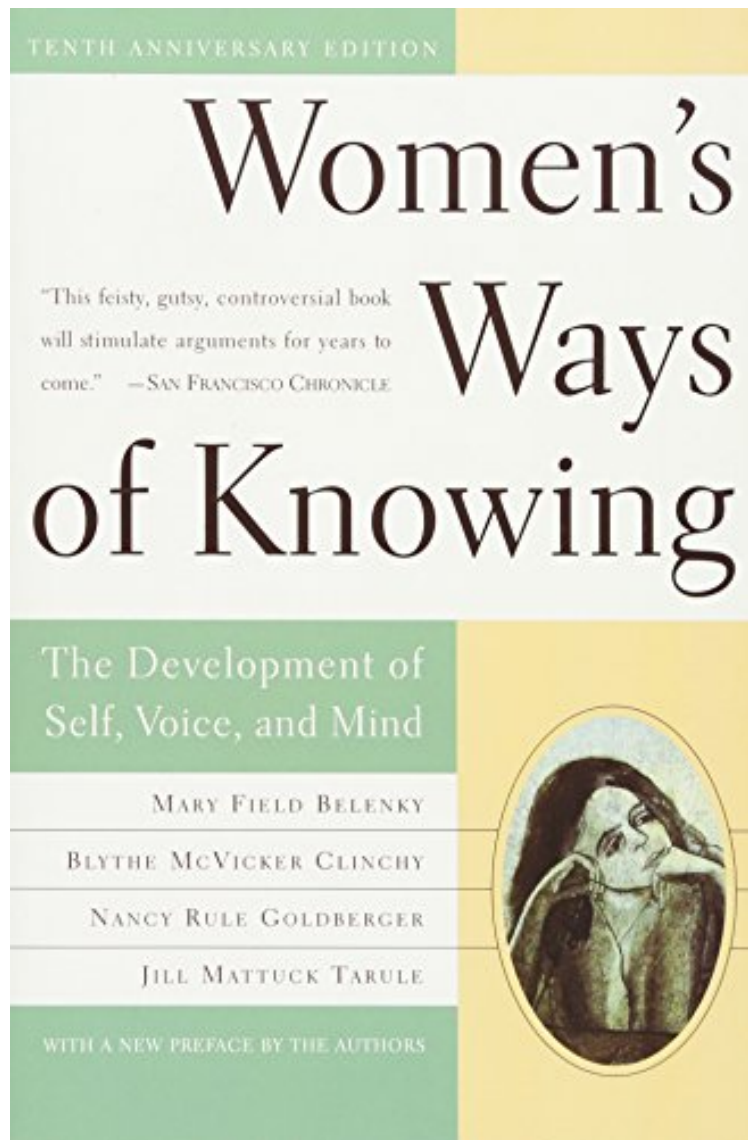


## Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind 10th Anniversary Edition

