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**A Model For Gender-Inclusive Education**

J. R. Nadler

A Thesis  
in  
The Department  
of  
Educational Studies

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts  
Concordia University  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A Model For Gender-Inclusive Education**

J. R. Nadler

This study addresses the current educational system which is one that both imitates and perpetuates our patriarchal society. The particular areas within which this can be seen are the hierarchical structure, gender capital, the manifest and hidden curriculum, and pedagogy. Previous models, both philosophical (Rousseau, Mill, Martin, for example) and sociological (critical theory and feminist pedagogy, for example), have not adequately addressed these issues. Research shows that our school system continues to be malestream and gender-based, and that despite providing equality of education, it does not provide equity.

A gender-inclusive model of education is presented which addresses these issues and suggests changes, both systemic and specific, and which will provide a just education for both sexes. It presupposes the understanding that gender, and hence a gender-based division of labour, is manufactured. It seeks to eliminate any gender-based differentiation with the understanding that all human traits and abilities are present in all people.

## **DEDICATION**

To Margaret Manson for all the encouragement she gave to me as a teacher, a woman, and a feminist; to Joyce Barakett for all the academic doors she opened for me and all the ideas she directed me towards; to Peggy Brennan for her counsel, her friendship, and her computer expertise; to Ellen Shapiro for listening to me, supporting me, and for editing my work. To all the girls and women whom I have taught and who have taught me.

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## PREFACE

"Even if the schools are mixed and women have, in theory, access to the highest levels of instruction, it nevertheless remains true that schools continue to direct the development of girls according to discriminatory principle by offering them models of less stature for identification, by encouraging in them dependence and attitudes of subordination, and by systematically discouraging those who would like to include in their lives elements other than motherhood and its connected functions."

(Dunnigan, 1975; 1)

There is a sculpture in the Lionel-Groulx Metro station which has had a great impact on me. At first, I was touched by the inclusive and humanitarian message of various ethnic faces carved from one tree trunk. This past year, however, passing it several times a week on the way to classes, I began to see the sculpture in terms of who it excludes: myself. Not one of the faces is that of a woman. What that work has come to symbolize for me is my anger at patriarchy.

I define **patriarchy** in the following way:

"...not simply tracing of descent through the father...but any group organization in which males hold dominant power and determine what part females shall and shall not play, and in which capabilities assigned to women are relegated generally to the mystical and aesthetic and excluded from the practical and political realms" (Rich, 1979; 78).

It is also important to note that not all males share equally in the benefits bestowed by the patriarchy because of a hierarchy based on class, race, and caste (eg. homosexuality). However, all males are 'members' and any male benefits more than any female of the same class, race or caste. Also important to note is my use of the personal voice and subjective approach in this work. A popular feminist maxim states that the personal is the political and the political is the personal. Hence, most feminist researchers and theorists use both a subjective approach and a personal voice in reporting their findings. This work will be in keeping with this style.

It is critical that those of us who are not 'members' not



be persuaded that great gains have been made. It is important that we do not too easily give up our feminism---a term, which the media has made unattractive through its pejorative definition---for humanitarianism: "The urge to leap across feminism to 'human liberation' is a tragic and dangerous mistake. It...recycles us back into old definitions and structures, and continues to serve the purposes of patriarchy" (Rich,1979;134). It is important that those of us who are disempowered, not be blind to the reality and not be misled by the fine rhetoric surrounding us. Laws have been passed to protect us, affirmative action is meant to give us an equal chance, politically correct language now includes us, and women's studies has become a fixture on many campuses. However, what has been given can just as easily be taken away. Already, affirmative action is being discussed by some factions as if it were discrimination against white males and an anti-affirmative action movement popularly known as 'deconstruction' has infected many college campuses. Daily we are aware of how much further we need to go while listening to the voices which say we have gone too far already. For every step forward, there seems to be an equidistant step back into backlash<sup>1</sup>; for every promise there is a disillusionment.

In 1967 in the United Nations' Declaration of the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women Article 7 read

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<sup>1</sup>. I use the term, as it is discussed by Susan Faludi, to mean a counter-assault on women's rights.

"All appropriate measures shall be taken to educate public opinion and to direct national aspirations towards the eradication of prejudice and the abolition of customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of women" (Chabaud,1970;17). Great policy. Fine rhetoric. However, twenty-five years later in an expose entitled "Inside the World's Largest Men's Club" (Kirshenbaum, 1992) the U.N. is found to be riddled with policies and practices which restrict women to support roles and low-status positions. There is bitter irony in "Last year, six months after the U.N. published a much-heralded ground-breaking report on women's status worldwide, an internal committee made note of 46 years of failure within the U.N. to fulfil the promise of its own charter..." (Kirshenbaum,1992;16). If the U.N., which sets worldwide policy cannot be trusted, how might individual classrooms/schools/school boards fare in a rhetoric/reality review?

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

"For we can chase our own tails  
And spend years  
Testing girls for their inadequacies.  
We will not find them,  
For we are looking in the wrong place.  
The underachievement lies not in the  
girls, But in those who do not wish to  
accept them,  
As equals."

(Spender, (d)1980;131)

This thesis proposes a model of education which recognizes the pre-existing division of society along sex lines. It is along this divisive line that gender is established. The model presented in this thesis seeks to unseat the educational imbalance caused by this split and create a site in which every individual receives an education appropriate to his or her needs and abilities regardless of sex. Such an educational system would be reflective of the changes already happening in other institutions and would need to be a force in bringing about further change. Such a system would need to be constantly self-examining, dynamic, and open to new ideas.

Even though I question whether or not schools can/should be the site for change, I believe that it is there that change might occur and it is there that I, as an individual/teacher, can be the most efficacious. I have practised a form of feminist pedagogy throughout most of my nineteen year teaching career and I have kept au courant of much of the literature of emancipatory teaching. Nevertheless, this has not given me a vision of what a 'school for all', rather than a 'school for boys', would look like. This is what I will construct: a model for a gender-inclusive school.

It is important here to differentiate between **sex** and **gender**: sex is a biological consideration; gender is constructed. By gender I refer to a "...culturally-shaped group of attributes and behaviours" (Humm, 1989:84) which

create the "...framework in terms of which society views men and women" (Humm,1989:89). This generates a division of anticipations in terms of characteristics, behaviours, and aptitudes, a polarity between the sexes, and a division of labour along the production/reproduction dichotomy (Martin,1985). I shall allude to "...sex only when referring to individuals as biologically female or male, and gender when... referring to different sets of expectations and limitations imposed by society on girls...simply because they are female" (AAUW,1992;5).

By gender-inclusive, I mean a system where all attributes which are human, whether they have been previously categorized as male or female, are acceptable and encouraged in all humans. Gender-inclusive education would require that every individual would receive an education appropriate to her or his unique needs and wants rather than to some arbitrarily chosen one based on sex or gender.

In order to battle patriarchy, one must know where it hides. How then is our educational institution patriarchal? Authority patterns are clearly hierarchical and paternalistic, with the 'old boys' system operating in most institutions. Also, in terms of staffing, the gender-based division of labour is clear whether at the macro level of who defines policy (government or board level) and who is required to implement it, or at the micro level of inner-school staff meetings as to who speaks and who records. In addition, the

manifest curriculum itself shows bias in: 1) the value/status of sciences over the arts<sup>1</sup>; 2) white, male, Euro focus of subject matter and materials; 3) emphasis on the 'rational', the 'objective', and 'standards'; and, 4) exclusion of information on certain marginal groups.

Also vital to consider is one aspect of the hidden curriculum, **pedagogy**. While curriculum is the knowledge, pedagogy is the means by which it is inculcated. Pedagogy includes such areas as classroom management, teaching style and classroom activities, and evaluation. Current pedagogy tends to encourage competition without valuing individual experience, critique, and voice; it is designed to keep students under control and silent.

Teacher education, itself, does little to deal with the issue of discrimination as it applies to the category of sex/gender. Also, it has been shown in studies of teacher behaviour towards students that "Just as 'male' interests are accorded more status in the outside world, so boys manipulate classroom activities by the demands they make on teachers and ensure it is their interests which are given priority" (Clarricoates, 1981; 195). In students' behaviour towards each other it is seen that girls are both covertly and overtly discriminated against. Underlying all this there is the delusionary belief that school is a meritocracy and if you

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<sup>1</sup> Important to look at, as well, is who is streamed into which areas, who teaches which subjects, and what are the subject areas in which most administrators begin their careers.

don't 'make it', it is innately your fault: "There is danger of attributing underachievement to girls rather than society" (Clarricoates, 1981:199).

Of equal importance to the 'public patriarchy' of schools is the 'private patriarchy' of home. Our current framework for understanding the connection between the family and school is to blame mothers by focusing on social/psychological theory and not on government policy. However, rather than a theory of 'maternal deprivation' it is a structural deprivation which is to blame.

"Gender relations and feminist analysis is not a women's problem; it is a general problem of thinking and theorizing about schooling. The study of gender relations and the development of a feminist analysis should therefore be moved from the periphery to the centre of the study of education" (Manicom, 1984:86).

There are several concepts which are central to the model I propose. Pedagogy, as stated earlier, is the way in which knowledge is transmitted. It is "...a technology of power, language, and practice that produces and legitimates forms of moral and political regulation, that construct and offer human beings particular views of themselves and the world" (Giroux, 1992;81). Just as we can question who dictates what is worthwhile knowledge (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985), we can question the impartiality of pedagogical practices. Pedagogy addresses the questions of how we produce, transmit, and reproduce knowledge. Since teachers and learners produce knowledge together, pedagogy problematizes the nature of

knowledge. **Ideology** is a belief system which is culturally produced. It is social practice and is neither neutral nor objective. Ideology legitimates a particular regime of truth. According to Peter McLaren (1988) ideology is knowledge and knowledge is power. From a feminist perspective, ideology is patriarchy and knowledge is sexist/androcentric. Hence power is under male control.

Before presenting my model for gender-inclusive education, I will review, critique and evaluate several other models which may be of relevance to mine. To start I will examine the five basic models of the philosophy of the education of women. The first, typified by Jean Jacques Rousseau, is a theory of sexual asymmetry which provides different education for the different roles for which the sexes are destined. The second, exemplified by Mary Wollstonecraft and John Stuart Mill, still assumes, for the most part, separate roles. However, it recognizes the value of family and the requisite abilities, and suggests the same education for the sexes. The third, that of Plato, accepts the possibility that given the same education both genders can fulfil the same roles. The fourth philosophy, espoused by such philosophers as Virginia Woolf and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, advocates separate but equal education for the sexes. The fifth model, based on a current feminist perspective suggests that 'the same' does not necessarily result in 'equal'. These theorists, among them Jane Roland Martin, propose a systemic



change in society and education, and a change in available roles, in order that the differences in the sexes be acknowledged and accommodated.

As well, I will review the various theories of critical pedagogy and feminist pedagogy. Of particular importance is a look at androcentric models (eg. Habermas) and feminist reinterpretations (eg. Nancy Fraser; Barbara Marshall). Theories of resistance are also important: resistance of students to the dominant ideology (Giroux, Freire, MacLaren); resistance of students to an emancipatory agenda (Ellsworth, Weiler); teacher resistance to liberatory initiatives (Acker, 1988); and, resistance by men and women to feminist issues. We must also ask the question: do critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, and women's studies work for change or, do they inadvertently reproduce the elitist, patriarchal structure.

### **Constraints and Limitations**

There are three main barriers to gender-inclusive schooling. First, the educational institution is not autonomous but is strongly connected to other major institutions: political, economic, religious, and the family. Change will not occur in one arena without it occurring simultaneously in others. As well, it can be argued that school is the place where society reproduces itself and as such is not a site for creating anything other than the status

quo. Teachers themselves, rather than being agents of change or 'transformative intellectuals' (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985), are shown to be conservative civil servants. Second, gender is an ideology which permeates our entire system. It has been suggested that our form of capitalism has its foundation in a division of labour and that production in the public sphere cannot take place without the support of the private sphere. In other words, it is women's management of the private (home and children) which frees men to labour. Patriarchy, or a gender-based division of labour, makes this possible. To eliminate patriarchy requires a total systemic restructuring which is an awesome task. Third, there will be no real change unless at least a majority of people want it and actively work for it. The dominant group has a vested interest in things remaining the same. In addition many, not of the dominant group, who are under the illusion that our system is meritorious, are too busy striving towards the top or trying to be members of the elite. As well, many of those in second class positions (eg. women) are disempowered, identify with their 'masters', and cannot relate to others of their kind. Despite the barriers, however, change does occur.

In order to present my model for gender-inclusive education two relevant questions must be answered: in what ways is the existing model not gender-inclusive; and, what changes need to be made in order to meet the gender-inclusive criteria/definition? To answer these questions, I will review

the feminist research which delineates how women and girls are excluded from a just education. Of particular interest are the following topics: 1) the hierarchical structure; 2) gender capital; 3) an androcentric curriculum; 4) a male-based pedagogy; and, 5) teacher attitudes. Then I will offer solutions.

When she spoke at Concordia University, Gloria Steinem commented that we have spent the past twenty years raising our daughters to be more like men, but that we have not yet had the courage to raise our sons to be more like women (Steinem, 1993). I believe she was speaking of her vision of a gender-inclusive world, a world where a young man might be heard to ask, "Can I have both--a family and a career?" It's a world I long for but may never see. In fact, a recent legal development suggests that it may take even longer than I had supposed. I am referring to the Elizabeth Symes' case, where it was argued that there is "...male bias in the interpretation of the law which found it normal to consider hockey tickets and membership in clubs as legitimate business expenses to be deducted from taxable income, while child-care expenses are not" (Johnson, 1992; B3). Until men and women are equal in responsibility for child-care there will be no equality of the sexes. I may not have the hope that this will change soon, but what I do have, what I can see, is my model of what such a world, and, more specifically, what a gender-inclusive school in such a world, might look like. I look

forward to a world where biology will no longer be confused with gender and, therefore, where there will be no gender-based division of labour; a world where all human beings can potentially have all human characteristics and do all human activities; a world which allows people to make life choices--parent, professional, politician---based on ability and desire rather than gender. A world with empowered individuals and, hence, a world which is truly free.

