UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES **9777/03/PRE**

Paper 3 Presentation **May/June 2013**

PRE-RELEASE MATERIAL

To be given to candidates

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Guidance for Teachers

This Resource Booklet contains stimulus material to be used by candidates preparing their presentation for 9777/03. One copy should be given to each candidate.

Presentations must be prepared in a four-week period. This may take place at any point before 31 May 2013, by which date all presentations must have been submitted to CIE via MOVEit.

The Presentation is marked out of 40.

Instructions to Candidates

- You should use the enclosed stimulus material to help you identify the subject for your presentation.
- Your presentation should attempt to answer a question.
- Your presentation must address alternative perspectives on the question you select and must engage directly with an issue, an assumption, a piece of evidence and/or a line of reasoning (explicit or implicit) in one or more of the documents within this Booklet (i.e. you should not just pick an individual word or phrase which is not central to the reasoning of or the issues covered by the documents).
- Include in your presentation an explanation of how it relates to these pre-release materials.
- Your presentation should be designed for a non-specialist audience.
- Originality in interpretation is welcomed.
- Your presentation may be prepared in a variety of formats (e.g. PowerPoint, weblog or web pages) and should normally include an oral presentation or commentary.
- The speaking or running time of your presentation should be a maximum of 15 minutes.
- Whether presented or not, the submission must include a verbatim transcript of the presentation.

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Document 1

'Why Chinese Mothers Are Superior.'

This article was published in the *Wall Street Journal* on 8 January 2011 and is taken from *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, a book by Amy Chua.

Amy Chua is a professor at Yale Law School and is also author of *Day of Empire* and *World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability*.

A lot of people wonder how Chinese parents raise such stereotypically successful kids. They wonder what these parents do to produce so many math whizzes and music prodigies, what it's like inside the family, and whether they could do it too. Well, I can tell them, because I've done it. Here are some things my daughters, Sophia and Louisa, were never allowed to do:

- a sleepover
- have a playdate
- be in a school play
- complain about not being in a school play
- watch TV or play computer games
- choose their own extracurricular activities
- get any grade less than an A
- not be the No. 1 student in every subject except gym and drama
- play any instrument other than the piano or violin
- not play the piano or violin.

I'm using the term "Chinese mother" loosely. I know some Korean, Indian, Jamaican, Irish and Ghanaian parents who qualify too. Conversely, I know some mothers of Chinese heritage, almost always born in the West, who are not Chinese mothers, by choice or otherwise. I'm also using the term "Western parents" loosely. Western parents come in all varieties.

All the same, even when Western parents think they're being strict, they usually don't come close to being Chinese mothers. For example, my Western friends who consider themselves strict make their children practice their instruments 30 minutes every day. An hour at most. For a Chinese mother, the first hour is the easy part. It's hours two and three that get tough.

When it comes to parenting, the Chinese seem to produce children who display academic excellence, musical mastery and professional success – or so the stereotype goes.

Despite our squeamishness about cultural stereotypes, there are tons of studies out there showing marked and quantifiable differences between Chinese and Westerners when it comes to parenting. In one study of 50 Western American mothers and 48 Chinese immigrant mothers, almost 70% of the Western mothers said either that "stressing academic success is not good for children" or that "parents need to foster the idea that learning is fun." By contrast, roughly 0% of the Chinese mothers felt the same way. Instead, the vast majority of the Chinese mothers said that they believe their children can be "the best" students, that "academic achievement reflects successful parenting," and that if children did not excel at school then there was "a problem" and parents "were not doing their job." Other studies indicate that compared to Western parents, Chinese parents spend approximately 10 times as long every day drilling academic activities with their children. By contrast, Western kids are more likely to participate in sports teams.

What Chinese parents understand is that nothing is fun until you're good at it. To get good at anything you have to work, and children on their own never want to work, which is why it is crucial to override their preferences. This often requires fortitude on the part of the parents because the child will resist; things are always hardest at the beginning, which is where Western parents tend to give up. But if done properly, the Chinese strategy produces a virtuous circle. Tenacious practice, practice, practice is crucial for excellence; rote repetition is underrated in America. Once a child starts to excel at something – whether it's math, piano, pitching or ballet – he or she gets praise, admiration and satisfaction. This builds confidence and makes the once not-fun activity fun. This in turn makes it easier for the parent to get the child to work even more.

Chinese parents can order their kids to get straight As. Western parents can only ask their kids to try their best. Chinese parents can say, "You're lazy. All your classmates are getting ahead of you." By contrast, Western parents have to struggle with their own conflicted feelings about achievement, and try to persuade themselves that they're not disappointed about how their kids turned out.