Mary Field Belenky, Blythe Mcvicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, Jill Mattuck Tarule  
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Mary Field Belenky, Blythe Mcvicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, Jill Mattuck Tarule : Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind 10th Anniversary Edition before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind 10th Anniversary Edition:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating insight and discussion on the mind of women  
By J. Lukowski  
There are five categories of women who know (or think). First, the "silent knower" comprised only 2% of the survey group of 135 women--these women were deprived socially, economically, and educationally, which is why they viewed words as weapons to diminish people. Thus these women did not tend to have dialogue within themselves (pp. 24-25). They tended not to have confidence to learn from either experience or words (p. 26). They did not seem to relate to others in a sense of "we-ness" (p. 27). Such women tended to receive the labels as immature, impulsive, acting-out, hyperactive, delinquent, and of a short attention span (p. 28). This woman is common in Third World countries, and must be integrated with more developed women in order to open her horizons. An approach to this kind of woman would be "to speak" to her through actions of kindness and generosity. Second, the "received knower" sees ideas as concrete and falling into dualistic modes (right/wrong, true/false, etc.)--these women are apt "to see the emperor in full regalia" because they conform to authorities as sources of truth (pp. 37-38), and these authorities (usually male--p. 45) are infinitely capable of receiving knowledge and retaining the "right answer" with impeccable precision (p. 40). Paradox is therefore inconceivable to these women, which is why they have trouble with understanding poetry, for example (pp. 41-42). They strive to subordinate their own actions to the symbolic representations of the good that they are able to hear in the voices of others (p. 46). These women are thus followers--they look to others as their "fount of truth," and therefore need "midwife teachers" (pp. 217-19) in order to put these women into conversation with other voices past and present. Third, the "subjective knower" views the fountain of truth as within, and, therefore, can negate the answers of the outside world (pp. 54, 61, 69). (One-half of the 135 women interviewed were in this category--p. 55.) She distrusts logic, analysis, abstraction, and even language (p. 71). These women tend to come from families that were less advantaged, more permissive, more chaotic than the average (p. 56), which is why they tend not to have a coherent, reflective moral maturity (p. 77): they thus have no clear self-concept, but yet at the same time tend to be positive, as they are open to novelty or to the curious (pp. 82, 84). On the one hand, they tend to have a negative view of male authority, because such figures were either absent in their lives or were sources of emotional, sexual, and/or verbal abuse (pp. 57-59, 79). This is why they tend to rely on female peers, mothers, sisters, and grandmothers for knowledge and truth (p. 60). Such women are best influenced by life stories to convey knowledge. Fourth, the "procedural knower" is well practiced at the art of being a university student (p. 87). These women tend to be privileged, white, young academics--their outlook on life tends toward the worship of "methodolatry," because they tend toward "the chilling academic analyses of problems" (pp. 87, 93-95). They do not accommodate knowledge; instead they assimilate it (p. 123), because they know that intuition or "gut feelings" may deceive; that is, some truths are truer than others, etc., and hence they rely heavily on procedures, skills, techniques (pp. 93-94, 99). They place form over substance (pp. 95, 97), which is why they tend to feel like chameleons or frauds (pp. 124, 129). The subcategory of the "separate procedural knower" tends toward impersonal rules, impersonal reason, and a sense of justice; and these women tend to be tomboys--and so are tough-minded women who seek to weed out their biases from knowledge so as to arrive at the flower of pure reason (pp. 101-104, 109). To them, using doubt as a way to test knowledge is not a good game, and is actually taken personally (p. 105). The other subcategory is the "connected knower" in this context tends toward care and relationships with a capacity for empathy in others (pp. 101-02, 113). Again, form rather than content is central, and thus (to use a double negative) nothing human would be alien to them (pp. 115-17). For these women, one must be careful not to make light of disagreements in those cases where form (the superficial?) dominates substance. (For these women, they must learn that inductive logic is the art and deductive logic is the science, for which the procedural knower would tend to depend too heavily.) Finally, the "constructed knower" maintained the voice of integration--she brought together reason, intuition, and the expertise of others (pp. 133-34) with an open mind and open heart (p. 141). She was articulate, reflective (p. 134), and was seriously preoccupied with the moral and spiritual dimensions of her life (p. 150). This woman had a high tolerance for internal contradiction and ambiguity (p. 137) because truth was a matter of context (p. 138-39). She could recognize an expert as one who appreciated the complex but who maintained an air of humility about their knowledge (p. 139). These women may find intimate relationships difficult to maintain, especially if they speak their minds (p. 140). These women aspire to the kind of work that contributes to the empowerment and improvement in the quality of the lives of others (p. 152). These women are the self-actualizers, who emphasize the complexity of problems and ones responsibility to use knowledge to help others (and not just to help ones self). Interestingly the book highlighted that of 135 women surveyed, half disclosed that there were victims of some form of incest or sexual abuse, and that these life experiences had an effect on their perceptions of the male gender. This book was fascinating, and difficult to put down -- certainly a must read.  
5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Still groundbreaking and insightful  
By CSI  
am an educator at a law faculty and I take my teaching very seriously. Until I read this book I had very set ideas about how my students learn, and particularly about the quiet ones and their lack of will or preparation. This book blew my antiquated ideas out of the water and I have found it to be truly enlightening to consider that my female students may be learning entirely differently from how most of my male students learn, and that if I ask questions in a different way, it invites debates which are more inclusive, and affirms those (male or female) who otherwise feel excluded. In particular the distinction between separate and connected learning has been really eye-opening for me.