**CHAPTER TWO**  
**THEORETICAL BASE**

"Scholars have shown that Western culture has propagated an ideology of creativity that says men produce art, women children; that literary texts both reflect and reinforce sex/gender systems; that literary critics may judge those texts more favourably if they were written by a man rather than by a woman; that literature classes tend to concentrate on books by and about men; that colleges and universities, particularly the more prestigious, prefer to hire male literary scholars rather than female; and that language itself, a system thought to be neutral as the laws of nature, has been used to press a male advantage."

(Stimpson, 1979; 55)

It is an eclectic mix of ideas which influence my educational position. First, a study of the history of the philosophy of the education of women has provided some questions: should boys and girls receive the same education; is the same, equal; could sex segregation benefit one or the other group? In trying to answer these questions it becomes apparent that this is not merely a philosophical question but also a sociological one. These are all questions about gender. These are all questions based on fundamental assumptions about both sex-roles and gendered division of labour. If this is the case then we must also ask what critical pedagogy and feminist critical pedagogy can contribute to the discussion.

In this chapter the focus is on pre-existing models of education, from philosophy and from sociology. First, we will look at four philosophical models---Rousseau's, Wollstonecraft's, Plato's, and Woolf's---which are ultimately, from a gender-inclusive perspective, untenable. The fifth philosophical model---J.R. Martin's one suggesting systemic change---is the model on which this thesis is based. Also, of particular interest is critical theory and critical pedagogy which, although they offer a base upon which to formulate new ideas, are ultimately androcentric. What is of use to a gender-inclusive model is feminist theory and feminist critical pedagogy.

## **Rousseau: The Theory of Sexual Asymmetry**

The first philosophy of the education of women, as shown in Rousseau's Emile, is one of sexual asymmetry or complimentary traits. "The faculties common to the sexes are not equally shared between them; but take them all in all, they are well balanced" (Rousseau,1956;134). Rousseau believed the sexes are fundamentally different: the male has the qualities necessary for intellectual thought and responsibility; the female has the qualities for household management and child-rearing.

"In the mating of the sexes each contributes in equal measure to the common end but not in the same way. From this diversity comes the first difference which has to be noted in their personal relations. It is the part of the one to be active and strong, and of the other to be passive and weak. Accept this principle and it follows in the second place that woman is intended to please man" (Rousseau,1956;131).

Man is the citizen, woman is 'the other'. Hence, he advocates separate and different education for the sexes. While Emile is learning things of a rational, analytical, and intellectual nature, Sophie, his helpmate, is developing her 'natural' charm and nurturing skills. Woman, for Rousseau, has been created and needs to be educated, to fill all the gaps left missing in man.

Although Rousseau's philosophy was readily accepted then and seems to exemplify some currently held beliefs (eg. 'family values') about women's 'natural' place, it is easy to challenge. Rousseau claims that Emile is an autonomous and

self-sufficient man, yet he makes it possible for Sophie to control him. In effect, it is the old argument that women should not want power outside the home because they have so much within. Sophie's

"...manipulation of her husband undermines all claims to his being a self-governing person, just as his dependence on her for the material and emotional conditions of morality, citizenship, and, indeed, of life itself undermines the claims of his being a self-sufficient person---Sophie manipulates Emile because, possessing neither economic nor political power of her own, her sole alternative is to channel his resources to her ends" (Martin,1985;65).

Rousseau claims that Sophie is not capable of being autonomous and self-sufficient, but she is not even offered the opportunity, for "...if she is indeed capable of acquiring the attributes Rousseau associates with the good citizen, Sophie's education will ensure she does not" (Martin, 1985;53).

It is ironic that this philosopher was known for his belief in the natural equality of all men:

"It is a measure of the extent and pervasiveness of sexism...in our culture, and in the history of ideas, that Rousseau's happy acceptance of the enslavement of more than half the human race does not interfere with his reputation as a champion of liberty" (Ruth,1980;15).

He was able, at the level of mankind, to challenge the assumptions of meritocracy, but could not, on another level, see his own beliefs about womenkind as myth. What Rousseau, and other proponents of this model, cannot differentiate between is culture (ie. socialization) and nature (ie.



biology); or, between gender and sex.

### **Wollstonecraft: The Rights of Women**

Mary Wollstonecraft wrote The Rights of Women as much as a repudiation of Rousseau as a statement of her own philosophy. She agrees with him that women are too caught up in the sensual, but rather than assume it is in their nature, she sees it (gender) as culturally manufactured : "...she saw the damage and danger to women themselves, whose potential and independence were initially stifled and broken by an apprenticeship to pleasure, which induced psychic and social dependency" (Kaplin,1985;157). She advocates separate roles for most women but she elevates the domestic and reproductive realms to the same level as production and, hence, recommends that they require an education equal to man's. "Make women rational creatures and free citizens, and they will quickly become good wives and mothers---that is, if men do not neglect the duties of husbands and fathers" (Wollstonecraft,1970;197). John Stuart Mill is in agreement with Wollstonecraft. He sees the passive and manipulative traits of women, not as 'natural' as Rousseau did, but as a direct result of their enslavement and education, and places the blame on patriarchal attitudes. "I believe that the disabilities elsewhere are only clung to in order to maintain their subordination in domestic life; because the generality of the male sex cannot yet tolerate the idea of living with an equal" (Mill,1970;266).

This model of same roles/same education was groundbreaking. First, it refuted the claim that women are irrational beings. Second, it challenged the "...supposed superiority of public, and productive activity as the ideological source of the authority of the male within the private family" (Lange,1979;6) and raised the status of reproductive (home) duties to equal that of productive (paid work) duties. Also, it was meant to assure men that if women were given a status, education, and citizenship equal to man's, they would not neglect their domestic duties.

The problems of this model are twofold. Wollstonecraft and Mill seem to assume that women will be content to remain in the home so they maintain gender-based division of roles. Jane Adams, a sociologist who was a contemporary of theirs, suggested that this would cause a "... conflict between the social and the family claim..." (Adams,1985;66) when the college educated woman "...either hides her hurt, and splendid reserves of enthusiasm and capacity go to waste, or her zeal and emotions are turned inward and the result is an unhappy woman, whose vitality is consumed by vain regrets and desires" (Adams,1985;67). Another problem is that women are given, by Wollstonecraft, only two choices, the rational or the emotional, but no middle-ground: "...the absolute subjection of feeling and emotion to reason or the absolute subjection of reason to feeling and emotion" (Martin,1985;91). So, although there is no longer a gender-based division of natures in this

model everyone is expected to adopt male-based traits. It is "...an ideal of female education that gives pride of place to traits traditionally associated with males at the expense of others traditionally associated with females" (Martin,1985; 100). In this model we still need to stay in the home but as 'men'---no longer 'women'.

### **Plato: Same Education, Same Role**

The third model of education, Plato's, advocates same education/same roles. His philosophy of the education of women suggests that

"... if, the male and female sex appear to differ in their fitness for any art or pursuit, we should say that such pursuit or art ought to be assigned to one or the other of them; but if the difference consists only in women bearing and men begetting children, this does not amount to a proof that a woman differs from a man in respect of the sort of education she should receive" (Plato,1970; 339).

Since she receives the same education and has been freed from her reproductive duties with Plato's abolition, for his leaders at least, of home and family, then she is given access to the same roles.

Although, Plato eradicates gender-based division of roles and gender-based division of natures, Plato's model ignores certain problems. First, rather than embrace the reproductive realm as of equal importance to the productive, "...Plato emancipates women because he abolishes private home and family" (Martin,1985;18). Second, although aware of

socialization in his censorship ideas, he seems to be blind to the fact that "...we should expect gender to make a difference, even if biological sex in itself does not, in the way females learn, in their motivation to learn, and in the degree of readiness they possess when their formal education for ruling begin" (Martin,1985;22). He seems unaware that his curriculum suggestions are in line with male-based subject matter and that his schools have a male-based pedagogy: "It places females at a disadvantage when educational methods are determined by what works with males" (Martin,1985;25). Since "...Plato's primary concern in constructing the Just State is efficiency, not equality..." (Martin,1985;17) he proposes no changes to education to accommodate the differences between the sexes (or the classes, races, castes) and makes the mistaken assumption that equal opportunity will result in equal success.

### **Sex-Segregated Education**

The fourth model, advocated, in the past, by such thinkers as Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and, currently, Adrienne Rich, suggests that given the unequal treatment of boys and girls and the discrimination against girls in the educational system, the sexes should be segregated but be given an equal education. "In patriarchal society women are 'programmed' in myriad ways to defer to men and to the male version of reality and one way of

circumventing this is to exclude men" (Sarah, Scott, and Spender,1980;56). Although Woolf saw the disadvantages of separating the sexes educationally, she believed that there was no place for women in the English educational system of her day, and, therefore suggested that we would be better served by remaining outsiders (Woolf,1938;1). "The social condition of the girls' school may be artificial but when male supremacy is seen as 'natural', the creation of an artificial environment for girls has its advantage" (Sarah, Scott, and Spender,1980;63). Certainly, the private school system has often operated on this ideal producing a superior educated elite. However, this could be part of the problem with this solution.

The current concern of most feminists is to be inclusive for all women no matter their status, race, or class. Sex-segregated schools seem to be the norm amongst the elite and hence any benefit of this system will go to the already privileged. Also, if all we do is separate, without changing the current male-based curriculum and pedagogy then little will be accomplished. As well, to separate students based on sex only further dichotomizes along gender lines and further emphasizes gender differences. Sex then becomes eradically linked to gender and hence gender-roles. In addition, separation at school does not eliminate the influence of what Nancy Fraser (1988) calls the 'private patriarchy'. In fact, by not addressing this and splitting along the, by then,

gender lines, we emphasize the public and private realms: "...single-sex schooling more easily catered to the reproduction of the bourgeois gender relations in which...girls were prepared more for the marriage market than the labour market" (Arnot,1983;72). It is futile to train girls' self-esteem, 'voice', and assertiveness in isolation, when ultimately they must function in a mixed, androcentric society: "...there seems little value in female speakers being supremely confident in single-sex groupings if this confidence is lost with the appearance of male speakers" (Swann,1992; 209). How can they be trained to deal with prejudice and discrimination in a sheltered and sequestered atmosphere?

In terms of funding, as well, vigilance will be needed. Not only might some schools receive better funding than others based on the 'public's' perception of need but also private funding may be unequal. Already, we know that it is the more industrial-type programming, which could be argued to be male-based, which receives private support (the sciences, technology, etc..). Funding for the arts (female-based?) has been steadily declining as funding for sports (hockey rather than ringette) rises.

### **Tampering With A Different Educational Ideology**

The fifth and last model proposed here is one which requires that both education and social roles change. This is the model upon which my thesis is built. In 1867 when John

Stuart Mill approached Florence Nightingale to join the National Society for Women's Suffrage she turned him down "...based not on political disagreement but rather on her belief that women's economic struggle was more important than suffrage and in danger of being undermined by the exclusive concentration on it..." (Stark,1979;18). She understood that universal suffrage would not be the track to equality for any underclass, based on race or gender.

In the 1990's when most of the world is offering women Plato's model---same education/same roles---many feminists are questioning this because the 'universal' sameness does not necessarily mean equality. We have been accepting this model for several decades now at great costs: denial of our own nature and denigration of the realm of reproduction. "While on the one hand women have achieved great success in gaining entry to education, it is entry to men's education and it serves to reinforce male supremacy and control in our society" (Spender,1982;27). In fact in the offering of this model we are being given an ultimatum: come out into the 'real' world and become men, or, stay at home and remain women. We are wrong no matter which we choose because we "...may choose how we wish to be wrong, as feminine or unfeminine, but we have little or no choice about being, by definition, in the wrong" (Spender,1982;32). Jane Roland Martin's model of a philosophy of education for women is based on a current understanding of women's ways of knowing (Belenky et al,1986) and women's moral

development (Gilligan,1980) as being different from men---not necessarily complimentary to, not a pale reflection of, and not inferior to. It is based on an understanding that in order to succeed in Plato's model we have had to become 'men'. This model requires a great many changes beginning at the root of our society; it requires a change in its ideology.

A major obstacle for womenkind is the socialization of the sexes which is based on an ideology of gender-based traits. "One can preserve control through physical or economic coercion, but naked power is far more effective cloaked in beliefs that make it appear legitimate" (Persell,1977;9). There are male and female stereotypes; there are traits which are considered masculine and traits considered feminine. There are, to preserve and perpetuate this division, strong social pressures (eg. homophobia) against crossing the line. Men are expected to be analytical, objective, and rational; women are expected to be nurturant, cooperative, and compassionate. The former qualities are meant for the realm of production, for work, and have a high value attached; the latter are meant for the undervalued (eg. unpaid) sphere of home and reproduction (Martin,1982;13-14)<sup>1</sup>. The societal assumption is that these differences are natural, that 'biology is destiny', and that our division of labour flows naturally from this gender-based division of natures.

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<sup>1</sup>. Martin's idea of productive/reproductive realms is not new. Socialist-Marxist feminists draw upon this model grounded in the work of Marx and Engels.



"Biology and differences in biology, far from explaining differences in behaviour between boys and girls, is used to give legitimacy to them. Gender differences do not flow naturally from biology but must be seen as being rooted in politics. The appeal to biology is merely an excuse and as such must itself be seen as part of the rationalizing ideology of the politics of male domination" (Mahony,1985;64).

Ideology (eg. Weber's 'cloaked beliefs' and Gramsci's 'commonsense assumptions')<sup>2</sup> is particularly hard to challenge because, first, it is often based on some truth, and, second, there are always examples or perceptions of examples which prove the rule. "If members of the dominant group feel they have been treated fairly by a system in which they have succeeded, it is only a slight shift for them to generalize that the system is fair to all" (Spender,1982;89). Also, since the ideology benefits the dominant group it is not in their interest---although it might be in their power--- to change it.

"And if one does a thorough job, the conclusion will have that quality of obviousness that scientists so enjoy at the end of meticulous research. And it really is obvious for it fits what we believe about the world: but the reason it fits so well is that it is founded on those very beliefs" (Spender, 1982;4).

