

*A Study of Human Capabilities*, edited by Martha Nussbaum and Jonathan Glover (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); (jointly with Jean Drèze) *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995); "Agency and Well-Being: The Development Agenda," in *A Commitment to the Women*, edited by Noeleen Heyzer (New York: UNIFEM, 1996).

2. My paper "Well-Being, Agency and Freedom: The Dewey Lectures 1984," *Journal of Philosophy* 82 (April 1985), investigates the philosophical distinction between the "agency aspect" and the "well-being aspect" of a person, and attempts to identify the far-reaching practical implications of this distinction, applied to many different fields.

3. Alternative statistical estimates of the extent of "extra mortality" of women in many countries in Asia and North Africa also are discussed in my *Resources, Values and Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984); (jointly with Jean Drèze) *Hunger and Public Action* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). See also Stephan Klasen, " 'Missing Women' Reconsidered," *World Development* 22 (1994).

4. There is a vast literature on this; my own attempts at analyzing and using the available evidence can be found in "Gender and Cooperative Conflict" (1990), and "More Than a Hundred Million Women Are Missing," *New York Review of Books*, (Christmas number, December 20, 1990).

5. These issues have been discussed in my *Resources, Values and Development* (1984), "Gender and Cooperative Conflict" (1990), and "More Than a Hundred Million Women Are Missing" (1990). A pioneering study of this general field was presented in Ester Boserup's classic work, *Women's Role in Economic Development* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971). The recent literature on gender inequality in developing countries includes a number of interesting and important studies of different types of determining variables. See, for example, Hanna Papanek, "Family Status and Production: The 'Work' and 'Non-Work' of Women," *Signs* 4 (1979). Martha Loutfi, ed., *Rural Work: Unequal Partners in Development* (Geneva: ILO, 1980); Mark R. Rosenzweig and T. Paul Schultz, "Market Opportunities, Genetic Endowment and Intrafamily Resource Distribution," *American Economic Review* 72 (1982); Myra Buvinic, M. Lycette and W. P. McGreevy, eds., *Women and Poverty in the Third World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); Pranab Bardhan, *Land, Labor and Rural Poverty* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); Devaki Jain and Nirmala Banerjee, eds., *Tyranny of the Household: Investigative Essays in Women's Work* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1985); Gita Sen and C. Sen, "Women's Domestic Work and Economic Activity," *Economic and Political Weekly* 20 (1985); Martha Alter Chen, *A Quiet Revolution: Women in Transition in Rural Bangladesh* (Dhaka: BRAC, 1986); Jere Behrman and B. L. Wolfe, "How Does Mother's Schooling Affect Family Health, Nutrition, Medical Care Usage

and Household Sanitation?" *Journal of Econometrics* 36 (1987); Monica Das Gupta, "Selective Discrimination against Female Children in India," *Population and Development Review* 13 (1987); Gita Sen and Caren Grown, *Development, Crises and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (London: Earthscan, 1987); Alaka Basu, *Culture, the Status of Women and Demographic Behaviour* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Nancy Folbre, Barbara Bergmann, Bina Agarwal and Maria Flore, eds., *Women's Work in the World Economy* (London: Macmillan, 1992); United Nations ESCAP, *Integration of Women's Concerns into Development Planning in Asia and the Pacific* (New York: United Nations, 1992); Bina Agarwal, *A Field of One's Own* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Edith Kuiper and Jolande Sap, with Susan Feiner, Notburga Ott and Zafiris Tzannatos, *Out of the Margin: Feminist Perspectives on Economics* (New York: Routledge, 1995); among other contributions.

6. Gender divisions within the family are sometimes studied as "bargaining problems": the literature includes, among many other contributions, Marilyn Manser and Murray Brown, "Marriage and Household Decision Making: A Bargaining Analysis," *International Economic Review* 21 (1980); M. B. McElroy and M. J. Horney, "Nash Bargained Household Decisions: Toward a Generalization of Theory of Demand," *International Economic Review* 22 (1981); Shelley Lundberg and Robert Pollak, "Noncooperative Bargaining Models of Marriage," *American Economic Review* 84 (1994). For approaches different from that of "bargaining models," see Sen, "Women, Technology and Sexual Divisions" (1985); Nancy Folbre, "Hearts and Spades: Paradigms of Household Economics," *World Development* 14 (1986); J. Brannen and G. Wilson, eds., *Give and Take in Families* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987); Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (New York: Basic Books, 1989); Sen, "Gender and Cooperative Conflict" (1990); Marianne A. Ferber and Julie A. Nelson, eds., *Beyond Economic Man: Feminist Theory and Economics* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993); among other contributions. Useful collections of papers on these issues can also be found in Jane Humphries, ed., *Gender and Economics* (Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar, 1995), and Nancy Folbre, ed., *The Economics of the Family* (Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar, 1996).

