

# Women's Dreams, Men's Dreams— The Difference<sup>\*</sup>



## Who Is This Dreamer?

The dreamer stretches, yawns, and comes fully awake. Drowsily clasping the notepad and pen at bedside, the figure jots down the essence of a just-finished dream. The room is dim, the hair is tousled, the nightshirt is unrevealing. Peeking over the writer's shoulder, can you tell if these are the words of a woman or of a man?

Mother comes to me, dressed as she was when I was a child-young, in a long dress with a low waist and a Basque beret. She has a loose sweater on top, with a pale blue, rather gray, scarf tossed over her shoulder, and white sport shoes with dots-she always was an elegant woman. Her hair is graying, and on her face is a sweet, sweet expression-she lost that in her long illness. I can vividly see her image and at the same time feel her atmosphere, what she represents. I sense a real contact is established, one that I had lost since her death ...

Few readers would hesitate to identify the writer of this dream account as a woman. Why? (Without reading further, you may wish to take the short test at the end of this chapter right now, to assess how well you recognize the differences between men's and women's dreams.)

The author of this dream description is, indeed, a woman-she is married, fifty-five years old, and will be called Lynette. She had this dream sometime after her mother's lingering death from cancer. As we shall see later, dreams about deceased parents are a fairly common theme for adult women. We shall also see what Lynette learned from this dream.

We have said that women's dreams are different from men's. We examine here the characteristic features that make up that difference. Most adults sense the contrast, qualities they intuitively recognize as "female," rather

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than knowing them as findings of dream research. Several typical feminine characteristics are contained in the excerpt above.

### *Empress of Dream Recall*

First, women -are superb dream recallers. Ms. Typical is far more aware of the fleeting imagery of her nights than Mr. Typical. Throughout the centuries women have passed along the "secrets" of dream interpretation by oral tradition. Among Greeks today there are still old women who are known in their extended families and villages as the interpreters of dreams.<sup>1</sup> In other Middle Eastern cultures as well, Iran and Turkey, the tellers of dream truths are often female.<sup>2</sup> Who knows, perhaps they are the descendents of the oracle at Delphi in Greece, or of the priestesses at the temples of Asklepios at Pergamon in Turkey, or of the temple of Isis in Egypt?

In the hundreds of workshops and classes in dreamwork that I have led over the years, the majority of attendees have been women. The ratio, I would estimate, is about eight women to two men. Of course some men are very good indeed at dream recall and some women poor at it, but, on average, the female excels.

Many couples, I have also noticed in my nearly forty years of dream study, consist of a high dream recaller and a low dream recaller. Usually the good recaller is the woman. "It's incredible the dream stories my wife tells—complete adventures! I hardly remember anything in the morning," is the oft-repeated comment a husband makes to me. When the rare mate happens to be the high dream recaller, his mate is customarily poor in this ability—an intriguing instance of opposites attracting.

Of course, these observations alone do not prove that the average woman remembers dreams better than the average man. The difference could simply be a result of greater cultural acceptance for women's interest in dreams. Suggestive, however, are studies showing that people who are good at dream recall tend to experience anxiety, are often introspective, and may be light sleepers.<sup>3</sup> Both men and women sometimes have these tendencies.

**High Estrogen and High Dream Recall?** Although they are not in total agreement, researchers routinely report that pregnant women—especially in the second trimester—recall their dreams even more readily than women who are not pregnant.<sup>4</sup> This finding is, I believe, an important clue to women's apparently superior dream recall.

There may be a relationship between the level of estrogen in a woman's body and her degree of dreaming. If so, this explanation would also account for the observation that the amount women dream, as well as their recall of dreams, fluctuates with the stage of their menstrual cycle. Researchers occasionally report that the peak of dreaming, and memory of doing so, occurs between ovulation (when estrogen is high) and the onset of menstruation (when estrogen is low).<sup>5</sup> Older women who take estrogen to replace their own diminished supply also sometimes report that their amount of dream recall varies during the month. Investigators studying menopause find that post-menopause women who ingest estrogen, to replace their diminished supply, dream more than those who do not take the hormone.

When researchers plot the lifelong pattern of sleeping and dreaming, they find several differences between the sexes. A team at the University of Florida Sleep Laboratories in 1974, led by Robert Williams, measured the sleep parameters of 237 normal males and females ages three to seventy-nine.<sup>6</sup> The amount of REM sleep declined sharply for both males and females from infancy to puberty, thereafter dropping gradually. In childhood both boys and girls spent approximately 30 percent of their sleep time in REM;<sup>7</sup> at puberty both sexes had about 25 percent of their sleep time in REM.<sup>8</sup>

For males the percentage of REM sleep reached a low point of 23 percent in their thirties; then it remained steady until their seventies, when there was another slight decline.<sup>9</sup> In contrast women's amount of REM did not show any perceptible drop from their twenties onward, only a very gradual decline. Thus although males dream less by their thirties, women's decline in REM is less steep with aging.

**Women Have More Deep Sleep.** Deep sleep is the stage when our brain waves are most slow. In addition to making us feel rested and refreshed, it is the time when the growth hormones are released: it is the stage of sleep that allows us to recover from fatigue. Although both sexes showed less deep sleep (stage 4) in older years in the

Williams' study, women continued to have more deep sleep than men, as well as more REM, until past menopause.

In their fifties women had less deep sleep than at younger years, but they continued to exceed men into the elder years. Among some elderly men, deep sleep disappeared entirely, but it remained present in about half of the elderly women. For example, in the Florida study that was headed by Williams only one out of ten of the elderly male subjects had any stage 4 sleep, whereas six out of eleven of the older women still slept deeply.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, in a study conducted by Rene Spiegel in Basel, Switzerland, in 1981, several elderly women exhibited no significant change in any part of their sleep patterns from those of younger persons.<sup>11</sup> Spiegel noted patterns similar to those of Williams and his colleagues: the elderly women in his study spent 14 percent less time in REM sleep than young men did, while the elderly men spent 19 percent less time in REM.<sup>12</sup> The older women had about twice as much deep sleep as the older men.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, elderly men showed about twice the number of awakenings as elderly women did and they had more sleep problems.<sup>14</sup> The overall sleep of Spiegel's women was deeper, longer, and subject to fewer disturbances than that of the men. Men therefore show changes in sleep patterns as much as twenty years earlier than women; thus women are said to "sleep younger." There is still much we need to learn about the process, but it is certain that women continue to dream more and to sleep more deeply throughout their lives.<sup>15</sup>

These findings, along with the others mentioned above, suggest that female hormones are closely linked to women's greater amount of dreaming and hence their greater dream recall. Whatever the cause of dreaming may prove to be, it is small wonder that women are better dream recallers if they have more dreams to remember. Dream recall, by the way, *decreases* during a period of mental illness.<sup>16</sup> This is especially so during severe depression, and cessation of dreaming in a person who usually recalls dreams has been associated in some cases with attempted suicide. Remembering our dreams seems to help us stay aware of how we are feeling and alerts us to get help when it is needed.

**Approach to Life and Dream Recall.** Life-style also influences dream recall. One study showed that art students report more dreams than engineering students. Presumably, the art students had a heightened interest in imagery whether awake or asleep. High dream recallers seem to be more introspective and more interested in how the mind works than low recallers.<sup>17</sup> Another study revealed that high dream recallers are especially sensitive.<sup>18</sup>

For either sex, deliberate interest in dreaming is usually associated with greater dream recall. It is a memory skill that can be improved with training.

Researchers find that people who are learning new skills, such as a foreign language, dream more.<sup>19</sup> This fact has led to the speculation that dreaming is somehow crucial in consolidating our memories. More specifically, REM dreaming is believed to help process and store information, and perhaps stimulate the sensory system during sleep, whereas non-REM sleep is thought to ensure our physical growth, cell repair, and restoration.<sup>20</sup> Older people whose minds are still keen have been found to dream more than those whose abilities are waning. We have already pointed out that older women exhibit more dreaming.

### ***Women's Long, Long Dream Tales***

Along with being good recallers, women characteristically give lengthy dream descriptions. Dream reports increase in length with age for both sexes, according to researcher Robert Van de Castle,<sup>21</sup> but at every step girls give more extensive descriptions than boys. Using a collection of one thousand dreams from two hundred college students, half of them men and half women, he and Calvin Hall reported that, on average, the dreams from females were 8 percent longer than those from men.<sup>22</sup>

This difference would probably have been much greater had they not eliminated from the study any dream report longer than three hundred words. In my dream diary from the age of fourteen until the present age of fifty-three, comprising a series of volumes scanning over thirty-nine years and containing more than twenty thousand dreams, almost all the dream accounts exceed three hundred words. Although I am unusual in having recorded my dreams across such a broad span of time, I resemble most women in that my dream recall and dream descriptions are ample.

A study of children's dreams found that changes in length of report depended on the child's age. In children three to five years old, researcher David Foulkes noted that dream reports were almost equal in length; he found that the typical girl's dream report for his subjects at five years old was fourteen words long and the typical boy's dream report was thirteen words long. No description exceeded fifty words.<sup>23</sup>

However, by age nine to eleven, girls' dream reports were perceptibly longer (they averaged 75.5 words, whereas the boys' reports were 60.5 words). The maximum report length he obtained was 443 for girls and 249 for boys of this age. (In his study, this difference did not hold for the older children of eleven to fifteen.)<sup>24</sup>

Women give longer dream reports partly due to the fact that they remember more of their dreams; they also use more words. Adjectives and detailed descriptions are far more frequently employed by women in writing and speaking. (For this reason, the sample quiz at the end of the chapter has been made more difficult by presenting dream descriptions of roughly equal length.)