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<sup>2</sup> See also Chapter one, page 8 for the definition of ideology. Also note that Gramsci's emphasis on the common sense assumption is implicit in ideology: "The concept of ideology...is very helpful for understanding how dominant groups maintain control. One can preserve control through physical or economic coercion, but naked power is far more effective cloaked in beliefs that make it appear legitimate...Thus ideology serves to portray the position of dominant groups in such a way that it seems 'natural', inevitable, and the best way for things to be for everyone" (Persell,1977;9).

It is hard for either sex to challenge these assumption, regardless of who benefits, because they feel so right and there is little that is concrete or objective (or, rational or analytical) to point to.

Hence, the masculine perspective is the right and valued one. This leads to male-as-norm and woman-as-deviant and to women being defined in terms of men, always "...defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute---she is the other" (de Beauvoir,1961;xvi). Being 'the other' woman finds herself---her sexuality, her psychology, her intellect--circumscribed by men and in terms of the masculine. Hence we are denied and excluded. "It seems evident that, whenever they were developed, the dominant modes of ordering and categorizing experiences of private as well as public life have been functions of largely male perspectives---because in Western culture, males have been the dominant group, the ones in power" (Greene,1978;214).

### **Critical Theory**

Habermas' social theory exemplifies this problem. In asking the question, "What's Critical about Critical Theory?" Nancy Fraser (1987) charges that "By omitting any mention of the childrearing role, and by failing to thematize the gender subtext underlying the roles of worker and consumer..."

(Fraser,1987;45) Habermas neglects an essential component in his vision of system institution and life-world institutions. Although the omission is glaringly obvious, he neglects to see that gender is a vital component in his public/private, material/symbolic paradigm. In the classical capitalism model, he: 1) exaggerates the differences and occludes the similarities by disconnecting family as socially-integrating, symbolically representational from workplace as system-integrating, materially representational; 2) fails to see the "... modern, restricted, male-headed nuclear family..." (Fraser,1987;38) as normatively secured with its actions regulated by power; and, 3) neglects to understand societal roles (eg. worker, consumer, etc.) as gendered. Further, his model ignores the fact of two, gender-based, separate and unequal welfare programs and, does not acknowledge women as subordinate in "...a shift 'from private patriarchy to public patriarchy'..." (Fraser,1987;50). In terms of areas of conflict, Habermas neglects what 'working' women know by being in both worlds. Fraser shows that Habermas cannot see that women--in biological terms---have been defined by men. In application to education, understanding of our genderized roles cannot take place in the schools ('public patriarchy') without the schools recognizing the genderization of parenting ('private patriarchy'). We must realize that the blame we receive as teachers/mothers is because we are women.

Further, in "Feminist Theory and Critical Theory",

Barbara L. Marshall takes the position that Habermas fails to show the connections between structures of dominance and concrete social movement. She deplores both the dual-system model and the biological argument, "...we must distinguish between biological sex and its expression in gender relations...[because]...it is the materially based social relations of gender that affect how sexual capacities are manifested in particular, concrete, historical circumstances" (Marshall,1988;212). Marshall understands that the difference between sex and gender is that gender is manufactured. Gender is ideology.

From a feminist perspective, what critical theory fails to show is that family is not just a reproducer of human capital but, because of its powerful cultural image, it is a reproducer of women's subordination/inferiority which is part of our culture's 'knowledge'. Marx's analysis of the capital/wage relationship is not adequate for understanding the role ideology plays in the domination of women. Therefore, Marshall suggests "...we must place sexual division of labour at the centre not the periphery" (Marshall,1988;215) and view women both in relation to the economic structure (capitalism) and in relation to men (patriarchy). This concurs with the concept of ideology as being culturally produced as well as producing and legitimating "...a particular regime of 'truth'..." (McLaren, 1988;156). Manicom (1984) asks us to see motherhood similarly: that rather than a theory of 'maternal deprivation' it is a

structural deprivation which is to blame. She suggests that our current framework for understanding the connection between the family and school is to blame mothers by focusing on social/psychological theory and not on government policy.

Both Marshall and Fraser, by inserting the central but missing ingredient of gender, demonstrate that critical theory can be developed to address feminist issues. Fraser believes that Habermas' model needs to be ameliorated so that it is not so dichotomous and is representational of our changing concept of roles as well as the relationship between public and private spheres.

"We require...a framework sensitive to the similarities between them, one which puts them on the same side of the subordination, since both family and official economy appropriate our labour, short-circuit our participation in the interpretation of our needs and shield normatively secured need interpretations from political contestation" (Fraser,1987;56).

In addition, Marshall suggests a reconstruction so that the focus is on the family: "Whether viewed primarily as the locus for domestic labour, the site of human reproduction and socialization, or as a hegemonic ideology, the family, and women's roles as wives and mothers within it, is central to feminist theory" (Marshall,1988;211). She suggests that capitalism/patriarchy be uncoupled to find the points of contradiction: fifty percent of women work in both the home and market-place; both are in competition for women's labour; and women grow increasingly aware of the double-shift and sexual inequality. The market-place reality of women's lives

substantiates Fraser's claim that the two worlds are interconnected. Marshall's feminist critical theory requires that we reinterpret norms (androcentric), create new meanings (eg. femininity), and link the ensuing change of consciousness with institutional reform. In short, she suggests we change, first, the 'truth' (ideology) and the system will follow. Unfortunately, what Marshall and Fraser do not address is the educational institution as a particular site for change: "Just as 'male' interests are accorded more status in the outside world, so boys manipulate classroom activities by the demands they make on teachers and ensure it is their interest which are given priority" (Clarricoates,1981;195).

### **Critical Pedagogy**

Aronowitz and Giroux's (1985) critical pedagogy distinguishes between schooling and education. They suggest the creation of a political pedagogy, and propose social and cultural production through a social critical movement. A significant component to their vision of education is to convert teachers from efficient civil servant managers to 'transformative intellectuals'. They utilize Freire's vision of teachers as ever-changing, ever-questioning, never-assuming educators: "I must be constantly open to criticism and sustain my curiosity, always ready for revision based on the results of my future experience and that of others" (Freire,1985;11). For Aronowitz and Giroux, this would mean a change in teacher

training to include political economics, political theory, and social psychology. Teachers must be radicalized so that they question the underlying assumptions (eg. meritocracy) of society and its educational system. Further teachers must distinguish between schooling--what happens in the classroom--and education, by becoming involved in community issues and actions. The contradictions and struggles outside the classroom need to be brought in, critiqued, and discussed. The links between knowledge, power, and choice need to be reflected upon and acted on. Teachers must make "...the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical" (Aronowitz and Giroux,1985;36).

However, in terms of gender, liberatory pedagogies such as these "...ignore the private sphere, and treat liberation primarily in terms of power in the public spheres of work and politics" (Maher,1987;97). In addition, critical pedagogy fails to tackle issues of "...trust, risk and the operations of fear and desire around such issues of identity and politics in the classroom" (Ellsworth,1989;313). There is a need to re-theorize education and pedagogy: all knowings are partial, there are things each of us cannot know, and teachers are not neutral; "...acting as if our classroom were a safe space in which democratic dialogue was possible and happening did not make it so" (Ellsworth,1989;315). Knowledge is always partial, interested, and potentially oppressive.

Peter McLaren deals with some aspects of Fraser's and

Marshall's interpretations of critical theory as well as addressing the educational/pedagogical concerns of Aronowitz and Giroux. He views ideology not merely as economic---as Marx did---but also as culture. It is his belief that ideology is reproduced through knowledge and that knowledge is power. He questions what is 'truth', what is worthwhile knowledge, and who decided what is worthwhile knowledge because "...'new directions' in education have made us critically aware of existing assumptions and perspectives pertaining to what counts as legitimate knowledge" (Clarricoates,1981;185). Hence, McLaren understands that knowledge is not objective, not 'truth', and that we need to be aware both of its positive---to make sense of, find a place in, and act in the world (Dorothy E. Smith's accountability<sup>3</sup>)---and negative functions. We must be especially cognizant of the selectivity of 'truth', in its negative sense, in order to encourage/create resistance. In Freirean terms, we must find the link between a 'language of critique' and a 'language of possibility' by relating knowledge and power and by rethinking our understanding of democracy. Although neither McLaren nor Freire deal with gender, from that perspective of the negative functions, ideology is patriarchy, knowledge is androcentric, and power is dominance. Rituals---which adjudicate conflicts

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<sup>3</sup> See The Everyday World as Problematic. It is there that she discusses how women are excluded from texts, talk and power. By using 'institutional ethnography' as a research tool, she hopes to make the system 'accountable' to women.



and are mechanisms of social control---reflect the culture which demands the subjection of certain groups. For all dominated, marginal groups (as McLaren shows with working-class boys and Westwood shows with factory women), there is a point of resistance which needs to be exploited by, for the former, critical pedagogy, and, for the latter, feminist critical pedagogy (Marshall,1988;219).

Where McLaren and the feminists diverge is over gender, "For the...elimination of private ownership, profit-orientation and hierarchical command in paid work would not of itself affect the official economic/domestic separation" (Fraser,1987;40). McLaren's (and Aronowitz and Giroux's, and Freire's, and Habermas') is a "...world seen from men's position within it, a world where any examination of the inequalities usually deals only with those inequalities which exist among men" (Clarricoates,1981;185-5). His theory is based on, for the most part, class, status, race whereas feminists see the gender subtext as pivotal. However, McLaren does give feminist critical pedagogy some guidelines: 1) see ideological construction in materials, curriculum, social relation, etc.; 2) construct pedagogical practices which reflect student's experience; 3) realize and use moments of self-reproduction; and, 4) question what the 'truth' is and where it comes from. Class, as well as status, race and "Gender differentiation arises from the fusion of many elements: the curriculum, the composition and distribution of

the staff hierarchy, teacher/student interaction, and even behaviour and attitudes of the students themselves" (Clarricoates,1981;189).

### **Feminist Pedagogy**

Patti Lather also addresses some of the important aspects of Marshall and Fraser's theories. Lather begins at "...an experience of conflict and contradiction..." (Fraser,1987;52), "... a site for the intersection of biology, economy, ideology, politics and the contradictions between them.." (Marshall,1988;217), and "...the disjuncture between received versions of reality and lived contradictions" (Lather,1984; 56). So, if we find a place/moment/event of resistance---be it to genderized roles or division of labour---that is where change can occur. McLaren describes this moment as conflict between school knowledge and ritual knowledge.

However, Lather proposes that we understand critical theory/ pedagogy's male-centredness and look to how women's studies can emancipate. By "Adopting gender as a basic analytical tool...[there is a]...possibility for the fundamental social change that opens up when we put women at the centre of our transformative aspirations" (Lather,1984; 52). Like McLaren's attack on 'knowledge' through a class disjunction, Lather attacks 'knowledge' through a gender disjunction:

"The intent of women's studies is to create critical spaces wherein the debate over power

and the production of knowledge can occur through its cogent argument that the exclusion of women from the knowledge base brings into question that which has passed for wisdom" (Lather, 1984; 54).

Hence, she addresses what Marshall and Fraser describe as women's subordination by the system through ideology, by offering an educational way out. Education is singularly important because "...the patriarchal culture and social setting operate within the education system to reproduce the divisions between females and males" (Clarricoates, 1981; 188). Like McLaren, Lather understands that awareness---a counter-hegemonic consciousness---is the first step. She sees also, that a changed or emancipatory content is only a partial answer. What is needed for a feminist critical pedagogy, is "...exposure to a differing value system, a cognitive hold on alternative views, and an experience of marginality" (Lather, 1984; 57).

However, Magda Lewis (1980) shows us that feminist pedagogy, rather than transforming, can result in the opposite effect. Because of resistance to emancipation, the tension between desire and threat, women are further subordinated much like Willis' (1977) middle-class boys, McRobbie's (1978) and Thomas' (1980) dual oppression, and Amos and Palmer's (1981) 'triple oppression'. What Lather fails to understand, I believe, is that although women's studies has been instrumental in consciousness raising, it will not address the fundamental problems until it enters the mainstream. Until

women's ways of knowing and herstory are included in the regular classroom (curriculum, pedagogy, materials, etc.), the schools will continue to reproduce dominant culture's 'truth' and girls/women will continue to suffer from lack of 'gender capital'. Further, there is risk involved for the feminist teacher because the same desire and threat holds true for her also. As well, feminist teachers need to be aware of the contradiction they bring to classrooms such as 'authority and expertise' versus 'nurturing' and femininity (Briskin, 1990; 2-5). It is through self-questioning as well as system-questioning, that we will model for our students a technique for reformation.

### **Conclusion**

It is clear that some of the models presented---Rousseau's, Wollstonecraft's, Plato's, Woolf's, as well as critical theory and critical pedagogy---cannot be a part of a gender-inclusive model of education. A critique of them leads to an understanding of the evolution of gendered education, gives fresh insight, and substantiates an understanding of what needs to be omitted. The models which form the real base of my model, however, are J.R. Martin's one of systemic change and feminist critical pedagogy. From these we understand that critique of both gender and gender-based division of labour is essential. We also understand that it is through our major institutions that ideology---patriarchy---is perpetuated and

hence education needs to be a site in which it is challenged.

I believe that we should have one educational system which will accommodate everyone's needs. This system would require integration of all knowledge so that we no longer divide along lines of 'men's studies' and 'women's studies'. As well there will be no segregation, in terms of space or curriculum, based on sex. Rather than critical pedagogy and in addition to feminist critical pedagogy, what is needed is a post-modern<sup>4</sup> approach of continuous critique. "The goal is to keep things in process, to disrupt, to keep the system in play, to set up procedures to continuously demystify the realities we create, to fight the tendency for our categories to congeal" (Lather,1991;13). The teacher in this system is of prime importance, not because he or she is the holder of all knowledge or because he or she is the 'transformative intellectual', but because this is a person who must be adaptable, non-resistant, self- and system-questioning. There will need to be a new approach to not only recruiting teachers but also to training them because this new pedagogy "...denies the teacher as neutral transmitter, the student as passive, and the knowledge as immutable material to impart" (Lather, 1991;15). The new teacher, the new administrator---in fact all staff in this non-hierarchical system---must not only be in

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<sup>4</sup>. There has been a considerable impact of postmodernist theory on feminist pedagogy theory. However, I have not provided a full examination of the abstract and complex concepts of this theory. A thorough study of this theoretical perspective lies outside the parameters of this thesis.

constant evolution but must also be active in the larger system. In order that the school system remain meaningful and accommodating, other institutions---home, government, church--  
-must also be in the continuous process of deconstruction<sup>5</sup>.  
Therefore, the new educator must be politically involved and bring that involvement into the classroom.

