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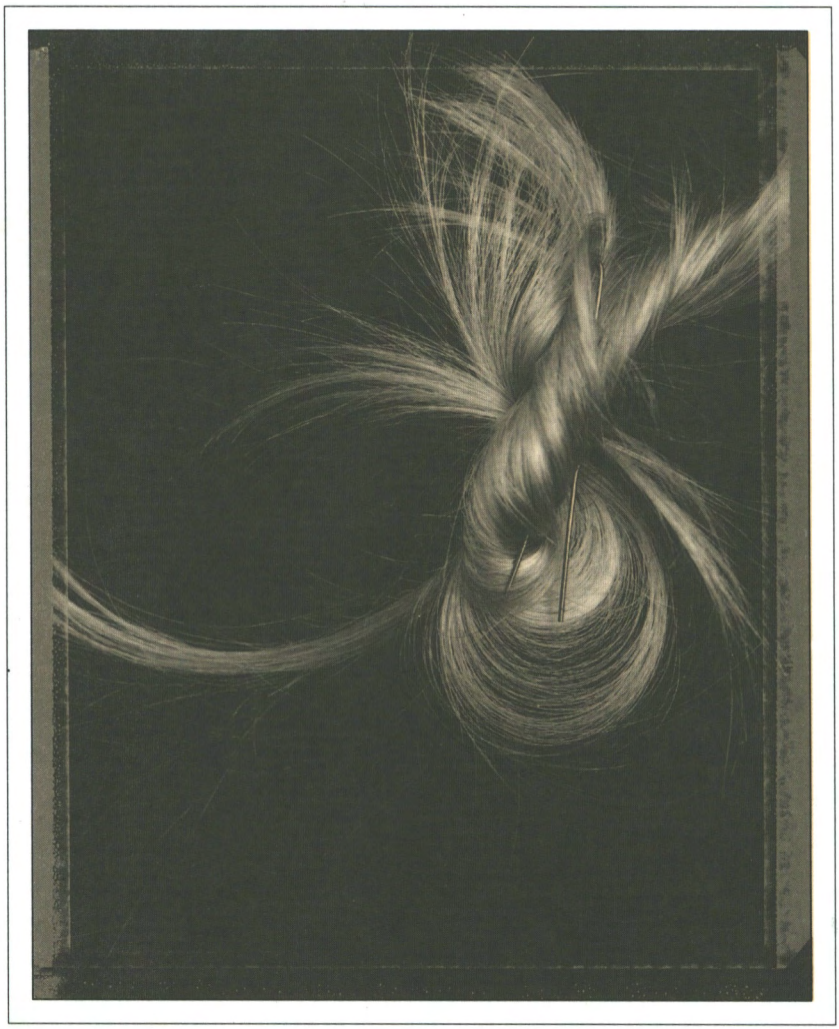
SPECIAL ISSUE: EDUCATING SEXUALITY



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Helen Bagley

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Volume 12:2 Educating Sexuality

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Editorial: Educating Sexuality

ALISON JONES and SUE MIDDLETON, August 1996

For this theme issue of the *Women's Studies Journal* we have brought together a range of local studies which cohere around how, in educational sites, women and girls 'learn' culturally specific hetero-sexuality. Such collections are a welcome resource for education courses which seek to increase their New Zealand content and focus. Alison Jones and Sue Middleton, who teach in Education Departments at Auckland and Waikato Universities respectively, have gathered some research accounts by university staff and doctoral students working in the general area of sexuality and education, however they might be configured together. This *Journal* issue follows Middleton and Jones' collection of research, *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2,* and like that volume, will be used as a text book in education courses.[1]

'Education' as a field of study in the university might be understood as the study of the processes through which we become subjects, with particular (but not exclusive) emphasis on those processes and practices which characterise formal educational institutions. We become gendered subjects through our encounters with discourses in these and other sites; intrinsic to this production is that of ourselves as embodied and sexual subjects.

Such assertions are commonplace in contemporary feminist theorising, but only slowly has *education* come to be understood as a key site where bodies and sexuality are engaged and produced. In the past, much of the research and writing on women and education placed little emphasis on issues of embodiment. It was more preoccupied with questions of representation (e.g. in curricula and policy texts), and distribution of the sexes in school subjects and within the hierarchies of the teaching profession. While some writers in the 1980s identified women's embodied sexuality as contradictory to the disembodiment of post-Enlightenment educated rationality, there was little sustained analysis of sexuality itself as discursively produced in educational settings.[2]

Work by a range of Australian, British and North American feminist researchers and theorists in education including Bronwyn Davies, Valerie Walkerdine, Michelle Fine, bell hooks and others have introduced terms such as erotics, desire, bodies, sexuality as part of the

language of study in education.[3] Students and feminist educators can now read collections such as *The Jane Gallop Seminar Papers: The Teacher's Breasts; School Girl Fictions; Fashioning the Feminine,* and *Pedagogy, Technology and the Body* which debate the contested and interwoven terrains of education and sexuality.[4]

The beginning work on this territory in New Zealand has been exciting and wide-ranging, and some of it is published here. All the research in this collection is on-going. Sue Middleton discusses the ways in which students' and teachers' bodies have historically been disciplined in New Zealand schools; Jane Gilbert deconstructs 'sex' in school biological science; Anne Marie Tupuola indicates some of the difficult issues facing young Samoan women in negotiating fa'aSamoa and female sexuality. Jody Hanson argues for the importance of sex worker education; Karen Nairn shows how geography field trips are crucial sites for educating the embodied geographer. Kathleen Quinlivan's research is concerned with the experiences of lesbian students in New Zealand schools, and Sue Watson shows how the decision to go to a single-sex school represents an opportunity for heterosexuality to be re-asserted in paradoxical ways.

This volume will add to the growing body of writing on educating sexuality by New Zealanders, for example Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's work on Maori lesbian sexuality and education, Margaret Tennant's and Erik Olssen's historical research on the policing of child sexuality in families and schools, Rose Pere's historical account of Maori controls on sexuality, Julie Glamuzina and Alison Laurie's work on the ways adolescent sexuality, in particular lesbianism, was constructed in schools in the 1950s, Alannah Ryan's study of neo-conservative backlash against liberal sexuality education in the 1980s and Bill Rout's ethnography of teenage boys' conceptualisations of girls' sexuality.[5] Writers such as Hilary (Haines) Lapsley, and Chris Atmore have deconstructed discourses of child sexuality and sexual abuse in educational settings; Alison Jones has written about the erotics of pedagogy. [6]

Missing from the collection in this *Journal* are three authors whose work we had intended to include. Due to the policy of the *Journal* to exclude male authors, we were unable to publish Shane Town's research on gay students and teachers, and Todd Brackley's work with Martin Thrupp on the ways adolescent boys construct masculine (and homophobic) sexualities in schools.

Alison Jones is Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Auckland. She teaches courses on feminist theory and education and publishes in the same area.

Sue Middleton is Associate Professor and Assistant Dean (Graduate Studies) in the School of Education, University of Waikato, where she teaches courses on 'Women and Education', 'Education and Sexuality' and 'Educational Research Methods'. With Helen May, she is completing an oral history of teaching.

NOTES

1 Sue Middleton and Alison Jones (eds), *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2* (Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1992).

2 Sue Middleton, 'Schooling and Radicalisation: Life-histories of New Zealand Feminist Teachers', *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 8 (1987) pp. 169-189.

3 Bronwyn Davies, *Shards of Glass* (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1993); Valerie Walkerdine, *Schoolgirl Fictions* (Verso, London, 1990); Michelle Fine, *Disruptive Voices* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1992); bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress* (Routledge, New York, 1994).

4 Jill Julius Matthews (ed), *The Jane Gallop Seminar Papers: The Teachers' Breast* (Humanities Research Centre Monograph Series, Canberra 1994); Valerie Walkerdine, *Schoolgirl Fictions*; Pam Gilbert and Sandra Taylor, *Fashioning the Feminine* (Allen and Unwin, Sydney, 1991); Erica McWilliam and Peter Taylor, *Pedagogy, Technology and the Body* (Peter Lang, New York, 1996).

5 Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, 'Kia Mau, Kia Manawanui – We Will Never Go Away: Experiences of a Maori Lesbian Feminist', in Rosemary Du Plessis et al (eds), *Feminist Voices: Women's Studies Texts for Aotearoa/ New Zealand* (Oxford University Press, Auckland, 1992) pp. 278-289; Erik Olssen, 'Truby King and the Plunket Society: An Analysis of a Prescriptive Ideology' *N.Z. Journal of History,* 15:1 (1981), pp. 3-23; Margaret Tennant, 'Natural Directions: the New Zealand Movement for Sexual Differentiation in Education During the Early Twentieth Century', in Barbara Brookes, Charlotte Macdonald and Margaret Tennant (eds), *Women in History: Essays on European Women in New Zealand,* (Allen and Unwin/ Port

Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1986) pp. 87-100; Rangimarie Rose Pere, 'Te Wheke: Whaia Te Maramatanga Me Te Aroha', in Sue Middleton (ed), *Women and Education in Aotearoa Volume 1* (Allen and Unwin/ Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1988) pp. 6-19; Julie Glamuzina and Alison Laurie, 'Sexual Politics in the 1950s: The Parker-Hulme Murder Case', *Sites,* 19 (1989) pp. 33-42; Julie Glamuzina and Alison Laurie, *Parker and Hulme: A Lesbian View* (New Women's Press, Auckland, 1991); Bill Rout, 'Being Staunch: Boys Hassling Girls', in Sue Middleton and Alison Jones (eds), *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2* (Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1992), pp. 169-180

6 Hilary Haines, 'Research in Focus', *Mental Health News* (August 1988) pp. 21-23; Chris Atmore, 'Essential Fictions, Fictional Essences: Some Recent Media Constructions of Child Sexual Abuse in Aotearoa', *Women's Studies Journal*, 7:1 (1991) pp. 29-54; Alison Jones, 'Desire, Sexual Harassment and Pedagogy in the University Classroom', *Theory into Practice*, 32:2 (Spring 1996) pp. 102-109.

Uniform Bodies?
Disciplining Sexuality in School 1968-1995

SUE MIDDLETON

We were divided into four houses for sports. At the end of every month marks were credited to your house. They had a very strict prefect system. If you weren't a prefect you couldn't walk up the main steps into college, you had to go around through the back entrance. The prefects had to examine the uniforms every Monday morning to see if they were the correct length. And boys and girls had a separate playground, of course. (Girl high school pupil, 1930s)

I remember the first day because my form master really terrified me. The first thing he did was to show us the range of canes that he had. He had this box alongside his desk and he held up canes of different lengths and thicknesses and informed us how the canes were to be graded. The bigger you got the heavier the cane. I remember that very well. (Boy high school pupil, 1950s)

The general judicial form that guaranteed a system of rights that were egalitarian in principle was supported by these tiny, everyday, physical mechanisms, by all those systems of micropower that are essentially non-egalitarian and asymetrical that we call the disciplines. (Michel Foucault)[1]

In the early 1980s I was researching the experiences and perspectives of my own generation of feminist teachers. Speaking of her life as a university student during the early years of the sexual revolution of the mid-1960s, one of my interviewees said:

> I remember putting a hell of a lot more energy into my sex life and my emotional life than I ever did into my work and really university was just a backdrop against which the dramas of my sex life were played out. All sorts of things that were anathema to my parents were played out.[2]

Over sixteen years of university teaching I have watched students struggling with similar conflicts between the rationalism of the

academic and the chaos of embodied sexuality. In the early 1990s I decided to make this into an object of study and, accordingly, designed an undergraduate course entitled 'Education and Sexuality', which I have taught to Education and Women's Studies students at Waikato University since 1993. This article provides a resource for this and other such courses. It foregrounds the topic of school discipline as a useful angle from which to view the educational, cultural, historical, political, institutional, and other social phenomena which give form to our sexualities.

The life history data used in it come from a wider research project. Helen May and I conducted life history interviews with 150 New Zealand teachers and former teachers who ranged in age from 21 to their mid-90s. The focus of the interviews, and of the wider project, was on how and why these teachers developed their educational ideas.[3] We engaged them in conversations about their own childhoods and experiences as school pupils, their reasons for choosing teaching, their experiences as trainee teachers, and significant influences on their thinking during their teaching careers. While Helen interviewed 75 early childhood and infant educators, I interviewed 75 teachers of secondary, intermediate, and older primary school children. In the course of my interviews, the teachers told me many stories about discipline, punishment, and the regulation and normalisation of their bodies as school pupils, as student teachers, and as practising teachers. This paper is based on those portions of my 75 interviews which addressed these issues.[4] It addresses the disciplining of bodies in school from the late 1960s to the present day and is condensed from a much longer paper which takes the analysis from as far back as living memories of schooling can go – the early years of the twentieth century.[5]

What interests me in this present paper is the contradiction between education and discipline, how this impacts upon male and female bodies in school, and what its implications are for questions of sexuality. Most education theory textbooks would argue that *education* requires the liberation of the mind and the release of the imagination – the development of independence of thought and action. Yet – in works of literature, in educational research, and in everyday conversations – many people's narratives about *schooling* depict experiences of compulsion, bodily restrictions and confinements, petty rule following, punishments (often physical) and unquestioning obe-

dience to authority. This contradiction has perplexed me since my own school teaching days in the 1970s when my desire to tune my classroom to students' own inquiries was frustrated by organisational requirements to monitor presence and absence, to police hair-ribbons and socks, and to measure and grade 'progress' on numerical scales. Foucault's studies of 'the power of normalisation and the formation of knowledge in modern society' provide a useful focus on this contradiction.[6]

Viewing freedom and subjection as flip-sides of the same coin – as complementary rather than contradictory – Foucault argued that 'The Enlightenment,[7] which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines.'[8] The democratic forms of government characteristic of western[9] capitalist states rested on the ideal (or fantasy) of individual rational autonomy – the core Enlightenment value. Yet the social order required citizens who were not only autonomous and free, but, at the same time, both economically productive and subjected (rendered governable). As products of the Enlightenment, institutions of public schooling straddle this contradiction. Children in school learn to be both autonomous and governable – free and subjected.