**Women's Superior Language Skills.** The underlying cause of women's longer dream reports is probably due to their generally superior skill in language. On average, women test as more verbally fluent than men. Although men and women generally score as being equally intelligent on IQ tests, they differ in the items on which they excel.

Girls who are asked to give definitions of words, or read complicated passages and show they understand them ordinarily score higher than boys on the same task. Boys are much more likely to have reading problems; they are eight times more likely to stammer; and more males score in the very low range of IQ tests. In fact the highest IQ scores recorded at a major American testing center were obtained by girls (who scored 200 and 201 compared with an average score of 100).<sup>25</sup>

**Men's Superior Spatial Skills.** In contrast, males tend to score higher than females on items that test the ability to visualize and manipulate objects in space—shown by their ability to quickly arrange parts into a pattern or to imagine them rearranged. Superiority of males in visual-spatial tasks is apparent from the age of eleven onward. Males are also better at mathematics from age eleven, a fact that is partially explained by the spatial reasoning involved, especially in geometry.<sup>26</sup>

Visual-spatial skills, suggests British psychologist John Nicholson, may have developed from hunting and from manipulating tools and weapons in evolutionary times; those who were good at it would survive and pass on these abilities genetically.<sup>27</sup> He cites evidence on both sides of the argument and concludes that the genetic explanation of sex difference in visual-spatial skills remains controversial. Also, recent studies have shown that one woman out of four exceeds the average man on this skill.<sup>28</sup>

**Spatial Skills a Function of Practice?** Moreover, the inferiority of women in spatial skills is most marked in countries where the woman is submissive, as in sections of India, and is nonexistent in others where women are more equal, as among the Eskimos.<sup>29</sup> This finding suggests that males tend to perform better than females on spatial skills because they have had more life experience practicing them.

Furthermore, researchers found that children who were coached in visual spatial tasks (such as imagining three-dimensional figures turning in space or finding odd-shaped figures embedded in complex drawings) improved dramatically in geometry in only three weeks compared with children who had simply studied Euclid during the same time. Students at one university who were given visual-spatial tests at the beginning and end of the first year of an engineering class showed striking improvement in scores. Thus, it appears that at least part of visual-spatial skill is based on the experience a woman has in early or student life. Nicholson suggests that we institute remedial classes in visual-spatial skills for girls just as we now have remedial reading classes for boys.<sup>30</sup>

Keep in mind that we speak of groups of people-of averages—not of individuals. My husband's skill at language exceeds my own; at the same time I am much better than he is at visual-spatial tasks, usually an area of male supremacy, including such things as finding my way back to the car in a crowded parking lot, following a map to a place new to us, or "feeling" my way back to a place I have only been once. My guess is that my early experience manipulating the marionettes that my artist-father made for me on a three-dimensional stage gave me extra practice in visual-spatial skills.

**Impact of Verbal Style.** Feminists who have studied the language differences between men and women assert that women use "powerless" language in contrast to the more powerful sparse male style.<sup>31</sup> Their view is that

women weaken their statements by overuse of description and qualifiers, such as "kind of" or "sort of," and by being overly polite. They characterize female language as "powerless, tentative, irritating, and trivial." Taste varies and so does literary style. Marcel Proust and Thomas Mann employ as many adjectives as any female writer and it does not seem to lessen their stature as classic authors.

Nevertheless, women's dream descriptions in English can sometimes be recognized in part by their use of words as well as by the length of the report. Choice of words is often characteristically female, as can be seen in the quiz at the close of this chapter.

In fact, Kenneth Colby, a psychoanalyst who studied the content of dreams in 1958, found that certain words discriminated between male and female dream reports.<sup>32</sup> He collected four hundred dreams of patients in psychoanalysis (two hundred from men and two hundred from women) that had appeared in psychoanalytic journals.<sup>33</sup> Counting hundreds of elements in the dream reports, he classified them into one of six categories.<sup>34</sup> He then compared the presence or absence of each item in the women's dreams to the same items in the men's dreams.

Colby found five significant differences between these male and female patients. In their dream reports, men more often mentioned, in the following order of frequency, the words

1. *travel* (in any vehicle)
2. *hit*
3. *auto*
4. *wife*

Women more often mentioned the word *husband*.

In another study of the same type, Colby compared the four hundred dreams of male and female college students (using a sample he obtained from Calvin Hall). He found that the students' dreams were longer than the patients' dreams. Their dream descriptions contained the same word differences, with the addition of two words, appearing mainly in the women students' dreams: *home* and *cry*.

Colby concluded that men and women's dreams differ in the frequency that they dream about "heterosexual mating objects," by which he meant wife and "husband," and the "intensified penetration of space" implied in the men's dreams about "travel" and "hitting." He saw the fact that female college students mentioned "home" and "crying" more often than men as confirmation of the same point, that is, women cry rather than hit, and stay home rather than travel. Perhaps, almost thirty years afterward, repeating this study would reveal changes in the dream role of women today. Later in this chapter we shall examine some evidence for this trend.

So far as I know, Colby's work has not been replicated, although it is a simple enough concept to apply to dream records.<sup>35</sup> The idea is intriguing and is consistent with Hall's findings.

In some cultures females utilize a totally separate language from men to communicate with one another. In Japanese, women usually employ a more polite speech and choose deferential verb forms in contrast to men, who tend to shorten verbs and express themselves in forceful bursts. In certain primitive tribes where females are forbidden to speak of men's activities, the women have invented a secret vocabulary to discuss weapons, war, hunting, and other male enterprises among themselves. Males of the Mazatec in Mexico use a private language of long and short whistles, corresponding to the syllables of certain words. Mazatec women do not understand this secret language.<sup>36</sup> Our words alone—or our whistles sometimes betray our sex.

**Differences in Brain Structure?** Scientists still disagree over whether the observed differences in verbal and visual-spatial skills are based upon differences in brain structure between the sexes, rather than being shaped by the environment.

In earlier centuries much was made of the fact that women have smaller brains, on average, than do men. From this it was inferred that women were less intelligent. I still see this false argument put forth today. In fact, brain size is proportional to body size and has absolutely nothing to do with intelligence level. The largest brain ever recorded was the brain of an idiot; the smallest brain ever measured was that of the French genius Anatole France.<sup>37</sup> So much for that theory.

More recently, scientist Marian Diamond at the University of California, Berkeley found that the female rat has a cerebral cortex that is thicker on the left than on the right.<sup>38</sup> In contrast the male rats had a cerebral cortex that was thicker on the right than on the left—differences that she thought might be related to the different verbal and visual-spatial skills.

Other researchers have cited evidence that men tend to use one side of their brain more than the other, whereas women tend to use both sides equally—allowing each sex to excel at different tasks. Some studies reported that women have more connective tissue between the hemispheres of their brains than men do, implying that they can therefore make more rapid associations between the two sides of their brains than men.

Recent research, however, challenges some of these earlier findings. Neuropsychologist Marcel Kinsbourne, reporting at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Chicago in 1987, claims that he found no difference between the way men and women perform on tasks that combine verbal and visual-spatial skills.<sup>39</sup>

Neurophysiologist Ruth Bleler of the University of Wisconsin, at the same meeting, showed slides of images of the insides of brains taken from thirty-nine men and women.<sup>40</sup> These measures, from a magnetic resonance imaging scanner, revealed no differences between brains of males and females. Bleler thinks that an earlier study was based on too few samples that were chosen without taking into account the age of the person or cause of death—factors that could affect the amount of connective tissue present. Other findings are likewise calling into question the former conclusions about sex differences in the brain.

Regardless of what the final word may prove to be on female-male brain similarities and contrasts, people associate different characteristics with each sex. These concepts influence their own behavior and their expectations about the opposite sex.

**Drawings of Femininity and Masculinity.** When I asked a large number of workshop participants to draw their ideas of femininity and masculinity, I found a striking contrast in the drawings. Women and men alike portrayed their conceptions of the sexes differently.

Using a process first suggested by Betty Edwards in her book *Drawing on the Artist Within* (a sequel to her popular *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*), I asked participants to take a sheet of paper and fold it into several sections. Participants were then guided in making a drawing of several abstract qualities, such as joy, anger, femininity, depression, and peacefulness.<sup>41</sup> To these, I added the quality of masculinity.

You may wish to try this yourself. For example, place your pencil on a sheet or limited section of paper. Close your eyes and think back to the last time you were really angry. Remember what it was like and how it felt. Now, still holding those images, let the feelings well up from inside you and flow down your arm and out the tip of your pencil. Just let your pencil move in response to your emotion. Do not draw stereotyped designs like hearts or arrows. Let the quality of the line reflect your feeling.

Edwards found, and my collection of drawings confirms, that people tend to draw a similar type of design for each quality. joy, for instance, is likely to be represented by rounded lines and circular motifs; anger is usually depicted by sharp, jagged lines; depression tends to be marked by lines placed low in the drawing area; femininity usually has curved or crossed lines; peacefulness is reflected in horizontal lines. Although there are individual differences, drawings tend to fall into recognizable "families."

The drawings I collected revealed that pictures of femininity closely resembled the drawings of joy, with rounded lines. Masculinity drawings more closely resembled the drawings of anger, with a sharp, harsh line quality. A similar sort of difference is replicated in people's dreams. Let's see what the researchers of dreams have caught in their nets.