I've thought long and hard about how Chinese parents can get away with what they do. I think there are three big differences between the Chinese and Western parental mind-sets.

First, I've noticed that Western parents are extremely anxious about their children's self-esteem. They worry about how their children will feel if they fail at something, and they constantly try to reassure their children about how good they are notwithstanding a mediocre performance on a test or at a recital. In other words, Western parents are concerned about their children's psyches. Chinese parents aren't. They assume strength, not fragility, and as a result they behave very differently.

For example, if a child comes home with an A-minus on a test, a Western parent will most likely praise the child. The Chinese mother will gasp in horror and ask what went wrong. If the child comes home with a B on the test, some Western parents will still praise the child. Other Western parents will sit their child down and express disapproval, but they will be careful not to make their child feel inadequate or insecure, and they will not call their child "stupid," "worthless" or "a disgrace." Privately, the Western parents may worry that their child does not test well or have aptitude in the subject or that there is something wrong with the curriculum and possibly the whole school. If the child's grades do not improve, they may eventually schedule a meeting with the school principal to challenge the way the subject is being taught or to call into question the teacher's credentials.

If a Chinese child gets a B – which would never happen – there would first be a screaming, hair-tearing explosion. The devastated Chinese mother would then get dozens, maybe hundreds of practice tests and work through them with her child for as long as it takes to get the grade up to an A.

Chinese parents demand perfect grades because they believe that their child can get them. If their child doesn't get them, the Chinese parent assumes it's because the child didn't work hard enough. That's why the solution to substandard performance is always to excoriate, punish and shame the child. The Chinese parent believes that their child will be strong enough to take the shaming and to improve from it. (And when Chinese kids do excel, there is plenty of ego-inflating parental praise lavished in the privacy of the home.)

Second, Chinese parents believe that their kids owe them everything. The reason for this is a little unclear, but it's probably a combination of Confucian filial piety and the fact that the parents have sacrificed and done so much for their children. (And it's true that Chinese mothers get in the trenches, putting in long grueling hours personally tutoring, training, interrogating and spying on their kids.) Anyway, the understanding is that Chinese children must spend their lives repaying their parents by obeying them and making them proud.

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By contrast, I don't think most Westerners have the same view of children being permanently indebted to their parents. My husband, Jed, actually has the opposite view. "Children don't choose their parents," he once said to me. "They don't even choose to be born. It's parents who foist life on their kids, so it's the parents' responsibility to provide for them. Kids don't owe their parents anything. Their duty will be to their own kids." This strikes me as a terrible deal for the Western parent.

Third, Chinese parents believe that they know what is best for their children and therefore override all of their children's own desires and preferences. That's why Chinese daughters can't have boyfriends in high school and why Chinese kids can't go to sleepaway camp. It's also why no Chinese kid would ever dare say to their mother, "I got a part in the school play! I'm Villager Number Six. I'll have to stay after school for rehearsal every day from 3:00 to 7:00, and I'll also need a ride on weekends." God help any Chinese kid who tried that one.

Don't get me wrong: It's not that Chinese parents don't care about their children. Just the opposite. They would give up anything for their children. It's just an entirely different parenting model.

There are all these new books out there portraying Asian mothers as scheming, callous, overdriven people indifferent to their kids' true interests. For their part, many Chinese secretly believe that they care more about their children and are willing to sacrifice much more for them than Westerners, who seem perfectly content to let their children turn out badly. I think it's a misunderstanding on both sides. All decent parents want to do what's best for their children. The Chinese just have a totally different idea of how to do that.

Western parents try to respect their children's individuality, encouraging them to pursue their true passions, supporting their choices, and providing positive reinforcement and a nurturing environment. By contrast, the Chinese believe that the best way to protect their children is by preparing them for the future, letting them see what they're capable of, and arming them with skills, work habits and inner confidence that no one can ever take away.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704111504576059713528698754.html]

Document 2

'Mother Inferior?'

Adapted from an article published in the *Wall Street Journal* on 15 January 2011 by Hanna Rosin, author and journalist

In pretty much every way, I am the weak-willed, pathetic Western parent that Ms. Chua describes. My children go on playdates and sleepovers; in fact I wish they would go on more of them. When they give me lopsided, hastily drawn birthday cards, I praise them as if they were Matisse, sometimes with tears in my eyes. (Ms. Chua threw back one quickly scribbled birthday card, saying "I reject this," and told her daughters they could do better.) My middle son is skilled at precisely the two extracurricular activities Ms. Chua most mocks: He just got a minor part in the school play as a fisherman, and he is a master of the drums, the instrument that she claims leads directly to using drugs (I'm not sure if she is joking or not).