For Foucault, the school was characteristic of the apparatuses of disciplinary power which took shape from the eighteenth century. In contrast to the feudal system in which people were governed by fiat or force, within modern nation-states the population is governed by surveillance, classification and normalisation by 'experts'. Pedagogy (the science of teaching) was developed alongside, and in interaction with, other professional knowledges (or disciplines) such as medicine, psychology, psychiatry, demography, and criminology. The professional ways of knowing (or discourses) developed within institutions – hospitals, prisons, schools etc – which were articulated to government (the apparatuses of ruling).[10] For example, most children are born within the medical system; are monitored in infancy by welfare groups like the Plunket Society or maybe Social Welfare; in kindergartens and schools they are categorised as 'bright or dull', 'normal or pathological' and may come under surveillance by psychologists, psychiatrists or criminal justice professionals. The examinations to which individuals are subjected result in case records, which 'fix' our identities in writing (on paper or in electronic databases) and these records may be passed from one disciplinary institution to another :

> The examination that places individuals in a field of surveillance also situates them in a network of writing; it engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them. The procedures of examination [are] accompanied... by a system of intense registration and of documentary accumulation. A 'power of writing' [is] constituted as an essential part in the mechanisms of discipline.[11]

Like blood in the tiny capillaries of the human body, the disciplinary knowledges of professionals – articulated to the powers of government – flow through the conduits of intersecting professional networks, information systems and social institutions.

For example, within schools the bodies of individuals are subjected to the 'panoptic' (all-seeing) gaze: 'a relation of surveillance, defined and regulated, is inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching, not as an additional or an adjacent part of it, but as a mechanism that is inherent in it and which increases its efficiency.'[12] This 'relation of surveillance' – so central in teachers' everyday work – includes monitoring the spatial locations of students (where they may be and with whom they may mix); the postures students may assume within their allocated spaces inside and outside the classroom (static or moving; sitting in rows or in groups, in desks or on the floor, etc); and the standardisation of their dress (in some cases even their underwear).

The surveillance and monitoring of students' sexuality has been central to this 'relation of surveillance' since the beginnings of modern secondary schooling. Writing about the early French secondary schools Foucault argued that:

> one can have the impression that sex was hardly spoken of at all in these institutions. But one only has to glance over the architectural layout, the rules of discipline, and their whole organisation: the question of sex was a constant preoccupation.[13]

Within the family and school, as in the wider society, it has been customary to classify human bodies as male and female and to orient a child's upbringing around this binary distinction. Throughout New Zealand's educational history, male and female bodies have been subjected to normalising practices which reinforce this opposition. Historical accounts of the early years of secondary schooling show that girls and boys were allocated different (and often unequal) spaces within school buildings and grounds; were subjected to different cur-

ricula and regimes of punishment in accordance with ideals of toughening boys and domesticating girls; and were required to dress according to conventional norms of masculinity and femininity.[14] However, at the same time, the liberating notion of education for both sexes – the freeing up of autonomous minds and spontaneous imaginations – was a dominant ideal both of the policy-makers and in the lives and works of those who taught. This tension between education and discipline created both possibilities and constraints for those who studied and taught in New Zealand secondary schools in the period here being studied.

The remainder of this paper falls into two parts: the first covers the period from the mid-1960s to the election of the Fourth Labour Government in 1984 and the second explores the period since 1984. I begin my discussion of each of these time periods with a brief account of the broad social theories which dominated the most influential educational policy texts of the time. Identifying these overarching educational ideas provides parameters in which to construct a discourse analysis of the 'micropractices' of power with respect to students' sexuality which were described in the interviews. I have chosen three intersecting themes to follow: the differential allocations of space to males and to females; the freedoms of movement permitted within these gendered spaces; and the policing of dress.

THE MID-1960S TO THE LATE 1980S

During the 1960s many of the post-World War Two baby boom generation – students whose parents may not have had access to higher, or even secondary, education – were moving to the cities and studying in tertiary institutions. The sense of marginality many of us who were such students felt in academic environments – as female and/or Maori, and/or working-class, etc – together with the sense of possibilities afforded us by the economic prosperity of the time, fuelled radical critiques of education and wider social protests. The hippy movement, the student revolts, anti-Vietnam War protests, anti-Apartheid demonstrations, and the beginnings of second-wave feminism all had their repercussions on school students and teachers.

In the late 1960s, secondary schools were faced with increasingly diverse populations of students as a result of the urbanisation of Maori and the immigration of Pacific Islanders. Teachers – as individuals, within their schools and professional organisations – strug-

gled to come to terms with how best to teach in schools with such diverse student populations. One retired principal of a metropolitan girls' high school described the visual changes in the school as viewed from the stage at morning assembly:

> By 1970 it was a different school. You could stand on the stage and you could look at the school. The hair colour was different. Whereas it had been sort of light brown, the occasional blonde, and the occasional red head, it was a much darker mix with the Chinese and the Indian and the Greek, and the Pacific Islanders coming in. And at the same time as we were realising that our school was changing we were looking at major changes in educational direction, and I'm really always heartened that it was teachers that took the plunge. Because *Education in Change* was a key-note document, I think.

The document she mentioned, *Education in Change*, was published in 1969 by the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association.[15] Its recommendations were in tune with the 'neo-Progressive'[16] thinking which was being disseminated and taken up by the more liberal secondary teachers – particularly in English and Social Studies. By the early 1970s, the multinational publishing companies were producing moderately priced and readable handbooks written by teachers for teachers about how to tailor a programme to the individual 'interests' of students.[17] *Education in Change* encapsulated some of the thinking in these in the following definition: 'education forms a major part in the process of individual and social growth and should be self-motivating because its rewards are inherent. This report is directed towards the development of a concept of self-motivated learning.'[18] It lists 'human qualities which education should be concerned to promote at all times. The highest value is placed on: the urge to enquire; concern for others; the desire for self-respect.'[19] By the early 1970s, the Department of Education was introducing new syllabi in which the post-war version of equality of opportunity ('equal means the same') gave way to one of education for diversity – cultural pluralism and student choice within the system and some support for the creation of 'educational alternatives.' [20]

In the more liberal/progressive schools, these ideas generated major upheavals in the ways they were structured and this brought about changes in teaching practice. Up till this time what had counted as academic had rested on the cognitive styles, language and inter-

ests of the white professional and managerial elite. Since the development of psychology as a discipline in the 1930s, the allocation of students to courses and streams had been done largely on the basis of their scores on intelligence tests. As a means of ensuring justice and equality of opportunity, these had been believed to be scientific and therefore as appropriately objective measures of innate potential. The Social Darwinism of the 1920s and 1930s had left unquestioned the resulting relegation of Maori and working-class Pakeha to the manual streams – a stratification that became increasingly obvious as the processes of urbanisation brought about the influx of 'brown' students into the predominantly 'white' urban secondary schools and universities. [21] Conceptualising cultural difference as valuable diversity rather than deviance or inferiority, the discourse of pluralism provoked some schools to 'destream' during the 1970s. This broke down the barriers between students who took different courses (academic, home craft, commercial, agricultural, or industrial) and resulted in co-educational classes of mixed ability and mixed race. It therefore altered previous patterns of the differential distributions of groups of students in school space. Teaching in non-streamed classes made whole-class instruction difficult and forced secondary teachers to develop the kinds of individualised and small-group teaching methods which up till this time had been characteristic only of primary schools.

From the point of view of the 'discipline of the body' it would seem that Progressivism – which rests on assumptions of freedom of choice, intrinsic motivation, and self-discipline – is in direct opposition to some traditional school regulatory practices with respect, for example, to students' dress. However, as Valerie Walkerdine has argued, what happens is that the processes of discipline, regulation and normalisation become more covert: 'the child supposedly freed by this process to develop according to its nature was the most classified, catalogued, watched and monitored in history'.[22] 'Freed from coercion, the child was much more subtly regulated into normality.'[23] Within a Progressivist school environment, she argues, 'Discipline became not overt disciplining, but covert watching...[as] the classroom became the facilitating space for each individual under the watchful and total gaze of the teacher.'[24] Writing about child-centred learning in primary schools, Walkerdine noted that the freedom of children meant less space for the teacher, who becomes 'the servant

of the omnipotent child, whose needs she must meet at all times.' [25]

In accordance with this shift, new social technologies for regulating the population without physical coercion were becoming freely available to teachers. Behaviourist psychology with its techniques of positive reinforcement was being taught in teachers' colleges and universities. The new psychological and sociological discourses positioned 'problem' students not so much as naughty but as having behavioural difficulties which were often the result of social pathology. Accordingly, many schools created senior staffing positions which were devoted to the welfare of the students and their families. Eric Cotton (b1939) described the burn-out he experienced as a Dean in 1971 at a new co-educational school with a high population of working-class immigrant Pacific Island students and a Senior Mistress who had failed to win the confidence of Samoan girls:

> I was a Dean and that was a huge job there, if you wanted to make it that way. I would spend day after day looking for girls around the town. They could be in any situation and anywhere, and I saw the rougher side of life that I didn't even think existed. I got on really well with girls – basically because the woman who was a senior mistress found it difficult and was confrontational with them all the time. I would be in my classroom, and there'd be a knock on the door and there'd be one of the girls there saying, 'We need to see you for a moment.' And no one knew about it. So I'd leave some work for the class and say, 'What's your problem?' Mainly Samoan girls, who were getting a really hard time at home. They'd say, 'We've got this problem.' 'Whereabouts are you? How many of you?' They'd usually have gone into the girls' toilet. [26]

This welfare, or social work, model became dominant in the official discourses about discipline in schools during this period. It offered an alternative to corporal punishment as a technology for regulating the whereabouts and behaviour of children.

The neo-Progressive schools were characterised by increasing informality in the relationship between students and teachers. Individualised and group teaching methods encouraged more movement in classrooms by students and teachers. Seeking bodily comfort, freedom of movement and informality, some of us who were teaching struggled to loosen the rigidities of our schools' requirements with respect to the way we dressed. I had male colleagues who refused to wear ties, grew their hair and side-burns and wore jeans. We younger

women found that our miniskirts conflicted with the freedom of movement required in the classroom – as Rona Gregg (b1948) explained: 'In those days you had mini-skirts and when you lifted your hand up to write on the blackboard, it wasn't a particularly good thing to be doing!' The revealing tendencies of the mini-skirts of the early 1970s no doubt, at least in part, influenced the acceptance at this time of trousers as appropriate work clothes for us.

The influx of the young and fashionable to classroom teaching in the 1970s exacerbated classroom management dilemmas for one of my interviewees whose embodied sexuality did not match students' ideals. Audrey Hall (b1928) had always taught in girls' schools before taking on a position at the age of 49 in a coeducational school in a conservative suburb:

> I found boys very lazy as students. A lot of them never settled down and did a decent period of work, or their homework. I was older by then. A younger teacher can get a rapport with students, almost a hero worship. They see you as a role model and notice what you're wearing, and comment on it, too – quite a different sort of relationship. But coming in as a middle-aged woman to boys' classes you really had to be very bossy and authoritarian. A feeling of 'We're all in this together, let's get to work' didn't seem to work. I like a relaxed way of teaching, but I found that at that school I had to be very authoritarian.

As Sari Biklen has expressed it, 'Teachers' bodies are objects of the student gaze.' She goes on to say that when students recall their school teachers one of the primary things they remember is their teachers' appearance.[27]

The publication in New Zealand of an English translation of the Danish-authored *Little Red Schoolbook* brought the language of Liberation from the social protest movements into the context of schools.[28] In a climate in which students' rights were seen as important, some of them challenged inconsistencies between the stance of 'freedom of expression' which was offered to them by the Liberal/Progressive or protest movement discourses and their positioning as passive recipients of teachers' normalising practices. While some liberal schools relaxed uniform and hair regulations, conservative ones maintained them, even in the face of student protest. Robert Williams (b1939) describes one example in a co-educational school: 'The *Little Red Schoolbook* came out – ideas about pupil power and this sort of stuff.

But it died a natural death fairly quickly. I can remember when the Beatles came out, we had all the fuss about long hair.' However, at his next school (a boys' school), the struggle had become more confrontational:

> [The former Principal] had had the school absolutely screwed down tight, and the new Principal was faced with mutiny from the boys – sit-ins on the school field over caps. He abolished caps, and the Board of Governors thought that that was the end of the world. [The sit-ins were about] wearing caps, and long hair and all that stuff. It was the time of the *Little Red Schoolbook*, a time of great ferment – student power.

The refusal of some schools to relax their uniform requirements trivialised them as educational institutions for some of their more questioning students. One of the teachers interviewed – Nell Wilson (b1955) – explained her radicalism as a feminist teacher with reference to her own student days in an urban co-educational school in the years 1968-1971. She had resisted the minutiae of the school's attempt to normalise every inch of her bodily adornment:

> The uniform was a grey skirt and a white blouse. So I made a tie-dye grey skirt which didn't go down well at all. I was constantly called into the Senior Mistress's office and given lectures... I chose to ignore all of that. All of these things had nothing to do with what went on in the classroom, but they were all of the things that were actually important as an adolescent, I think. And as a fourth former I had quite long hair, and so I used to wear it in all different kinds of ways. And I remember distinctly; this is one of those things that you never forget, – we had a 'gals' assembly and Mrs Owens (who was the dragon) walked up and down the aisles and picked out girls who had to go on stage for having inappropriate hairstyles. That included me who on this particular day had these pigtails just above my ears – my hair was really long, so it kind of looked like Pippi Longstocking pan handles... I think as a result of things like that, I was so sick of the place that I didn't do a seventh form year.

Some schools at this time abolished uniform. While for many, this may have signalled an increase in personal freedom, for others – especially those whose families were unable to provide them with good clothing – it was a source of constraint and discomfort. Rangi Davidson (b1956), who had himself attended a private Maori boys' boarding school, had regarded his own school's uniform as important in helping him to develop a sense of self-worth:

> I'm basically a traditionalist and a disciplinarian... I like to wear a tie for school. I believe in the importance of a uniform for self-esteem and all that sort of thing. The uniform gives you a sense of belonging to something and if it's a nice uniform it makes you feel good. The same as dressing. If you dress well, you feel good. If you don't dress well, you don't feel so good.

In the late 1980s, Rangi had taken a teaching position in the Maori bilingual unit of a large co-educational school which had abolished uniforms. The school had a high proportion of students from homes in which parents and caregivers were on low incomes or unemployed and the students he taught were mainly from such backgrounds. Concerned about the self-image of the students in the bilingual unit, Rangi introduced a special travelling uniform for them:

> I enjoyed working in a big school. Over 1,000 kids. Co-ed, my first co-ed school. Non-uniform. A few things there that were really new to me... After a while it didn't worry me, the uniform – essentially I am a traditionalist. I really believe in that. But what I tried to do to get around it was, I introduced uniforms. The bi-lingual kids had a travelling uniform. Essentially I was just worried about the bi-lingual kids, I wasn't worried about the rest of the school. And when the kids travelled they looked nice and they felt good about themselves.

The freedom of students from affluent families to choose their own dress was at the expense of those less well-off – it had accentuated the signs of their poverty.