## Results of Research in Dream Content

Once again, keep in mind that the differences we have been discussing in women's and men's body structure and functioning are slight. So are the differences that have been measured between their dreams. We speak here of averages between groups of men and women. When women are compared with each other, there are usually greater differences between the women within the group than there are between the average woman and the average man.

### *Home Sweet Home: Women's Dream Settings*

Investigators often report that women tend to set their dreams in familiar places.<sup>42</sup> Indoors, in a house or near it, is the most frequent setting, as in this example described to me by forty-year-old Jennifer:

I am in a house made of glass, with Charlie. He is dancing naked. He wants me to take off my clothes and dance with him. I won't because it is a glass house and people would see me. I enjoy looking at him. He is so alive, naked. I feel so loving. I am sorry I haven't taken off my clothes, when I awake.

Charlie is an imaginary dream character. Jennifer's dream suggests that she is tempted to engage in some behavior that she fears would overexpose her, in the same way that the glass walls would do. Note that Jennifer uses the adjective glass, the adverb naked, and the qualifier *so*. She also refers to the "house" and to the human body—all characteristic of female dreamers. Although the setting is unfamiliar, it is indoors.

In contrast, men are less likely to dream of themselves in house settings;<sup>43</sup> they are more likely to picture themselves in unfamiliar, outdoor places, such as this dream that Len told me recently:

I am climbing a mountain and see my father way down in the valley. He is calling my name and I ignore him. (I'm working through some problems with my father right now.)

In Len's dream language, he seems to be trying to move up in the world (the mountain) while conscious of his father's view, one that he is trying to forget. He may feel that the father-within-himself is holding him back. Note that Len uses only one modifier—*way down*. A woman would usually elaborate the framework with more. She would also probably express the way she felt about hearing her father call her name and how it felt to ignore him, in the same way that Jennifer described her response to Charlie.

Psychoanalysts make an analogy between women's internal genitals and their inclination to indoor activity; men's erectile and projectile genitals are compared with their taste for the outdoor life. For the same reason Erik Erikson, from observations of children's play with blocks, stated that little girls build enclosures—inner space—whereas little boys build towers—outer space.<sup>44</sup>

Applying the concept of inner and outer space to dream content, C. B. Brennels devised a scale to measure "ego style" in the dreams of men and women who were college students.<sup>45</sup> Results indicated a tendency for males to structure their dreams in terms of extension and separateness, whereas females tended to structure their dreams in terms of intimacy. Women, according to this view, confine themselves to small houses; men roam the wide-open dream ranges.

**Unanswered Questions About Dream Settings.** Is woman's place in the home in her dreams? Calvin Hall and Robert Van de Castle were the first to claim that it is. Their data was based upon an analysis of five hundred dreams from one hundred women and five hundred dreams from one hundred men, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, who were undergraduate college students in psychology classes at Case Western Reserve University and Baldwin-Wallace College. The dreams were gathered between 1947 and 1950.<sup>46</sup>

Examining the original data, it can be observed that the differences between male and female groups is fairly small.<sup>47</sup> Of the total 644 settings in the male dreams, 284 took place indoors (a proportion of .44), while 302 took place outdoors (a proportion of .46). In the female dreams with a total of 654 settings, 362 took place indoors (a proportion of .55), while 229 took place outdoors (a proportion of .35). The difference was measurable but the gap was small.

Hall and Van de Castle's data have served as a standard without question ever since it was published in their book *The Content Analysis of Dreams* in 1966. Surely there has been some change in women's dream content, reflecting the major social changes during the thirty years since the time this study began in 1947?

No, said Hall and his associates, based on a repeat of this study, carried out in 1979 and 1980.<sup>48</sup> This time the undergraduate college students in psychology classes were at the University of Richmond, a private, urban, coeducational institution that was judged to have students from the same socioeconomic level as Case Western Reserve in the first study. Hall reported that "there has been little change over a period of 30 years in what

college students dream about.<sup>49</sup> Women still dream of being outdoors (a proportion of .37) less than men do (a proportion of .49). Figures for indoor settings, ambiguous settings, and no settings were not reported. Hall goes on to say that "sex difference or the lack of them in all of the content categories used in this study have remained the same in dreams collected from college students in 1950 and 1980."

However, other investigators are uncovering conflicting findings. Perhaps, as Carol Schreier Rupprecht, associate professor of comparative literature at Hamilton College, has pointed out, Hall's research has been gender-biased as well as gender-conscious.<sup>50</sup>

As women move more into the working world, there is some shift in this tendency to place dream action within a home. A recent study by a research team in Canada, headed by Monique Lortle-Lussier, compared the dreams of homemakers who were mothers with those of working women who were also mothers.<sup>51</sup>

These researchers found that changes in dream settings occur with changing roles. The dreams of the working mothers reflected more vocational settings than those of the homemaker-mothers—possibly allowing the dreamer to rehearse activities that were preoccupying her. It seems to be mainly the college-age and homebound female who tends to keep to her house in dreams and stick with well-known spots in her nighttime jaunts.

For instance, Jennifer, a professional who travels widely in her work, placed another of her dreams outdoors, followed by a vocational setting:

I am in Hawaii to move the office. I'm unhappy. I'm driving, trying to get to the office and feeling lost. I'm on a road paralleling the coast on a cliff (it's not actually there). I see the city where I want to go, Honolulu, with tall buildings and a skyline. I am on the road to a military base.

Finally I somehow get to the office. Everything has been removed—my books, plants, pictures, library, prints. My desk is empty. I don't have what I need to do my work. The whole office has been cleaned out. No way to do my work. I am afraid my plants will die. I can't find the boss. When I do, lie is horrible, slimy, sleazy, untrustworthy, and shifty-eyed. He doesn't want to listen. I yell at him. He is impassive to my pleas.

Jennifer understood that this anxiety dream was related to her anger about not moving where she wanted to be in her office in waking life. In the first setting—outdoors in a familiar but distorted setting—she feels lost. She can see where she wants to go but has trouble getting there. She is in control (driving her own car), yet a dangerous cliff is close and she is heading toward greater restriction (the military base).

In the second scene—in a work setting that has changed—Jennifer is distraught to find she has been deprived of all that "makes life worthwhile." Her plants, she told me, were her own growth that was taken away. Her books are "what give sustenance to do my work, essential." Her pictures are "what I need to be strong. I get much beauty and pleasure from them."

The qualities of Jennifer's dream settings help her to recognize that the message of her dream relates to her feelings about work. Dramatically, they show her how alarmed, angry and deprived of valuable, essential things she currently feels. Recognizing this will help Jennifer take appropriate action in waking life.

Women who work in their daily lives also go to work in their dreams. The finding that women's dreams take place mostly in houses, as well as Erikson's concepts of inner space in the female's imagery and outer space in the male's imagery have been challenged. The bottom line seems to be that the dreamer places herself or himself in settings that are contiguous with daily life. The female attorney tries cases in her dreams; the woman runner performs marathons while she sleeps; the college-age woman whose experience is linked closely with classrooms and home will find herself in similar dream settings, whereas the professional whose work takes her to the Far East will sometimes set her dreams in Japanese hot springs or Balinese beaches.

Sheila, a well-traveled professional in her fifties, gave her dream an unfamiliar, unusual outdoor setting:

I am with a whole group of women, jumping with parachutes over foreign territory. At first it looks as though we will hit land. Later the wind shifts and I see we are going to hit the sea. As we drift down, I see many small craft that will be able to retrieve us quickly. While we descend, we arrange ourselves into



a rough circle and do a kind of song and dance in the air to try to control our descent. This raises a marvelous spirit among us and I think what fun it is, even though it is risky.

The air space above an unknown land is surely not a typical dream setting for a woman. Sheila's dream imagery is positive; although she is over "foreign territory" and there is some risk, the danger is small. Wherever she lands, she will have assistance. Her dream characters cooperate in a joyful pattern, easing her descent. Women sometimes select rare settings for their dream action.

The settings of dreams are not necessarily based on biology; they have, I believe, a continuity with our daily activities. The nineteenth-century female writers Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë set their novels in drawing rooms, schools, homes, or local resorts; they were writing from their daily experience. Critics have attacked the "narrowness" of the scope of their writing without giving full recognition to the restrictions of the lives of women at the time these authors were writing.

A male like Tolstoy was free to travel extensively, engage in war, consort with women of all social levels, exchange with men of all ranks; he could write from the broader scope of his own experience. So, too, our dream lives are narrow or wide, depending upon our interaction with life.

**Significance of Dream Settings.** What sense can today's woman make of the controversy around dream settings and what relevance does it have for her life anyhow? Women who want to understand their dreams need not concern themselves with the ongoing debate among researchers about whether or not dream elements change over the years.

Averages mean little to the individual dreamer who wants to understand her personal dreams. To get the most information from your dream settings, think of them as stage sets for your inner dramas. Ask yourself why your dreaming mind chose to play out the scene in this particular place. Each set implies a meaning. Here are a few of the typical dream settings and their common symbolism (exact meaning will vary from dreamer to dreamer):

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*Dream Setting*

*Common Symbolism*

Kitchen	Place where emotional nourishment is available
School	Place where one feels tested or place of learning
Bad crime area	Place where one feels in danger
Rocky area	Place where it is "hard" to move around
Shop	Place of making choices
Garden	Place of beautiful feelings

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In the pages to come, we will see how dream settings help illuminate the meaning of dreams. Meanwhile, be sure to examine the characteristics of your dream settings. Are they familiar or strange? Old-fashioned or newfangled? Being torn down or expanded? Comfortable or awkward? Deteriorating or being reconstructed? Cramped or spacious? Each element adds a dimension to the symbolism of a dream setting.