I would be thrilled, of course, if my eldest child made it to Carnegie Hall at 14, which is the great crescendo of the Chua family story (although I would make sure to tell my other two children that they were fabulous in other ways!). But the chances that I would threaten to burn all her stuffed animals unless she played a piano piece perfectly, or to donate her favorite doll house to the Salvation Army piece by piece, as Ms. Chua did with her daughter, are exactly zero. It's not merely that such vigilant attention to how my daughter spends every minute of her afternoon is time-consuming and exhausting; after all, it takes time to play with my kids and to drive to drum lessons, too. It's more that I don't have it in me. I just don't have the demented drive to pull it off.

Many American parents will read "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother" and feel somewhat defensive and regretful. *Well, I do make my Johnny practice his guitar twice a week! Or, Look, I have this nice discipline chart on my refrigerator with frowny faces for when he's rude at dinner!* But I don't feel all that defensive. In fact, I think Ms. Chua has the diagnosis of American childhood exactly backward. What privileged American children need is not more skills and rules and math drills. They need to lighten up and roam free, to express themselves in ways not dictated by their uptight, over-invested parents. Like Ms. Chua, many American parents suffer from the delusion that, with careful enough control, a child can be made perfect. Ms. Chua does it with Suzuki piano books and insults, while many of my friends do it with organic baby food and playrooms filled with carefully curated wooden toys. In both cases, the result is the same: an excess of children who are dutiful proto-adults, always responsible and good, incapable of proper childhood rebellion.

In the days since Ms. Chua's book has come out, the media have brought up horror stories of child prodigies gone bad, including this 16-year-old who stabbed her mother to death after complaining that her Chinese immigrant parents held her to impossibly high standards. Most prodigy stories, I imagine, involve more complicated emotions. (The Amy Chua of the book, by the way, is more seductive than the distilled media version. She is remarkably self-aware. "The truth is, I'm not good at enjoying life," she writes, and she never hesitates to tell stories that she knows make her look beastly. It's worth noting that, in TV and radio interviews about the book, she's been trending more pussycat.)

I have a good friend who was raised by a Chinese-style mother, although her parents were actually German. Her mother pushed her to practice the violin for eight hours a day, and she rarely saw other people her age. Now she is my age, and she does not hate her mother or even resent her. She is grateful to her mother for instilling in her a drive and focus that she otherwise would have lacked. What she does hate is music, because it carries for her associations of loneliness and torture. She hasn't picked up the violin in a decade, and these days, she says, classical music leaves her cold. It's not an uncommon sentiment among prodigies: "I hate tennis," Andre Agassi says on the first page of his autobiography, "Open," "hate it with a dark and secret passion, and always have."

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The oddest part of Ms. Chua's parenting prescription is that it exists wholly apart from any passion or innate talent. The Chua women rarely express pure love of music; instead they express joy at having mastered it. Ms. Chua writes that she listened to CDs of Itzhak Perlman to figure out "why he sounded so good." This conception of child prodigies is not just Chinese. It is the extreme expression of the modern egalitarian notion of genius, as described by Malcolm Gladwell in "Outliers." Anyone can be a genius, if they just put in 10,000 hours of practice! It doesn't matter if they can carry a tune or have especially limber fingers. They don't even have to like music.

But why not wait for your children to show some small spark of talent or interest in an activity before you force them to work at it for hours a day? What would be so bad if they followed their own interests and became an expert flutist, or a soccer star or even a master tightrope walker? What's so special about the violin and the piano? Ms. Chua's most compelling argument is that happiness comes from mastery. "What Chinese parents understand is that nothing is fun until you're good at it." There is some truth to this, of course. But there is no reason to believe that calling your child "lazy" or "stupid" or "worthless" is a better way to motivate her to be good than some other more gentle but persistent mode. There is a vast world between perfection and loserdom. With her own children, Ms. Chua does not just want them to be good at what they do; she wants them to be better than everyone else.

"Children on their own never want to work," Ms. Chua writes, but in my experience this is not at all true. Left to their own devices, many children of this generation still have giant superegos and a mad drive to succeed. They want to run faster than their siblings, be smarter than their classmates and save the world from environmental disaster. In my household, it's a struggle to get my children to steal a cookie from the cookie jar without immediately confessing.

Before I had children, I worried about all the wrong things. I was raised by (immigrant) parents who did not have a lot of money, and so I spent my childhood roaming the streets of Queens looking for an open handball court. My children, by contrast, have been raised by relatively well-off parents who can afford to send them to good schools and drum lessons. I wanted them to be coddled and never to experience hardship. But childhood, like life, doesn't work that way. Privilege does not shield a child from being painfully shy or awkward around peers or generally ostracized. There are a thousand ways a child's life can be difficult, and it's a parent's job to help them navigate through them.