Not only did student-centredness influence the regulation of bodily adornment, but it also gave form to new discourses about the ways the physical/ sexual body itself could be spoken about in schools. During the 1970s, the spirit of neo-progressivism – centred as it was on humanist psychological concepts of personal growth – had extended into the question of sexuality education. No longer conceptualised in terms of introducing students to the 'biological facts' alone,[29] sexuality education was conceptualised as part of a broader education in human development and relationships, values, and health. These ideas were developed in the context of the 'second wave' of feminism[30] and reports of the time implied, even if they did not always say so directly, that capacities for sexual arousal and expression were equally distributed between women and men.[31] Emotions and desires were no longer 'missing' from the discourse.[32] During the

time of the post-pill 'sexual revolution' speaking about sex in the mass media became increasingly tolerated. Commercial publishers marketed sexual information for teenagers (which included information about sexual desire, masturbation, contraception and abortion among other things). This created new, easily accessible, conduits for teenagers themselves to access information without mediation or moralising by adults.[33] The question of sexuality education became an object of intense media speculation, meetings by concerned parents, and staffroom discussions. Several government reports on secondary education were produced within this context and the language used in these shows the influence of these wider community debates and concerns.[34]

The 'Johnson Report' expressed some of the more open sexual attitudes of the time as follows:

> No students should leave school without facing up to the real implications of personal relationships, and the consequences to their own personality development if they fail to do this. We want students to realise that sexuality involves self-discipline and involves loving and caring for another person – not the mere seeking of self-release. It is the basis of a lasting relationship; it is a most powerful emotional drive and has a great capacity for bringing happiness and giving meaning to life. It is not confined to the younger years but grows with understanding and maturity. It can be a spiritual force.[35]

On the basis of their knowledge that teenagers always have been, and always will be, sexually active, the Johnson Committee's focus was upon urging them to confine such activities to 'caring relationships.' However, because they had not said that teenagers should be instructed that sex belongs only in marriage, the message was too permissive for many and caused a public outcry. Upon the appointment of a conservative Minister of Education by the National Government in the early 1980s, the 'moral right' pressure groups were able to play a major part in ensuring that the Johnson Report was never implemented.[36] However, its language had encapsulated the ethos which underpinned the many (and often co-educational) 'human relationships' programmes which were introduced into secondary schools during the 1970s and 1980s and which have continued to be in place in many secondary schools up to the present day.[37]

EDUCATIONAL RESTRUCTURING: 1984-1995

1984 (the year of the election of New Zealand's Fourth Labour Government) is commonly regarded as signalling the beginnings of the present 'phase' in the educational thought of policy-makers, which many commentators have seen as dominated by a heightened emphasis on individualism and competitiveness as primary social values.[38] To contextualise the kinds of questions being raised by some teachers and pupils in schools today with respect to the regulation of the body, it is necessary to have some understanding of the broader policy discourse of school reform.

Following recommendations in the 'Picot Report', policy-makers devolved responsibility for many educational decisions from central government authorities to Boards of Trustees, which were to be composed of parents, staff, and (in secondary schools only) student representatives.[39] Labour's policies embodied contradictions between the atomised individualism of a free market economic vision and a centralised 'socialist' conceptualisation of equity. While Labour's 'New Right' economic vision conceptualised the population as atomised, competitive, acquisitive individuals, their equity policies viewed New Zealand society as composed primarily of groups. These policies were based on the idea that certain groups, through no fault of their own, had been educationally disadvantaged, and were therefore owed compensation. Within this discourse, schools were conceptualised as sites for effecting compensatory justice. [40]

The powers and responsibilities of each Board of Trustees were listed in school charters, which contained details of the school's broad objectives and specific goals. Some of these, including the equity objectives, were required to be included by Government and were to be 'non-negotiable'.[41] Schools' successes and failures in meeting their stated goals – including the equity objectives – were to be monitored by the Educational Review Office (ERO). Teachers, Boards and whole schools are also subject to processes of surveillance, examination, and normalisation by 'the authorities.'

Although there may have been a 'de-emphasis' on equity issues since the National Government assumed office in 1990, [42] most schools are still required to assume responsibility for promoting 'equitable educational outcomes' for both sexes.[43] With respect to 'gender equity', most schools still have the mandate to develop equal

opportunities objectives; to provide non-sexist role-models for students, to develop non-sexist curricula, to have an equal employment opportunity policy, and to create a school which is free of sexual harassment. Empirical studies have yet to be carried out in New Zealand on the ways the policy-makers' conceptualisations of 'equity policies' are transformed in specific institutions into micropractices of power[44]. However, my data include some interesting comments from some teachers about ways in which their bodies, and those of their students, are regulated in today's schools.

These stories cluster around the following topics: students' and teachers' dress, ways of speaking about sexual matters, and the differential distribution of sexed/gendered bodies in space.

Despite a deregulated climate with respect to formal dress-codes for teachers, many of those I interviewed described ways in which what they wore to school was influenced by the normalising gazes of their school communities, other teachers, and their students. The new devolved administrative structures have made schools more 'porous' than they used to be in absorbing the expectations and values of their communities. This can influence how teachers dress. Maureen McWilliam (b1973) began her teaching career in the mid-1990s in an Intermediate school whose parents were predominantly from business and professional occupations. She described how the ethos of the business and professional world was inscribing itself on the bodies of the teachers:

> This Intermediate is very much control orientated. Everything is orientated towards the child, but it's very much in terms of streaming the child into opportunities. Right down to the clothes, even to the colours used in the clothing. It's very bold, black, white. The staff were very much into power dressing and I found it really scary.

Other women said that the 'sexualising gaze' of male students influenced how they dressed for work. For some this required concealment of the body. For example, Julie King (b1969) was careful not to appear 'provocative' to her mainly Pacific Island students (for whom modesty was a key value): 'I deliberately don't wear tight clothes. I'm very conscious about what I'm wearing. I wear quite baggy clothes, or if I have a tight top on I wear a big loose shirt over it. I don't want to be ogled at by teenage boys, basically. That's quite a conscious decision that I have made.' Her modest mode of dressing

for school was a form of self-defence. It was a way of minimising the extent to which she would be positioned as an object of sexual desire – spoken about, fantasised about, or harassed – by boy students.

The acceptability of public 'speaking out' about sexuality with respect to the 1970s sexual revolution had generated the commercial mass production of pornography – the rendering visible of male sexual fantasies in the public sphere. By the 1980s, boys could easily (if illegally) access such materials.[45] Nell Wilson (b1955), a teacher in a boys' school, found herself positioned as 'object of the pornographic gaze' by an unknown student who had inserted

> bits of pornographic material in my roll. The next thing was some women's underwear outside the classroom. The worst thing was two sheets of fairly graphic photographs of a woman baring all with a kid's writing all over it – he wrote me a kind of a love note that was quite obscene and shoved that in my classroom door. It was addressed to me.

Explicitly sexual images and language could be used by boys to exert power over women teachers. It could also be used to denigrate the bodies, and thereby to reject the ideas, of other women who entered their educational horizons, such as female poets or women characters in books. Nell Wilson had showed her sixth form boys a BBC videotape which had been screened in this country on the Fraser show. This had raised the problem of the widening gap between English boys' and girls' achievements in school – how girls are achieving more highly than boys. My reading of the boys' response is that they used homophobia to denigrate the bodies of the women in the video as a defence against their insecurities in the face of a threatened undermining of the boundaries of their binary construction of acceptable masculinity and acceptable femininity:

> I had taped the Fraser programme in which he had a panel discussion about why girls do better at school. I thought my sixth form would be really interested in this because this is about kids their age and things they're going to have to face. And their reaction was really weird. As soon as I put it on, all they did was spend time trying to undermine the women on the programme – saying, 'she's got to be a lesbian, look at her, look at the clothes she's wearing! That person looks sick – they're feminists.' They would not believe that I was showing it to them because I thought they might be interested in the consequences for them, if it was true. I hadn't expected that reaction at all. And yet I shouldn't

> have been surprised at all – the current term of abuse at Boys' College is to call each other 'gay'.

The removal of the secrecy surrounding sexuality and the freeing up of speech made it possible for students to use sexual terminology quite legitimately in the classroom. While in previous eras homosexuality could never have been raised in the classroom, there are today legitimate spaces in the curriculum for the discussion of such issues – not only in sexuality education itself, but also in 'mainstream' subjects, such as English, since many great writers have been lesbian or gay. The creation of legitimate spaces, however, can also offer students a new tool of resistance. Their use of the term 'lesbian' (no longer a banned concept) as a term of abuse offered them a defence against 'dangerous knowledge' that could have undermined the securities of the patriarchal gender order they sought to preserve.[46] Another example came from Veronica Neilson (b 1969), who was also teaching in a boys' school. She described how students used homophobic language in an attempt to regulate her appearance:

> Last year I had my hair cut really short like Anita McNaught's [a TV presenter], and one of the boys came up to me and said 'Miss, you shouldn't have your hair cut like that because people are going to think you're a lesbian.' And I said 'Oh, do you really think so?' And they said 'Yeah!' I said, 'Oh well, if the shoe fits.' I never tell them whether I am or whether I'm not.

This suggestion of homophobia as a ground for the policing of teachers' dress is a theme which recurs throughout my data on the post-Picot years. As Jennifer Gore and Carmen Luke have argued "Women's sexualities – in their manifestation in dress, appearance/appeal, 'looks', age, bodily habitus – continue to be read by many men as signposts of women's worth."[47]

This so-called 'male gaze' can also be assumed by women in an attempt to regulate the compliance of 'other' women to the norms of conventional heterosexual femininity. Susan Godfrey (b1968) had attended a teacher education programme in the early 1990s. She was older than most of her classmates, had lived an 'alternative life-style', was living with her baby and the child's father in a nuclear family situation, but had rejected the frills of feminine adornment: 'My classmates were shying away from me because I had hairy legs and hairy

armpits and short hair.' Further examples of women applying such pressure were offered by Veronica Neilson, who commented that 'women who don't have that [feminist] background are really trying to be something. We've got teachers at school who try to be bimbos and it's embarrassing.' In a small-town co-educational school, Veronica's feminism had been challenged by boy students' mothers. She described such a challenge as resulting from one of her poetry lessons:

> There was one poem that talked about women's bodies being made to conform and I was talking to the boys about what we see as beautiful and what we don't. And I had this very beautiful farmer's wife come in and ask me what I was trying to do – was I trying to make her son marry someone ugly or something? Another poem was about 'the weight of the wedding band on Jennifer's hands.' Talking about how men have often oppressed women. And I got back-lash again.

While formal rules for teachers' dress have been relaxed, these women found themselves subjected to strong informal pressures – from students, from colleagues, and from parents – to conform to a conventional image of femininity which would leave a patriarchal, dualistic, gender order intact.

With respect to the regulation of students' dress, I have little data concerning the present day, but the fragments which I have suggest some interesting points for discussion and lines for future inquiry. Most secondary schools have retained uniforms for at least the junior school although students now have considerable flexibility within the uniform requirements (for example, in the girls' school which was attended by my daughter in the early 1990s, girls could make their own summer dresses in any modest style from the regulation fabric). Most schools do not require uniform for their senior students. Some of those interviewed had used their students' fascination with dress as curriculum material. Dress offered Julie King (b1969) a space to engage with her Pacific Islands students about feminist issues by meeting them on their own cultural ground. Discovering the influence of American music videos on the dress of her Pacific Island students, she made these a topic for feminist analysis in her English curriculum:

> On teaching practice [from College] I taught from music videos because I suddenly realised that the way the students were dressing – their hairstyles, the way they spoke, everything – was coming from the mu-

> sic videos in American films. They all wanted to be gangstas. I stopped the video every 10 seconds and we analysed what kind of image it was – whether it was a male image, a female one, a dance one or whatever – and the boys seemed totally oblivious to the fact that they were predominantly male images that we were seeing... When I started my first job in this school, which has got no uniform, the kids were actually wearing the stuff and their hairstyles were from music videos and the way they talked with their body with all this rap gangsta kind of stuff.

The covert regulation of students' dress in those schools which have abolished uniforms would make a fruitful field of future inquiry. Such schools retain the powers to monitor and regulate students' clothing by means of a dress code. For example, one such school's present dress code reads:

> In keeping with this school's emphasis on self-management, there are no uniform regulations. The development of sensible attitudes towards matters of dress and appearance is seen as part of the educational process and students are asked to avoid extravagance of style or appearance... In any question of acceptability of dress the school's decision will be final.

It would be interesting to research whether or not in practice such dress codes result in a covert normalising process whereby those whose adolescent struggles manifest themselves in 'extravagance of style' (Punks and avant garde youth) are excluded or expelled from the school. Does 'sensible' mean 'average'? While in previous eras, teachers' and students' dress was more overtly regulated through formal dress-codes and uniforms, the mid-1990s are characterised by more informal micropractices of power which inscribe on the bodies of teachers and students the norms of the wider society.

My second theme concerns the architectural and outdoor spaces within which girls' and boys' bodies are permitted to locate and move. New Zealand's educational histories tell of changing and differential allocations of school spaces to girls and boys: single sex institutions and segregation of the sexes within what were officially co-educational schools (e.g. through streaming, through separate entrances and playgrounds).[48] My data on the 1990s suggest that such spatial questions remain. I shall mention two – some questions concerning

co-education, and stories concerning boys' resistances to 'open' classroom activities in one school.

Many of the older men who were interviewed had themselves attended all-boys' schools and, although some of them had taught in such single-sex institutions, said that the all-male cultures of these needed 'softening' through the presence of women teachers and girl pupils. Such views were concisely summarised by George Reed (b1926):

> I didn't like caning. I didn't like bullying. I didn't like boys on their own, I thought they needed some girls to sort of soften the edges. I enjoyed the company of men. I enjoyed the staff room in single sex schools, and yet I also enjoyed the staff room at co-educational.

David Don (b1932) had taught long-term in a boys' school and had worked hard at convincing the Principal that, although he 'couldn't get girls in the senior school', he had succeeded in convincing him 'that women could contribute a great deal to the school. They have been on the staff ever since and some of the women colleagues that I taught with were superb. They would lend a different aspect to things. Yet they got a lot of resistance from some people.' This enthusiasm for having women staff in boys' schools was widespread among many of the men who had worked in such schools.

Many of the women said that they enjoyed teaching boys in co-educational or in single-sex environments. However, as exemplified previously, some of them felt uncomfortable under the 'sexualising' gaze of male adolescents and had experienced harassment of various sorts. Others had experienced discrimination in terms of employment advancement opportunities. To help them to deal with such experiences, a number of the women had become involved in the organisation of women teachers' groups in boys' schools or in co-educational settings. Sometimes this was regarded with suspicion, even hostility, by male colleagues. For example, Sian Murray (b1963) had become the Women's Officer for her branch of the NZPPTA in a co-educational school in a conservative region of New Zealand:

> I had to organise women's meetings which was really good for all the staff. We used to have a lot of women's dinners. The men didn't like that, but we still had them anyway. And then the Regional Women's Officer used to come down and have seminars and so I would organise those. The chairperson at that time was a female, so she was really supportive.