***"I've Grown Accustomed to Your Face":  
Characters in Women's Dreams***

**Results of Studies About Characters in Women's Dreams.** As with settings, what we know about women's dream characters seems to depend upon when the study was made and what sample of women were examined.

The data from Hall and Van de Castle's work with college students demonstrated that women like to dream about people they know: their parents, their siblings, their mates or dates; their babies and children; their friends and foes.<sup>52</sup> Although men also sometimes dream of the same characters, especially their family, they are less

likely to dream of familiar characters. The mention of a mother, as in Lynette's dream at the opening of this chapter, indicates a greater probability that the author of the dream is female.

In contrast, men often choose to dream of unfamiliar people, and more of groups than single individuals: these are frequently identified by their job, for example, banker, accountant, or car salesman, rather than being identified by their relationship with the dreamer.

Later studies, such as the ones conducted by Lortie-Lussier and her associates, suggest that when women move into work settings that require their dealing with more strangers on the basis of their job status, these characters make their appearance in women's dreams.<sup>53</sup> This is not a case of working women's dreams "becoming more like men's dreams," as some theorists have suggested. Characters in women's dreams and men's dreams mirror the areas of life each is coping with more—either directly or in fantasy—while awake.

Lortie-Lussier collected dreams from eighteen single female undergraduates who hoped later to combine motherhood with a career. She compared these dreams with those of nineteen university graduates who were already working mothers. Among the working mothers' dreams, work colleagues were featured alongside husbands and children. Only familiar characters starred in the students' dreams. Each group, it seems, was influenced by their daily contacts.

Women divide their attention into roughly equal parts between the female and male characters in their dreams. Men, in contrast, are more preoccupied with other men in dreams: twice as many men as women appear in men's dreams.<sup>54</sup> When I asked Van de Castle what the most striking difference between men's and women's dreams was, he asserted that it is this sex-ratio contrast, which is consistent across cultures.

We can speculate from these findings that most women have equal problems or conflicts with men and women, whereas men appear to be more concerned about their relationships with other men, especially authority figures.

However, in another study comparing the dreams of homemaker-mothers with working mothers, Lortie-Lussier and her colleagues found that more male characters appeared in the dreams of the working mothers.<sup>55</sup> Again, their dream content was influenced by their waking-life role.

Women register their daily activities with varying dream characters. My objection to most of the measurement scales is that they give the Impression of a static picture. Women's dreams are more like an ongoing movie. They change as behavior and emotional state change. An individual woman will have characteristic trends, but the content of her dreams can shift with the blink of a night.

When the dream soup is boiled down, it reveals that women are, in general, more concerned about their emotional relationships to both sexes, whereas men are more occupied with succeeding or failing in reference to other men. Overall, women have more people in their dreams.

**Significance of Dream Characters.** For the woman seeking to comprehend her own dream scenarios, it is useful to make careful note of characters that appear in her dreams. After the dreamer herself or himself, the person most dreamed about is usually the one with whom the strongest emotional bonding exists.<sup>56</sup>

Dreamers may ask themselves: What people do I dream about most? Why am I preoccupied with them? Do they represent themselves or a characteristic within me that I feel in need of, or one that I dislike in myself? What celebrities appear in my dreams? What quality do they represent in my dream plays? On the next page are a few short samples of common symbolism of characters in women's dreams (the precise meaning varies with the dreamer's personal associations).

---

***Dream***

***Character:***

***Common Symbolism:***

Baby	A "newborn" quality of the dreamer or a special project
Husband or lover	A supportive, indifferent, or destructive aspect, depending on nature of relationship
Gardener	Someone who helps the dreamer grow

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Throughout the chapters that follow, we shall see again and again how the characters in a woman's dream help her understand aspects of herself and her relationships to others. Lynette's mother, for example, in the opening dream sequence, represented for the dreamer an intuitive, sensitive part of herself that she wants to "bring to life."

### ***The Great Nurturer: Animal Characters in Women's Dreams***

In a garden near Rome stands a monumental statue-fountain known as Diana of Ephesus. She displays a multitude of breasts, each of which spout water. Viewing it one sunny afternoon, I thought how the ancients who worshiped her must have felt overwhelmed with the idea of being nourished by this goddess. Her many breasts flowing with fluid emphasized her role as nurturer.

**Studies of Animals in Women's Dreams.** The dreams of girls and women are filled with imagery that conveys a similar message. Mammals, according to Van de Castle, abound in the dreams of even young girls some theorists believe that females intuitively sense at a deep level their role as milk-giving creatures.<sup>57</sup> Small animals-kittens, puppies, bunnies, and so on-are very typical of women's dreams, especially during pregnancy from the second trimester onward, as we will see. In contrast, men are more likely to populate their dreamscapes with wilder, larger animals, with more birds-said to be associated with the erectile capacity of the penis-and other non mammals.

In my 1984 study of children's dreams sixty-two girls reported roughly double the number of animals as fifty-eight boys. (However, since the girls' dreams were longer, this difference is hard to assess.) The only category in which boys had a greater number of animals than girls was dragons. No girl dreamed of a dragon, whereas six boys did so.<sup>58</sup>

Children as a group have more animals in their dreams than adults do. (From 28 to 60 percent of children's dreams contain animals compared with about 7 percent in adults' dreams.) The number of animals decrease as the child ages; tame animals begin to replace wild ones.<sup>59</sup>

Various explanations are offered for this characteristic trend of the appearance of smaller, milder animals in women's dreams. On average, women are smaller and gentler than men, as well as the makers of milk. Anthropologists estimate the size and strength of the average woman as approximately two-thirds that of the average man. Men tend to be physically larger, more muscular, and, many would say, more aggressive as well. Perhaps the dream animals reflect this condition.

**Significance of Dream Animals in Women's Dreams.** As with the other categories of dream content, what is important to the individual dreamer is her understanding of her own dream images. Sonny, for example, in her late twenties, found herself puzzled by this dream:

I am petting a friendly rat with curly, golden hair when it suddenly bites me. I wake up alarmed.

As we talked, it soon emerged that Sonny's boyfriend had curly hair with golden highlights in the sun. The two of them had been living together happily when they began to have a conflict about whether or not to marry. In Sonny's dream language, the "friendly rat" had turned nasty. Happily, the dilemma was solved and Sonny was married; she has developed a close and devoted relationship with her husband over the past several years. Most dreamers have two or three favorite animals that recur in their dreams. My own, for instance, are cats and birds, whereas my husband's dream animals are usually dogs and horses. Animals often represent an instinctual part of the dreamer.

To decipher the symbolism of your own dream animals, it is helpful to ask yourself, What characteristics does this animal exhibit? How does this animal differ from other animals that are similar to it? Your answers will provide clues to the animal's presence in a particular dream. We will explore the meaning of dream animals further in the context of the specific dreams described in the following chapters.

### ***The Sharp-Tongued Dagger: Verbal Aggression in Women's Dreams***

In general, women are more likely to resort to verbal rather than physical aggression when they are angry. Wounding with words is usually more effective for a woman than using physical strength.

**Studies of Aggression in Women's Dreams.** The sting of women's aggression in dreams tends to take a similar form: a quick verbal stab or even a tongue-lashing. Male dreamers are more likely to picture men in their dreams behaving violently: chopping off heads, blowing up bodies, and slaughtering or being butchered by the enemies of the dark.

In dreams females are more likely to attack only when attacked, whereas male dreamers more often behave with unprovoked aggression. However, certain populations display different patterns of aggression. A researcher studying the dreams of 260 high school students in 1970 found, to his surprise, significantly more aggression in the females' dreams than in those of the males. Lower-class girls behaved more brutally in their dreams than their male counterparts, or than any of the middle-class students.<sup>60</sup>

Women dreamers usually aim aggression more at other female characters, or equally attack female and male characters. In comparison, men dreamers are mainly aggressive in very direct ways toward other male characters.<sup>61</sup> In general, there is more aggression in male dreams, and this sex difference becomes greater with age.<sup>62</sup>

**Poor Little Matchgirl: The Victim Role in Women's Dreams.** Being the victim rather than the victor is the most common response to aggression among female dreamers. One investigatory team studying college students' dreams found that a chase scene without violence was almost unique in women's dreams. Male dreams often had male aggressors, whereas female dreams often had animal aggressors. Few victims of either sex fought back in their dreams; women were less likely to do so.<sup>63</sup>

In some ways female victimization in dreams parallels life events; both are subject to change. For the most part, male characters are the villains in women's dreams. The male stranger is the most common villain in dreams of both sexes.<sup>64</sup>

**Significance of Aggression in Women's Dreams.** Individual dreamers can learn about the nature of their relationships by observing the pattern of violence in their dreams. Dreamers may ask, Am I often victimized in my dreams? Who is the villain? Are males more unfriendly to me in my dreams? Does it depend upon the man? Are females unfriendly in my dreams? Which women? Are they authority figures or colleagues? Do characters treat me differently under different dream circumstances? How do I respond? Do I defend myself? Do I resolve dream dilemmas?

In chapters to come, we will explore the meanings that aggression has to individual women in the context of their specific dreams.