Because Ms. Chua really likes bullet points, I will offer some of my own:

- Success will not make you happy.
- Happiness is the great human quest.
- Children have to find happiness themselves.
- It is better to have a happy, moderately successful child than a miserable high-achiever.

"Western parents," Ms. Chua writes, "have to struggle with their own conflicted feelings about achievement and try and persuade themselves that they're not disappointed in how their kids turned out." With that, she really has our number. At the present moment in Western parenting, we believe that our children are special and entitled, but we do not have the guts or the tools to make that reality true for them. This explains, I think, a large part of the fascination with Ms. Chua's book.

But "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother" will lead us down the wrong path. The answer is not to aim for more effective child-perfecting techniques; it is to give up altogether on trying to perfect our children. Now I look upon those aimless days wandering the streets of Queens with fondness, because my life since then, starting the moment I entered a competitive high school, has been one ladder rung after another.

In her book, Ms. Chua refers, with some disdain, to her mother-in-law's belief that childhood should be full of "spontaneity, freedom, discovery and experience." My mother-in-law believes that, too, and she is especially gifted at facilitating it with whatever tools are at hand: a cardboard box, some pots and pans, torn envelopes. One afternoon I watched her play with my then-2-year old daughter for hours with some elephant toothpick holders and Play-Doh. I suppose that I could quantify what my daughter learned in those few hours: the letter E, the meaning of "pachyderm," who Hannibal was and how to love her grandmother 2% more. But the real point is that they earned themselves knee scabs marching across those imaginary Alps, and pretty soon it was time for a nap.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703959104576082434187716252.html?mod=WSJ_article_related]

Document 3

'Success And The Tiger Mother.'

An article on the website of *The Times of India*, an Indian newspaper, 29 January 2011
Gautam Adhikari

Win the future. With that stirring call in his State of the Union address on Tuesday, US President Barack Obama urged America to shape up for competition with China and India, which were thundering ahead in growth and development.

Well, thanks. We Indians are mighty pleased that you consider us to be a future competitor but, as things stand, um, you Americans needn't worry too much. True, we are growing impressively but when it comes to competitiveness, or offering an enabling environment for business, we are still way down in global charts. That's because we have a serious 'governance deficit', as Azim Premji, Keshub Mahindra, Bimal Jalan and other leading citizens rued in a recent letter to the government.

With China, however, America probably has a more pressing problem. China's foreign exchange reserves are close to $3 trillion, they hold around a trillion dollars worth of US government bonds; they are investing hugely in highways and new energy sources and smart railways, boosting their infrastructure in general; and they are expanding research, often with the help of young people trained in the US.

Training people with a renewed emphasis on education at all levels and intensifying research must be America's way forward to meet future challenges from emerging nations. "This is our generation's Sputnik moment," said the president, referring to the late 1950s when a Soviet satellite by that name spurred America on to a furious race in science and technology. Yes, but training doesn't begin or end with school, does it? Isn't how children are raised at home equally important for training minds?

A minor firestorm has been generated in the media here with the publication of Amy Chua's book, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*. She says the Americans have it all wrong by bringing up their children indulgently. The Chinese tiger mother, on the other hand, insists on a strict, sometimes harsh, upbringing for her child because all work and no play unless monitored for performance, will make Jack successful.

While raising her own children as a tiger mother, Chua frequently had to argue with her husband, Jed Rubenfeld, the son of a psychotherapist, who like the Chinese-American Chua is a law professor at Yale but holds different views on child-rearing. He would plead with her not to insult, humiliate or frighten the children into submission. But she would yell at her little daughters during piano practice: "If the next time's not perfect, I'm going to take all your stuffed animals and burn them!"

Their two daughters performed excellently in school and in music. But when the younger one was asked what title she would like to give her mother's book, she suggested: "The Perfect Child and the Flesh-Eating Devil".

I can see several ambitious parents in India's cities nodding their heads in approval of the tiger mother. Kids need discipline. But are children raised in a near-perfect style essential to the success of a society or nation? Or are free minds and self-confidence more effective in producing persons who can make society competitive?

The jury is still out on the matter. Point to note: China, with its millions of tiger mothers, has done well of late and shows some potential of becoming the leading nation of the world one day. America, however, has been the world's leading power since the middle of the 20th century despite its supposedly lax style of child-rearing.

In the field of knowledge, the US lead may have declined slightly but is still massive. Shanghai's Jiao Tong University made a ranking of the world's leading universities: out of the top 20, as many as 17 are American. Nobel prize winners in science are mostly American, with Germans and the British coming a distant second and third.