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<sup>5</sup>. By deconstruction I mean continuous self-critique and reconstruction of text and context.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE PROBLEMATIC: THE EXISTING MODEL

"...the Western scientific way of knowing, purportedly sexually neutral, is actually genderized; its acquisition of knowledge emerges as an active masculine process by a subject distanced from its passive, feminized object. Such fixed separation of subject and object correlates with rigid boundaries, intra-psychic ones between self and other, ideological ones between Culture and Nature."

(Keller, 1978; 409)

An African-American friend who had emigrated to Canada back in the early seventies, once commented that he preferred the discrimination he had experienced at home in the U.S., that he preferred the signs (eg. No Blacks Allowed, Whites Only, etc.) which explicitly prohibited his entrance or participation. Here, he said, there were no signs, but the unwelcome was just as strong. He just never knew until he entered the restaurant, for example, that he was a pariah. I have thought about what he had said for many years and, up until recently, never understood that that silent unwelcome was one I have known myself. Once women were legally prohibited from certain institutions, certain clubs, certain jobs. There is no longer any legal prohibition but the unwelcome has taken on different, more subtle, more covert forms: "...some influence within the school operates to depress girls' achievement and aspirations, and causes them to have a lower estimate of their ability than boys of equal ability" (Lobban,1978;50).

Education, itself, while posing as 'education for all', excludes us in various ways. This chapter will survey the existing educational institution and the research which demonstrates its gender bias. The problematic areas to be studied specifically are 1) structure and power; 2) gender capital; 3) malestream knowledge; and, 4) curriculum.



## **Structure and Power**

In a gender-inclusive school one of the most obvious changes needs to be in the structure because "...equal opportunities for girls cannot be tackled in isolation from power relations in the entire school" (Riddell,1992;89). What is required is the deconstruction of the hierarchy, a new understanding of authority, and a redistribution of power. As the system operates now, there is a from-the-top-down system of authority and power. One problem with this is that the upper levels are mostly male and the lower strata are mostly female: "...that the proportion of women teachers to men steadily decreases as one moves up the educational hierarchy-- the interconnections between gender, knowledge, mode choice, and kinds of power are suggestive" (Poynton,1985;30). The educational model, as it exists, is the same as in other institutions and represents a gendered division of labour.

The gender-based division of labour is one which is divided along the production/reproduction line: men produce; women reproduce.

"Men are invested with authority as individuals not because they have as individuals special competencies or expertise but because as men they appear as representative of the power and authority of the institutionalized structures which govern the society" (Gaskell,1987;253).

It is a structure in which power is in the hands of the producers who then have a vested interest in maintaining their power and maintaining the dichotomy. Hence gender is

manufactured and remanufactured. Therefore women's proper realm is 'hearth and home' and to try to enter any other sphere is a no-win situation. "The only women who are fit to be promoted are non-mothers, who are by definition not proper women and who therefore should probably not be promoted anyways" (Riddell,1992;84). This structure is social and economic, and reproduces itself through all major institutions. However, schools are a unique site for reproduction of this arrangement both through example and message. "The organization of the school can show in microcosm the way that society is divided on the basis of gender: it can show the economic relations of gender" (Payne,1980;35). In the workplace, where women have been permitted access, it has been, historically, at inferior status, less-skilled, lower-paid levels: in supportive roles. Often, they have been summarily fired when no longer needed (eg. post-second world war). Often, now, they make up the vast numbers of part-time, non-unionized, untenured, expendable workers<sup>1</sup>. When women are in the workplace it is rarely in positions of power or authority. "The control of women workers by male managers, for example, may be found mirrored in the sexual hierarchy of the school's division of labour, with a male head-teacher and inspectors and a large female teaching force" (Deem,1980;20).

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<sup>1</sup> See for example, the lists for substitute teachers in the public school system. Also of note, in a similar vein, are the lists of part-time instructors at many universities, Concordia not being an exception.

In schools it is, for the most part, males who enjoy positions of power and authority.

If we look at women's historical involvement in education we see definite political/economic (eg. capitalism) influences at play. It benefitted the social structure to tap an unused and restive resource, to allow young women to be involved but only to a certain extent. "Yet because of a tension between the ideals of domesticity and femininity on the one hand and the struggle to enlarge the middle-class women's economic sphere on the other, particular jobs were seen as appropriate for women" (Apple,1984;39-40). Therefore women entered the profession of teaching. However, the restrictions from higher education and the professions became even more important (Apple,1984;40) and women were ghettoized in this, now, pseudo-profession of teaching. Once more---just as women of the lower classes had shifted from 'cottage industry' into the factories---women were allowed into the system but at the lower levels only. Access to teaching jobs was, for women, both a gain and a loss: "...once women had carved out this area of influence they held on to it as one of the few arenas in which they could exert any power, even at the expense of further reinforcing stereotypes about women's sphere" (Acker, 1983;134). If we view teaching as women's work---which it is still viewed as even with the influx of men in the past few decades at the secondary level at least---then the existing structure should not surprise us.

"The fact that most elementary school teachers in the 1950's and 1960's and today are women provides us with a key element in understanding why there have been attempts by state bureaucrats, industry, and (a largely male body of) academics to control the curricular and teaching practices in classrooms" (Apple,1984;29).

Education then is women's work but only at non-authority strata, and because it is women's work it is viewed with little respect for the difficulty of the task.

What, then, do our children learn from this structure? One of the ways this division of labour is perpetuated is through its overt existence and its assumed veracity. "The implicit message that pupils may glean from observation of the male dominated staff hierarchy is that power and maleness are, and indeed should be associated, while femaleness is associated with the subservient role" (Lobban,1978;54). The message learned at an educational level, is then seen throughout other institutions---family, church, business---and the conclusion is drawn: men are in charge everywhere. School, however, is the "...first direct view of the work world from which they can easily draw the conclusion that women are destined to the subordinate tasks, and men to those positions which include more responsibility, prestige and power" (Dunnigan,1975;2). This results in minimized aspirations for girls and the belief, for both sexes, that ability, knowledge and authority are masculine attributes. It is quite clear that children learn, early, exactly what their place is in this structure, how much power they can expect to have, how much

power they should want to have<sup>2</sup>, and what roles are expected of them. They may resist but opposition without guidance, usually results in perpetuation of the system (see Amos and Palmer, 1981; Willis, 1977; etc.). There is "...a 'cause and effect' relationship between male policy and decision makers and female educational 'underachievement' and the predictable consequence of low social status" (Spender, (b)1980; 39). Therefore, when we ask why girls' math grades, self-esteem, and ambition drop over the course of their education, the answer is right before us. They have learned---via the authority structure, via the hidden curriculum---their lesson well.

### **Gender Capital**

Cultural capital is Pierre Bourdieu's theory of how schools reproduce the structure of dominance. He discusses cultural wealth which, he says, is theoretically available to us all. However, in fact, this culture is possessed by those groups who have the means to acquire it and the code to decipher it. Education inherently assumes and teaches to the culture of the dominant class. Thus "...the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not.

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<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of 'power illiteracy' see Naomi Wolf's Fire with Fire. She suggests that women have a fear of power which leads to their eschewing authority positions and being leery of controlling large amounts of money. She further suggests that it is this fear which is partially responsible for girls opting out of pursuit of the higher paying professions (Wolf, 1993; 243).

give" (Bourdieu,1973;494), so that those without this culture cannot attain it. Education is a 'closed shop'. Schools institutionalize the dominant culture so there becomes a 'correct' way to know, to speak, to behave, and to learn: "...cultural capital includes linguistic aptitude, informal knowledge about school, manners, personal style, and taste used in social selection" (Lareau,1992;207). Those with the advantage, coming from the dominant culture and having the accepted cultural capital, not only will do well in school but also will attain the positions of advantage. Education, according to Bourdieu, is not as important as culture in job acquisition. Many compensatory programs such as Head Start, have been initiated based on an understanding and acceptance of Bourdieu's theory. However, where his theory fails is that although he considers class, race, and status, he does not consider gender.

Gender is a very important dynamic in theories of cultural capital and, for example, about language. "It is my belief that the gender-related language forms that we are exposed to and that we acquire as we learn our first language contribute significantly to the ways we view one another as men and women and frame for us our respective expectations" (Freed,1987;82). The form, vocabulary, and content of language is 'man-made' and this puts girls at a disadvantage when entering the schools of the dominant (ie. male) culture. Also "...language is characterized by the silence of women

and...women's silence empowers men" (Daumer and Runzo,1987;51) while it disempowers women, starting us off in education with a cultural deficit. In addition to language, there are other areas which exclude girls/women from equity of access: behaviour, taste, learning style, and social standing. The dominant group--in this case male---has their own understanding of knowledge and how to decode it. Therefore, and henceforth, women's/girls' cultural deficit will be referred to as **gender capital**.

By gender capital, I mean the training a child receives prior to his/her entering school which will have already established such particulars as learning style, speech pattern, role expectation, and self-esteem. From the start a baby's "...identification as male or female is of crucial cultural importance to those around them... and manifests itself immediately in different communicative behaviours with respect to new born infants" (Poynton,1985;24). What's the first thing we ask when we learn a baby is born? We ask its sex. From then on every interaction with the child, long before he or she is aware of sex (maleness or femaleness), includes gender reference: 'What a beautiful girl!'; 'What a handsome boy!'; 'Look at the legs/hands/muscles on him...made for football!'; or, 'What a lovely smile she has!' It is apparent that "...each family transmits to its children, indirectly rather than directly, a certain cultural capital and a certain ethos" (Bourdieu;1976;110). Gender, then, is

learned first in the family. Knowledge of sex-type behaviour is learned by the child through observation: modelled by parents, teachers, other children, etc.; depicted in books/pictures, T.V., and other media (Sayers,1987;27). According to the cognitive-developmental theory

"...it is neither biology nor society but their conceptualization by the child that determines gender development...initiated by the child's ability to correctly categorize itself as either boy or girl---an ability that is normally acquired by the age of three" (Sayers,1987;29).

The desire to categorize is normal and understandable in terms of identity given the emphasis placed on it by those around the child. What is not natural is our division based on biology, developed into gender, and dictated through roles. This also the child learns.

I am reminded of "X", a story by Lois Gould, in which the sex of the child, X, was hidden. When X entered school she/he was gender-neutral and enjoyed/practised all behaviours, speaking styles, and activities. This situation frustrated school administrators, teachers, other parents, and, initially at least, X's peers. Understandable: she/he had no gender capital and could not be categorized. Nevertheless, in the end X was pronounced "...the least mixed-up child" (Gould,1980;64) and the wisdom of the authorities allowed she/he to continue without inculcation of gender capital. This is only a story.

As much as gender capital is initially taught in the family, it is reinforced in school. "When pupils enter the



classroom, laboratory or workshop they have already been subjected to years of socialization into their sex roles, and all that is needed to reinforce this is just to accept it" (Randall;1987;171). Upon entry into the school system both girls and boys see the sexist hierarchical structure and are expected to compete in a 'malestream' curriculum and androcentric understanding of knowledge. Despite the fact that traditionally education is rational, 'objective', and competitive, girls have been taught to be emotive, subjective, and cooperative. "'Little girls' come to school with notions that part of their life-style include performing tasks for others in the domestic arena and also with the knowledge that their games have less status than those of boys" (Lee,1980;124). Girls then are ill-prepared to succeed in such a system with the gender capital they have been given. In addition, while femininity appears to be learned through modelling and mentoring (eg. 'bonding' with mothers and female teachers) masculinity is developed through opposition to those who dominate (usually women) the early years. Hence, "...the development of the 'male sex role' may depend on experiencing resistance against a 'feminine' environment in early school as well as at home" (Acker,1983;135). This is not only dichotomous but also establishes the need for male resistance/violence against/towards women. "The educational system at present is not encouraging individuals to develop their unique potentials, it is fitting individuals to restrictive

stereotypes and thereby causing damage, particularly to girls" (Lobban,1978;61). Although gender is initially established at home, it is sanctioned, reinforced, and cultivated at school.

### **Malestream Knowledge**

Why do we study history in terms of political eras--- kingdoms, rise and fall of ideologies, wars---and in terms of conquest of new worlds, rather than cures for diseases? Why do we study science in terms of technological creations and discoveries rather than in terms of failures, mistakes, and unanswered questions? Why not centre education more on artistic creation or changes in family and gender roles? Why is there little or no education on herstory, on the slavery, emancipation, and advancement of women? Who made these choices? Who decides what is to be taught and what is worthwhile knowledge? If we are to define education to "... mean a process of understanding the world, of acquiring the confidence to explore its workings" (Buckman,1973;1), then the educational system is sorely lacking because it presents only a limited (eg. male) view of the world and teaches very little of the real skills needed for life. The 'malestream' education, as it stands, is dichotomous, sexist and controlling.

"The world view expressed in the traditional disciplines, calling itself universal, in fact only reflected the experiences and purposes of one group, giving them exclusive power over the definition of knowledge which was denied to everyone else...Knowledge should be

defined, interpreted and created so as to empower different groups of people to understand (and improve) their own lives" (Maher,1985;35).

