

**‘Women talk more than men’**

**‘Women are better at interacting than men’**

**‘Men use language on a less personal and more competitive basis than women’**

We all know the commonly-held beliefs about communication between the sexes. And the result? An unavoidable catalogue of misunderstanding.

With wry humour and intellectual rigour, Deborah Cameron questions how well these ‘facts’ stack up against the evidence, and demonstrates why it matters.

## **The Myth of Mars and Venus**

Do men and women really speak different languages?

**Deborah Cameron**

A thriving industry of self-help manuals and popular science books has grown up in the last fifteen years, all based on the assertion that there are fundamental differences in the way that men and women use language to communicate. Whether the reason given is nature, nurture, or planet of origin, the ‘Mars and Venus’ story is widely accepted. But, asks Deborah Cameron, ‘Why do so many people find it convincing?’

Drawing on the findings of more than thirty years of academic research, Cameron dispels the myths to tell a much more complicated – and satisfying – story, and shows how selective and inaccurate is the picture presented by many popular writers. She also demonstrates that popular assumptions about ‘male-female miscommunication’ can have far-reaching consequences in many areas of life: for example, attitudes to sexual violence or discrimination in the work-place.

*‘If we are serious about understanding the relationship between language and gender,’ says Deborah Cameron, ‘we need more sophisticated ways of thinking about men and women, their similarities and their differences.’*

***The Myth of Mars and Venus: essential reading whatever planet you are from.***

### **About the author**

Deborah Cameron is Rupert Murdoch Professor of Language and Communication at the University of Oxford. An internationally-known researcher in the field of language and gender studies, she is the author/editor of many books and articles, and is a regular contributor on national radio.

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