During the 1980s a number of state and private boys' schools had opened their doors to senior girls from other schools.[49] This had had the effect of 'creaming off' some of the more able girls from the senior classes in the neighbouring girls' schools. John Wilson (b1939) worked in a boys' school, which, together with the local girls' school, had set up an arrangement which involved his senior boys going to the nearby girls' school for some subjects and the senior girls coming to his school for others. He was aware that his well-resourced school had better facilities than those at the girls' school:

> [When I started working at a boys' school] I missed the girls, because they do soften the place. But they love coming here because it's nicer than their place to be in; and they really appreciate that. And I think it's ideal. I don't think I would have been happy staying on here with just boys. No, I like girls.

In his interview, he gave a thoughtful analysis on the relative benefits of single-sex and co-education for boys and for girls at different stages of their adolescent development. He believed that girls were more powerful than boys in early adolescence and that the self-esteem of boys was best nurtured in these 'junior' years in single-sex settings. For example, some girls used their superior verbal skills to 'put down' boys in a way which was damaging to their self-esteem when they were in the early stages of adolescence and less mature physically, intellectually and emotionally than the girls:

> I'm convinced that boys do well at third, fourth and fifth Form in single-sex boys' schools. The girls aren't there to put them down. Put-downs are the worst things that happen at schools – that's the type of bullying when there's the name-calling, not the physical stuff. Girls are better motivated at 13, 14, 15 , they're neater, they're tidier, they're more aware of what they need to do. And the boys are ugly. They become semi-ugly at about 15 or 16, and then they become human. And girls at 13 or 14, if they're powerful are looking at guys 15 or 16; they are looking at the guys who are decent, they're not looking at these guys who are the same age. They're ahead of them. They know more about themselves, and about the boys than the boys know about them. They think a lot more. They talk a lot more. The boys are out there doing things, and yelling and screaming and swearing and things. And so, what I've noticed here [at a boys' school] is that they work a lot harder. And you can really crank into them, because boys are pretty simple

> creatures. It's not running them down, but you know, you can say it simply to a boy and he'll probably accept it. Whereas with girls, they'll want to argue the finer details because they're more intelligent or more aware at a younger age of themselves. But I think [single sex schooling] is ludicrous at 16 or 17 when the boys have caught up and the girls are good too. No one talks about senior kids in disparaging terms, they always worry about the 13, 14, 15 year olds; that's where the problems are.

A further story about non-academic boys being damaged by verbal put-downs by sophisticated girls was given by Rangi Davidson (b1956), who was concerned that so many Maori boys rejected intellectual work as being the province of 'nerds' and therefore as being 'unmanly'.[50] He did not say whether it was girls or other boys who were applying the 'nerd' label to the working-class Maori boys he taught who were succeeding academically, but explained that girls did not experience the same pressures because academic success was more acceptable in their peer group culture:

> Girls are better learners. They work harder. They get on with the job. But when they have a bad day, wow watch out! Whereas boys tend to be more aloof, tough boy images come through a lot. They don't show their emotions as much which is the tough boy image again. But they don't work as well as girls. They are frightened to show that they work hard. It's a lot to do with peer pressure. I know the intelligent Maori boys at our school [in an small town with a high Maori population] they get the nerd label or whatever you want to call it.

While Rangi cast this resistance as being a characteristic of working-class Maori boys, Nell Wilson (b1955) had had similar difficulties in her English class in a boys' school with a predominantly Pakeha and largely middle-class student population. As a student-centred teacher, she wanted her students to work in groups, to initiate inquiries, and to engage in debates on controversial issues. She wanted a classroom with flexible use of space, freedom of movement, and interaction between students as a basis for learning. Instead, she found that, accustomed to a static environment – formal and exam-oriented – the boys resisted her pedagogic style by demanding that they sit still while she fed them notes:

> It was a real struggle there. I just couldn't believe how it was. All the boys wanted was 'Look, if you give us the notes, we'll have the right answers.' That's all they were interested in. They didn't want to talk

> about anything, they just wanted the right answers....The boys have been just so resistant to getting out of their chairs for one thing, and talking to each other, for another and actually sharing information. They seem like they don't want to do that at all. So I don't know whether it's a boys' thing or just a Boys' College thing.

It seems that it is the ethos of a particular community of students as structured by the traditions and micropractices of a particular school over time, whether single-sex or co-educational, that creates the climate of the classrooms in which the constraints and possibilities for teachers' pedagogies are constructed and in which specific technologies for disciplining the body come to form.

CONCLUSION

The work of the teacher, like the work of all professionals, is necessarily embedded in the intersecting knowledges and institutions of disciplinary power. The teachers who were interviewed for the wider study from which the data for this paper have been extracted were dedicated to education as a liberating activity. As school pupils themselves they had experienced the constrictions of disciplinary power, but, as students who were to be ultimately academically successful and to choose to work as educators, they had also grasped education's possibilities. Many had become activists against some of the repressive facets of schooling. There were men who had campaigned against caning when more humane forms of discipline (such as behaviourist psychology) became available. There were women who fought against the unequal allocations of space to girls and boys. And there were teachers of both sexes who campaigned for more freedom of expression with respect to dress.

The life-history methodology adopted in this paper has focussed not just on the grand theories of the policy-makers but on institutional practices in classrooms, playgrounds and staffrooms. Instead of the 'top-down' focus which results from research on policy texts alone, I have added to my readings of policy-texts a view of schooling 'from the bottom up.' This has enabled me to include within my focus the normalising practices which are, of necessity, at the heart of the job of teaching: 'the supervision of the smallest fragment of life, or of the body.'[51] As Michelle Barrett has pointed out,[52] research which is 'predicated upon favouring practice over theory' can help us to understand the discourses of schooling, not as the mere disem-

bodied abstractions of rationalist policy-documents, but as always/already located in, and structured by the processes of our own embodied experiences and perspectives in the 'organised and organising practices' in schools. Such a perspective provides me with useful resources for my 'Education and Sexuality' course in which my main concern is 'helping my students to understand the power relations in which they [as students and as future or practising teachers] work without being defeated by them.'[53]

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NOTES

1 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1977), p. 222.

2 Interview for my doctoral research. This work (which was completed in 1985) is both summarised and deconstructed in Sue Middleton, *Educating Feminists: Life-Histories and Pedagogy* (New York, Teachers College Press, University of Columbia, 1993).

3 We are writing a book, An Oral History of Teaching, under contract to Dunmore Press, Palmerston North. The travel, transcribing, and some other expenses involved were made possible by a grant from the University of Waikato Research Fund.

4 The 3000 pages of interview transcript data we have collected have been entered on a NUD-IST data base. NUD-IST is the acronym for Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising – a program developed by QSR Corp Pty, La Trobe University, Box 171, Victoria 3083, Australia.

5 Sue Middleton, 'Canes, Berets and Gangsta Rap: Disciplining Sexuality in School, 1920-1995', (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York Hilton, April 8-12, 1996).

6 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 308.

7 The Enlightenment refers to the post-French Revolution emphasis on reason as the supreme human virtue and as the basis for the government of democracies. As the legitimating ideology of industrial capitalism, liberalism (the philosophy of individual freedom and autonomy) argued

that positions of power and authority must be a reward of merit – individual talent and hard work. During this period (since the eighteenth century) the Industrial Revolution and the urbanisation of populations stimulated the growth of the regulatory apparatuses studied by Foucault.

[8] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 222.

[9] The term 'western' is problematic for those who live in the South, as it is a Northern hemisphere orientation. I shall use it here as inclusive of those southern nation-states whose governmental apparatuses (such as schooling) were shaped under colonial conditions.

[10] See Dorothy Smith, *The Conceptual Practices of Power* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press), 1990.

[11] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 189.

[12] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 141.

[13] Michel Foucault, *A History of Sexuality, Volume 1* (New York, Vintage, 1980), p. 31.

[14] See Middleton, 'Canes, Berets and Gangsta Rap', 1996; and Ruth Fry, *It's Different For Daughters: A History of the Curriculum For Girls in New Zealand Schools, 1900-1975* (Wellington, NZCER, 1985).

[15] New Zealand Post-Primary Teachers' Association, *Education in Change* (Auckland, Longman Paul, 1969).

[16] The child-centred approaches to teaching (the micropractices) which characterised the first-wave of Progressivism – that education can be the route to a democratic society – underpinned government policy and curricula for the post-War primary and secondary schools. The micropractices, or pedagogy, associated with the Neo-progressivism of the 1970s was more influential in secondary schools and drew on the radical social critiques of the 1960s for its political rationale. While the psychological underpinnings of first-wave progressivism had been Deweyan and psychoanalytic, those of the second wave were based on humanistic and behavioural psychology. In effect, secondary teachers took on board techniques which had long been characteristic of the primary school classroom, e.g. individual and group work and field work in the wider community. For details of Progressivism in early childhood and infant education see Helen May, 'Learning Through Play: Women, Progressivism and Early Childhood Education, 1920s-1950s', in Sue Middleton and Alison Jones (eds), *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2* (Wellington, Bridget Williams Books, 1992). For neo-Progressivism in secondary schools, see Sue Middleton, 'Towards an Oral History of Educational Ideas in New Zealand as a Resource for Teacher Education', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 12:5 (1996 in press).

17 e.g. John Holt, *How Children Fail* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969); Herbert Kohl, *The Open Classroom* (New York, New York Review, 1971); N. Postman and C. Weingartner *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974.)

18 New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association, *Education in Change*, p. xiv.

19 ibid., p. 1.

20 See Sue Middleton, 'Gender Equity and School Charters: Theoretical and Political Questions for the 1990s' in Sue Middleton and Alison Jones (eds), *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2* (Wellington, Bridget Williams Books, 1992).

21 Social Darwinism in education in the 1920s and 1930s is discussed in Middleton, 'Canes, Berets and Gangsta Rap', 1996.

22 Valerie Walkerdine, 'Developmental Psychology and the Child-Centred Pedagogy: The Insertion of Piaget into Early Childhood Education', in J. Henriques et al (eds), *Changing the Subject* (London, Methuen, 1984); Valerie Walkerdine, 'Sex, Power And Pedagogy', in M. Arnot And G. Weiner (Eds) *Gender and the Politics of Schooling* (London, Hutchinson, 1987); Valerie Walkerdine and Helen Lucey, *Democracy in the Kitchen* (London, Virago, 1989).

23 Valerie Walkerdine, 'Progressive Pedagogy And Political Struggle' in Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore (eds) *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy* (New York and London, Routledge, 1992), p. 18.

24 ibid., p. 19.

25 ibid., p. 21.

26 All names of interviewees in this paper are pseudonyms. Because the interviews covered the teachers' own school days as well as their teaching careers, I have inserted their birthdates. This indicates whether the excerpt from the narrative refers to their childhood, adolescent or adult experiences.

27 Sari Biklen, *School Work: Gender and the Cultural Construction of Teaching* (New York: Teachers' College Press, University of Columbia, 1995), p. 178.

28 Soren Hansen and Jesper Jensen, *Little Red Schoolbook* (Wellington, Alister Taylor, 1972).

29 In the post-World War Two years it was argued that, if teenagers were taught the 'biological facts of reproduction' in general science, they would rationally choose to abstain from sexual activity. The wild emotions of sexuality (the 'discourse of desire', as Fine, 1988 expresses it) were to be curbed by scientific/ rationalist knowledge. This is further discussed in

Middleton 1996a and in Sue Middleton, 'A Short Adventure between School and Marriage? Contradictions in the Education of the Post-War Woman,' in Sue Middleton (ed) *Women and Education In Aotearoa Volume 1* (Wellington, Allen And Unwin/ Port Nicholson Press, 1988).

30 Department of Education, *Education and the Equality of the Sexes*, (Wellington, Government Printer, 1975).

31 Until this time, sex-education literature had stated directly or by implication that men had stronger sexual urges than women. See Middleton, 'A Short Adventure between School and Marriage?', 1988.

32 Michelle Fine, 'Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females: The Missing Discourse of Desire,' *Harvard Educational Review*, 58:1 (1988), pp. 29-53.

33 e.g. Hansen and Jensen, *Little Red Schoolbook*; Felicity Tuohy and Michael Murphy, *Down Under the Plum Trees* (Martinborough, Alister Taylor, 1976).

34 Department of Education, *Towards Partnership: Report of the Committee on Secondary Education* ('McCombs Report'), (Wellington, Department Of Education, 1976); Department Of Education, *Growing, Sharing, Learning: The Report of the Committee on Health and Social Education* ('Johnson Report'), (Wellington, Department of Education., 1977).

35 ibid, p. 38.

36 For a useful discussion of social conservatism and sexuality in schools in the 1980s see Allanah Ryan, 'The 'Moral Right', Sex Education and Populist Moralism,' in Sue Middleton (ed) *Women and Education In Aotearoa Vol 1* (Wellington, Allen and Unwin/ Port Nicholson Press, 1988) pp. 114-126

37 Department of Education, *Growing, Sharing, Learning* 1977.

38 Sue Middleton, John Codd and Alison Jones (eds), *New Zealand Educational Policy Today: Critical Perspectives* (Wellington: Allen and Unwin/ Port Nicholson Press), 1990.

39 Taskforce to Review Educational Administration, *Administering for Excellence* ('Picot Report'), (Wellington, Ministry Of Education, 1987).

40 Middleton, 'Gender Equity and School Charters' 1992.

41 During the 1990 General Election campaign, Lockwood Smith – who was to become the new Minister of Education in the incoming National Government – announced that he would make the equity clauses optional on the grounds that Labour's equity policies were 'Orwellian social engineering.' (See Middleton, 1992a). Although few, if any, schools have re-negotiated their charters, the climate under National has no doubt 'de-emphasised' the importance of the equity issues in the minds of school personnel and ERO evaluators.

[42] See note 41 and also Adrienne Alton-Lee and Prue Densem, 'Towards A Gender-Inclusive School Curriculum: Changing Educational Practice,' in Sue Middleton and Alison Jones (eds), 1992.

[43] The full statement is that a school's 'policies and practices seek to achieve equality of educational outcomes for both sexes, for rural and urban students; for students from all religions, ethnic, cultural, social, family and class backgrounds, and for all students irrespective of their ability or disability' – Ministry of Education, *Tomorrow's Schools* (Wellington, Government Printer, 1988), p 8. Honouring the Treaty of Waitangi was also a salient 'equity objective.'