### ***Party Girl: Friendly Interactions in Women's Dreams***

**Studies of Friendliness in Women's Dreams.** Female dreamers seem to be more democratic than males in dispensing friendly actions: both male and female dream characters are treated in a friendly manner. "You and I were having fun in my dream last night," said one girlfriend in my study to another:

You're dressed in a wonderful Irish tweed cape with a beret. We go to a special place on our way to a bird shop.

Happy, friendship-type dreams are not uncommon for women and their friends of both sexes.

"Wanna fight?" might be the motto for a man speaking to another man in his dreams. In comparison with women, men tend to be more aggressive with the male characters in their dreams, while they are more prone to treat their female characters in a friendly manner.

Several studies have reported that women exhibit more friendliness in their dreams; they also receive more friendly overtures.<sup>65</sup> In general, however, all dreamers have less friendly behavior in their dreams than they do aggression.

An interesting sidelight to these findings about dream aggression occurs in Van de Castle's data. He reports that the friendliness of women in their dreams varies with their menstrual cycle. Women are more friendly to other female dream characters during their periods, he says—perhaps identifying more with each other. During the remainder of the month, he found, the women in his sample were less friendly to female dream characters. Instead they tended to befriend their male dream population.

**Significance of Friendliness in Women's Dreams.** Perhaps nature prompts women to feel more friendly toward men, awake or asleep, when the likelihood of conception is greater.

Whatever the cause, women may wish to observe whether their friendly dream acts change during their menstrual cycle. Also worthwhile noting is how dreamers typically relate to the men and women in their dreams. Are you always hostile or friendly to the men in your dreams? Does it depend upon the man? Do you have a consistent reaction to the females in your dreams? Do your characters typically hinder, frustrate, or cooperate with you?

The answers to these questions will give the dreamer material to assess how she or he is predisposed toward the opposite sex—in a positive or negative way. Ambivalence, most dreamers will find, exists in their dream relationships, just as in waking life.

### *The Romantic Interlude: Sexual Interactions in Women's Dreams*

**Studies of Sex in Women's Dreams.** When women make love in dreams, they, more often than men, choose to do so with someone well known to them: a husband, a sweetheart, or an exciting colleague.<sup>66</sup> Occasionally they will select a celebrity—Paul Newman is particularly favored because of the symbolism of his name: “new man.” Or, they may choose a power figure, such as the president, to become their lover in a dream. Even less seldom, women conjure up golden angels or Greek gods to raise themselves to celestial dream ecstasies. In general, however, they prefer home turf for dream romancing.

Men differ in that they seem to be most stimulated in dreams by the unknown female, the exotic stranger. Their passionate dreams soon get down to basic intercourse, with little lingering foreplay—in this, too, some will say, dreams parallel life. One study of college students found that more males had dreams of nudes than females did.<sup>67</sup>

We have mentioned that women, as well as men, are now known to become sexually aroused during dream periods. While dreaming, their nipples become erect, their vaginal temperature and pulse rate increase, and there is greater blood flow to the genitals. These bodily changes correspond to the penile erections long observed in males, especially on awakening from the morning dream. Even infant boys display an erect penis while dreaming—an indication that the behavior is a natural process, not a learned one.

Women, like men, also experience orgasms during dreams, although the frequency is less. Sexual mobilization of the body usually occurs regardless of whether or not the dream content is sexual; it is part of the general nervous system arousal each of us experience while we dream.

Some theorists think that sexuality in women's dreams is connected with their menstrual cycle. Unfortunately the studies that have investigated this possibility came up with contradictory findings. One research team, Ethel Swanson and David Foulkes, measured four female college students in the laboratory over forty-four nights, waking them periodically to find out what they were dreaming. The investigators reported that sexuality in dream content was highest during menstruation and also when the women reported low waking sexual desire.<sup>68</sup>

In another study Van de Castle asked women about their dreams. He reported more sexual dreams before ovulation than during menstruation.<sup>69</sup> Additional evidence is needed to determine which behavior is more characteristic.

A study done with paraplegic men and women found that several of them had orgasmic imagery in their dreams. This suggests that the experience of orgasm may be as much a function of the brain as it is of the

genitals.<sup>70</sup> It is unclear to what extent prior experience, and therefore memory, played in these subjects' orgasmic dream responses.

**Fewer Sexual Dreams in Women.** Women in general dream less about sex than men do. A study of college students found that sexual interaction appeared in only 4 percent of the women's dreams, whereas 12 percent of the men's dreams included sex.<sup>71</sup> In Kinsey's classical study of nearly eight thousand women, about 70 percent said they had had overtly sexual dreams sometime in their lives. Among the men, nearly 100 percent of the almost six thousand in the sample reported having erotic dreams.<sup>72</sup>

In chapter 1, we described how, although females mature physically at an earlier age than males, their sexual responsiveness develops later. (See the sections "Women's Sexual Peaks Develop Later" and "Women's Sexual Dreams Develop Later" for details.) It is worth repeating that it is not until females are twenty-nine years old that there is a percentage of experienced individuals that compares with that of males at age fifteen.<sup>73</sup>

We saw, too, how dream life seems to parallel the discrepancy of the waking-life pattern. Young men begin having nocturnal emissions with their sexual dreams at an early age. By age fifteen, nocturnal emissions occurred in dreams of about 40 percent of the males. In comparison, only 2 percent of the females had experienced erotic dreams to orgasm by age fifteen.

As they age, more women have erotic dreams to orgasm, although men still have more of them. Males have their greatest frequency of dreams with nocturnal emissions in their teens and twenties; women have the most sexual dreams with orgasm in their forties. Sex dreams seem, in part, to be a mirror of the actual experience a person has had.

Among those women who do have orgasmic dreams, they have them less often than men. The younger males reported having orgasmic dreams four to eleven times a year; the older males had them three to five times a year. One of the younger males said he had as many as twelve erotic dreams to orgasm each week. Women of all ages reported an average of three to four orgasmic dreams per year.

Kinsey found that a woman's sexual dreams were likely to increase under given conditions: when the dreamer's usual sexual outlet was inadequate, reduced, or eliminated; when she was widowed; when she was in prison; when her husband was away; and when she ceased ingesting certain drugs.

On the other hand sexual dreams did not usually begin until the woman had experienced sexuality in the waking state. Orgasmic dreams often started the same year that one or more of the other types of sexual activity began, such as masturbation, petting, or intercourse. There seemed to be a correlation between a high level of erotic responsiveness and the number of orgasmic dreams. Some women with high rates of orgasm in daily life also have high rates of orgasmic dreams.<sup>74</sup>

**Content of Sexual Dreams.** Heterosexual dreams were reported most often among the women in Kinsey's sample; 85 to 90 percent had such dreams. Homosexual dreams were reported by some 8 to 10 percent; dreams of sexual relations with animals were reported by about 1 percent of the women.<sup>75</sup>

Kinsey found that the women in his group more often mentioned sexual partners that were obscure rather than known people, in contrast to Hall and Van de Castle's finding. Sometimes the dreamer herself was participating in the sexual act; at other times she watched another dream character. Kinsey also observed that sex dreams customarily reflected experiences the dreamer had had in waking life. Dreams of intercourse were more common among those who had engaged in it; likewise, dreams of petting, rape, homosexual contact, animal contact, sadomasochistic dreams, as well as dreams of pregnancy, were more likely to be reported by women who had experienced these events.

Kinsey mentions the curious finding that a number of young men dream of women with male genitals—a phenomenon he attributes to the fact that the men who have not directly observed female genitals have difficulty visualizing them. He does not say whether females reported a similar kind of dream about men.

**Significance of Sexual Intercourse in Women's Dreams.** The individual dreamer may benefit from observing romantic behavior personal dreams. Dreamers may ask, What partner do I choose for romantic dream encounters? Is this person a stranger or is he known to me? Does he represent a genuine attraction or does he represent a quality I need? What is the nature of our contact—harsh or tender, domineering or cooperative? Do I have unusual types of sexual interactions in dreams?

Answers to such questions will guide the dreamer to better understand emotions about waking relationships. The dreamer may find that sexual intercourse in a dream symbolizes integration with a missing element more than a particular person—a need for tender treatment, a need to re-contact artistic impulses, and so forth. Later on we will explore the various meanings of sexuality in the context of specific dreams.

## What Women Focus on in Their Dreams

Our dreaming minds, just as in waking life, pick out the area of the ongoing activity that most piques our interest.

**Color Me Fascinating.** One of the elements frequently mentioned by women that rarely arises in men's dreams is color. We know very little about color in dreams beyond this basic observation.

In one of the few studies of color in dreams, an ophthalmologist (a physician who specializes in the eye) studied the dreams of six men. These subjects recorded their dreams over five months; immediately upon awakening, or as soon as possible thereafter, they matched any dream colors they observed with samples from a color atlas.

The ophthalmologist found that only half of the dreams referred to color at all. Of the dreams that did contain color, forty-nine colors were recorded (the number of dreams was not specified by the investigator). Half of the colors mentioned were near-white or pastel. Intense colors were usually red or orange in hue. The researcher concluded that the paucity of purple, blue, or blue-green in the dreams in his study could be anatomically related to the small number of blue units in the color areas of the cortex.<sup>76</sup>

Would female dreams investigated in the same manner exhibit more color? I suspect they would. Females are far more aware of color in waking life, as well as having been observed to speak of color in their dreams more than males do. The mention of color in Lynette's dream at the opening of this chapter is a clue to the feminine nature of its author. Notice that the colors referred to in her dream include blue—a color that was found to be extremely rare in male dreamers.