The same picture comes up when we look at new inventions and innovative ideas. Just in the last couple of decades, the internet, email, Facebook, Twitter and the iPad all came from America, not China or India. Tiger mothers did not raise those who introduced such innovations, like Bill Gates or Steve Jobs or Mark Zuckerberg.

An absolute decline of America may well be nigh. But they are not quite there yet.

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/Success-And-The-Tiger-Mother/articleshow/7379985.cms]

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Document 4

'The Work-Dad Balance.'

Adapted from an article by Matthew Taylor published in *Prospect*, March 2011. Prospect is a UK current affairs magazine.

A look at social trends over the last few decades reveals a complicated picture of attitudes towards parenting. Research by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission reveals that almost nine out of ten fathers say they would take more parental leave if there was more generous provision to do so. And despite Britain being near the bottom of the European league table for parental leave and compensation, the household division of labour has shifted dramatically – and is continuing to shift. The daily average time spent on childcare by fathers has grown by a staggering 800 per cent, from 15 minutes in the 1970s to two hours a day in the late 1990s. In 2008, a British Social Attitudes survey reported that the number of men who agreed that it is the man's role to earn money while the woman stays at home was at an all-time low of 17 per cent.

Such trends look set to continue. Research last year found that 50 per cent of men want to slow down their careers to leave more space for their families, and a survey of teenagers found both boys and girls wanted to balance work and family in their future lives. Meanwhile, research by the insurance company Aviva found that 6 per cent of fathers – about 600,000 men – now consider themselves to be their child's primary carer. Undoubtedly, such fathers deserve to be supported in the same way that mothers who look after children are.

More broadly, helping fathers to be carers seems to be good for both men and society as a whole. A study by Lancaster University Management School found that fathers who work flexibly are happier, healthier and better motivated in their jobs. In countries such as Sweden, where fathers have enjoyed greater work flexibility for some time, there is also evidence of improvements in family relations and couple stability. Mothers without support or jobs are more likely to suffer from depression, and research also links better outcomes for children – including stronger peer relationships and fewer behavioural problems – with higher levels of engagement by their fathers.

So the desire among fathers to take a more active role in parenting – and the benefits of encouraging them to – are obvious.

Fatherhood then and now…

Two men talk about their experiences of fatherhood

Clive Stafford Smith, Director of Reprieve

Experiences of fatherhood begin with our own childhood, and I am a little sad when I think of my own. I wondered, when my son Wilf was only ten days old, whether I had already kissed him more times than my father ever kissed me in 49 years.

My father said he could never beat me – that was what boarding school was for. When I first went away, I cried every night for a week, feeling abandoned. The notion of doing this to Wilf seems utterly foreign. And I would miss his company.

Today, the evolution of gender roles has wrought many changes, though imbalances remain: some women's purported desire to "have it all" has left them having to "do it all", working the second shift at home. I, too, want to have it all with Wilf, and thanks to my privileged working position, to a certain extent I have succeeded. But for most people our labour system fails to support fatherhood in any meaningful way. (We in the UK fund the NHS for healthcare; teachers for education; why not parents for the most important job of all?)

I observe the enthusiasm with which Wilf encounters his environment. Big stones go splosh; little stones go splish. I never knew (or had long forgotten) the excitement of the things that surround us. Tractors, helicopters, trains and automobiles, they are all so thrilling. Wilf listens to classical music (more than I do) and squeals with laughter at a particular sequence of notes. Recently, we sat listening to a dour movement of the *Nutcracker*; he insisted on repeating it, even though it made him cry. I wonder when I lost this ability to feel. I find myself resenting grown-ups, and conspiring with Wilf to resist their stifling conformities.

Ian Hargreaves, Professor of Journalism

My dad was a father of his time, as I am of mine. He was married in uniform, followed by seven unbroken years in the Middle East. When he returned from war, my mother didn't recognise him at the station. She had baked a pie; it was left uneaten. She bore three sons in four years.

I never knew much of what my father did. He came home every evening, but wasn't highly visible. I knew that he wanted me to do well at football and school, so I did. On the tennis court once a year he would ace me and my brothers on every service point. I suspect he partly disliked his role as sole provider.

Parenting is, needless to say, a harder job than any I've done for money. My children's mothering, I'd say, is sound. What about the fathering? Well, I'm writing this from a hotel room in Boston, where I'm doing some work for the British government. I am a fractal father: on call but not on the spot. I'm home roughly four nights a week, supplying routine in manageable doses, plus the odd moment of inspiration and useful male dullness at moments of drama, such as the day the dog ate the guinea pigs.

I've been struck by recent research into children's attitudes. They say they want to mix work and play in employment and not stay in any job too long. These sceptical, multi-tasking, work-life balancers should make good parents: fractal fathers and, let's hope, fractal mothers too.