[44] An Australian example of such research is outlined in Jane Kenway, Sue Willis, Jill Blackmore and Leonie Rennie, 'Learning From Girls: What Can Girls Teach feminist Teachers?' in Lyn Yates (ed), *Feminism and Education* (Melbourne Studies in Education, La Trobe University, 1993) pp. 63-77

[45] Sue Middleton, 'Sex, Drugs, and Bombs: Six Years on the Indecent Publications Tribunal', *Sites*, 29 (1994) pp. 18-44

[46] A useful anthology of critiques of, classroom studies of, and strategies for sexuality education is James Sears (ed), *Sexuality and Curriculum: The Politics of Sexuality Education* (Teachers' College Press, University of Columbia, New York, 1992). This volume addresses questions of homophobia and gay/lesbian visibility in schools.

[47] Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore, 'Women in the Academy', in Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore (eds), *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy* (Routledge, New York and London, 1993) p. 201.

[48] Middleton, 'Canes, Berets and Gangsta Rap'.

[49] Bill Rout, 'Being Staunch: Boys Hassling Girls', in Sue Middleton and Alison Jones (eds), *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2* (Bridget Williams Books, Wellington, 1992). pp. 169-180.

[50] This analysis is similar to that of Paul Willis with respect to working class lads in 1970s Birmingham [Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour* (Saxon House, Westmead, 1977]. A local analysis which applies this argument to middle-class and working-class girls (and deconstructs the argument at the same time) is Alison Jones, *At School I've Got a Chance* (Dunmore, Palmerston North, 1991).

[51] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 140.

[52] Michele Barrett, *The Politics Of Truth: From Marx To Foucault* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1991) p. 135.

[53] Erica McWilliam, *In Broken Images: Feminist Tales for a Different Teacher Education* (Teachers College Press, University of Columbia, New York, 1995) p. 134.

The Sex Education Component of School Science Programmes as a 'Micro-Technology' of Power

JANE GILBERT

> Getting hold of the difficulty *deep down* is what is hard. Because if it is grasped near the surface it simply remains the difficulty it was. It has to be pulled out by the roots; and that involves our beginning to think about these things in a new way. The change is as decisive as, for example, that from the alchemical to the chemical way of thinking. The new way of thinking is what is so hard to establish. Once the new way of thinking has been established, the old problems vanish; indeed they become hard to recapture. For they go with our way of expressing ourselves and, if we clothe ourselves in a new form of expression the old problems are discarded along with the old garment.[1]

This paper is a deconstruction of the content of the sex education component of school science programmes. Its main argument is that these programmes form a 'micro-technology' of power in the sense in which this term is used by Foucault.[2] They contribute to the constitution of all of us as autonomous individuals who inhabit 'natural' sexed bodies. Furthermore, they contribute to the conceptualisation of the category 'woman' (in much of modern Western thought) as what is 'lacking', left over', or 'excess to' man. Because of this, it is important that the (explicit and implicit) content of these programmes is deconstructed and resisted.

The appearance of sex education in (New Zealand) secondary schools as part of the core curriculum of schools has, for obvious reasons, been controversial. The question of who needs to know what, about what, has been subjected to a series of vigorous debates, involving a number of different interest groups. Given that historically the main force motivating the decision to include some form of sex education in schools was the attempt to reduce the teenage pregancy rate,[3] programmes emerged which had as their main focus the inculcation in students of the 'facts' with respect to how pregnancy occurs (and, by implication, how to *prevent* it from occurring). An effect of

this was that the category 'sex' came to mean heterosexual sexual intercourse and its (possible) connection with pregnancy. On the basis of this, sex education programmes were developed which had as their main concern the instruction of students in certain of the 'biological facts' of reproduction. Consequently sex education programmes have historically been associated with school science programmes. It is through this association (and through its implied association with the wider discourses of medicine and science) that the material presented in them achieves an 'authority' that it is unlikely to have otherwise had.

More recently, other aspects of sex, sexuality and sexual knowledge have become part of school sex education programmes. However, because these other aspects are not associated with science and medicine in the same way as are the 'simple' biological facts of reproduction, their legitimacy as part of the core curriculum has been more tentative and open to question.

In the following sections I outline the kind of sex education material with which students are likely to be presented in school science programmes. My purpose in doing this is to call into question the *scientific* authority of much of this material. In addition however, I think it is important to make explicit some of the ways in which these programmes work to maintain the wider 'technologies' of power through which we are constituted as autonomous individuals inhabiting one or other of two different types of bodies, one of which is conceived of as the 'real thing' while the other is whatever is 'left over'.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF 'SEX' IN SCHOOL SCIENCE PROGRAMMES

The equation of 'sex' (in school science programmes) with 'reproduction' (and as therefore a 'biological' topic) sets up the context within which it is likely to be taught. A survey of a range of the textbooks used in New Zealand schools reveals a common pattern to the organisation and presentation of this material. 'Sex' becomes one of the seven different 'systems' which, in biology, define and organise the way in which living organisms are thought about (the others are nutrition, excretion, respiration, locomotion, growth and sensitivity). Because the focus is on reproduction, there is a tendency, in the material presented to students, to focus on the *differences* between male and female cells and organisms, and on the mechanisms of fertilisation.

A common pattern for the presentation of this material is for there to be first, a brief outline of asexual forms of reproduction (using the ubiquitous *Hydra* or *Amoeba* as examples). This is commonly followed by an account of plant reproduction, beginning with the structure of flowers and moving on to the processes of pollination, fertilisation, and seed development and dispersal. The pattern is to then move to a brief discussion of inheritance, plant and animal breeding, and chromosomes, followed by a description of the reproductive behaviour of some non-mammalian animal (commonly the frog, although the dogfish and the salmon also occur frequently) in order to introduce students to the processes of gamete production, to the details of the male and female reproductive systems, and to the processes involved in fertilisation. Once this has been dealt with, students are usually presented with an account of the events of pregnancy in humans, as well as a description of the menstrual cycle and of the conditions necessary for pregnancy to occur (and sometimes, of the various means of preventing it from occurring).

Sex, in school science programmes, is thus reduced to a discussion of fertilisation, with the result that there is a focus on the *differences* between male and female organisms, and on sex as being *both* an essential property of bodies *and* something which is biologically necessary for the continuation of the species. In these discussions there are two (and *only* two) kinds of body – produced through an interaction between the two different chromosome combinations, the two kinds of sex cells, the two sets of sex hormones and the two sets of external genitalia and secondary sexual characteristics.

In biology textbooks designed for use in the last years of secondary school or in undergraduate biology courses at university, 'sexuality' is represented (again) as a function of reproductive anatomy. A common mode of presentation is to begin with the creation of a new individual at fertilisation through the union of dissimilar gametes. The following typifies the way in which the gametes are commonly distinguished:

> An *egg*, the female gamete, contains food for the embryo and molecules that control early development. As a result of all this luggage, an egg is too large to be motile and must sit around waiting to be found. A motile *sperm* is the necessary complement to the nonmotile egg, and the two have evolved together.[4]

In accounts of the events leading up to fertilisation, it is very common for these events to be portrayed using metaphors such as those of courtship, a hunt, or a race. Some accounts emphasise the best sperm winning, others emphasise luck, still others emphasise the teamwork of the sperm in the struggle towards a goal that only one of them can achieve. Very occasionally, generally in accounts written by sociobiologists, ovarian 'choice' is mentioned. The story of the sperm is one of noble struggle, it is a thrilling, self-congratulatory narrative in which the heroic sperm struggles to succeed in the hostile environment of the vagina, uterus and oviduct.[5] Military and/or ballistic metaphors are common in textbook descriptions of fertilisation, as is imagery invoking the idea of gang rape. Sperm are portrayed as small, active, streamlined and penetrating, as having strong and efficient tails, and as moving strongly with great speed. They have a great deal of energy, while ova, in contrast, are conventionally (as in the extract above) described as being large and passive, immobile and blob-like.[6] In textbook accounts of the moment of fertilisation, sperm are portrayed as being 'actively penetrating', as having an 'infiltrating action' in 'purposefully' burrowing into the passive egg cell. [7]

> The sperm works like a revolving drill, with its head rotated by its tail movement. When sperm reach the ovum, it is still covered by the sheath of nutrient cells ... [These cells] must be cleared away. The cap of the sperm, the *acrosome*, gradually disappears and enzymes are released. These help the sperm to disrobe the egg.[8]

Thus fertilisation is the 'overcoming' by the 'vigorous' sperm of the 'obstacles' that are put in its way by the female body.[9] It consists of a single 'victorious', 'winning' sperm 'reaching the finish line'.[10] In addition, we are told that after fertilisation, the 'excluded' sperm continue their frenzied activity (while the egg remains passive); that is, that their movement causes the fertilised ovum to start rolling down the oviduct toward the uterus.[11]

Students who are learning the 'biological facts' of sex are thus presented with a set of images in which fertilisation is the 'conquest' of the female by the male. It is the (necessary) transgression of the boundaries of the female body by groups of male cells working together. These images of fertilisation as a kind of sado-masochistic fantasy, in which the egg as objectified, violated and subjugated by

the sperm, in its struggle to achieve omnipotence and recognition by the 'other' and by the world (through the passing on of its genetic material to the next generation) reveal more about the various unconscious fantasies associated with masculinity than they do about the *actual* behaviour of eggs and sperm.[12]

This (Aristotelian) idea that the male element gives form (and activity) to the undifferentiated 'matter' of the female is common in modern accounts of sex determination.[13] First, the 'essential' (or chromosomal) sex of the new individual is seen as being given by the sperm cell (not the egg) through its provision of either an X or a Y chromosome which, when added to the egg's single X, produces a combination of either XX (female) or XY (male). Second, in accounts of the *realization* of the individual's 'essential' sex in embryonic development – in the sense of its development of external and internal genitalia and hormone systems that are consistent with its original, chromosomal sex – the development of maleness is represented as the norm, as a process which requires *active* intervention. The female pathway, on the other hand, is represented as the 'default' setting,[14] but at the same time, as passive; that is, it is what is 'left over', or 'excess to' maleness, as what happens if the development of maleness does *not* occur.[15] In most accounts the embryo is portrayed as passing through an 'indifferent period' in which no sex differences are observable, as having a single gonad which is capable of developing into either a testis or an ovary.[16] Whether the embryo develops into a male or a female is seen as being determined through the intervention of the sex chromosomes and of hormones present *in utero.* Maleness is produced by the *presence* of a Y chromosome, which leads to the production of H-Y antigen – a substance which both inhibits the development of female gonads, and causes the bipotential gonad to develop into a testis. Most accounts of differentiation *only* contain a description of the development of maleness. Femaleness, if it is described at all, is represented as some sort of natural, fundamental, 'ground state'[17] or as a 'lack' of something. The development of a male embryo is commonly represented as a kind of 'mastery' of the Y chromosome over the X chromosome, and/or of maleness over the 'natural' femaleness of the indifferent gonad. If however, the female state *is* somehow more 'natural'; if it *is* the case that femaleness is a kind of 'default' pathway that development takes if mastery fails, then it would seem logical for femaleness to be repre-

sented as the norm, and the male pathway as a modification of (or deviation) from this norm. But, given the assumptions which underlie and drive this story, it is necessary for the 'normal' (and definable) condition to be male (and passivity is not a 'normal' part of maleness).

In these accounts, the Enlightenment assumption of two (qualitatively different) sexes exists alongside the (apparently contradictory) Aristotelian idea that there is one 'true' sex which is 'naturally' dominant over the other (aberrant and imperfect) form it finds itself co-existing with.[18] While this is never stated explicitly, this contradiction tends to be resolved through the assumption that there *are* two sexes, but that one is somehow more 'real' and definable (and thus more likely to achieve full subjectivity) than the other.

Thus, for students in school science programmes in which there is a sex education component, the meanings of sex and sexuality are reduced to, and equated with, reproduction and heterosexual sexual intercourse, and bodies are represented as classifiable into one of two (and only two) different sexes. The result of all this is that it is inevitable that it is the *differences* (rather than the similarities) between the sexes that are emphasised, and further, that these differences be represented as (Aristotelian) active/passive, form/matter binaries. In addition, any form of relationship between the sexes is represented, not as a co-operative interaction, as the development of a form of 'amorous exchange', an 'engagement, one with the other' in a 'new and fertile' form of (genuine) partnership,[19] but, on the contrary, as a violent struggle for dominance, for the suppression of the one by the other.

The purpose of this paper is to argue that the representation of sex in this way – as an essential, 'natural' (and therefore immutable) fact of bodies, on the one hand, and as existing in two qualitatively different forms (of which one is somehow the 'real thing', while the other is 'lack', 'default' or 'excess') on the other – is part of an important 'technology of power'.[20] In the following section I argue that this representation is not supported by the evidence of science itself. It is important to point this out because it is through their association with the authority of science that these representations gain their ability to support and maintain the assumptions through which women's exclusion from full subjectivity is achieved. I also argue however, that it is important to do more than simply point this out; that it is

important that we develop ways to actively *resist* these representations. In the final section of this paper I offer some thoughts as to how we might go about doing this.

OTHER SCIENTIFIC REPRESENTATIONS OF SEX

In this section of the paper I want to (very briefly) refer to some scientific research which does *not* support the representation of sex in the ways outlined above. My purpose in doing this is to unsettle the authority that these representations achieve as a result of their (apparent) origin in 'the scientific facts'. I look at research which disrupts the notion that there are two (and *only* two) sexes, and at research which calls into question the construction of sex as a binary in which the two halves are differently valued and in a relationship characterised by violent struggle and conflict. This is followed by an outline of some work which undermines the construction of sex (and the body) as a set of ahistorical, immutable, biological 'facts'.

In a recent paper, the biologist Anne Fausto-Sterling summarises research which calls into question the modern assumption of two qualitatively different and mutually exclusive sexes.[21] As outlined above, sex is assumed by biologists as being produced through the interaction of chromosomal, gonadal, physiological, and psychological factors (the chromosomes however, being seen as the 'essential' or determining factor, and the others as being produced through their influence).[22] According to Fausto-Sterling, it is estimated that, if tested, roughly 4 per cent of the population would be shown to have chromosome configurations which would not allow them to be unambiguously classified as either male or female. For example, the existence of a large number of different chromosomal 'abnormalities' is described in the biomedical literature (for example, XO, XXY, XYY, triplo-, tetra- and penta-X and so on).[23] In addition, as a result of a variety of possible disruptions to their very early development, there are individuals who are 'mosaics' or 'chimeras' (that is, they have some body cells that are XX and some that are XY). In some individuals, the presence of a Y chromosome does not result in the development of male genitalia and physiology. Other individuals are XX but develop male genitalia, while some are XY but, because they have cells that lack the appropriate receptors for male hormones, do not develop as males (a condition known as testicular feminisation). Still others are XX, but have a metabolic problem with 'female' hor-

mones which results in them being converted into 'male' ones (a condition known as congenital adrenal hyperplasia).

