versus single-sex. Opens the door for us to be misogynistic.

* Paz: We can say whatever we want…
* Carmichael: Women around me are smarter.
* Schumacher: This is about the person, not one feature.
* Paz: Sometimes we make stereotypes to make ourselves feel better. Cited a quote from the Gould article about “prejudiced men.”
* Asgian: Everyone has a stake…

Eble: Male/female (sex) versus men/women (gender)

* Carmichael: You’re born with a sex, then you become a gender.
* Strotman: Biology versus personhood.
* Henry: If you are a male, you can be a woman?
* Eble: Why?
* Henry: But you can’t be a woman if you’re a male?
* Carmichael: Stereotypes that we fill…
* Henry: A woman can do that too…
* Carmichael: Shared a discussion of his family, his brother being called a “man”
* Rumsey
* Schumacher: Gender versus gender identity…
* Shaffer: You’re the man versus stop being a girl
* Schumacher: Masculine versus feminine characteristics…shared a World Affairs summit anecdote.
* Carmichael: We come up with terms that crutch a “female becoming a man”