



★ **Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference**  
Cordelia Fine. Norton, \$25.95 (304p) ISBN 978-0-393-06838-2

With a fabulous combination of wit, passion, and scholarship, Fine (*A Mind of Its Own*) demolishes many of the common theories offered to explain the construction of gender in contemporary society. Taking on everyone from Louann Brizendine in *The Female Brain* to Cambridge University sex psychologist Simon Baron-Cohen, Fine's analysis convincingly demonstrates that the scientific data simply do not support long-accepted notions about gender differences, such as that women's brains are hard-wired for empathy while men's are not, or that testosterone levels in the womb shape male and female brains differently. She details the ways in which the studies supporting these theories are flawed in construction and interpretation, and can be based on the researcher's biased social notions of gender. Indeed, to the extent that there are gender differences, she discusses how sexism, both subtle and overt, is responsible for them. She shows that the fact that we spend our lives in environments that promote gender differentiation makes those differences nothing more than self-fulfilling prophecies. This marvelous and important book will change the way readers view the gendered world. (Aug.)

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