In addition, according to Fausto-Sterling, a further 4 per cent of the population are 'intersexual' at birth; that is, they are born with 'ambiguous' external genitalia (which are, in general, immediately surgically 'corrected' so that they are consistent with the results of a chromosome test).[24] When we add to these figures the number of individuals who do not conform to – the much more difficult to measure – patterns of 'normality' with respect to the levels of specific hormones, or to the psychological profiles and/or sexual orientation that are conventionally regarded as characteristic of each sex, it seems clear that 'abnormality' is likely to be at least as common as 'normality'.

Fausto-Sterling argues that a model with provision for at least *five* different sexes would be more appropriate than the conventional two-sex model.[25] Yet bio-medicine in general works hard to support the social and, consequently, the legal insistence that there be *two* (and *only* two sexes) and that we be able to define the one 'true' sex of each and every individual. There are units in most large hospitals that specialise in 'fixing' – through surgical and endocrinological intervention – individuals who exhibit sexual 'ambiguity' at birth. Physicians work hard to ensure that intersexuality does not *appear* to exist: 'unruly bodies' are 'disciplined', in order that the Enlightenment understanding of the body, as belonging to one or the other of two discrete sexes, is maintained.

In the controversy that has raged over the sex-testing of female athletes, the issues raised by the insistence that there be two sexes are thrown into sharp relief.[26] What is widely understood to be a 'common-sense' distinction is, in fact, very difficult, if not impossible, to define with the degree of precision that is expected. The development of (a whole series of different) tests for the verification of an individual's 'true' sex has been characterised by a considerable amount of confusion as to exactly *what* the test is supposed to measure (and for what *purpose*).

In an earlier paper, Anne Fausto-Sterling critiques work (reported by David Page and his associates) which claims to have isolated and cloned a section of DNA containing the gene (as opposed to the chromosome) for 'maleness' (TDF or Testis Determining Factor).[27] Page *et al*'s work involved the analysis of DNA samples from individuals

who were unproblematically categorised as either XX *males* or XY *females*. They hypothesised that the XX males must still have had the key piece of Y chromosome somewhere (perhaps translocated onto one of their X chromosomes), while the XY females were female because they had 'lost' a crucial piece from their Y chromosome – the piece on which the TDF gene is located. Their research identified a piece of DNA – found on the Y chromosome – which appeared to control testis formation. However, a DNA sequence which was very similar was found to be *also* present on X chromosomes. It was argued that TDF is a gene that has to be active on *both* of an individual's sex chromosomes before it is expressed. In 'normal' males, TDF will be present on both their X and their Y chromosome: therefore it will be expressed and testis formation will occur. In females one of the two X chromosomes condenses to form an inactive structure called a Barr body. Females thus have only *one* active TDF gene, so it will not be expressed, and testis formation will not occur.

However, Page *et al*'s research shows that the particular piece of DNA that they claim contains a testis-determining factor was *missing* from the Y chromosome of their 'XY females'. These individuals, they reasoned, would therefore have only one active TDF gene (on their X chromosome) so that TDF would not be expressed, and the individuals would develop as females. Their research also shows that this same section of DNA *was* present on the X chromosome of their 'XX male' individuals. However, Page *et al* do not account for how the TDF managed to express itself in these individuals – that is to make them 'male' – when presumably one of their X chromosomes was inactivated as a Barr body. This work typifies the way in which maleness is routinely conceptualised as resulting from *activity* asserting itself over the passive 'ground state' of femaleness. In another report on (other) recent work, Jennifer Marshall-Graves takes this notion even further in speculating that perhaps the (hypothesised) X inactivation system in females evolved to ensure that TDF *could* operate to produce maleness.[28] According to Page *et al*:

> The mammalian Y chromosome, by its presence or absence, constitutes a binary switch upon which hinge all sexually dimorphic characteristics.[29]

It is clear that, for Page *et al*, *sex* determination and *male* determination are collapsed into a single concept; maleness is equated

with 'presence' (and activeness) while femaleness is 'absence' or 'lack' (and passivity); and sex is a simple either/or dualism. However, despite its initial appearance, their research does *not* support these assumptions.

In the same article, Fausto-Sterling cites a range of other research, the conclusions of which support another, quite different, understanding of embryonic development (for example the research by Eicher and Washburn[30] which demonstrates the development of ovarian tissue to be a process which is as least as active a process as the development of testicular tissue). Fausto-Sterling points out, however, that this work, because it does not support the binary of male-presence-active/female-absence-passive, is not widely known, and that, because of this, the mechanisms through which *femaleness* is determined remain largely uninvestigated. [31]

Emily Martin, in her deconstruction of conventional representations of the events leading up to fertilisation, cites other recent biological research which supports, not the conflictual model of sperm-egg interaction described above, but a more interactive, co-operative one.[32] In addition, she cites research showing that the forward motion of the sperm's tail is extremely weak, the tail making the head move *sideways* with a force which is about ten times stronger than its forward movement. The implication of this is that the sperm's movement is not nearly strong enough to break the *zona pellucida* of the egg. On the contrary, it is more likely to dislodge itself sideways. The authors of this study show that the heads of the sperm stick to adhesive molecules on the surface of the egg, which force them to lie flat.[33] They conclude that the surface of the egg actively envelopes the sperm to prevent its escape. In other work it has been demonstrated that ova produce hundreds of tiny microvilli which engulf the ineffectually wriggling sperm.[34]

It seems clear that the conventional model of fertilisation as being achieved through the active penetration of the passive egg by the entrepreneurial sperm is (at the very least) open to re-examination. *If* we, in our attempts to understand and portray the behaviour of these cells, insist on attributing to them some sort of agency, then surely the metaphor of *co-operation* between sperm and egg in the achievement of fertilisation would be more appropriate than one which is based on the idea of the 'subduing' of the egg by the sperm.

In *The Making of Sex,* Thomas Laqueur documents the develop-

ment, during the seventeenth century, of a major shift in the understandings of the nature of sexual difference.[35] He shows that, prior to this period, what he refers to as the Aristotelian 'one-sex' model – in which there are two genders but *one* basic (and perfect) sex – predominated. Using evidence from a wide range of sources, Laqueur shows that female genitalia were thought of as simply male genitals that had (by mistake) become inverted. However, by the end of the seventeenth century, according to Laqueur, a 'two-sex model' in which femaleness is seen as the *opposite* (rather than an imperfect rendition) of maleness, became dominant. Over the last three hundred years or so, this view has been refined and developed into its present form. Maleness and femaleness are now defined, not just as the presence or absence of certain *external* features, but as originating (and being expressed in) *every cell* of the body; that is, in an essential difference at the most fundamental level of the biological substratum. As Laqueur puts it: 'an anatomy and physiology of incommensurability replaced a metaphysics of hierarchy'.[36] However, as we have seen, 'the metaphysics of hierarchy' has not entirely disappeared from the modern conception of the relation between the sexes. In feminist scholarship of the last ten to fifteen years, there has been a focus on 'gender' (as opposed to 'sex') as the category which, because it is seen as being socially constructed (and therefore open to intervention), is the more interesting and useful.[37]

However, seeing sex (and the body) as not only uninteresting, but analytically barren, has allowed them to be left out of the discussion. It has allowed them to be conceived of as entities which come *before* (and are therefore separate from) 'culture'. As a number of feminist scholars have argued recently, the effect of this has been the re-invention (and replication) of the mind/body split, and, as a consequence, the re-presentation of male and female (and mind and body) as the two halves of binaries in which one term is more highly valued than the other.[38] It has also had the effect of maintaining the split between the natural sciences and the social sciences in that the study of 'sex' is assigned to the domain of the biomedical sciences, while 'gender' becomes the object of the social sciences.[39] The maintenance of a sex-gender distinction, in feminist theory, while it was developed to contest the naturalisation of femininity, has in fact produced the *opposite* effect, in that it has left unchallenged the notion of an ahistorical, 'natural' biological body.[40]

As Laqueur has demonstrated, sex *cannot* be assumed as a simple, ahistorical, *a priori* 'fact' of bodies. He shows that it is a mutable and historically specific *construction*, which has, over time, undergone radical changes. I want to argue that biological understandings of the body must be seen, not as separate from, but as part of its socio-cultural construction. I also want to argue that it is important that these understandings be brought into feminist debate in such a way that our understandings of the body can be thought of as being in a dynamic relationship with our understandings of the mind (rather than split off from it), and, following from this, that sex be conceived of as being in a dynamic relationship with gender. I think that it is important for feminist theory (and for the interventions into the school curriculum that are informed by it) to take account of a view of the body (and sex) as having *no* unmediated natural 'truth', as being discursively produced in the same way that we now assume the mind and gender to be; as being mutable and open to re-inscription in the same way as we assume our understandings of the mind (and the self) to be.

As Laqueur has shown, changes (in our conceptions of sex and the body) have occurred, *not* as a result of 'improvements' in scientific 'methods' or understandings, but as a result of changes in social and political conditions. This idea – that scientists use 'pre-scientific' or 'cultural' notions as a cognitive resource in the development of new scientific 'facts' – is not new in the literature of the history, philosophy and sociology of science.[41] In the final section of this paper, I would like to take up this idea as the basis for developing some new ways of thinking about science and science education, and about sex and sex education, ways of thinking which will provide spaces from within which the understandings of sex assumed in the conventional accounts outlined above can be resisted rather than replicated.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS OF SCIENCE, SCIENCE EDUCATION (AND SEX EDUCATION)

Over the last ten years or so there has been a shift in debate in the philosophy of science away from attempts to justify scientific knowledge as 'real' – that is, as an accurate description and explanation of events in the 'real' world – towards a development of new concepts of realism that are very different from those traditionally associated

with scientific knowledge.[42] Rom Harré, for example, defends what he calls a 'more modest' form of realism, arguing for a view of scientific knowledge, not as a body of ultimate truths (that is, as absolutely trustworthy, unrevisable knowledge of the real world) but as sets of theoretical 'entities' (such as genes, subatomic particles, and electromagnetic radiation) which have been produced (and which achieve a 'reality' of their own) through the *actions* and *practices* of scientists in 'referring to' them.[43] Scientific knowledge, for Harré, consists not of reality, but of certain *symbolic* entities which have been *constructed* by scientists (and which *become* 'real').

This conception of science has been taken up by some science educators. For example, in a recent paper, Rosalind Driver and her associates argue for a conception of science education as the 'enculturation' of students into scientists' 'ways of knowing' and 'practices', a conception which originates in the view of scientific knowledge as something which has been socially constructed by scientists.[44] Such a view represents a significant departure from the thinking which underlies the development of conventional school science education programmes (in which learning is expected to take place either through the simple 'transmission' of information from teacher to student, or through the students' 'discovery' of 'the facts' through a process of guided experimentation with 'reality', approaches which are notorious for their lack of success in achieving 'real' understanding in students of the conceptual basis of scientific knowledge) and, as such, it represents significant progress in the development of a framework for science education in which students *will* be able to learn about science.[45]

If, however, we were to apply this approach to the development of the sex education component of a school science programme, our aim would be to help students to develop understandings which are as close as possible to those of working scientists. Our aim would be to 'socialise' them into the 'norms and practices' which characterise that section of the 'scientific community' which concerns itself with the biology of sex.[46] If we were to do this, we might devise a programme which explored the history of scientific ideas about sex, along with the ways in which it is currently thought about by scientists, and which focussed on the practices through which these understandings have been arrived at. However, unless the programme involved some means of developing in students a critical understand-

ing of the *assumptions* on which scientific knowledge about sex become possible in the first place (and which guide its development in certain directions rather than others), we would hardly be contributing to the 'fostering [of] a critical perspective on scientific culture amongst students' emphasised by Driver *et al.*[47] On the contrary, we would be contributing to the maintenance of the very assumptions through which women are excluded from achieving full subjectivity with respect to scientific knowledge.

Michel Foucault's re-thinking of the history of ideas as discursive practices offers a way of 'calculating' strategies for the transformation of these discursive practices. His conception of discourse as:

> practices linked to certain conditions, obedient to certain rules, and susceptible to certain transformations[48]

that is, in terms which foreground their social *effects*, has important implications for the development of an interventionist politics which is *capable* of transforming those effects. However, on this view, a crucial requirement for the development of resistances is that the 'rules and criteria' for the formation and transformation of the discourse (as well as its 'specific ideas') are *known to* the 'calculators' of the strategies for transformation. Within Foucault's theory of discourse, it is not possible for political intervention to be conceptualised simply as the 'overthrow' or 'transgression' of existing disciplinary formations.

> Political practice [does] not transform the meaning or form of the discourse, but the *conditions of its emergence*, insertion and functioning; it transform[s] [its] mode of existence (emphasis added).[49]

For Foucault then, an effective interventionist politics does *not* work on the objects, concepts, operations or specific ideas of a discourse; on the contrary, it works by modifying its rules of formation.[50] For him, the relation between politics and discourse is most usefully conceptualised as being at the level of rules of formation (and transformation), *not* at the level of specific ideas, concepts and methods. Thus political intervention can be:

> very direct ... since [it] no longer [has] to pass through the consciousness of speaking subjects nor through the efficacy of thought.[51]

On this view, developing critiques of the specific ideas of sci-

ence (as is done, for example, in the papers by Anne Fausto-Sterling and Emily Martin) is not, in and of itself, sufficient to produce change. Rather, it is necessary to develop interventions that work at the level of the 'rules of formation' of the discourse of science. For Foucault, political action is most effective when it exploits 'mobile and transitory points of resistance', and resistance is most effective when it is directed at a particular *technique* of power, rather than at power in general.[52] If, as Luce Irigaray has argued, the function of the female is to

> be the residue, the magma ... from which men, humanity, draw nourishment, shelter, the resources to live or survive for free;[53]

if her function is to be the 'undifferentiation' which underlies 'all possibility of determining identity', to be the 'unconscious' of humanity; then one of the most important 'rules of formation' on which scientific knowledge becomes possible is the assumption of a sexual difference which is based on femaleness being the ground on which maleness is possible, an assumption of femaleness as being everything that is *outside* of maleness and rationality.[54]

A sex education programme which is capable of effectively intervening in sex's conventional construction – as an ahistorical, immutable 'fact' of bodies, as existing in two qualitatively different forms (of which one is the 'real thing' while the other is what is 'left over') and which are (necessarily) engaged in a conflictual relationship – would need to contain some means of unsettling this conception of sexual difference.