A major problem with our liberal arts, malestream education is its dichotomies: reason vs emotion; objective vs subjective; theory vs practice. In terms of gender equality, a significant split is between the objective and the subjective. In itself the assumed objectivity of knowledge is a myth. No knowledge can be objective because it is chosen, developed, printed up, and transmitted by individuals who all have their own vision, biases, and vested interests. Women understand this "...because as human beings we have had the personal experience of discovering that many sanctioned 'objective' truths which have been applied to women are frequently little more than the expression of the misogynist or sexist bias of men" (Brewster,1980;5). Also, by presenting knowledge only from an objective stance, one denigrates the subjective. Thus one does not legitimize the personal experiences of both the teacher and the learner. We do ourselves, as educators, a great disservice by trying to rationalize the emotional, by trying to quantify the qualitative, by trying to objectify the subjective. As well, by choosing one over the other, we are producing half humans, ill-equipped to cope with the real world which is often subjective, irrational, emotional.

"Dewey repeatedly pointed out that the distinction educators draw between liberal and vocational education represents a separation

of mind from body, head from hand, thought from action. Since we define an educated person as one who has profited from a liberal arts education, these splits are built into our ideal of the educated person. Since most definitions of excellence in education derive from that ideal, these splits are built into them as well. A split between reason and emotion is built into our definition of excellence, too, for we take the aim of a liberal education to be the development not of mind as a whole but of rational mind" (Martin, 1985;189).

This educational dichotomy is constructed along the production/reproduction line of Habermas' model. "Exogamy thus enforces a pervasive, absolute symbolic opposition of men to women, suppressing their similarities and oppressing them both by preventing either from enjoying the traits associated with the other" (Greene and Kahn,1985;8). The school curriculum itself emphasizes production (eg. work) and the male stereotype of analytical, rational, and objective. In school these traits have a positive value. The hidden agenda (eg. hierarchical structure), for girls, emphasizes the reproductive (eg. home) and the female stereotype of nurturance, cooperation, and compassion. These have a negative value and are considered appropriate only for the roles of home-making and 'mothering' (Martin,1982;13-14). This model is harmful to both sexes, propelling each into roles which may or may not fit the individual, but is especially harmful to the female who has been taught little about survival in the public sphere. What it also does to girls is catch them in a no-win, desire/threat cycle.

A girl/woman's place in the world is made quite clear by all institutions:

"...romantic ideology works to construct female subjectivity in particular ways and within traditional versions of marriage and motherhood. These ideological patterns reinforce the public-private ideological division and are clearly integrally related to broader gender inequalities in society and particularly to the division of labour" (Taylor, 1989; 446).

A girl/woman's place is also made unclear. The way femininity is constructed it precludes intelligence: if we are successful in school and/or work (eg. the nineteenth century 'blue stocking') we are perceived as unfeminine; if we are successful at being feminine we are perceived as being stupid (eg. 'Don't worry your pretty little head about that!'). "Girls and women face a choice between, say, sounding competent and sounding feminine" (Swann, 1992; 23). When what we desire is success, we are threatened with de-feminizing; when what we desire is romance, we are threatened with disempowerment. In order to succeed, to be educated, a woman must sublimate her female side. If she does succeed she no longer is viewed as a woman "...while it is possible for a woman to possess the traits of Peter's educated person, she will do so at her peril: her possession of them will cause her to be viewed as unfeminine, i.e. as an unnatural or abnormal woman" (Martin, 1982; 10)<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> In fact, Sigmund Freud called educated women 'deviants' because they pursued 'masculine aims' (Millett, 1971; 252).

Girls face three major conflicts based on this conflicting ideological message. The first is domesticity vs paid work: we are prepared for reproduction as opposed to production but are expected to, more and more, enter the workforce often at unskilled, low-paying positions because we are unprepared for the reality (rather than the romance) of life. It is clear that "...this tension, between filling a family role and one within the economic system, creates a double bind for women which is central to the reproduction of gender relations" (Taylor,1989;442). The second conflict concerns sexuality and the politics of reputation: it is a "...narrow tightrope [teenage girls] walk to achieve attractiveness without the taint of sexuality" (Cowie and Lees,1981;20). If one considers, first, the emphasis placed on relationships (and, for example, having a boyfriend) for femininity and 'scoring' for masculinity, and, second, the double standard in terms of sexual activity, the conflict deepens. The third is an adolescence-femininity conflict: our image of the typical teenager is one of risk-taker, rebel, and experimenter which does not correlate with the feminine stereotype of passivity, cooperation, and dependence. "The whole notion of adolescence as a time of rebellion and independence has male connotations which conflict with expectations associated with femininity" (Taylor,1989;443). Considering these conflicts with which girls must cope, it is a testament to girls/women that any of us achieve academic or

professional success at all.

### **The Manifest Curriculum**

The hidden curriculum, as shown above, can be seen in the structure---hierarchical and sexist---as well as, to be discussed later, teacher attitudes/expectations, classroom management, and pedagogy. It can be observed clearly that "...the 'hidden' curriculum in schools is sex differentiated and that what is communicated to the pupils is what behaviours, attitudes and prestige are appropriate for each of the sexes" (Lobban,1978;52). The manifest curriculum is no less harmful. Its influence can be seen in numerous places: (1) what is included and excluded from content; (2) a division of subject by masculine and feminine traits; (3) texts and materials; and, (4) language and space.

What has been chosen as worthwhile content for most school subjects is not accidental. Seen from the outside it would appear that only men's lives and male accomplishments have been worth recording.

"Women's desire to be included in the curriculum is called a frothy 'self-esteem' issue; when white men object to reassessed history---as with Christopher Columbus revisionism---this is not a self-esteem problem but a 'battle for tradition'. When middle-class white men refuse to pay high taxes, they are not complaining but engaging in a 'populist uprising', a 'taxpayer revolt'. And when it is real injustice that men object to, they are not producing a 'victim culture' but the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, and the 'Marseillaise'" (Wolf, 1993;141).

What we are told by curriculum content is that women have had nothing to contribute, that women's ideas are useless, and that we do not exist. The message received by young men is that they count; the message received by young women is that they do not.

"Because our perceptions of historical reality are largely what historians choose to record, women, in a very real sense, have had no history. And because history is knowledge and knowledge is a form of concrete power, women, by being denied access to their past, have also been excluded from this power source" (Dye,1979;28).

This expurgation touches all school subjects but especially history where the omissions are the most obvious. Women are silent because historically we have not been given a voice. "History...is the history of the male line, and the history of education...is the history of men's education" (Spender,1982;19). Our contributions are excluded from the textbooks. In addition, in psychology we find theories which have been framed to repudiate our experiences and control us. Analysis of women relies upon "...the male-centredness of psychology and upon theories that attribute women's lower status in society and personal problems to psychological qualities that make both appear to be inevitable:" (Sherif, 1979;93). In sports, as well, certain choices exclude women's abilities/aptitudes. "We tend not to ask why sport takes on the forms it does, which emphasizes only certain abilities and skills which happen to be those that favour men and are valued by our society" (Dewar,1987;267). In fact, so deep is this



socialized attitude go, that a young man recently complained to me that he had been 'traumatized' by an elementary teacher's preference for aerobics over competitive sport. He gave no indication that perhaps the reverse might be true or that perhaps young women may similarly be 'traumatized' by a 'malestream' sports program.

Of prime importance to curriculum, whether it be science or literature, is how women are perceived/described. In literature, a supposedly female-based subject, girls find their femininity defined by a male perspective and described in a male voice. "We are deprived of our knowledge, our heritage, our learning, we are required to become familiar with knowledge encoded by man and about man, that this is the sum total of human knowledge" (Spender, 1982; 11-12). The lessons learned from male-based literature are that we are secondary or peripheral characters, passive objects of male desire with little or no sexuality of our own (the angel), could be the self-sacrificing mainstay of the family (the saint), or could be used and abused (the slut). The sciences are no exception:

"It is of course a prime tenet of all androcentric thinking that everything about the female was designed primarily for the benefit and convenience of the male, to make her (a) more attractive to him and (b) more accessible to him; and if you want a really good laugh, I would recommend reading up on some of the incredibly involved and convoluted arguments of a male evolutionist trying to explain why women, alone of all primates, equipped herself with a hymen, which appears on the face of it to have no other purpose

than to keep him out" (Morgan,1972;49).

One has to question why Elaine Morgan's theory of evolution is never taught alongside Darwin's.

The language used in certain subjects is very revealing in terms of gender stereotypes. In science we talk about 'hard' facts being good/objective but about the subjective being 'soft'; in philosophy we talk about 'toughmindedness' as positive and 'softheadedness' as not. Is there any connection between the fact that scientists are referred to as 'he' while nature is 'she', and that science is constantly in the process of trying to conquer nature? Is it a coincidence that "...the more valued and valid ways of thinking, acting, and being are masculine" (Martin,1985;25-26)? This then is how subjects are divided, by gender stereotypes based on the public/private model: science and math are male spheres; art and literature are female. "The extreme male-typing of subjects such as science might then be due to their particularly strong association with social production---a sphere that has come to be regarded as a male preserve as it has become progressively divorced from social reproduction within the home" (Sayers, 1987;28).

Because of the many aspects of the hidden agenda (eg. structure, teacher attitude, etc.) the sexes tend to stream themselves: the boys towards science, technology, and industrial courses; the girls towards languages, home economics, and business. Why then do "Gender divisions in the

school curriculum correspond to divisions in the labour force" (Gaskell,1992;45)? One study into why girls opt for business classes over the potentially more lucrative industrial found three major reasons: 1) socialization; 2) perception of opportunities; and, 3) preparation for domestic labour (Gaskell,1992;49). It was not lack of ability or aptitude.

"Curriculum content and the behaviour of boys and male teachers all served to encourage girls to encapsulate themselves within safe and known boundaries...the few brave souls who did make non-traditional subject choices were given little support in coming to terms with their gender identity in a hostile environment" (Riddell,1992;114).

Therefore most girls remain in the safe, expected, and accepted streams, as boys do also, limiting their future choices.

There are

"...six common forms of sex bias in instructional material: exclusion of girls, stereotyping of members of both sexes, subordination or degradation of girls, isolation of materials on women, superficiality of attention to contemporary issues or social problems, and cultural inaccuracy, through which most of the people active in a culture are excluded from view" (AAUW,1992;63).

Texts and materials, both in quality and quantity, are especially important in terms of gender inequality. Of prime importance are the images and paradigms offered:

"Females and males are frequently represented in stereotyped ways: males more often take a leading role, they are more active, they feature in a relatively wide range of activities; whereas females, when present, frequently take a more passive role and engage

in a narrower range of activities, such as those related to domestic life" (Swann, 1992; 12).

In fact, more often than not, girls/women are rarely, if at all represented in science, technology, or math books which may be one of the factors which stream girls out of these areas. "There is an interesting parallel between the decline in girls' involvement in maths between seven and sixteen years of age, and the gradual disappearance of girls from math books over the same period" (Northam,1987;159). There has been some evidence also that images and topics used for illustration in texts and educational materials, tend to reflect male interests, aptitudes, and activities. "Some studies have suggested that the subject-matter of print materials takes account of boys' interests more than girls'. This has also been a matter of particular concern in subjects in which girls lack confidence" (Swann,1992;112).

In terms of materials and economics, the bias is not always as obvious. It can be seen, however, if one compares a science department budget (\$2,800) to an English department (\$1,000) budget; it can be seen in the lack of equipment available to a non sex-stereotyped physical education program compared to the generous funding made available through business sponsorship for a hockey team<sup>4</sup>. It is clear that "...the grants that the school got for subject development tended to go to the male pupils, as they were very often given

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<sup>4</sup>. Beaconsfield High School, 1993-94.

to subjects that the male pupils took such as science and mechanics" (Lobban,1978;53).

Language is more than the sum total of the words we use because "...the means by which people communicate comprise an environment just as real and influential as the terrain on which they live" (Postman,1979;52). Language is an important aspect of gender capital: "By the time they come to school, girls and boys have already begun to learn gender-differentiated language; they have begun to learn how to speak differently as a girl or boy, how to speak to other girls or boys, and how to speak about them" (Swann,1992;14). Language is also an important element in our texts and materials, and our curriculum. Just as stories of girls, stories to interest girls, and positive images of girls are absent from our school texts, so too are girls/women silent. Despite the derogatory myth of the talkative female, studies have shown that (1) men talk more, exert more control over conversation, and interrupt more often, and that (2) women listen more, are more supportive, and have greater expertise in sustaining a conversation (Spender,(c)1980;149). In fact, no matter how little women/girls may talk it is always perceived as too much because of the expectation of passivity, docility, subservience and silence.

"A number of recent studies demonstrate that this pervasive stereotype of women as talkers is a gross caricature and that in conversational interaction between men and women, far from men never being able to get a word in edgewise, they usually have the upper

hand" (Poynton, 1985; 26).

Language is also an essential element in the structure of a system. The language one uses to address others and how one is addressed, who listens to whom, the level of deference and/or assertiveness in one's tone: all these indicate position and direction.

"In a hierarchical society predicated on divisions and inequalities and constructed on a concept of 'leaders' (and necessarily 'followers'), it is no coincidence that the language of women is held to be lacking in authority, forcefulness, effectiveness, persuasiveness" (Spender, (a)1980; 10).

In fact, women are caught in a double-standard: we can either be seen as feminine or ambitious, but not both, and either personae is condemned as 'not good enough'. In fact "...the qualities of 'good' writing as they are advocated in textbook and rhetoric books---directness, assertiveness and persuasiveness, precision and vigour---collide with what social convention dictate femininity to be" (Duamer and Runzo, 1987; 52).

Gender differentiated language habits/patterns are not the only problem. In fact, it could be said that the language (eg. vocabulary) itself is sexist: "...language contains a gender imbalance, in that females are linguistically 'hidden' or excluded; and that linguistic images of females and males are often stereotyped, with females treated in pejorative terms" (Swann, 1992; 34). It is not a coincidence that there is resistance to the neutral word 'woman' to replace the value-

laden words 'girl' or 'lady': "Just as the term 'girl' diminishes women's growth and maturity, the use of the term 'ladies' protects patriarchal society from confronting women's powerful energy---be it sexual, aggressive, or creative" (Polak,1993;C5). In fact, I have found that just addressing teenage girls as young women seems to brighten them and make them stand just a little taller.

As verbal space is an essential element in gender development, so is physical space. It has been found that boys take up more physical space and are more likely to invade a girl's space than vice versa. The space issue can also be seen in body images and dress. Girls are taught early to be ashamed of their bodies and this is emphasized at the onset of puberty.