7. On this see Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family* (1989); Drèze and Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (1989); Sen, "Gender and Cooperative Conflict" (1990); Nussbaum and Glover, *Woman, Culture and Development* (1995). See also the papers of Julie Nelson, Shelley Lundberg, Robert Pollak, Diana Strassman, Myra Strober and Viviana Zelizer in the 1994 Papers and Proceedings in *American Economic Review* 84 (1994).

8. This issue has started receiving considerable attention in India. See Asoke Mitra, *Implications of Declining Sex Ratios in India's Population* (Bombay: Allied Publishers,

1980); Jocelyn Kynch and Amartya Sen, "Indian Women: Well-Being and Survival," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 7 (1983); Bardhan, *Land, Labor and Rural Poverty* (1984); Jain and Banerjee, eds., *Tyranny of the Household* (1985). The "survival problem" relates to the broader issue of neglect, on which see also the studies presented in Swapna Mukhopadhyay, ed., *Women's Health, Public Policy and Community Action* (Delhi: Manohar, 1998), and Swapna Mukhopadhyay and R. Savithri, *Poverty, Gender and Reproductive Choice* (Delhi: Manohar, 1998).

9. On this see Tinker, *Persistent Inequalities* (1990). My own paper in this collection ("Gender and Cooperative Conflict") goes into the economic and social influences that affect the divisions within the family, and discusses why the divisions vary so much between regions (for example, antifemale bias being much stronger in South Asia, West Asia, North Africa and China than in sub-Saharan Africa or Southeast Asia), and also within different areas inside the same country (for example, gender bias at this level being very strong in some Indian states, such as Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, and effectively absent in Kerala). There are also close linkages between different influences on women's relative position, such as those connecting legal rights and basic education (since the use of legal provisions relates to the ability to read and write); see Salma Sobhan, *Legal Status of Women in Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Bangladesh Institute of Legal and International Affairs, 1978).

10. The role of gender divisions in the sharing of hunger has been illuminatingly studied by Megan Vaughan, *The Story of an African Famine: Hunger, Gender and Politics in Malawi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Barbara Harriss, "The Intrafamily Distribution of Hunger in South Asia," in *The Political Economy of Hunger*, edited by Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1990), among others.

11. Some of these issues have been discussed in the specific context of India, with comparisons *within* and *outside* India in Drèze and Sen, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (1995); see also Alaka Basu, *Culture, the Status of Women and Demographic Behaviour* (1992), and Agarwal, *A Field of One's Own*, (1995). The different sources of disadvantage are particularly important to study in analyzing the special deprivation of groups with little economic or social leverage—for example, widows, especially from poorer families. On that, see Martha Alter Chen, ed., *Widows in India* (New Delhi: Sage, 1998), and her forthcoming book, *Perpetual Mourning: Widowhood in Rural India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999; Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

12. On the issues involved, see my "Gender and Cooperative Conflict," in Tinker, *Persistent Inequalities* (1990), and the literature cited there.

13. See L. Beneria, ed., *Women and Development: The Sexual Division of Labor in Rural Societies* (New York: Praeger, 1982). See also Jain and Banerjee, *Tyranny of the Household* (1985); Gita Sen and Grown, *Development, Crises and Alternative Visions* (1987); Haleh Afshar, ed., *Women and Empowerment: Illustrations from the Third World* (London: Macmillan, 1998).