While this might initially appear to be an impossibly ambitious undertaking for a school science programme, it is my view that this is not necessarily the case. It would be possible to take a case study approach, for example, using the material on the sex-testing of athletes, to construct programmes which encourage students to develop *both* an understanding of the 'biological facts' *and* a means of critiquing them.[55] In order to appreciate the issues involved in, for example, the sex-testing controversy, it is necessary to first develop a comprehensive understanding of the relevant biological 'facts'. However, when students' understandings – of the concepts of, for example, chromosomes, Barr bodies, and the relationship between chromosomal sex and the developmental processes through which an individual becomes a full member of *either* one *or* the other of

two sexes – are developed through the use of such case studies, the obvious confusion on the part of the scientists involved (as to the nature and purpose of the tests) is likely to come sharply into focus.

In my view, the objective of such programmes should be to develop in students an understanding of scientific knowledge as a *discursive construct* (rather than as the indisputable facts), an understanding of scientific concepts such as that of sex as the *effects* of discourse (rather than as immutable facts). This idea, particularly the implications it has for the development of pedagogy and practice, is radically different from Driver *et al's* conception of science as socially constructed by scientists. The goal of their work (and of most other work in science education) is to find ways to produce in students better understandings of the 'norms and practices' of scientists. This approach does not involve a questioning of the assumptions which underlie those norms and practices. If we are interested in finding ways to help students *resist* some of the implications of these norms and practices, in particular those that give science its 'authority' over other discursive practices, we will need to do more than 'enculturate' students into these norms and practices. In addition however, I think it is important to say that in 'doing more', in developing students ability to 'use and refuse' the discursive practices of science, we will inevitably also help students to develop deeper understandings of the scientific concepts involved.[56]

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NOTES

1 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1980) p. 48e.

2 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1979).

3 See, for example, Sue Middleton, 'A Short Adventure Between School and Marriage? Contradictions in the Education of the New Zealand Post-War Woman', in Sue Middleton (ed), *Women and Education in Aotearoa, Volume 1* (Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1988).

4 Karen Arms and Pamela S. Camp, *Biology* (Saunders College Publishing/Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Philadelphia, 1982) p. 572.

5 See, for example, Emily Martin, 'The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male and Female Roles', *Signs*, 16:3 (1991) pp. 485-501.

6 ibid.

7 Lennart Nilsson and Lars Hamberger, *A Child is Born* (Doubleday, London, 1990) p. 48.

8 ibid., p. 48, 52

9 ibid., p. 50

10 ibid., p. 57, 51

11 ibid., p. 57

12 See, for example, Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1985) and Jessica Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism and the Problem of Domination* (Virago, London, 1990).

13 See, for example, Nancy Tuana, 'The Weaker Seed', in Nancy Tuana (ed), *Feminism and Science* (Indiana University Press, Indianapolis, 1989). Also, in *Making Sex: Body and Gender From the Greeks to Freud* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1990) Thomas Laqueur argues that, for Aristotle, nature's aim is always to produce a perfect creation every time. For him, this perfection is expressed as maleness. Females (or intersexuals) are simply misbegotten males. Thus, for Aristotle, there is only one 'true' sex (maleness), which co-exists with a variety of aberrations and imperfections (of which femaleness is one). According to Laqueur, in the pre-Enlightenment period, *gender* was the primary or 'real' category, while sex was understood to be entirely dependent on gender. Gender was what mattered most, and was the category that was seen to be part of the natural order of things. To be a man or a woman was to be located in

a social position, to assume a cultural role that was seen to be logically pre-exist one's sex. It was not necessary to somehow *be* essentially either one or the other of two incommensurable sexes. As Laqueur puts it 'sex before the seventeenth century ... was still a sociological and not an ontological category' (p. 8). The result of this was that, for Aristotle, 'sex' was not something that is contained within the matter from which the body is constructed. Instead, it is something which is expressed (or represented) in its external morphology, and which can be changed, if this should prove to be necessary to maintain a consistency between the individual's social gender and their sex.

14 See, for example, Linda Maxson, and Charles Daugherty, *Genetics: A Human Perspective* (W. C. Brown, Dubuque, 1985) or any other standard textbook account of embryological development.

15 Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which is Not One* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1985) and Luce Irigaray, *The Ethics of Sexual Difference* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1993).

16 Anne Fausto-Sterling, 'Life in the XY Corral', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 12:3 (1989) pp. 319-331.

17 Anne Fausto-Sterling, 'Society Writes Biology/Biology Constructs Gender', *Daedalus*, 116:4 (1987) pp. 61-76.

18 Laqueur, *Making Sex*.

19 Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (London, Routledge, 1991) pp. 165ff; Irigaray, The Ethics of Sexual Difference.

20 Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

21 Anne Fausto-Sterling, 'The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough', *The Sciences* (March/April, 1993) pp. 20-24.

22 See, for example, Maxson and Daugherty, *Genetics*, p. 136.

23 A recent article by Jan Cameron ['For Women's Own Good ... Gender Verification of Female Athletes', *Women's Studies Journal*, 12:1 (1996) pp. 7-24] contains a useful summary of these 'abnormalities'.

24 Fausto-Sterling, 'The Five Sexes'.

25 ibid.

26 See, for example, Cameron, 'For Women's Own Good'; C. Anderson, 'Olympic Row Over Sex-Testing', *Nature*, 353:6347 (1991) p. 784; Alison Turnbull, 'Woman Enough For the Games?', *New Scientist* (15 September 1988) pp. 61-64; Gail Vines, 'Last Olympics for the Sex-Test?', *New Scientist* (4 July 1992) pp. 39-42.

[27] Fausto-Sterling, 'Life in the XY Corral'. David Page, Rebecca Mosher, Elizabeth Simpson, Elizabeth Fisher, Graeme Mardon, Jonathan Pollack, Barbara McGillivray, Albert de la Chapelle and Laura Brown, 'The Sex- Determining Region of the Human Y-Chromosome Encodes a Finger Protein', *Cell*, 51 (1987) pp. 1091-1104.

[28] Jennifer Marshall-Graves, 'Male or Female? Homing in on the Gene that Determines Sex', *Women in Science Enquiry Network Journal,* 25 (1991) pp. 7-11.

[29] Page *et al*, 'The Sex-Determining Region', p.1091.

[30] Eva Eicher and Linda Washburn, 'Genetic Control of Primary Sex Determination in Mice', *Annual Review of Genetics*, 20 (1986) pp. 327-360.

[31] Fausto-Sterling, 1989.

[32] Martin, Emily, 1991.

[33] Baltz, J; Katz, D. and Cone, R., 'The Mechanics of the Sperm-Egg Interaction at the Zona Pellucida', *Biophysical Journal,* 54:4 (1988). pp. 643-654.

[34] Schatten, Gerald and Schatten, Helen, 'The Energetic Egg', *Medical World News*, 23 (1984). pp. 51-53.

[35] Laqueur, *Making Sex*.

[36] ibid

[37] See, for example, Barrett, Michele, *Women's Oppression Today* (Verso, London, 1980); Chodorow, Nancy, *The Reproduction of Mothering* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1978); Greer, Germaine, *The Female Eunuch* (Paladin, London, 1971); Millett, Kate, *Sexual Politics* (Abacus, London, 1978); Oakley, Anne, *Sex Gender and Society* (Temple Smith, London, 1972).

[38] See, for example, Gatens, Moira, 'A Critique of the Sex/Gender Distinction', in *Beyond Marxism: Interventions After Marx*, edited by Judith Allen and Paul Patton. (Intervention Publications, Sydney, 1983); Butler, Judith, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge, New York, 1990); Butler, Judith, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (Routledge, New York, 1993); Kirby, Vicki, 'Corporeal Habits: Addressing Essentialism Differently', *Hypatia*, 6:3 (1991) pp. 4-24; Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* (Allen and Unwin Sydney, 1994); Nancy Jay, 'Gender and Dichotomy', *Feminist Studies*, 7:1 (1981).

[39] Oudshoorn, Nelly (1994) *Beyond the Natural Body: An Archaeology of Sex Hormones* (Routledge, London, 1994).

40 As Vicki Kirby (1991) has put it: 'the politics of representation remain separable from what is commonly understood as the biological facts of the body's existence. ...the anatomical body is [seen as] indeed the unarguably real body, the literal body, the body whose immovable and immobilizing substance must be secured outside the discussion. This improper body is quarantined for fear that its ineluctable immediacy will leave us no space for change, no chance to be other-wise, no place from which to engender a different future. ... [T]he specter of essentialism means that the biological or anatomical body, the body that is commonly understood to be the "real" body, is often excluded from this investigation' (1991:8, 4).

41 See, for example, Fleck, Ludwik *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979 [first published 1935]).

42 See, for example, Bhaskar, Roy, *A Realist Theory of Science* (Harvester Press, Brighton, 1978); *Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation* (Verso, London, 1986); *Reclaiming Reality: A Critical Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy* (Verso, London, 1989); Hacking, Ian, *Representing and Intervening: Introductory Topics in the Philosophy of Natural Science* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1983); Harré, Rom, *Varieties of Realism: A Rationale for the Natural Sciences* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986).

43 Harré, 1986; pp. 65ff.

44 Rosalind Driver, Hilary Asoko, John Leach, Eduardo Mortimer and Philip Scott, Philip, 'Constructing Scientific Knowledge in the Classroom', *Educational Researcher*, 23:7 (1994) pp. 5-12.

45 See, for example, Osborne, Roger and Freyberg, Peter, *Learning in Science: The Implications of Children's Science* (Heinemann, Auckland, 1985); and Burns, Janet, 'An Evaluation of Senior Chemistry in New Zealand Secondary Schools'. PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1988).

46 Driver et al, 1994.

47 Driver, Rosalind; Asoko, Hilary; Leach, John and Scott, Philip, 'Constructing Scientific Knowledge in the Classroom: A Theoretical Perspective on Pedagogy', Paper presented at the *Symposium on Enculturation and Personal Knowledge Construction in Science: Portrayals From the Children's Learning in Science Research Group,* AERA Annual Meeting, San Francisco, 1995.

48 Foucault, Michel, 'Politics and the Study of Discourse', *Ideology and Consciousness,* 3 (1978) p. 25.

49 ibid, p. 21.
50 ibid, p. 22.
51 ibid, p. 22.
52 Foucault, Michel, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction* (Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1981.
53 Irigaray, *This Sex.*
54 Irigaray, The Ethics of Sexual Difference; see also Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'Female' in Western Philosophy* (Routledge, London, 1993).
55 Anderson, 'Olympic Row'; Cameron, 'For Women's Own Good', Turnbull, 'Women Enough'; Vines, 'Last Olympics'.
56 Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminisim, Nature and Difference* (Routledge, New York, 1989).

Learning Sexuality: Young Samoan Women

ANNEMARIE TUPUOLA

The Dilemma

She cried bitterly in frustration
cast into the world of the unwanted
the young mother-to-be
was faced with a bitter decision...
...the solution lay within her...
She had marred her family picture
the pride which had been for so long upheld
was now in fragments
scattered across the evening sky. [1]

INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS - A Personal Reflection

In recent years Pacific Islands communities and health authorities in New Zealand have become concerned with the growing number of 'unintended pregnancies' and abortions among Pacific Island women. According to 1993 statistics, approximately three quarters of hospitalisations of Pacific Island women aged between fifteen and twenty-five years were for pregnancy, childbirth and health services related to reproduction.[2] Between 1990 and 1992 the estimated abortion rate for Pacific Islands women was 1,020 per 1,000 women compared to 376 per 1,000 for non Pacific Islands women.[3]

In my opinion these figures should alert us to some of the cultural dilemmas and communication barriers faced by young Pacific Island women in New Zealand. I applaud current services such as Awhitia, Family Planning Clinics and the Pacific Islands AIDS Trust that aim to educate Pacific Islands women about sexuality, contraceptives and safe sex and that involve the participation of Pacific Islands people. However, I have a major concern about the effectiveness of the context and procedures taken by both the Pacific Islands communities and health educators to educate young Pacific women about sexuality.

I attend various Pacific Islands and Samoan Health community

fonos (forums) to seek more information on how these communities view youth health, especially sex education. These gatherings tend to reinforce the authoritative and hierarchical social structure of fa'aSamoa (Samoan culture) and are in many instances disempowering for subordinate members – the youth and young women.[4] In general, there is an unspoken expectation at these meetings for youth, in particular young women, to listen and defer to the perspectives and decisions of those in authority – the older and elite members of the communities. Occasionally similar power relationships prevail (perhaps at an unconscious level) in some sexuality programmes designed and implemented by Pacific Islands elders. Although it is encouraging that elders are taking the initiative in the area of sex education, the effectiveness of this must be questioned.

I have found through personal communication with young Samoan women that many were hesitant about discussing taboo subjects in the presence of adults, particularly as they saw it violating Samoan principles of fa'aaloalo (respect) and ava (reverence). Another factor was confidentiality. Many fear the loss of privacy, especially as many of the educators are renowned members of their church, ethnic communities and neighbourhoods, possible relatives and family friends. In examining contemporary sexuality services it is pivotal to acknowledge the differential power relations between Samoan youth and elders in New Zealand and that the current expectation for young Samoan women to speak in the presence of adults or to publicly discuss matters of sexuality with ease is unrealistic.

The points of discussion in this article originate from my research for a Master of Arts thesis at Victoria University entitled, 'Critical Analysis of Adolescent Development – a Samoan Women's Perspective'. This research aimed to re-examine adolescent development theories within a Samoan context. Do Samoans, Samoan girls in particular, experience adolescence as defined by western psychologists, anthropologists and human developmentalists?[5] Many of the young women I interviewed as part of this research were critical of theories that posited adolescence as a stage where girls grow away from their families, have boyfriends and become individuals.[6] Their conflicted and strongly-held views about their own sexuality led me to focus on this aspect of the women's experience.

Here I will briefly discuss the Samoan principles of fa'aaloalo and ava (respect and obligation) to illustrate the rigid codes of con-

duct between elder/aiga/male and the young woman. My simple synopsis here is not to underrate the compelling nature and influence of fa'aSamoa but rather to set the scene to show why learning sexuality may be a cultural dilemma for young Samoan women. In view of the heterogeneity of young Samoan women I introduce my research participants and their definitions of fa'aSamoa and sexuality. To capture the ease, comfort and open dialogue typical of my research I discuss aspects of my methodology that proved effective. Following that I include the painful and secretive experiences of these women to illustrate the contradictory principles and attitudes held by some Samoans toward female sexuality. The concluding section re-emphasises the cultural dilemmas and challenges faced by young Samoan women in New Zealand and suggests ways they can be effectively addressed in future sexuality and sex education programmes and services.