[http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/coalition-fathers-paternity-leave/]

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Document 5

'Venus and Mars collide – are the sexes really alien to one another?'

Adapted from an article in *New Scientist*, 5 March 2011
Laura Spinney

It is surprising how much we actually do know about the differences between men and women. There is certainly enough science to address such contentious issues as whether women are innately bad at mathematics (they are not) and whether cultural indoctrination alone can explain why boys and girls tend to play with different toys (it cannot). Yet confused onlookers are often left with the impression that, when it comes to sex differences, everything is still up for grabs. So what's the inside story?

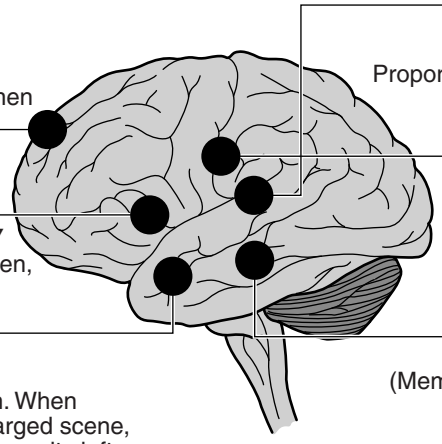
For a start, we have learned a great deal about the biology that underpins sex differences. For years, the accepted view was that all embryos start out the same – the default sex being female. We know now that's not quite how it works. It turns out there are "pro-female" and "pro-male" genes, and that sexual differentiation is governed by a delicate balance between the two. In 2006, for example, Pietro Parma at the University of Pavia in Italy, and colleagues, reported in the journal *Nature Genetics* that a gene called *r-spondini* promotes the development of the ovaries, and that without it individuals who are genetically female grow up physically and psychologically male.

Biologists have also revised their views on the role of sex hormones. Testosterone in men and oestrogen in women were always thought to account for most of the biological differences between the sexes. It is now clear that the effects of hormones and genes can interact, with implications for the wiring of the brain and, ultimately, for behaviour. Moreover, the contribution of genes can in turn be modified by experience: a child's early environment can induce chemical modification of DNA that changes whether the gene is active or quiescent.

So, sex determination is not over by birth. Both nature and nurture play a role in shaping the differences between men and women, especially in the brain, which is constantly remoulded through our lives. Many believe that there are critical periods when the sex of a child's brain is particularly malleable. By the time we reach adulthood there are numerous differences in structure between the brains of men and women, as revealed by brain-imaging studies (see diagram below). As yet neuroscientists know little about how the structural differences translate into behaviour.

The human with two brains

Women's brains are 10–15% smaller than men's, but each sex has areas that are proportionally larger



Spot the difference

Over the years, psychologists have developed a good picture of which human behaviours show sex differences. What has emerged is a hierarchy of traits (see table). There is one obvious pattern: "The further you go from reproductive behaviour, the less impressive the sex differences" (Pfaff). So, not surprisingly, at the top of the table are gender identity and sexual orientation, which both have a direct bearing on an individual's chances of reproducing. Put simply, the vast majority of people who think they are male are men, while those who consider themselves female overwhelmingly tend to be women.

Nobody is going to object to that. But things get more contentious further down the scale when we start considering traits such as empathy and assertiveness. One way to cut through this is by comparing the extent of psychological differences between men and women with an obvious physical one such as height. As well as putting the size of various behavioural differences into perspective, this also gives a more dispassionate take on what the differences mean. Everyone would agree, based on their visual experience, that men are on average taller than women, yet there are enough tall women and short men in the world that height alone is not a reliable predictor of an individual's sex. A similar rationale exists for behavioural differences.

His and hers hierarchy

There are real psychological and behavioural differences between the sexes but most are far smaller than the difference in height.

Trait	Difference between males and females (standard deviation units)
Gender identity eg. How male do you see yourself?	**11.0 – 13.2**
Sexual orientation eg. How strong is your preference for having sex with males	**6.0 – 7.0**
Preference for boy's toys	**2.1**
HEIGHT	**2**
Preference for girl's toys	**1.8**
Physical aggression	**0.4 – 1.3**
Empathy	**0.3 – 1.3**
Fine motor skills	**0.5 – 0.6**
Mental rotations	**0.3 – 0.9**
Assertiveness	**0.2 – 0.8**
Perceptual speed	**0.3 – 0.7**
Verbal fluency	**0.5**
SAT-test maths (US)	**0.4**
Mathematics concepts	**No difference**
Computational skills	**No difference**
SAT-test verbal (US)	**No difference**

[Turn over

Taking this approach, last year Jay Giedd and Judith Rapoport of the US National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Maryland, pointed out in the journal *Neuron* that most of the effects of sex on behaviour are only around half the size of those on height.