14. See Mamta Murthi, Anne-Catherine Guio and Jean Drèze, "Mortality, Fertility and Gender Bias in India: A District Level Analysis," *Population and Development Review* 21 (December 1995). See also Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, eds., *Indian Development: Selected Regional Perspectives* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996). Questions can certainly be raised about the direction of causation in the identified relations—for example, whether women's literacy influences the status and standing of women in the family or whether women's higher standing inclines a family to send young girls to school. There could be, statistically, also a third factor that correlates with both. And yet recent empirical studies suggest that most families—even in socially backward areas in India—seem to have a strong preference for educating the children, including girls. One large survey indicates that the proportion of parents who think it is "important" to send girls to school even in the states with the least female literacy is remarkably high: 85 percent in Rajasthan, 88 percent in Bihar, 92 percent in Uttar Pradesh, and 93 percent in Madhya Pradesh. The main barrier to the education of girls appears to be the absence of convenient schools in the neighborhood—a major difference between high-literacy and low-literacy states. See the Probe Team, *Public Report on Basic Education in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999). Public policy, therefore, has a central role to play. There have been recent public policy initiatives with good effect on literacy, especially in Himachal Pradesh, and more recently in West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and a few other states.

15. The 1991 Indian census indicates that the death rate per thousand in the 0–4 age group was 25.6 for males and 27.5 for females at the all-India level. The female mortality rate in that age group was lower than the male mortality rate in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, but higher in all the other major Indian states. The female disadvantage was most pronounced in Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

16. Murthi, Guio and Drèze, "Mortality, Fertility and Gender Bias in India" (1995).

17. See Jean Drèze and Mamta Murthi, "Female Literacy and Fertility: Recent Census Evidence from India," mimeographed, Centre for History and Economics, King's College, Cambridge, U.K., 1999.

18. There were, apparently, not enough data with adequate interdistrict variations to examine the impact of different forms of property rights, which are relatively more

uniform across India. On an isolated basis, there is, of course, the strong and much-discussed example of the Nairs in Kerala, who have had matrilineal inheritance for a long time (an association that confirms, rather than contradicts, insofar as it goes, the positive impact of female property rights on child survival in general and the survival of female children in particular).

19. There is, it appears, a positive association between female labor force participation and under-five mortality in these fits, but this association is not statistically significant.

20. See, among other important contributions, J. C. Caldwell, "Routes to Low Mortality in Poor Countries," *Population and Development Review* 12 (1986); and Behrman and Wolfe, "How Does Mother's Schooling Affect Family Health, Nutrition, Medical Care Usage and Household Sanitation?" (1987).

21. These have been extensively discussed in my joint book with Jean Drèze, *India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (1995).

22. The various sources of evidence on this have been subjected to critical examination, and not surprisingly, the different empirical studies emerge with rather disparate force in these critical scrutinies. See particularly the "critical perspectives" on this issue presented in Caroline H. Bledsoe, John B. Casterline, Jennifer A. Johnson-Kuhn and John G. Haaga, eds., *Critical Perspectives on Schooling and Fertility in the Developing World* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1999). See also Susan Greenhalgh, *Situating Fertility: Anthropology and Demographic Inquiry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Robert J. Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, "International Comparisons of Educational Attainment," paper presented at a conference on How Do National Policies Affect Long-Run Growth?, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 1993; Robert Cassen, with contributors, *Population and Development: Old Debates, New Conclusions* (Washington, D.C.: Transaction Books for Overseas Development Council, 1994).

23. On these and related general issues, see my "Population: Delusion and Reality," *New York Review of Books*, September 22, 1994; *Population Policy: Authoritarianism versus Cooperation* (Chicago: MacArthur Foundation, 1995); and "Fertility and Coercion," *University of Chicago Law Review* 63 (summer 1996).

24. See United Nations, ESCAP, *Integration of Women's Concerns into Development Planning in Asia and the Pacific* (New York: United Nations, 1992), especially the paper of Rehman Sobhan and the references cited there. The practical issues relate closely to the social conception of women's role in society and thus touch on the central focus of feminist studies. A wide-ranging collection of papers (including many classics) can be found in Susan Moller Okin and Jane Mansbridge, eds., *Feminism* (Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar, 1994). See also Catherine A. Mackinnon, *Feminism*

Unmodified (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), and Barbara Johnson, The Feminist Difference: Literature, Psychology, Race and Gender (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