"Sexual modesty is considered a specifically feminine virtue, so any sign of immodesty in girls are condemned most forcefully. In fact, girls are often so well schooled that they are reluctant to reveal their bodies to other girls...These problems are intensified by girls' clothing: if we teach children that it is indecent to reveal their underwear, and then proceed to dress half of them in skirts, we are placing that half at a distinct disadvantage" (Jackson;1982;98-99).

Movement and posture, while much dictated by clothing, has also been genderized. For example, in a traditional martial arts (eg. karate) line-up, status is indicated by where one sits and gender indicated by how one sits---men with knees apart and women with knees together. In the twelve years that I practised in that group, I was never given a reasonable

answer to why there was a difference and only one unreasonable one: biology or pelvic structure. It is true that

"...girls are taught to sit in quite unnatural and submissive postures, with knees always together. Boys, in contrast, are free to sit more naturally with knees apart and they look dominant and assertive in doing so. Girls who sit in 'male' postures are not seen as assertive and dominant but as sexually provocative and 'available'. How we hold our bodies and how we interpret that holding depends on which gender we have been ascribed and what is counted as allowable within the frame of the gender one is taken to have" (Davies, 1989;15).

Why do schools not have a uniform or dress code which is gender-neutral to allow freedom of movement to both sexes and to eliminate sexualization through dress?

### **Pedagogy**

The way the curriculum is disseminated, pedagogy, is very much an agent of the hidden curriculum and includes such areas as classroom management, teaching style and activities used, and testing. It is clear that "...the critical content of any learning experience is the method or process through which the learning occurs" (Postman and Weingartner, 1969;17) or, phrased more succinctly, 'the medium is the message'. First, how a teacher arranges the actual time and space to be used by the learner, and how the school organizes the same, can have a effect, not only on learning in general but on particular groups. Hence, "...in classroom practices (seating arrangement, management strategies, work and play activities)



and school rituals (assemblies, uniforms) are frequently organized and structured around gender stereotypes" (Gaskell and McLaren, 1987; 265). Second, it is currently understood that examinations have hidden agendas. For example, reading tests evaluate speed rather than ability, content tests evaluate memory rather than knowledge, and, often, tests merely assess how good the student is at taking tests. Tests' inaccuracies are also gender related:

"Tests are balanced or unbalanced by the selection of test items with different characteristics. Test items can differ in terms of that which is being tested (skill areas), the format of the item (such as essay or multiple choice), the item content and context (including the use of gender references) and the selection of a reading comprehension passage on, say, child care or football" (AAUW, 1992; 54).

As well, we tend to talk about standards and standard testing as if these were absolute, universal, and objective truths. In fact, we know just how these are subjective and 'malestream' in our educational institutions because "... standards, evaluations of excellence, as usually in the eyes of the beholder and not supplied by the material itself... Standards are not there waiting to be 'discovered'; we have constructed them with particular principle in mind" (Spender, (b)1980; 46-47). We subjectively choose if, when, and how to test as well as by what standards to measure success by. In addition, by choosing to stress success the way that we do, we allow no learning to happen through risk and failure. Differences in teaching style---teacher-centred or child-

centred, open or close-ended questioning, competitive or cooperative activities---can also affect particular groups. There is the tendency to practice "...traditional notions of learning, wherein we search for objective truth and the single 'right answer' rather than for shared and comparative conclusions about multiple experiences" (Maher,1985;32). While curriculum establishes what knowledge is worthwhile, pedagogy establishes what is a worthwhile expression of that knowledge.

### **Teachers As Choice Makers**

A pivotal element of pedagogy is the person who makes the choices: the teacher. The teacher's attitude and expectations can be self-justifying:

"If you believe women are mentally inferior you don't bother to educate them, and as long as you don't educate them they remain mentally inferior. If you go further and make it plain that any overt sign of not being inferior is unfeminine, rebarbative, and off-putting to all self-respecting males, then she will probably take steps to conceal or disguise any such blemish in herself and quell it in her daughters" (Morgan,1972;211).

As Persell (1977) has pointed out, the classroom teacher's expectations towards the learner is the single most important influence on her or his success. According to one study, boys receive two-thirds of teacher time and three boys to one girl receive praise and encouragement (Mahoney,1985;29-33). Students, it seems, are aware of this disparity in treatment. Further, it was found that boys were asked questions twice as often as girls (Spender,1982;55) while "...more open-ended

questions were directed to boys and more yes/no questions to girls" (Poynton,1985;32). Also, boys receive more explanation, attention, encouragement, and disapproval, while girls' lack of ability and knowledge is pointed out twice as often. In terms of academic expectation boys were encouraged to pursue their aptitudes and girls were not; in terms of behaviour expectations, boys were assumed to be independent and sure while girls were presumed to be docile, dependent and sensitive.

The results are that boys have a more favourable opinion of themselves and a low one of girls, while girls' opinions of self diminishes and their opinion of boys elevates. This leads to both a devaluation of the female group and conflict for girls when success, which requires 'masculine' attributes (eg. boldness, aggression, etc.) is in conflict with 'feminine' values (Dunnigan,1975;3-5). In one study, although girls were "...judged by their teachers to be as capable as the boys, girls' marginalization in the classroom, and teachers' apparently lesser attentiveness to them, contribute to pupils views that boys are the more dominant, and capable, sex" (Stanworth,1987;212).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter posits the problems which must be addressed in creating a gender-inclusive education. Analyzed was the hierarchical structure both in terms of what it demonstrates

about power through staff distribution and what it teaches by its very existence. Gender capital as a significant concept was presented in terms of its family origins, how education reinforces it, and its educational ramifications. Then the ideological ('malestream') context of knowledge was explored in terms of how it dichotomizes along sex lines, and the price girls/women pay for this. Furthermore the manifest curriculum in terms of its harmful, sexist influence was examined. This phenomenon was shown in androcentric content, genderization of subjects, biased texts and materials, and the sexism of language and space use. The importance of pedagogical choices to gender equity in light of the above is crucial to the role teachers play in perpetuating educational inequity. What follows is a construct of the required changes to transform the existing gender-differentiated (formal) educational process into a gender-inclusive one.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A MODEL FOR GENDER-INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

"Genuine equality of the sexes has not yet been an educational goal and if it is now to become one, should we not, first of all, set up major educational reforms in teacher education, in in-service training programmes to reshape teachers' classroom practice, redesign the curricula and rewrite text books, etc., Should we not try to uncover the hidden forms of reproduction of gender relations, especially those which underpin the ideologies of parental freedom of choice, of student freedom of choice and of teacher neutrality."

(Arnot, 1983; 88)

Like many **radical feminists**<sup>1</sup> I believe that societal change must happen systemically. I believe this because, as I have shown previously, a bias is built into, for example, the hierarchical structure, androcentric language, and gendered division of labour. I do not consider education as an institution exempt from this sexism. In fact, not only does education fashion itself in the same mode as other institutions, but also it is the site from which this patriarchal ideology is inculcated. The educational institution is the primary mediating mechanism to perpetuate family socialization patterns. This makes education both a very harmful tool and, potentially, a very promising instrument for change.

Essential to gendered educational change is an understanding of the difference between **equity** and **equality**. In educational terms, I define equality as what passes for 'equal opportunity': on the surface, this allows both sexes the same choices but offers no compensatory solution for the hidden inequalities (eg. socialization). Plato's model is an example of this paradigm. Equity in education, on the other hand, requires that we acknowledge and compensate for (1) the real differences between the sexes, (2) genderization, and (3) patriarchal ideology as it is found in our school system. J.R.

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<sup>1</sup> When I use the term **radical feminist**, I use it in the sociological sense similar to liberal or socialist feminist. A radical feminist is one who believes that patriarchal-social relations are the primary cause of women's oppression. This position demands a systemic change of all institutions.

Martin's model exemplifies this paradigm. Ultimately, change right at the very core of how we see the world and how we see ourselves in it is necessary. The shift in the existing educational ideology which emphasizes male knowledge/power/domination is crucial to a gender-inclusive education. In addition, reformation must be ongoing. In our employment of feminist critical pedagogy, we must always be self-critical (in a postmodern sense) and be careful that in our zeal to right the injustices done us we do not practice injustice on others.

As I have shown in the previous chapter a number of specific factors contribute to making our current educational system a gender-based one: hierarchical structure; gender capital; malestream knowledge; the manifest and the hidden curriculum. In this chapter a gender-inclusive model for education is outlined as a solution to these problems. First, I will discuss two approaches to alter the power structure. Second, I will suggest three possible solutions to gender capital. Third, I will demonstrate how malestream and femalestream knowledge needs to, and can, merge as the mainstream. Fourth, a paradigm for a gender-inclusive curriculum is proposed. Fifth, I will examine how pedagogical practices can be altered. Included is a reflection on the pivotal function which changes in the teacher's role can play in this model.

## **Structure and Power**

How then do we convert the structure within which education is organized? We must be aware that "...conservatism which exists at the grassroots level of the teaching profession is bolstered by a lack of strong directives or lack of concern within the reactionary and sexist hierarchy" (Scott,1980;103). Therefore any change in the authority pattern of education must be dual-propelled. First, within the already established hierarchy, there must be movement. This has already been launched through affirmative action programs to raise the percentage of female authority/administrative models. However, putting women in power/authority positions is only half the solution. It is still clear that while men have power and authority, women can have some but must also fulfil the nurturing role. This leads either to the notorious double-shift most women employed outside the home must shoulder or to each women feeling she needs to make a choice between home and career. In fact, many women who have achieved positions of authority/power either do not have children at all or have inaugurated their careers after their children are grown. "Kohlberg argues that children will produce stereotypes about the sexes until such time as their experience offers them an alternative and they do not see only males in positions of authority in society" (Lobban,1978;61). I would argue that this works both ways, that they need also to see men in full-time nurturant roles.



Therefore the shift must move both ways: women to positions of authority/power; men into nurturant roles (eg. early childhood educators). It is important to note that the most important position in education---the kindergarten teacher---is the lowest status. Will this status change once the job is no longer seen as 'mothering' and female gendered? Or, will we take a page from post-revolution Russian history: in order to raise the status of women they encouraged more women to enter the medical profession; what resulted, rather than the elevation of the status of women, was the devaluation of doctors.

Ultimately, using affirmative action to redistribute gender representation throughout the structure is only half the solution. Merely shifting personnel up and down the hierarchy is not enough. The second thrust of the solution is much more profound because, in fact, the structure itself is a male invention. "Stratification is fundamental to the male view" (Spender, (b)1980;40). Therefore, what is also needed is an amelioration of the way we conceive of organizational structures. Also

"...it is important that school-based and culturally focused approaches to social change are accompanied by broad policies to break down structural inequalities...Neither structure nor consciousness should be neglected in attempts to transform gender relations; both are equally important in change" (Taylor, 1989; 448).

Let us maintain some elements of the structure but also make changes which will make it inclusive to both genders and all

learning styles.

The new system should be decentralized, locally autonomous, with power resting more in the hands of the on-site (eg. teacher) authority. This demands many changes both in teacher training, which will be discussed later, in the profession's definition of itself, and in teacher accountability. Further, students themselves must be given an autonomy and a sense of control over their own lives: "...the idea that learners need a significant say in determining their own learning needs and worthwhile activities threatens those who are now using schooling as a means of political control" (Lister, 1973; 27). This student power can be achieved through a rethinking of classroom management and pedagogical practices. It is here that some understanding of critical pedagogy, especially Freire, will be fruitful.

### **Gender Capital**

In terms of the problem of gender capital there are three possible solutions. First, compensatory programs could be set up to train girls in 'malestream' attitudes, knowledge, and understanding socio/cultural, political, economic realms of the world. In fact, when girls do succeed in school it is often because they are able to assimilate into and understand male-based curriculum and pedagogy. Nonetheless, such a program would have to acknowledge the problem first and then find the funds, facilities and educators to implement it. One

wonders if the issue of gender equality would garner any support. If we do adequately pre-prepare girls to enter a mainstream educational system, are we not then punishing the victim rather than the perpetrator? Are we not, also, asking a great sacrifice---one that many women have already made---in the renunciation of the so-called feminine attributes of emotionality, subjectivity, and nurturance? Are we saying that these qualities have no value in an educated person/society?

A second solution involves the family: "Within the family, labour is replenished, sexuality is controlled, and sex roles are acquired. It is a powerful institution and the site of women's subordination" (Scott,1980;100). However, it is in the family wherein a more equitable and viable solution lies if, first, the school has a clear policy and can attain support from the home. "If parents' support is to be won for equal opportunity policies in school, then thoughtful communication of the school's goals is clearly essential, since, like teachers, parents have the power to sabotage educational reform through active or passive resistance" (Riddell,1992;204). However, this solution presupposes that both parents want equity for children of either sex and are not themselves unknowing victims of gender capital. What one study found was that

"...the gender codes of parents, too, may diverge, with mothers increasingly attracted to new visions of women's developing role in the public sphere. Many men, on the other hand, appeared reluctant to challenge the known boundaries of male and female territory"

(Riddell,1992;204).

Males, it seems, have a vested interest in remaining dominant and in preserving a place for their sons in the hierarchy. Even if both parents could be convinced of the need for equality, other family members, the media, society as a whole, still reflect the dichotomous worlds of public and private, of male and female; even as women more and more enter the public sphere, they are still seen as the primary care-givers in the private sphere.

As well, we need to look at the home-school link. In terms of schooling, according to studies, first, 'parents' tends to translate to mean mothers (see Manicom), and, second, their level of involvement has a direct correlation to the level of their child's success. It has also been found that mothers oversee and help boys more, and are less willing to accept bad performances from boys (Lareau,1992;223). Therefore much of the solution lies in politicizing mothers, to see their daughters' academic success, and subsequent employment, as equally important as their sons'.