Usually the greater number of color references in female dreams is attributed to their well-known daily interest in the topic. However, it seems to me that color sensitivity may be based on biological differences between males and females.

**Women's Superior Color Sense.** Women actually perceive color better than men do. In fact for the first eight months of life they see more acutely than males. Although from the age of six years, males are measured as having more acute vision, women's perception of color is less frequently impaired than males.<sup>77</sup> Color blindness occurs in only one out of two hundred females, whereas one out of twelve males suffers this deficiency. Small wonder that women mention color more often in their dreams if they perceive its nuances more accurately. Of course many men have developed a fine color sense, but they are often in the art field or some other occupation where they have been exposed to special training.

Regardless of whether color awareness may be traced to genetic or environmental conditions, or a combination, dreamers can gather more information about themselves by noting the colors in their dreams. It is particularly important to observe colors that recur and in what circumstances. Do you seem to dream in black and white rather than technicolor? Do your dream colors tend to be drab and dingy? Are your dream hues vivid or garish? Luminous or ethereal? What feelings and experiences do you associate with the colors that light up your dreams?

The whole issue is a complex one, and anything we can learn about it is helpful. Intensely emotional dreams tend to be more brilliantly colored. People who are able to induce dreams in which they know they are dreaming, lucid dreams, invariably comment upon the vividness of the colors. They often speak of glowing, luminescent color, "as if lit from within," unlike any ordinary dream.

**Adornment and Faces in Women's Dreams.** In addition to color, women also focus on clothing and jewelry in their dream descriptions more than the average male.<sup>78</sup> These objects are likely to reflect their daily interest.

Women in waking life are usually more concerned with relating to people than to things; preoccupation with the human face naturally accompanies this attitude. Females incline to speak of the hair, eyes, and features of their dream characters.<sup>79</sup>

Here, too, dreamers can benefit from observing the focus their dreams take. What magnetizes your attention in your dreams? What significance do these attributes or objects serve? As will become apparent, the whole dream action sometimes revolves around these "props."

**Flowers in Women's Dreams.** Women also have a propensity to dream about flowers. This image is thought to be a sexual referent as well as a thing of beauty—the blossom being the sexual organ of the plant, with its fragrance and form designed to attract the creature that will fertilize it.

Artist Judy Chicago's depiction of women throughout history in the form of floral plates makes use of the same analogy of female genitals and flowers. In the delightful musical *The King and I*, the king sings of the desirability of man flitting like the bee from flower to flower, "... but flower never goes from bee to bee to bee." Fortunately, women are not so rooted as flowers and, in their dreams and their lives, are able to move more freely.

The specific flowers that grow in dreams contain messages for the dreamer. Like the Victorian "language of love," each blossom has significance. Dreamers may ask, Why this particular flower at this particular time? What do I associate with this bloom? What have I experienced in connection with it? What qualities mark it as being different from other flowers? As we shall see, flowers are often associated in women's dreams with images of romance and sexuality.

**Enclosures in Women's Dreams.** Women tend to refer to household areas, especially rooms. For a large number of women these areas and the objects in them are more a part of their daily activity than they are for men. In this way dreams mirror life.

For working women household objects and areas can become symbols of obstacles or hindrances to their career. Some of these women understandably see brooms or piles of dirty laundry as extremely negative symbols in their dreams.

Rooms, we have said, are postulated to indicate something beyond daily experience. Since women's bodies enclose an internal space, inside the womb, with its entrance through the vagina, psychoanalysts have asserted that this "interior room" is represented by the rooms and houses in women's dreams. Whatever the explanation may prove to be, researchers often note that women describe more rooms in their dreams than men do.

Along this line, pregnant women report more architectural structures in their dreams than nonpregnant women do. One researcher, Patricia Maybruck, found that the buildings in the dreams of her pregnant subjects increased in size as the women's abdomens grew.<sup>80</sup> We explore this further in the context of specific pregnancy dreams.

Meanwhile, as we observed in reference to dream settings, it is useful for dreamers to observe the spaces in their dreams. Do your dreams take place more in one room than another? What experiences and qualities do you associate with this room? What makes it different from other rooms in the house? What takes place in these areas? Where do you have more trouble and where more pleasure?

While women are dreaming of rooms and flowers, men are busy regarding with their inner eye the tools, weapons, automobiles, and money that fill their dream spaces. These elements are thought by some theorists to be symbolic references to the male phallus and its function.

At the same time women are describing the colors and clothing, jewelry, eyes and faces, of their dream characters, men are talking about the size, the speed, and the intensity of their dream props. "A space rocket thrust off..." would be more typical of a man's dream account.

### *Feeling, Talking, Sensing, Judging— Activities in Women's Dreams*

Women are infinitely more expressive of how they feel during their dreams than men are, just as they speak more openly of feelings in everyday life, so, too, are women's dreams filled with emotion.<sup>81</sup>



And with words. Women describe more conversation in their dreams, and their characters tell them things: newborn babies expound truths, animals speak wisely, and inanimate objects utter comments.

In a dream that occurred as I began this book project, I was being considered as a member of an elite literary society. Several of the members stated their opinion that membership should be allowed later, not yet. A bust of Jane Austen, set on a shelf above wainscoting, spoke up on my behalf. As a founder of the organization and respected author, she was well qualified, even in statue form, to endorse my case.

Fantastic paintings, squalid tenements—the beauty or ugliness of a scene is more significant to the woman dreamer. Moral and aesthetic judgments, too, are more likely to occur in women's accounts of their dreams: "it was incredibly beautiful. . . ."; "The stranger was evil. . . ."

While women are judging, sensing beauty or lack of it, being emotional and communicating, men are occupied dreaming about success and failure—themes that dominate their side of the dream bed. We have already mentioned that they engage in more sexual adventures in their dreams than women. Sharing the same bed, a woman and her man may dream quite differently. This concept is stated succinctly in the Chinese proverb "Same bed, different dreams."<sup>82</sup>

### ***Extrasensory Perception: The Psychic Side of Women's Dreams***

Dream researchers find that women report more psychic dreams than men do. For example, a woman who dreams of a loved relative falling ill or dying when she has had no current physical contact with the person, or any other clue in the environment, may be experiencing extrasensory perception. Many of the women I interviewed for this study described dreams that seemed to imply psychic dimensions. Perhaps women's interest in other people tunes them in with greater sensitivity to subtle perceptions.

If you are a dreamer who experiences extrasensory perception in your dreams, you may find that keeping a record of your dreams will help you identify the difference between ordinary dreaming and predictive dreams. Notice in particular any recurring elements or themes.

Our dreams make our inner self visible. What do your dreams reveal about you? In some ways you are sure to resemble dreamers of your own sex. In other ways you are unique. The chapters to come will provide a standard against which you can compare your own dreams and will give clues to help you better understand these nightly adventures.

Following are two forms. One is a test to help sharpen your awareness of the differences that may exist between women's dreams and men's dreams. If you have already taken it, go ahead and read the "Gender Checklist for Dream Reports." It summarizes the differences in dreams often observed between sexes, although it is far from infallible. You may wish to use it with individual dreams to assess how accurate the current beliefs may or may not be. If you have not yet taken the *Dream Test*, you may wish to do so before examining the checklist.

While taking the test, keep in mind that some men resemble women in speech patterns. Highly fluent literary men—poets and novelists—often share women's proclivity for elaborate description. Also, homosexual men sometimes adopt speech patterns that are more feminine in style.

.....

### **Gender Checklist for Dream Reports\***

.....

***Characteristic***

***Women***

***Men***

- |                  |                          |  |                          |  |
|------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Recall        | <input type="checkbox"/> | better   | <input type="checkbox"/> | poorer   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | fluctuates with period                             |                          |  |
| 2. Length        | <input type="checkbox"/> | longer   | <input type="checkbox"/> | shorter  |
| 3. Type words    | <input type="checkbox"/> | more adjectives                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | few adjectives, sparse                                   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | may refer to husband, home, or crying              | <input type="checkbox"/> | may refer to wife, auto, any vehicle, travel, or hitting |
| 4. Setting       | <input type="checkbox"/> | familiar   | <input type="checkbox"/> | unfamiliar   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | indoor   | <input type="checkbox"/> | outdoor  |
| 5. Characters    | <input type="checkbox"/> | equal number of males and females                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | males twice as often as females                          |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | single characters                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | groups   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | familiar characters                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | unfamiliar   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | described by relation, e.g., mother, baby, brother | <input type="checkbox"/> | described by job, e.g., banker, lawyer                   |
| 6. Animals       | <input type="checkbox"/> | mammals  | <input type="checkbox"/> | non-mammals  |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | small creatures                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | large creatures  |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | domesticated                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | wild creatures   |
| 7. Aggression    | <input type="checkbox"/> | equal to male or female                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | mainly to males  |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | more nonphysical                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | more physical  |
| 8. Friendliness  | <input type="checkbox"/> | equal to male or female                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | mainly to females  |
| 9. Sex           | <input type="checkbox"/> | more romantic flavor                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | more basic   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | fewer orgasms                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | more dream orgasms                                       |
| 10. Color        | <input type="checkbox"/> | often mentioned                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | rarely mentioned   |
| 11. Focus        | <input type="checkbox"/> | clothing, jewelry                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | cars, vehicles   |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | eyes, face, hair                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | money  |
|                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | flowers  | <input type="checkbox"/> | size, speed, intensity                                   |
| 12. Emotions     | <input type="checkbox"/> | often mentioned                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | rarely mentioned   |
| 13. Sensations   | <input type="checkbox"/> | often  | <input type="checkbox"/> | rare   |
| 14. Conversation | <input type="checkbox"/> | often  | <input type="checkbox"/> | rare   |

15. Judgments (moral, aesthetic)  often  rare
16. Themes  relationships  success, failure

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Based on current research. Differences between male and female dreams are small. Special populations may differ. Future research may reveal changes or invalidate current findings.