The areas where differences between men and women are about half that of height include aggression, empathy, assertiveness and cognitive skills such as the ability to mentally rotate an object. Further down the list come verbal fluency and mathematical attainment, which show far less variation between the sexes than we are often led to believe. And at the bottom of the chart are a bunch of traits commonly thought to be biased by sex but which in practice show no discernible difference between men and women. These include computational skills, overall verbal ability and leadership potential.

In other words, the picture science paints is one where sex differences are real but not deterministic. In certain areas men may tend to be one way and women another, but the role played by nurture and the environment in shaping these differences means that we may have more influence over them than we thought.

The origins of antagonism

The evolutionary roots of sex differences can often be found in sexual selection – the proliferation of traits, such as the peacock's tail, that are considered most attractive by members of the opposite sex. Behavioural differences among humans are no exception.

Take competitiveness. Male-male competition is a feature of 90 per cent of traditional human societies, but the Jivaro people of the Amazon take the prize for bellicosity, with a breathtaking 60 per cent male mortality due to ambushes, raids and other warlike behaviour. However, for the Jivaro man who wins the battle, the rewards are high: his social status increases, as does his desirability to women, making him more likely to pass on his genes. The same competition exists in industrialised societies, says David Geary at the University of Missouri in Columbia, although it is often disguised as a contest for wealth. "The ambition, the aggression, the wanting to outdo the other guy is all the same, but the way of expressing it is different," he says.

Of course, sexual selection has also shaped women, and the resulting differences between the sexes are bound to lead to antagonism. "If you've got the two genders being selected on different traits, and they have to come together to produce offspring … clearly there's going to be conflict," says Monique Borderhorff Mulder at the University of California, Davis.

Nevertheless, biology is not destiny. In societies where women earn their own livings, male wealth is a less potent status symbol and men compete for it less. Evolution may explain different aptitudes and behaviours of men and women, but it does not determine them.

Document 6

'Women in Film.'

Extracts adapted from blogs on the Women in Film and Television website

Extract One

Actor, writer and producer Tina Fey discusses the difficult decision to have a second child in Hollywood, 8 April 2011

To procreate or not to procreate? For actor, writer, producer and mother Tina Fey, the decision to have a second child was not easily reached. While promoting her new memoir, *Bossypants*, Fey spoke candidly about feeling torn between work and the prospect of expanding her family, stating she was 'stricken with guilt and panic' when her daughter would say, 'I wish I had a baby sister.' For veritable Renaissance woman Fey, having a child may potentially – and drastically – alter her thriving career.

Fey, 40, is acutely aware of Hollywood's tendency to dismiss or dispense with 'older' (by film industry standards, that is) women. There is a perceptible dearth of roles for women in their 40s and beyond, at least in comparison to those offered to their 20-something counterparts. What's more, these 'mature' women are perceived differently – silently devalued, one might say – as they age. Says Fey, who is currently five months pregnant: 'Hollywood be damned. I'll just be unemployable and labeled crazy in five years anyway.'

While Fey is able to speak with levity about such prejudice ('Science shows that fertility and movie offers drop off steeply for women after 40.'), it is a very real, problematic hurdle that women in Hollywood must face. So, how to combat ageism in a youth obsessed industry? Perhaps it's best to take a cue from Fey herself.

Fey is an admirable multi-tasker, writing, producing and acting in original work, creating opportunities where they may not have existed prior. Balancing such an engaged career with family life certainly cannot be easy; indeed, women have long done the labour intensive “double-shift.” Nevertheless, Fey has managed to establish herself as a force in an industry like so many others, where men are often the primary decision makers. The hope is that women like Fey can continue to sustain a career by taking control and proving what we already know: creativity doesn’t slacken with age. Just don’t call 40 the new 20.

[http://www.wftv.org.uk/wftv/blogs_pop.asp?blog_id=169&action=search]

Extract Two

Older women feel slighted by stereotypical representations in film

Reductive character archetypes are not a new phenomenon in Hollywood, and neither, unfortunately, is the film industry’s obsession with youth. When pervasive stereotypes combine with ageism the results are particularly upsetting, as is often the case when older women are portrayed on screen.

In one of their final acts prior to shuttering this April, the UK Film Council (facilitated by research company Harris Interactive) conducted a survey of 4,315 people regarding their opinions about representation in film. Sixty-one percent of older women believe they are not adequately depicted, while 69% believe that younger women are glamourised.

When older women are depicted in film, trite stereotypes – such as the ‘sexless grandmother’ – tend to dominate storylines.