The third solution, to the problem of gender capital and to make possible the construction of a gender-inclusive educational system, is to change the system itself. We have what has been called 'malestream' education (O'Brian,1981): "...our very conception of education, of what counts as important knowledge and good pedagogy, has a male bias. It has been designed by men for men, it treats women as 'other', and

it ignores women's experience" (Gaskell and McLaren, 1987; 193). This perspective is pervasive. It affects our understanding of what constitutes worthwhile knowledge and what is good pedagogy; it forces us to select and teach curriculum through a limited vision; it dichotomizes: subjective and objective; reason and emotion; feminine and masculine; and, it creates a hidden curriculum which dictates roles and demonstrates how things should be done. "'Malestream' thought is sexist because it misrepresents reality. It assumes that men and male experience are normative and knowledge reflecting this experience is taken to be universal and representative of all human experience" (Gaskell and McLaren, 1987; 266). What is needed is a change in perspective: we need to look at knowledge, learning styles, pedagogy, and curriculum from subjectivities other than white male. If we examine education from a female perspective (and/or African-Canadian, for example), many aspects of school will change because "...if one starts from the standpoint of women, things appear in a different light. The questions one asks are different; the ways one goes about looking for answers are different" (Gaskell and McLaren, 1987; 197). If different questions are posed, then the appearance of the manifest curriculum would change radically.

### **The Dichotomies**

Just as Dewey suggested overcoming the mental-manual

dichotomy, many feminists (eg. J.R. Martin) suggest overcoming the productive-reproductive dichotomy. "Women's functions are explained by their biology and their family, men's by their responsibilities, wages and working conditions" (Gaskell and McLaren,1987;25). Until the public-private gender-based split is nullified, constructed gender stereotypes---males as rational and objective; females as emotional and subjective---will continue. Education itself, as Dewey suggested, needs to inject emotion, subjectivity, and the practical into our curriculum and pedagogy. "Let us welcome the intrusion/infusion of emotionality---love, anxiety, eroticism---into the intellect as a step towards healing the fragmentation capitalism and patriarchy have demanded from us" (Culley and Portuges,1985;19). This can only be achieved through a feminist critical pedagogy and teaching critical thinking. "Once you have learned how to ask questions---relevant and appropriate and substantial questions---you have learned how to learn and no one can keep you from learning whatever you want or need to know" (Postman and Weingartner,1969;23). Students, male and female, must be taught to question ideology and the educational institution which reproduces it. We must teach them to resist "...the forces in society which say that women should be nice, play safe, have low professional expectations, drown in love and forget about work, live through others and stay in the places assigned to us" (Rich, 1979;234). All human traits must be seen as possible and

acceptable for all humans.

What is needed, similarly, is a public challenge to the dichotomies, based on the reproduction/production division of labour, which defines our world. Society's focus must shift from a worship of the production model to one which values the two realms, production and reproduction, equally.

"When the production/ reproduction dichotomy and its accompanying hierarchy of values is rejected, teaching methods, learning activities, classroom atmospheres, teacher-pupil relationships, school structure, attitudes towards education may all be affected" (Martin,1985;198).

This can be done in education by the two-way shift of personal, as discussed previously, to de-genderize the structure and a reevaluation of the connection between home and school. Further, as will be discussed later, we need to reassess the male-based curriculum and the hidden agenda reflected in teacher attitudes/ expectations, and, language and silence. What is also needed is a re-examination of what is femininity and what is masculinity: these constructed concepts need to be challenged and critiqued in the classroom.

Moreover, we need to discuss both the construction of gender and the conflicts, previously mentioned, arising from femininity. "We are the ones who will decide what will and will not be 'feminine' and we can begin by asserting that it is very unfeminine to masquerade as dumb or stupid" Spender, 1982;85). In questioning gender (femininity), it has been suggested that single-sex (girls) activities are less

threatening:

"...if girls were more involved with all-girl subcultures, rather than having an early involvement with a steady boyfriend, they might gain some much-needed collective confidence...Certainly many activities involving critical reflection need to be organized in all-girl groups and also need to be based on cooperative work" (Taylor,1989; 449).

Certainly this has been the approach used by my school board, spear-headed by our Affirmative Action Committee (mostly women) initiating workshops (eg. self-esteem).

Nevertheless, dealing with girls only is merely one third of the job:

"...single-sex strategies are important. However, the problem of 'what to do with the boys' remains. I think that discussion about combining paid work and child-rearing are equally important for all students...until boys as well as girls agonize about combining having children and a career we will have no real change in gender relations" (Taylor,1989; 454).

Also, if questioning femininity is threatening or if girls are too silent the topic of questioning ideology can be approached by way of masculinity.

We have, for the most part, perceived of and approached the gender issue as a 'female' problem and hence, in some ways, have penalised the victim. For example, when we restrict the movement and freedom of young women because of the danger to them, it is not the real villain who is being punished. I endorse Golda Meir's solution: when it was proposed that there be a curfew for women to protect them, she countered that the



curfew should be for the predator---men---not for the victim (Stiehn,1981;55). In some ways this is what the 'Take Back the Night' initiatives have been about. One rather innovative educational approach is "...taking on the question of gender via masculinity. This could perhaps be a useful approach in the classroom, where questioning femininity is often perceived as very threatening to teenage girls" (Taylor,1989;454).

Additionally, when faced with the male-based educational system, often women have opted out. Others have learned to win at the 'male game' but at a high price: loss of 'femininity' and/or exclusion from female circle. For the past few decades taking Women's Studies has been the only viable option, developing and legitimating new ideas. However, Women's Studies can become its own ghetto. For a truly representative educational system I "...believe curriculum integration to be absolutely essential to feminist efforts to transform the academy, for women's studies courses alone cannot reach the thousands of students who graduate every year from our universities" (Aiken et al,1987;256). A new solution, as suggested by many leading feminists (eg. Steinem, Spender, etc.) is to 'feminize' men, to teach boys to listen and to be supportive, and to degenderize nurturing qualities.

Besides a change in 'sex-roles' what is also needed is a modification of perceptions about work, both paid and unpaid. What we are doing now, for the most part, is 'masculinizing' women and streaming girls into non-traditional educational/

employment paths. What we need to do is raise the value (along with the wages) of traditional female jobs, in or out of the home, because "...the more opportunities are stratified by gender, the more performance will also be stratified by gender" (Baker and Jones,1992;195). Somehow, also, we need to shatter the romantic ideology (Taylor,1989;446) and replace it with the reality of just how much time women do spend on the public work force and just how unromantic work in the private sphere is. If girls can be shown that "... important opportunities are linked to current performance, their attempts to improve their performance will generally intensify" (Baker and Jones,1992;195).

### **Language**

Many of the solutions suggested previously for other areas of gender inequality will, more than likely, effect language changes. In truth, much has been done already in anti-sexist language programs and many of us no longer use 'man'/'mankind' as generic in our classrooms. However, language needs still to be ameliorated. "In our daily lives men define the topics and provide the terms for describing and explaining the world, and we are silenced and interrupted as were our predecessors" (Spender,1982;34). We must eliminate all sexist, exclusionary, and genderized language, in form and in vocabulary, and must make language gender-neutral. Nonetheless, there will be those who will admonish us and say

that this is a petty issue and that modifying language ruins its aesthetic.

"Its not surprising that language engenders a strong emotional response in men and women. And that our fear and anger arise, unbidden, at the first sign of tampering. But if we believe our language creates our reality and if we choose a world in which gender is independent of status, we have little choice but to tamper" (Colwill,1993;C40).

Women need to take a more active role in gender-based language research, in language development<sup>2</sup>, and in asserting our own value: "...we will have to insist on our own forms of language use, on listening to others and on being heard, on 'taking a turn' rather than 'taking the floor' and on doing it without use of imposition, control, or devaluation of 'other' (Spender,(a)1980;5). In other words, we have the opportunity to re-define ourselves on/in our own terms, not as we've been defined by men and not to be like men. These new roles we model---in terms of authority, voice, knowledge---could have an impact on the next generation. It is equally important, however, that we direct our attention to the boys. As much as it is important that women/girls maintain and value their own attributes while acquiring some stereotyped male ones, it is important for men/boys to transform their roles. "Rather than women learning to talk like men it would seem preferable if men were to learn to listen more and be more supportive of the

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<sup>2</sup>. In fact women already are active in this area. See, for instance, The Handbook of Nonsexist Writing by Casey Miller and Kate Swift (1980).

conversation of others" (Spender,(c)1980;154).

## **Curriculum**

We need a

"...gender-fair curriculum. It acknowledges and affirms variation, therefore similarities and differences among and within groups of people...It is inclusive allowing both females and males to find and identify positively with messages about themselves. It is accurate, presenting information that is data-based, verifiable, and able to withstand critical analysis. It is affirmative, acknowledging and valuing the worth of individuals and groups. It is representative, balancing multiple perspectives. And, finally, it is integrated, weaving together the experiences, needs, and interests of both males and females" (AAUW, 1992;64).

There are some steps which can be taken to ameliorate a sex-role stereotyped and male-based curriculum. The initial step, bringing herstory and 'femalestream' concepts into the spotlight, is to inaugurate women's studies programs throughout the elementary and secondary grades. This should be compulsory for all students, female and male. However, great care should be given in choosing the teachers because a great deal of harm/good could be done because of an appropriate/inappropriate approach. Ultimately since "Women's studies becomes a ghetto that allows most students to continue in 'men's studies'" (Gaskell and McLaren,1987;198), the next step, the amalgamation of the two, is crucial. All recorded history must be augmented to include and value the contributions of women. Where women are not present this

absence must also be noted and discussed. We will have no need for Women's Studies if we accept the fact that most of what the schools now teach is 'men's studies'. It is essential that courses do not just remain in content and vision 'malestream' with women's topics tacked on or inserted into.

In fact, if we approach knowledge from a feminist perspective we will challenge not just knowledge itself but also the way we divide it into disciplines:

"...feminist philosophy is incompatible with existing methods of teaching and learning. It challenges generally held assumptions about the way in which courses should be organized and assessed about the way in which boundaries between disciplines should be drawn" (de Wolfe, 1980; 49).

Inclusive education would be interdisciplinary. There should be true integration:

"Curriculum integration asks men to value the female, the very element they had unconsciously rejected in their formation of gender identity, and to relinquish traditional culture, the very construct with which they had identified in expressing and allaying their anxieties about separation, selfhood and power" (Aiken, et al, 1987; 271).

It is essential that, if true change is to occur, we change our thinking about life and education for life in terms of sex-based streaming into the public and private spheres. "Until they see that thinking critically about gender relations, sexuality and culture is part of 'life skills', and part of what the school has a responsibility to teach, the private world will continue to be silenced, not examined, in the school" (Gaskell, 1992; 146). The ultimate objective of this

curriculum is gender-neutrality, where each student pursues his or her dream regardless of biology, where one's sex does not dictate one's life choices. We need to educate each student as the unique person, with the unique abilities/ perspectives, that she or he has: "...the dualisms which continue to dominate Western thought are inadequate for understanding a world of multiple causes and effects interacting in complex and non-linear ways, all of which are rooted in a limitless array of historical and cultural specificities" (Lather, 1991; 21).

### **Pedagogy**

Change in curriculum alone will not make the system gender-inclusive. How, then, does pedagogy need to change to be gender-inclusive? First of all, a more questioning approach ---as in feminist critical pedagogy---needs to be employed. Students and teachers need to critique all aspects of both education and society: knowledge, curriculum, gender-based sex-roles, and structure.

"Feminist pedagogy is based on a questioning of traditional authority relations between teachers and students, and a distrust of bureaucracy...It eschews the separation of the public classroom from private experience, and does not recognize any clear distinction between emotion and reason" (Gaskell and McLaren, 1987; 197).

However, it is important that, first, critique is on-going and doesn't itself become too complacent a position, replacing one

master---ideology---for another, and second, it is essential students become active in constructing alternatives.

In addition to a more critical approach, there needs to be greater integration of individual differing needs, abilities and subjectivities. We need to facilitate with "...an acceptance of each individual's personal experiences and perspectives facilitates students' learning... classrooms that emphasize collaboration and provide space for exploring diversity of opinion" (AAUW,1992;72). Competitiveness needs to be discouraged because where collaborative activities are dominant "...a form of discourse emerge[s] based on cooperation and augmentation rather than competition, on dialogue rather than hierarchy" (Annas,1987;4). We need to substitute most competitive activities with collaborative ones. Just as a collaborative atmosphere will upset a site of authority (eg. the boardroom) it will also change the authority structure in the classroom. No longer will objective knowledge and competitive strategy be trademarks of success; no longer will the teacher or boss be the final authority. Each member of a collaborative group brings their own subjectivities, their own 'knowledge', their own abilities. No individual can succeed without the group and no group can succeed without the individual. This will raise the trust level in the classroom and de-emphasize the success-failure dichotomy.

However, just as collaboration is a much needed skill we

must not lose sight of the need for girls/women to also be able to be competitive. The idea of competitiveness tends to conflict with girl's/women's need to 'connect' (Wolf, 1993;277) and this has often been the deciding factor in discouraging girls from vying for equity. Example are scholarships or status positions.

"This ambivalence about competitiveness and separation---which has heavily influenced progressive educational theory---risks creating an educational environment in which girls get only half of what they need --the nurturing half. It can also undermine the self-esteem that comes to girls from achieving a hard (hierarchical) goal, like winning a game or a debate" (Wolf, 1993;278).

Therefore we must strive to eliminate the gender gap in terms of strategy: boys learn how to be collaborative and girls learn how to be competitive. Both strategies should be appropriate for either sex.

Once the classroom is collaborative, cooperative, and interactive, the hierarchy tends to crumble and authority shifts. "Control in the classroom shifts from the teacher, the arbiter of knowledge---of what is to be known and how to know it---and becomes located in the interactions of students and [teachers] to the subject matter" (Tetreault, 1987;177). Hence, traditional ideas about evaluation and standards will seem obsolete. "Other factors, such as...portfolios of students work<sup>3</sup>, extracurricular achievements, and out of school

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<sup>3</sup>. See Portfolios: Process and Product editors Pat Belanoff and Marcia Dickson.



accomplishments (eg. volunteer work), must be considered with test scores when making judgements about girls' and boys' skills and abilities" (AAUW,1992;57). I would add to the methods for evaluation, for example, group dynamic skills and acquisition of 'life skills' (eg. parenting). As well, once the shift is away from standards and testing how could anything other than pass---even if 'pass with distinction'---or fail be relevant? In fact we need more qualitative rather than quantitative assessment.