.....  
**Dream Test**  
.....

Indicate whether these verbatim dream descriptions are from male or female dreamers:

- 1. I dreamt I was on an operating table. A sheet was pulled over my head and I was wheeled away. (I knew **it** was an omen of defeat.)
- 2. Dreamt that my little baby came to life again: that it had only been cold, and that we rubbed it before the fire, and it lived.
- 3. I dreamt I was looking in a glass when a horrible face—the face of an animal—suddenly showed over my shoulder.
- 4. Dreamt [a man] came into my room, his throat encircled with blood, saying, "I met [a woman] coming out of [a man's] room."
- 5. Dreamt many great waters fell from heaven. The first struck the earth about four miles away from me with a terrific force.
- 6. Dreamt of a beetle that bites like a scorpion.
- 7. Dreamt father was alive again and I could say all the things I had meant to say to him.
- 8. Dreamt I was lying in bed when [a husband and wife] entered the room. They were badly cut, with bones protruding through their skin, [the husband] weaker and leaning on [the wife]. They begged me to get up, saying that the sea was flooding the house and it was coming down. I did and looked out the terrace window fronting the sea, which rushed into the house. Then I thought I was choking [a man].
- 9. I dreamt I am in a house, probably mine (must have been the dining room). There are several white doves fluttering against the window. Light is coming against the window. I am very careful not to open the door, concerned they shouldn't go out of the house. I feel very happy.
- 10. Dreamt that I see my dead mother. In the dream I know that she is dead, but she seems young, beautiful, full of laughter. We talk and I feel very happy.
- Total Correct**

**Answers**

- 1. Male. Winston Churchill, after World War II, the night before the election in which he was defeated.
- 2. Female. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, English writer and wife of the poet, two weeks after she found her baby dead on March 6, 1815.

3. Female. Virginia Woolf, English novelist, two years before she committed suicide by drowning on March 28, 1941. The dream probably relates to her fear of returning mad. She says she was sexually abused at age three by her stepbrother while looking into a mirror.
4. Male. Duncan Grant, a painter of the Bloomsbury intellectual circle. He was the lover of Vanessa Bell, Virginia Woolf's sister. The characters refer to Quentin, Vanessa's son by her husband, Clive Bell; Angelica, the daughter of Vanessa and Grant; and his former homosexual lover, Bunny, now in love with Angelica. The dream depicts Grant's jealousy of Bunny's response to Angelica.
5. Male. Albrecht Dürer, German artist-engraver. The morning of this dream he painted a picture of it and prayed that such a catastrophe would be prevented.
6. Male. D. H. Lawrence, English novelist, about men in his circle. He referred to them as "swarming selves."
7. Female. Vanessa Bell, artist, sister of Virginia Woolf. Her relationship with her father, the scholar Leslie Stephen, had been stressful.
8. Male. Percy Bysshe Shelley, English poet, two weeks before he drowned in a boating accident at age thirty, on July 8, 1822. His first wife had committed suicide by drowning on November 9, 1816. The couple referred to were houseguests at his summer villa on the Gulf of Spezia, Italy.
9. Female. Nanette, in her eighties.
10. Female. Lynette, then in her mid-thirties, about her mother who died of cancer.

**Score correct:**      0-5 Chance score or worse  
                             6-8 Good at recognizing male/female dream styles  
                             9-10 Professional level

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#### Reference Notes

<sup>1</sup> Personal communications from some Greek women.

<sup>2</sup> Personal communications from some Iranian women.

<sup>3</sup> Rosalind D. Cartwright, *A Primer on Sleep and Dreaming* (Menlo Park, Calif.: Addison-Wesley, 1978), P. 44. See also Rosalind D. Cartwright, *Night Life: Explorations in Dreaming* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), P. 39.

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance, Ismet Karacan et al., "Characteristics of Sleep Patterns During Late Pregnancy and the Postpartum Periods," *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 101, no. 5, pp. 579-86, 1968.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Hartmann, *The Biology of Dreaming* (Springfield, IT: Charles C. Thomas, 1967), pp. 60-62. See also Patricia L. Garfield, "Keeping a Longitudinal Dream Record," *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice* 10, no. 3 (Fall 1973): 223-28.

<sup>6</sup> Robert L. Williams, Ismet Karacan and Carolyn J. Hirsch, *Electroencephalography (EEG) of Human Sleep: Clinical Applications* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974). This massive undertaking has produced the only full-scale bank of sleep parameters in existence. Since scoring differences exist among laboratories, it was important to obtain data that were gathered with the same procedure and scored in the same way in order to make valid comparisons between age groups. Of the 237 subjects, 115 were female and 122 were male; these were distributed fairly evenly over the entire age span

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, Karacan, and Hirsch, *Electroencephalography*. The figures for percentage of REM time, divided by the amount of sleep time from onset of sleep to final morning awakening, are as follows:

Age Bracket	Females % REM	Males % REM
3-5	31.75	30.26
6-9	29.31	27.33
10-12	27.43	26.39
13-15	25.63	26.70
16-19	22.12	22.02
20-29	25.23	28.00
30-39	26.22	23.47
40-49	26.67	22.85 sig.diff.
50-59	21.77	21.48
60-69	21.43	23.09
70-79	19.46	17.68

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>11</sup> René Spiegel, *Sleep and Sleeplessness in Advanced Age* (Jamaica, N.Y.: Spectrum Publications, 1981), P. 130. Spiegel measured 113 subjects of "advanced age," the average age being sixty-four; of these, forty-four were female, sixty-nine male.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 129, 167. Spiegel's exact figures differ from Williams's, but the trend of older women exhibiting more deep sleep is the same. In the sixty-to-sixty-nine-year-old group, Williams obtained a percentage of 5 percent stage 4 sleep for women, whereas men of the same age had 1 percent stage 4 sleep. In Spiegel's subjects, with an average age of sixty-four, he obtained 10 percent stage 4 sleep for women and 5 percent stage 4 sleep for men.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>15</sup> Cartwright, *Primer*, p. 22.

<sup>16</sup> Hartmann, *Biology of Dreaming*, p. 97. See also Spiegel, *Sleep and Sleeplessness*, pp. 14-22.

<sup>17</sup> Hartmann, *Biology of Dreaming*, p. 132. Based on N. Schechter, G. Schmeidler, and M. Staal, "Dream Reports and Creative Tendencies in Students of the Arts, Sciences, and Engineering," *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 29 (1965): 415-21.

<sup>18</sup> Ernest Hartmann, *The Nightmare: The Psychology and Biology of Terrifying Dreams* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), pp. 127-28. Hartmann is referring especially to nightmare sufferers.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph De Koninck et al. "Dreams During Language Learning: When Is the New Language Integrated?" *Association for the Study of Dreams Newsletter* 4, no. 3 June 1987): 3. The authors report that they and others have observed that "better performance in intensive language learning is associated with increases in REM sleep percentages."

<sup>20</sup> Cartwright, *Primer*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>21</sup> Robert L. Van de Castle, *The Psychology of Dreaming* (pamphlet) (New York: General Learning Press, 1971), p. 37.

<sup>22</sup> Calvin S. Hall and Robert L. Van de Castle, 1966. *The Content Analysis of Dreams* (New York: Appteton-Century-Crofts, 1966), pp. 158-60. Reports under fifty words were also eliminated as well as reports over 300 words.

<sup>23</sup> David Foulkes, *Children's Dreams: Longitudinal Studies* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982), pp. 47-48.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 334, 341.

<sup>25</sup> John Nicholson, *Men and Women: How Different Are They?* (Oxford, Eng.: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 75-76.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pp. 81-84.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 84. This study took place at Reading University, England.

<sup>31</sup> Described in Thomas Short, 1986 "The Word on Gender" (book review of Dennis Baron, *Grammar and Gender* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), *Washington Times, Insight*, April 7, 1986.

<sup>32</sup> Kenneth M. Colby, *A Skeptical Psychoanalyst* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1958). Colby actually counted concepts more than literal words; for instance, he categorized "riding in a canoe" as a "vehicle."

<sup>33</sup> Colby used the first dreams quoted in papers appearing in the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* between 1932 and 1956 and in the *Psychoanalytic Review* between 1932 and 1955.