Reading this book has shed a new light on my own learning processes and on the kinds of debates I have with friends, whether or not they are highly educated. Fantastic work written in the 1980's which still has so much to teach us today. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A breakthrough in understanding the development of human "voice" By D Train Women's Ways of Knowing articulates archetypal constructs of human "voice", or the way we gather certainty about the world and express our certainty through our worldview, i.e., through our very presence in the world. "Voice" is very appropriate in this context, because it symbolizes both what we hear / perceive of the world (the voice, or predominant programming, in our psyches that we pay attention and listen to), and what we give back to the world as a result of what we take in (our personal voices of expression). The articulation of these archetypes in WWK shifts from the theoretical to the profound when we realize that these constructs are acted out every day in seven billion human beings. It is a tragedy beyond scope when the voices of countless human beings are shut down either temporarily or permanently as a result of the terror people experience in any number of situations (women in places of brutal oppression, children in their complete dependence on adults for their survival, most people in situations of group pressure), at the thought of listening to a "voice" different from that allowed, or expressing their own voice when this would put them at risk. Contrarily, it offers hope for humanity when we realize, as the four researchers who collaborated to create WWK did, that these constructs (1. listening to and passing forward what we have understood of an "authority"; 2. disregarding all but what we feel inwardly or subjectively, and expressing only that; 3. becoming members in complex systems of "procedural" or objective knowledge, such as medicine, engineering, or the thousands of other specialized systems on which modern society is based and through which it functions, and participating in / contributing to one or more of those systems; 4. realizing that we are fluid beings and that we can move in and out of any combination of these archetypes, in essence "constructing" or co-creating new ways of listening and expression at will), are for us to understand and use rather than be constricted by. Through this transcendence of form, even invisible form such as archetypes of "voice", human freedom becomes possible. A fascinating paradox of WWK is that, while it set out as a research project to offer a women's perspective on the development of "voice" (since it had arrogantly been assumed prior to this work that the studies on the development of men's voices more or less captured that of both men and women), it turns out that WWK, in its articulation of the archetypes of human "voice", actually captures what is truly human in a way that transcends gender. These are the archetypes we have to work with whether we are women or men, though how we get to these archetypes, the obstructions in our way, and the possibilities of breaking through to the fluidity of the "constructive" voice are all dramatically influenced by our gender and the way that is held and worked with in the environment in which we find ourselves. Needless to say, reading WWK and comprehending what it offers can be tremendously helpful in gaining perspective into the workings of the enigma of our own minds. In this sense it stands with works like "Romancing the Shadow", "The Oracle of the Cosmic Way", Eckhart Tolle's works, and many others, as pivotal recent breakthroughs in our understanding of the self and its relationship to the world that is its mirror.

Despite the progress of the women's movement, many women still feel silenced in their families and schools. This moving and insightful bestseller, based on in-depth interviews with 135 women, explains why they feel this way. Updated with a new preface exploring how the authors' collaboration and research developed, this tenth anniversary edition addresses many of the questions that the authors have been asked repeatedly in the years since Women's Ways of Knowing was originally published.

From Library Journal From interviews with 135 women (mostly privileged college students) regarding their search for truth and knowledge, the authors (all female faculty members of colleges or universities) determine five learning "perspectives" that characterize "women's way of knowing." The somewhat philosophical text, which skillfully blends narration, documentation, and excerpts from interviews, sees higher education's teaching methods as more responsive to male "impersonalness" than female "connectedness" and recommends ways to improve the situation. On the whole, a work ironically geared more to the dialectician or feminist scholar than to the "integrated constructivist" or "passionate knower." For large public and academic libraries. Janice Arenofsky, formerly with Arizona State Lib., Phoenix Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. Women's Ways of Knowing offers new and useful understandings of the epistemology (methods and basis) of the development of women's knowledge. While this already classic scholarly work is neither easily nor quickly read, there are many excellent reasons to read, use, and appreciate it. Earlier research in this field concentrated on predominately undergraduate middle- and upper-class Caucasian males. Based on interviews with 135 women of various ages from a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds, Women's Ways of Knowing creates five "not necessarily fixed, exhaustive, or universal categories" of how women know what we know. The results of this study are insightful and applicable to everyday life. The authors, instead of speaking from the distant land of "objectivity" and the omnipotent "one," say "we" and talk about their process: how and why they did this study, the details of their planning, what surprised them, how the results affected their thinking, plans, and progress. A good example of what's possible when love informs science, Women's Ways of Knowing illuminates - with warm and welcome light - scholarly theories about how people learn and know. -- For

great reviews of books for girls, check out *Let's Hear It for the Girls: 375 Great Books for Readers 2-14*. -- From *500 Great Books by Women*; review by Jesse Larsen  
About the Author  
Mary Field Belenky is a consultant on human development and an associate research professor at the University of Vermont. she lives in Marshfield, Vermont and New York City.