25. See Philip Oldenberg, "Sex Ratio, Son Preference and Violence in India: A Research Note," Economic and Political Weekly, December 5–12, 1998; Jean Drèze and Reetika Khera, "Crime, Society and Gender in India: Some Clues for Homicidal Data," mimeographed, Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics, 1999. The explanations of this interesting finding can invoke cultural factors as well as economic and social ones. Though the brief discussion here concentrates on the latter, there are obvious connections with psychological and valuational questions raised by those who see a basic gender contrast in morals and attitudes, most notably Carol Gilligan; see In a Different Voice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982). Importance may well be attached to the fact that the most remarkable case of humane prison reform in India came from one of that rare breed, a woman prison governor, Kiran Bedi. Her own account of the radical change and the opposition she faced can be found in Kiran Bedi, It's Always Possible: Transforming One of the Largest Prisons in the World (New Delhi: Sterling, 1998). I do not pursue further here the important issue of distinguishing between alternative explanations of the nature of women's leadership in social change of this type, since the analysis presented in this work does not require that we try to resolve this complex issue.

26. Oldenberg argues for the former hypothesis; but see also Arup Mitra, "Sex Ratio and Violence: Spurious Results," Economic and Political Weekly, January 2–9, 1993. Drèze and Khera argue for an explanation with the opposite direction of causation. See also the literature cited there, including older studies, such as Baldev Raj Nayar, Violence and Crime in India: A Quantitative Study (Delhi: Macmillan, 1975); S. M. Edwards, Crime in India (Jaipur: Printwell Publishers, 1988); S. Venugopal Rao, ed., Perspectives in Criminology (Delhi: Vikas, 1988).

27. Another factor has been the use of group responsibility in seeking a high rate of repayment. On this see Muhammad Yunus with Alan Jolis, Banker to the Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty (London: Aurum Press, 1998). See also Lutfun N. Khan Osmani, "Credit and Women's Relative Well-Being: A Case Study of the Grameen Bank, Bangladesh" (Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University of Belfast, 1998). See also Kaushik Basu, Analytical Development Economics (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997), chapters 13 and 14; Debraj Ray, Development Economics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), chapter 14.



28. See Catherine H. Lovell, *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty: The BRAC Strategy* (Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press, 1992).
29. See John C. Caldwell, Barkat-e-Khuda, Bruce Caldwell, Indrani Pieries and Pat Caldwell, "The Bangladesh Fertility Decline: An Interpretation," *Population and Development Review* 25 (1999). See also John Cleland, James F. Phillips, Sajeda Amin and G. M. Kamal, *The Determinants of Reproductive Change in Bangladesh: Success in a Challenging Environment* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1996), and John Bongaarts, "The Role of Family Planning Programmes in Contemporary Fertility Transition," in *The Continuing Demographic Transition*, edited by G.W. Jones et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
30. See Agarwal, *A Field of One's Own* (1995).
31. See Henrietta Moore and Megan Vaughan, *Cutting Down Trees: Gender, Nutrition and Agricultural Change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890–1990* (Portsmouth, N.H.: Heinemann, 1994).
32. The difficulties to be overcome by women in the labor market and in economic relations in society have been plentiful even in advanced market economies. See Barbara Bergmann, *The Economic Emergence of Women* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); Francine D. Blau and Marianne A. Ferber, *The Economics of Women, Men and Work* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1986); Victor R. Fuchs, *Women's Quest for Economic Equality* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988); Claudia Goldin, *Understanding the Gender Gap: An Economic History of American Women* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). See also the collection of papers in Marianne A. Ferber, *Women in the Labor Market* (Cheltenham, U.K.: Edward Elgar, 1998).
33. There is a danger of oversimplification in seeing the issue of women's "agency" or "autonomy" in too formulaic terms, focusing on simple statistical connections with variables such as female literacy or employment. On this see the insightful anthropological analysis of Alaka M. Basu, *Culture, Status of Women, and Demographic Behavior* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). See also the studies presented in Roger Jeffery and Alaka M. Basu, eds., *Girls' Schooling, Women's Autonomy and Fertility Change in South Asia* (London: Sage, 1996).
34. See Naila Kabeer, "The Power to Choose: Bangladeshi Women and Labour Market Decisions in London and Dhaka," mimeographed, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 1998.
35. The changing role of women (and its far-reaching effects) in India since independence is discussed in an interesting collection of papers edited by Bharati Ray