<sup>34</sup> A total of 752 elements were distributed among the following categories: *settings, objects, actions, affects, thoughts, properties.*

- <sup>35</sup> In yet another study Colby examined a collection of dreams from primitive tribes. Males in this sample were identified by the words or concepts *wife, weapon, coitus, death, and animal*. Females in this group were distinguished by use of the words or concepts *husband, mother, clothes, and human body*.
- <sup>36</sup> Charles Berlitz, *Native Tongues* (New York: The Putnam Publishing Group, 1982), pp. 39-40.
- <sup>37</sup> Ashley Montagu, *The Natural Superiority of Women* (London: Collier Books, 1970), p. 60. The idiot's brain weighed over 2,850 grams compared with the brain of Anatole France, weighing 1,100 grams.
- <sup>38</sup> Janet L. Hopson, "A Love Affair With the Brain: PT Conversation With Marian Diamond," *Psychology Today* 18, no. 11 (November 1984): 62-73.
- <sup>39</sup> Keay Davidson, "Sexual Equality May Be All in Your Head," *San Francisco Examiner*, Feb. 22, 1987, p. A-3. See also Doreen Kimura, "Male Brain, Female Brain: The Hidden Difference," *Psychology Today* 19, no. 11 (1985): 50-58.
- <sup>40</sup> Davidson, "Sexual Equality," p. A-3.
- <sup>41</sup> Betty Edwards, *Drawing on the Artist Within: A Guide to Innovation, Invention, Imagination, and Creativity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986), pp. 66-95.
- <sup>42</sup> Calvin S. Hall and Vernon J. Nordby, *The Individual and His Dreams* (New York: New American Library, 1972), p. 38.
- <sup>43</sup> Hall and Nordby, *The Individual and His Dreams*, p. 38.
- <sup>44</sup> A similar study conducted by Erikson is described in Colby, *A Skeptical Psychoanalyst*, pp. 111-12. Erikson studied the play activity of 468 preadolescents (236 boys and 236 girls) aged twelve to fourteen. He observed that boys built scenes of wild animals, Indians, or auto accidents; they preferred toys that represented motion. Girls, in contrast, built quiet scenes of everyday life at home or school; they preferred enclosures. Erikson compared these play differences to the morphologic differences of the sex organs. For original, see Eric Erikson, "Sex Differences in the Play Configurations of Preadolescents," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 21 (1951): 667-92.
- In a study by J. H. Conn, boys four to nine years old were observed to play with toy vehicles or tools more often than girls, who chose dolls and doll furniture. See J. H. Conn, "Children's Awareness of Sex Difference; II: Play Attitudes and Game Preferences," *Journal of Child Psychiatry* (1951) 82-99.
- In a study of drawing completion, men were observed to draw objects that move, such as autos and steamships, in comparison with women, who drew containers, houses, vases, fruit, flowers, animals, and people; see K. Franck and E. Rosen, "A Projective Test of Masculinity-Femininity," *Journal of Consulting Psychology* 13 (1949): 247-57.
- <sup>45</sup> Described in Carolyn Winget and Milton Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams* (Gainesville, Fla.: University Presses of Florida, 1979). For original, see C. B. Brenneis, *Differences in Male and Female Ego Styles in Manifest Dream Content*, Ann Arbor, Mich., University Microfilms, 1968; or idem, "Male and Female Ego Modalities in Manifest Dream Content," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 76 (1970): 434-42.
- <sup>46</sup> Hall and Van de Castle, *Content Analysis of Dreams*, p. 158.
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 159.
- <sup>48</sup> C. S. Hall et al., "The Dreams of College Men and Women in 1950 and 1980: A Comparison of Dream Contents and Sex Differences," *Sleep* 5, no. 2 (1982): 188-194.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 188.
- <sup>50</sup> Carol S. Rupperecht, "The Common Language of Women's Dreams: Colloquy of Mind and Body," in E. Lauter and C. S. Rupperecht, eds., *Archetypal Theory: Interdisciplinary Re-Visions of Jungian Thought* (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), p. 203.
- <sup>51</sup> Monique Lortie-Lussier, Christine Schwab, and Joseph De Koninck, "Working Mothers Versus Homemakers: Do Dreams Reflect the Changing Roles of Women?" *Sex Roles* 12 (1985): 1,009-21.
- <sup>52</sup> Hall and Van de Castle, *Content Analysis of Dreams*, p. 164. In the group of 1,000 dreams from college students, females had 796 familiar characters out of a total of 1,363 human characters, a proportion of .58; males had 501 familiar characters out of a total of 1,108 human characters, a proportion of .45. Regarding unfamiliar characters, females had 567 out of 1,363 human characters, a proportion of .41; males had 607 out of 1,108, a proportion of .54.
- <sup>53</sup> In addition to the study referred to in note 51, see Monique Lortie-Lussier et al., "Social Role Impact on the Dreams of Working Mothers and Female Students," *Association for the Study of Dreams Newsletter* 3, no. 2 (June 1986): 7. This material was described in greater detail at a paper presentation by Lortie-Lussier at the Association for the Study of Dreams conference at Ottawa, Canada, in 1986.
- <sup>54</sup> C. S. Hall and B. Domhoff, "The Difference Between Men and Women Dreamers," in Ralph L. Woods and Herbert B. Greenhouse, eds., *The New World of Dreams* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), pp. 13-16.
- <sup>55</sup> Lortie-Lussier, Schwab, and De Koninck, "Working Mothers," pp. 1009-21.
- <sup>56</sup> Hall and Nordby, *The Individual and His Dreams*, p. 42.
- <sup>57</sup> Van de Castle, *Psychology of Dreaming*, p. 38.
- <sup>58</sup> Patricia L. Garfield, *Your Child's Dreams* (New York: Ballantine, 1984), pp. 392-93.
- <sup>59</sup> Foulkes, *Children's Dreams*, pp. 81-82.

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- <sup>60</sup> Quoted in Winger and Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, p. 302. For original, see J. J. Buckley, "The Dreams of Young Adults: A Sociological Analysis of 1,133 Dreams of Black and White Students," in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, vol. 31 [7-A], 3635.
- <sup>61</sup> Quoted in C. Winget and M. Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, pp. 300, 303. For original, see C. S. Hall and B. Domhoff, "Friends and Enemies in Dreams," Institute of Dream Research, mimeograph, 1962. See also A. F. Paolino, "Dreams: Sex Differences in Aggressive Content," *Journal of Projective Techniques* 28 (1964): 219-26.
- <sup>62</sup> Quoted in Winget and Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, pp. 300, 303. For original, see Paolino, "Dreams," pp. 219-26. See also Calvin S. Hall and B. Domhoff, "Aggression in Dreams," *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 9 (1963): 259-67. See also C. Winget, M. Kramer, and R. Whitman, "Dreams and Demography," *Canadian Psychiatry Association Journal* 17 (1972): 203-8.
- <sup>63</sup> Quoted in Winger and Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, p. 302. For original, see M. J. Feldman and E. Hyman, "Content Analysis of Nightmare Reports," paper presented to the Association for the Psychophysiological Study of Sleep, Denver, Colo., 1968.
- <sup>64</sup> Hall and Nordby, *The Individual and His Dreams*, p. 51.
- <sup>65</sup> Winget and Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, pp. 234, 299-300. For original, see Winget, Kramer, and Whitman, "Dreams and Demography." See also J. F. Rychlak, "Recalled Dream Themes and Personality," *Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology* 60 (1960): 140-43; Calvin S. Hall and Bill Domhoff, "Friendliness in Dreams," Institute of Dream research mimeograph, 1962; Hall and Domhoff, "Friends and Enemies in Dreams."
- <sup>66</sup> Hall and Van de Castle, *Content Analysis of Dreams*, pp. 180-81.
- <sup>67</sup> Winget and Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, p. 297. For original, see L. Cahagan, "Sex Differences in Recall of Stereotyped Dreams, Sleep-Talking, and Sleep-Walking," *Journal of General Psychology* 48 (1936): 227-36.
- <sup>68</sup> Ethel M. Swanson and David Foulkes, "Dream Content and the Menstrual Cycle," *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disorders* 145 (1968): 358-63.
- <sup>69</sup> Winget and Kramer, *Dimensions of Dreams*, p. 189.
- <sup>70</sup> J. Money, "Phantom Orgasm in Dreams of Paraplegic Men and Women," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 3 (1960): 373-83.
- <sup>71</sup> Sex occurred in fifty-eight out of five hundred of the men's dreams, yielding 12 percent; sex occurred in eighteen out of five hundred of the women's dreams, yielding 4 percent; see Hall and Van de Castle, *Content Analysis of Dreams*, p. 181.
- <sup>72</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey et al. *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Co., 1953), p. 215.
- <sup>73</sup> Alfred C. Kinsey, Wordell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders, 1948), pp. 186 and 187. In Kinsey's sample the average age of first orgasm was thirteen years, ten and one-half months; first ejaculation occurred, for 90 percent of the males, between ages eleven and fifteen.
- <sup>74</sup> Kinsey et al, *Human Female*, pp. 208-12.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 212-13.
- <sup>76</sup> Charles A. Padghain, "Colours Experienced in Dreams," *British Journal of Psychology* 66, no. 1 (1975): 25-28.
- <sup>77</sup> These findings are complicated by the fact that female thresholds vary with phases of the menstrual cycle. In general, sensitivity increases around the time of ovulation. See Mary Anne Baker, *Sex Differences in Human Performance* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1987), pp. 11-13.
- <sup>78</sup> Van de Castle, *Psychology of Dreaming*, p. 37. See also Hall and Van de Castle, *Content Analysis of Dreams*, pp. 160-63. Women mentioned about 9 percent more objects than men.
- <sup>79</sup> Van de Castle, *Psychology of Dreaming*, p. 37.
- <sup>80</sup> Patricia Maybruck, *An Exploratory Study of the Dreams of Pregnant Women*, (Ph.D. diss., Saybrook Institute, San Francisco), Ann Arbor, Mich., University Microfilms, 1986.
- <sup>81</sup> Van de Castle, *Psychology of Dreaming*, p. 37.
- <sup>82</sup> Personal communication from Chinese man.