The results of the survey should serve as a call for action in the filmmaking community. Not only is there a cadre of talented ‘mature’ actresses worthy of employment, but these same women deserve roles which will challenge them professionally and narrate a spectrum of stories. Women are neither solely doe-eyed ingenues or austere matriarchs. There is room for alternate representations, those which speak honestly to the range of experiences that women of different ages, races, cultures and social strata encounter.

[http://www.wftv.org.uk/wftv/blogs_pop.asp?blog_id=167&action=search]

Document 7

'Beauty is in the Eye of the Beholder – Women in Chinese Painting.'

Extract adapted from an article on an English-language website sponsored by the Chinese Ministry of Culture

'Four Beauties', a Ming Dynasty painting

China has a long history of using women as objects d'art since the Warring States and Western Han Dynasty when people painted female figures on silk.

Each time in history has its own idea of 'beauty' and from early times artists have recorded their particular version of 'beauty'. Artists in China are no different. Throughout the ages, the image of the 'ideal' beauty has been subject to the trends and politics of the times, and through their legacies we can gain a better understanding of Chinese history.

Even though paintings of women were common, women did not gain respect because of it. In the paintings women are only beautiful objects to show or admire. It is possible to link the growth of women depicted in art and a lowering of their social status.

[http://www.chinaculture.org/library/2008-01/14/content_79991.htm]

Document 8

'Art History and Film.'

Article and response taken from the website of *The Times of India*, an Indian newspaper, 1 March 2011

Article

'Filmmaking is about artistic freedom.'

Having swept the top honours at the 83rd Academy Awards – including the Best Motion Picture, Best Director and Best Actor in a Lead Role – *The King's Speech* joins a long list of critically acclaimed films that took liberty with historical facts. To expect otherwise would not be reasonable. Good cinema has never been about getting historical details right but about dramatising history in a manner that connects with audiences.

Period dramas always leave scope for nitpicking, but that is hardly the point. Unlike in the movie *Braveheart*, William Wallace never wore kilts. Roman emperor Commodus wasn't killed in the Colosseum as in Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*. Perhaps the love story between emperor Akbar and Jodhaa Bai in *Jodhaa Akbar* was exaggerated. Gandhi wasn't the blameless saint portrayed in the film *Gandhi*. So what? All these films have the power to move us, and convey history in a manner that's relevant to large sections of the audience. And in the end, that is what matters.

Movies are a creative medium subject to the interpretation of the filmmaker. *The King's Speech* is based on a book that chronicles England's King George VI's struggle against stammering. Pieced together from personal letters between the king and his speech therapist, Lionel Logue, the book is a treasure trove of facts. However, if director Tom Hooper were to strictly adhere to the book, it would have made for a dull film. The way a subject is depicted through cinema is also a study of the times we live in.

Aesthetics play a crucial role in filmmaking. It is precisely for this reason that creative freedom is sacrosanct for a filmmaker. Appreciation of good cinema is acknowledgement of the art of filmmaking, not just getting the history right. All art has some historical basis, but that hardly means art should be denied poetic licence.

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/Filmmaking-is-about-artistic-freedom/articleshow/7597355.cms]

Response

'Art cannot abolish history.'

If life can reflect art, there is no reason why art cannot reflect life. Indeed art must do so if it is to be credible. The error of historical adaptations is to assume that facts get in the way of entertainment. This results in portrayals that are not just an airbrushing of history but complete rewrites. The cost is borne by us – perceived as simpletons, we are given a fare of simple entertainment – and our young. Presented with warped renditions of history, their ability to learn from history is stunted.

The feel-good film *The King's Speech* demonstrates how historical films deny us history's lessons by glossing over Buckingham Palace's consistent support for Neville Chamberlain's deal with Hitler. Chamberlain exchanged a free people, the Czech, to safeguard the British empire. Instead we have a sugary sweet rendition, which perpetuates outmoded ideas such as the age-old enthrallment with royalty. This unthinking adoration would be checked if films factually portrayed their subjects, especially if they're inexplicably popular. The film also brushes aside the complexity of human life thereby doing a great disservice to an important historical figure, Winston Churchill. In making him a caricature goody-goody the actual man is lost. He's made into a consistent friend to the stuttering prince. Things and people are rarely so simple. Churchill was a supporter of the Nazi sympathiser Edward VIII.

Bollywood is just as guilty of playing fast and loose with history. *Jodhaa Akbar* is a case of the director's imagination joining the dots, to make a roaring love affair out of a marriage of convenience. *Mangal Pandey* is a blatant rewriting of history which, in feeding coarse nationalism, exposes the dangers of misusing history. It's the failure of directors to think that history and entertainment are mutually exclusive. We would be better entertained if the facts of history were respected.

[http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/opinion/edit-page/Filmmaking-is-about-artistic-freedom/articleshow/articleshow/7597378.cms]

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