### **Teachers**

If we consider the unequal treatment that girls receive from teachers sited in the previous chapter, it is no wonder that girls value themselves less and have lower self-esteem; it is no wonder that while "...girls are more likely to attribute their success to luck, boys are more likely to attribute their success to ability" (AAUW,1992;69). This self-esteem problem may change when curriculum (manifest and hidden), texts and materials, and language are gender-neutral. The ultimate way to change this, however, is to recognize the teaching profession as the most profoundly important one to the future of our world: "But education is our highest art, only allowed to our highest artists" (Gilman,1979;82). While according it commensurate status, we must hire and train only the best---not necessarily the best academically but the best in teaching aptitude---graduates, and name gender equality as

a prime objective of education.

Nevertheless, we must realize that as much as the female student experiences conflict by being in a 'malestream' school, the female teacher experiences the same. As women we bring many contradictions from our personal lives: the devaluation of mothering vs motherhood as women's life work (by extension one could equate mothering with teaching and with the devaluation of teaching); widespread violence against and abandonment of women vs women protected and cared for by men; heterosexuality as normal vs various theories about the wide range of female sexuality; attractiveness vs intelligence; widespread practices of gender discrimination vs the myth of meritocracy (Briskin, 1990; 2-5).

As educators we carry an extra burden of contradictions. First is the position we occupy on the nurturing-authoritarian continuum: "As mothers, we are expected to nurture; as professionals, we are required to compete. The context within which our nurturing is to take place is the patriarchal context in which we teach" (Culley, et al, 1985; 12). As women we are expected to be nurturing and feminine, but as teachers we are expected to demonstrate authority and expertise. In order to be respected we need to be perceived as having power and yet as progressive educators we want to share the power by validating the knowledge of our students. One strategy which could resolve this dilemma is to make students cognizant of the 'rules of the culture', aware of the power of ideology

(especially division of labour), and teach them leadership skills (Brisken,1990;7-11).

The second contradiction that we carry, as teachers, is that as much as we may practice non-sexist strategies in the classroom, sexism is not incidental to the system and permeates every aspect of education. A stance which could resolve this is to use anti-sexist strategies: show how gender (for example) differences do make a difference (Brisken,1990; 12-16). It is important that both as individuals and as professionals we demonstrate "...the ability of teachers to act effectively as change-makers and to empower students with a vision of alternatives and possibilities" (Brisken,1990; 17).

### **Resistance**

The above solutions are appropriate for the feminist (male or female) teacher who is, unfortunately, still in the minority. To suggest change to most teachers is to encounter resistance. Resistance, however, may not always be a negative position because very often it has meant resisting authoritarian control. "Since women's work is so often the target of both rationalization and attempts to gain control over it, such attempts and resistance to them become quite significant economically and politically, to say nothing of educationally, in schools" (Apple,1984;30). Educators, in general, resist change (eg. seen as control) whether it is

gender-based or not.

Many women, who succeed to administrative levels, have done so at a high cost: the loss of femininity or an overcompensation of same (backlash); the delay/avoidance of marriage/children; exclusion from female circles without the inclusion into male circles. Unless they are very self aware, these women are not feminists and will resist anti sexist strategies. The myth of the meritocracy exists and flourishes because a few, from outside, are allowed to succeed and they become the staunchest advocates of the existing system.

Male teachers/administrators tend to resist for different reasons:

"Because feminist scholarship's insistence on the social construction of gender inequality constitutes an implicit (and sometimes explicit) critique of men, it challenges self images and, involves many men in a curious dilemma. If they assume both their own agency in social processes and the injustice of women's secondary status, then they must acknowledge complicity in gender involvement" (Aiken et al,1987; 262).

As well, for males, there is no apparent benefit to changing. In fact, they are rewarded---in terms of power, control, and money---for resisting change. In addition, "...the male peer group---not to mention masculist culture and tradition exercises a considerable tyranny over many of its members, in effect acting as a tacit police force over their discourse, hence over thought itself" (Aiken et al,1987;270).

There are two main solutions to teacher resistance. The first, for those of us already established in the profession,

is professional development: "...research indicates that sex-gender equity issues are still not well understood by many educators. The research also shows that in-service training on equity issues can both increase awareness and provide specific tools for achieving a more equitable educational environment" (AAUW,1992;8). Certainly it is essential that both theory and practice be established; certainly, it is essential that administrators and teachers be involved. If this is to be taken seriously at the individual classroom level then it must be perceived as being taken seriously from 'above' through funds and classroom aids.

A second, more practical site for eliminating teacher resistance to gender-equity programs, is teacher education. Radical changes are needed because "...teacher training does not...raise questions about sexism and sexual divisions in education, not point out the effect of gender on schooling" (Deem,1980;178). If courses such as the Sociology of Gender Roles were given compulsory status alongside the Philosophy of Education, the message would be clear. Parallel to readings of Piaget and Kohlberg, should stand those, for example, of Gilligan and Belenky et al. Teacher education itself, should be changed from a 'malestream' perspective to an inclusive one.

A third solution to teacher resistance is to make change appear profitable. Women should be shown and helped to understand the contradictions mentioned previously. Men, and

'masculist' women, must be shown the price they pay for power: "...traditional masculist values synonymous with physical self-destruction" (Mahoney,1985;92). Those self-destructive learned traits are: 1) taking as much pain as possible without 'giving in'; 2) being able to 'hold' alcohol; 3) not showing/expressing emotions (repressing instead); and, 4) being highly competitive and achievement orientated" (Mahoney,1985;92). Change serves both sexes well.

### **Conclusion**

There are a number of ways that the existing school system can be changed so that it is gender-inclusive. First, there must be a real understanding of the problem and a genuine effort to adopt programs which will bring equity. There must also be the realization that equal does not mean the same. This is what we have now under the guise of a liberal arts educational system and it has not brought inclusion of any group (eg. class, gender, ability, etc.). The gender-inclusive school is a valuable and necessary objective and, hence, those in the position to bring about change (eg. government), must be shown its value to us as a society.

There are some very specific things administrators and educators can do to change our educational institution to a gender-inclusive one. The power structure can be changed by a shift in personnel: women moving up the ladder and men down. As well, the hierarchy itself can be ameliorated by

decentralizing the power base. There are three venues to the elimination of gender capital: compensatory programs; the influence the school has on the home; and, a non-male-based education. In terms of the dichotomies endemic to our schools--theory vs practice, rational vs emotional, production vs reproduction---there must be a melding of these into a praxis. It is suggested, as well, that we focus on educating the boys, as well as the girls, to question gender. In order to change language, we need anti-sexist language programs, more women involved in gender-based language research, and we need to teach males to listen. Curriculum needs to be made gender-fair by merging women's and men's studies and by using an interdisciplinary approach to the division of subject matter. Pedagogical changes include using more qualitative evaluation, using more cooperative learning tactics, changing the classroom authority structure, and employing critical pedagogy practices. Teachers themselves, a crucial component, need to be given the status they deserve so that they will have the power they need. Also, hiring practices must be more selective with gender-equity named as a major objective. There must also be professional development to make these ideas clear to teachers and administrators, teacher education which includes compulsory courses on gender in education, and all teachers must be shown how such changes will profit them. This is a prodigious task but if these suggestions were to be followed we would have gender-inclusive education.

However, I believe that the most important changes are those to the structure, to pedagogy, and to the curriculum. These are the most vital elements to the gender inclusive model. If we make significant change in these areas then it is most likely that all others---gender capital, language, space, etc.---will follow.



## AFTERWORD

"If we continue to distrust the power of our imaginations, our money, and our words, we hand over victory to those who want the majority to remain silent. By dint of sheer numbers and a handful of change, women have already begun to win. Are we psychologically prepared to see this potential for victory in our lifetime? Will we take up the responsibility to contribute the hidden perspectives of women to the policies of the twenty-first century, which will sorely need them in order to ensure the well-being of everyone, male as well as female?"  
(Wolf, 1993; 320)6

I believe that change can occur. I also believe that school is a practical site for this remodelling to occur. If I did not believe this I could not have, as a committed radical feminist, remained in education for nineteen years. By radical feminist I mean that I believe that the major cause of women's oppression is our patriarchal-social system. Believing this, believing that without pervasive systemic change there will be no equality, is a potentially no-hope scenario.

"It would, of course, be foolish to assume that changes in education alone can bring about radical changes in the life-chances and power position of women, given the all pervasive nature of patriarchal relationships and the central importance of the sexual division of labour to the organization of capitalist societies" (Deem,1980;177).

Therefore, while working within the system, I must act as a liberal feminist because that is the only way my voice will be acceptable and because that is the area where immediate change seems possible/probable.

Over those years I have seen change, I have been changed, and I have made change. I see hope in the students who have learned to ask questions of the system, in the students who make unconventional choices, and in the students who are cognizant of the real reason they make their conventional choices. I see hope in the fact that many colleagues have voiced an interest in my studies and that my school board's professional development department has requested a copy of my thesis. However, the power of an individual classroom teacher is limited and, ultimately a frustration. However, if change

had not already occurred the ideas that I have expressed over the years and the feminist pedagogy I have employed would not have been accepted. Also, I would not now be a candidate for an administrative position. The work myself and other women have done in affirmative action makes it possible. If I did not believe that the system could be changed I would not now be vying for that administrative position which will, I believe, not only make me a more powerful role model, but also enable me to have greater influence over my peers and my 'subordinates'. From a more powerful position I can repay the great women---bosses and teachers---who have mentored me by mentoring the next wave of female power. I have become, now, a power feminist (Wolf,1993).

I do not necessarily believe change will occur. Or, at least, that dramatic change will occur in my life-time. First, it is virtually impossible for change to be created only through the educational system. All our major institutions are both interconnected and patriarchal so unless there is major societal change there will be no educational change. In fact what change has occurred so far has had to have happened simultaneously in all major institutions. It is very clear to me that my acceptance as the token feminist on staff has limits: I am bound by just how much change has already taken place, and cannot 'push the envelope' too far. By the few occurrences precipitated by my pushing the feminist agenda too far, I have learned that an important stoppage to gender-

inclusive education is the danger to the feminist teacher.

Over the years I have learned that in order to get my message across---that there is a gender-based inequity both in the classroom and without, I must use, for the most part, a non-threatening, jocular, innocent questioning approach. Despite this, two years ago, I confiscated a violent hate poem directed at my feminism. Luckily, I have a supportive principal who trusts me. However, the boy's parents felt his violence/hate was not a problem and suggested that I had 'brought it on myself'; the guidance counsellor preferred to see it as a boy's 'rite of passage'. All this took place only one year after the Polytechnique massacre. It seems that feminism, rather than being the affirmation of women and of women's values I believe it to be, is to most people, men and women, a negation. At about the same time as the 'poem' incident, I overheard a colleague say that our school board was a 'damned matriarchy'. However, my school board is well below its objective of fifty percent women administrators. I am sure that he was referring to the recent influx of women into power positions and was no doubt, unconsciously perhaps, bemoaning the loss of his **droit d'ainesse**.

Resistance is another major stoppage to change "...one of sociology's core contradictions; the interminable tension between the subjectively creative human being acting upon his/her world and the objectively given social structure constraining him or her" (Plummer, 1983;3). As demonstrated in

chapter three, teachers often resist innovative anti-sexism programs for reasons of self-preservation. However there are also ideological reasons: most teachers enter the profession with a child-centred doctrine and an apolitical posture. "Teachers' hostility towards equal opportunities policies was also rooted in their belief that the job of the school was to provide a value-free environment for pupils to exercise freedom of choice" (Riddell,1992;80). That freedom of choice is valid even if the child opts to ghettoize herself by the gender-based division of labour.

As well students resist emancipatory programs/agendas and in their resistance place themselves into the feminine curriculum stream. Another major factor is that young women do not believe there can be change: "...the result is reproduction of gender divisions, not because they are desired, but because these young people don't believe the world can be otherwise" (Gaskell,1992;135). As well, there are students, male and female who believe that equality exists. A young woman in one of my classes, who informed me of this, had the backing of her peers. When sexism in school becomes an open topic of discussion, many students make mention of the discrimination against boys as in expectations of misbehaviour. They are unable to see the more subtle forms which affect the girls so dramatically. "Potentially emancipatory and transformative knowledge is rejected because they have difficulty understanding its relevance and

applicability... gender remains defined as a personal trouble rather than a social issue" (Dewar, 1987;285) and so it becomes a dating problem and not an educational issue.

It is clear that the classroom is not going to be the sole transforming arena. It is clear then if one wants change to happen one must be a 'transformative intellectual' questioning at the private and public levels of society; one must therefore, embrace 'power feminism'. Caution is required: change may not be positive. A feminist vision could be as oppressive as the patriarchal one:

"It will be a complex and difficult task to overcome the structures of patriarchy both inside and outside schooling in such a way that they are not replaced by an even more restrictive structure, but instead by structures in which the liberation and fulfilment of individuals overrides not only gender considerations but also class and ethnicity" (Deem, 1980;182).

What women, especially those of us in education, need now to do is grab a little of that power that has always been a male prerogative and use it to make the necessary changes. We must learn to compete like men while maintaining our cooperative techniques and bringing 'the feminine' to power positions. "Women must begin to distinguish between those with whom they should maintain their connection at almost any cost, and those whom it is perfectly all right to infuriate, contradict---or even conquer" (Wolf, 1993;286). We need to distinguish between men and the male system of power; between hating men and hating sexism. We must also learn something

from men: networking. This does not mean that we should form our own 'old boy' system which is elite and exclusionary but that we should be able to share our resources (eg. influence and money) to use for common goals.

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"Feminist pedagogy is about teaching from a feminist world view: from a perspective on the world which is in favour of the sharing of power, privilege, property and opportunities; which recognizes the systematic and systemic oppression of women; which believes in the possibility of change; and which understands the need to organize collectively to make change. By definition, feminist pedagogy challenges what is seen to be obvious, the natural, the accepted, the unquestioned.

(Briskin,1990;22)



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