REALITIES OF FA'ASAMOA PRINCIPLES

Fa'aaloalo and ava are central to understanding traditional fa'aSamoa principles concerning young Samoan women and sexuality. To address these effectively I will begin by discussing the cultural dilemma I face as the author of this article. Is my objective to paint a picturesque view of fa'aSamoa or to expose the covert hypocrisies of Samoan culture with the associated risk of confirming the stereotyped views of the 'other' and of losing the future respect of Samoan people?[7] Writing this article is itself a cultural violation as, within the social norms of traditional fa'aSamoa, I as a young Samoan woman have no acquired right and privilege to speak of and about the Samoan culture. Culturally-specific intricacies associated with public speech mean that many Pacific Islanders do not believe in the right for any Pacific Island person to speak for and about Pacific Islanders.[8] In accordance with traditional fa'aSamoa principles the rightful speaker and author here should be an older Samoan woman.

The topic of this article has me in a further predicament. In discussing female sexuality I take numerous risks, particularly as Samoans are generally conservative toward sex and overly protective of their private lives.[9] Such risks include losing any future status in my Samoan community and blemishing the honour of my family and ancestors. Through personal experience I am reminded of the severe and, at times, relentless unspoken disciplinary mechanisms of tradi-

tional fa'aSamoa and the intense fear of the possibility of ostracism from my aiga.

The aiga plays a pivotal role in the lives of young Samoan women. Research by Samoan people provides differing views of the aiga. According to Taule'ale'ausumai the aiga is the epitome of the collective and corporate nature of fa'aSamoa. Family life, she states, 'extends out beyond the nuclear family incorporating uncles, aunties, both sets of grandparents and many cousins'.[10] The aiga maintain a central disciplinary role. They discipline the child to respectfully comply with the instructions of older relatives. To escape the severe punishments of the aiga Samoan children learn to conceal their true feelings and soon become 'adept at ... an outward demeanor pleasing to those in authority'.[11] Another primary function of the Samoa aiga (male relatives in particular) is to protect and control the sexuality of the unmarried Samoan girl:

> As sisters, their reproductive sexuality controlled (by their fathers and brothers), women symbolize the pinnacle of aganu'u or culture. A calculus of control over female sexuality suggests for female status a set of important transformations between nature and culture. As 'girls', they are virgins, sisters but not wives. To remain a virgin under the pressure to lose control is not understood as self-control, but rather as the control exerted by brothers over their sisters.[12]

In a highly structured and hierarchical society such as Samoa, female virgins are highly valued and cherished in every Samoan family.[13] Unmarried women are held responsible for the status of their aiga and village and are therefore strictly watched and guarded from the time of their first menstruation.[14] Unlike her male peers, it is no longer the wishes of the girl but those of 'her village and aiga that counts'.[15] In honour of the feagaiga relationship the male relatives exert severe measures of control on the girl's sexuality to prevent the tarnish of their family honour.[16] In other words, whatever her rank, her brothers exercise an active surveillance over her to ensure that she has little (if any) contact with male peers without their consent and knowledge. Failure to fulfil these expectations will mean that the girl is 'liable to [be punished] with great ferocity'.[17] Should the girl fall pregnant or it is discovered that she is not a virgin the implications are detrimental. Shore concurs with this in the following:

> The implications ... are a total lack of control over a girl's sexuality by her brothers, and the complete triumph of personal desire. In cases like these, the usual norms that the brothers must respect and avoid close contact with their sisters are reversed, and the girls are subject to violent beatings at the hands of their brothers.[18]

Samoan women who obey the virtue of chastity before marriage are upheld as a source of pride for the aiga. Social positions accorded the highest cultural value for women are those in which 'sexuality remains controlled not by simple denial, but by elaborate arranged marriages'.[19] In many traditional Samoan societies arranged marriages are held with highest regard and in general hold the best cultural and economical intentions for the girl. Such arranged marriages not only are marked by 'careful negotiation and elaborate exchanges of toga ... fine mats ... food and implements of practical value' but also the triumph of the girl's aiga and male relatives.[20]

In outlining some of the fundamental principles of fa'aSamoa the expectation for young Samoan women to adhere to particular 'codes of honour' cannot be ignored.[21] First of all, young Samoan women, as subordinate members of the social structure of Samoa, are forbidden to speak in the presence of adults and elders and, in particular, on topics relating to the human body and sexuality. Secondly, there are several reasons for the cocoon-like lifestyle of the young Samoan woman.[22] The aiga is a major control agent in her life. Its primary function is not only to protect the young woman but also to discipline her when she violates fundamental socio-cultural expectations. Young women who disobey face severe consequences. As often shown in literature on Samoan people women are either beaten, labelled 'pa'umutu' ('prostitute'), ostracised from the aiga or become alienated and isolated from their Samoan communities.[23] To escape from these forms of punishment, some young women take drastic measures such as suicide, becoming pregnant to purposely dishonour their families or choosing to completely alienate themselves from their aiga and the culture.[24] The aiga's stringent codes of behaviour and the intense nature of discipline within traditional Samoan contexts may explain women's reluctance to openly discuss sexuality or to disobey the demands and decisions of their elders, aiga and male relatives.

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF FA'ASAMOA AND FEMALE SEXUALITY

The following discussion provides a critical and contemporary perception of traditional fa'aSamoa and its impact on female sexuality. I need to point out that although there are many positive aspects of fa'aSamoa, this particular account of my research highlights traumatic, complex and 'hidden' experiences of some young women – aspects of their experiences of sexuality which they feel have been kept silent for too long. The thirteen Samoan women in my research were aged between sixteen and twenty nine years old. Seven were born and raised in New Zealand while six were born in Samoa – of these, four are recent immigrants to New Zealand. Seven of the thirteen women had studied human development and ethnographic research at university.

The women were invited to participate through a 'snowball' sampling technique. I originally discussed my research with two young Samoan women and asked them to 'spread the word'. In turn, women interested in participating contacted me. Interestingly, although I was based in Wellington, word quickly spread as far afield as Auckland. This resulted in participants (myself included) from diverse socio-economic, cultural and educational backgrounds in both Auckland and Wellington. Four were tertiary students, two clerical workers, two sales and marketing assistants, three domestic executives and two were unemployed.

In acknowledgement of both the rural Samoa and urban New Zealand socio-cultural backgrounds of my participants it was necessary to incorporate into the research activities traditional fa'aSamoa principles alongside those of the palagi (european/ western) world.[25] In other words, while fa'aaloalo and ava were emphasised it was within a different context. My research required that all women respect each other's experiences and perspectives. It did not mean that younger women should defer and obey the views and requests of myself or older participants. Alongside the principles of respect and reverence were those common to the western world such as analysis, critique and verbal articulation. With the combination of these two cultural structures women were free to disagree with me and other participants, to display anger, pain, fear and to express these emotions in the knowledge that they would not be ostracised, and with the relief that other participants shared similar experiences.

The issue of confidentiality and privacy became a major priority. Women were reassured of their privacy by making allowances for individual meetings, by having them write their experiences down anonymously and by allowing them to choose the women they felt comfortable with in their group sessions. Each woman was also assigned a pseudonym to avoid them being recognised in the final text. Through designing a flexible methodology participants were able to shape the research and to analyse its process during all phases.[26] As seen in the following written comments made anonymously at the final session, this process was empowering and therapeutic for many of the women:

> This research helped me a lot. It gave me an inspiration of strength and inner peace. I felt very safe talking about my sexual experiences ... even though it was hard I felt I could trust the other women and the researcher. It was good that she was a Samoan researcher, it made a big difference – we had a common ground and that helped. I feel this research is so important. It is not very often that young Samoan girls get the opportunity to talk about their experiences. In the past, this has always been by our Samoan elders, the palagi intellects or those who are so far removed from our realities.

> I think this thesis made me take a good look at myself – it was a really empowering experience. I thought AnneMarie went out of her way to make me and the other women feel safe and comfortable. I was really surprised by the support I received from the women in this research ... I think I was a little reluctant to talk about sex at first, I didn't want our ideas to be labelled feminist or radical ... but it was neat how we could look at the text ... to make sure our ideas weren't misinterpreted [in the final research]. I feel privileged participating in this research ... it was well prepared and sensitive to my and other women's needs.

What were some of the women's views of fa'aSamoa values and protocol? Many participants critiqued the androcentric and ethnocentric principles of fa'aSamoa and attitudes of some elders toward young Samoan women. In their view fa'aSamoa epitomised moral contradictions, old fashioned expectations and gender-biased philosophies. Recent research on New Zealand born Samoans emphasises similar issues and, similar to my participants, suggests a need for

traditional fa'aSamoa customs to acknowledge the eras of modernity and westernisation.[27] In the following definition one participant calls for a fa'aSamoa that is neither hierarchical, contradictory nor hypocritical:

> Fa'aSamoa is when there is mutual respect between Samoan people. The expression of alofa must be genuine and with good intentions. Samoan cultural conventions of alofa, respect and reverence should not only be for the elders but for Samoan people who have earned it. Samoan values should be unconditional ... used in a non hypocritical way and with good intentions. Fa'aSamoa must be flexible enough to address and meet the diverse backgrounds of Samoan people. (Lucy, born in Samoa, 24 years old)

The growing influences of western thought and lifestyles are a reality for contemporary young Samoan women. With the exposure to western philosophies Samoan women become 'tangled ... in the webs of power relations in modernity'.[28] While some young women do not cut themselves off completely from traditional fa'aSamoa values such as alofa (compassion) and reciprocity, their desire to have independent lifestyles is evident. The following definitions of sexuality by two of the women pose contrasting views to those of Shore, Ngan-Woo and Liu.[29] Some young Samoan women, it seems, are wanting sexual independence and an end to the controlling and disciplinary measures of male relatives toward female sexuality:

> Um, sexuality, sexuality should be an individual thing for the girl – it shouldn't be any concern for fa'aSamoa or the aiga. Samoan girls should have the choice to be virgins or not and to have choices ... to be sexually independent ... without the dominance of the Samoan males ... Sexuality for the girl is understanding her sexual needs and being able to control them if she wishes ... it's not about the control of the male, that's just male chauvinism. (Kyla, born in Samoa, 20 years old)

> I have a lot of reservations about fa'aSamoa ... It's so contradictive and hypocritical toward the women. There's this ignorant belief that Samoan men protect the Samoan girl and help them control their sexuality. This is bull, frankly, some of these guys do more harm to the girls – some of them sexually harass the girls or even rape them and then the girl gets the blame and gets the hidings ... Maybe in the olden days the guys used to protect them but today it only feeds their egos and it gets out of hand,

> they want to control and control not protect – big difference there ... Sexuality is a personal thing for the girl and it shouldn't be a man's business to interfere. (Susanna, born in New Zealand, 19 years old)

How realistic is it for women located in traditional Samoan communities to become sexually independent? Much research on Samoan communities illuminates the prominent role of Samoan culture in New Zealand with the implication that many Samoan households are not assimilating to palagi ideologies.[30] With this in mind, it is likely that many Samoan aiga in New Zealand continue to uphold conservative views of sexuality. This becomes a cultural dilemma for some women as the opportunity to learn about sexuality is rare. Many Samoan parents severely discipline daughters that have boyfriends and discourage any discussion about sex in their families for fear their daughters will engage in pre-marital sex and blemish their honour. In effect, it appears 'safer' for young Samoan women to either remain ignorant about sex and contraceptives or to have clandestine relationships without the knowledge of their parents.[31] The intention of the aiga to protect the girl from pre-marital sex is at times unrealistic and unnerving for some Samoan women as can be seen in the following comments:

> I came from a household and family where boys were an absolute no-no. The mention of 'sex' was a sin. I was going out with a guy when I was 27 and like was too scared to tell my parents about having a boyfriend, 'cause they'd hit the roof. So I went dating behind their backs, and like I had these funny desires I couldn't control when I was with this guy. Even at the age of 27, I didn't know anything about sex, I was really naive, and, yeah, I had sex and fell pregnant. I didn't even know I was pregnant until I was around five months! Now I'm on my own, I ran away from home and am raising my child. I wish my parents weren't so overprotective of me when I was with them, it's like I struggle everyday to cope ... knowing there's a sensual side to me. (Martha, born in New Zealand, 29 years old)

> Sex was never ever discussed in my home. For me, being a Samoan girl was hard, especially when my body began to change, um, I didn't know what a period was, I freaked when it happened. There was a time when I started to have these funny feelings and, yeah, I became interested in boys. But it was hard, even though my sexual drives were going berserk, I had to keep them under control, um to the point where I had to learn to

> deny them. It was important that I ignored them because there was no way I could've gone out with a guy without my parents' permission, and like talking to mum about sex – please! That's asking for trouble! And then there's my brothers and uncles who are overprotective, it's impossible trying to escape ... So, even though you ... get these sexual feelings ... fa'aSamoa ... can determine when it's permissible for the girl to explore sexually or to become sexually active. For me that wasn't until I got married and 28 years of age. (Malia, born in New Zealand, 28 years old)

Another issue that signifies the relentless influence of the Samoan culture on some Samoans in New Zealand is the 'unspoken' yet continued practice of arranged marriages. In the traditional social structure of Samoa arranged marriages were held in highest regard by Samoan people as they marked a significant cultural triumph of the woman's sexuality. More recently these elaborate ceremonies have become an exploitation of the woman's sexuality for the financial gain of her family. According to Ritchie and Ritichie this behaviour is similar to that of other Polynesian cultures in that 'new influences challenge the traditional values of ... childrearing and place greater emphasis on a money economy'.[32] Unfortunately, the young women in my research face a further predicament. Do they disobey the expectations of their aiga and face the severe consequences or defer to those of authority and escape reprimand by concealing their true feelings? The following descriptions outline both the hypocritical nature of arranged marriages and the personal, cultural and emotional dilemma some young Samoan women face to honour the wishes of their aiga and parents:

> If you look at it, the only reason why there's arranged marriages and that is because of money and status. Like parents see it as making sure they don't have to worry about their daughter because she'll be alright financially, they don't have to help. They make sure the husband to be is comfortable financially and materialistically. They miss the whole point that love should be more important than wealth, not the other way round. (Susanna, born in New Zealand, 19 years old)

> I was 18 when I had to marry an old minister that just came in from Samoa. My aiga didn't ask me what I wanted or what my future plans were ... I had to marry this man and that was it. I was really angry, all this time, my brothers protected me, I was forbidden to talk to boys, let

alone sex! I was this chaste and virginal girl for what? So I could marry this minister? A stranger? I don't understand. I cried and cried on my wedding day, I even pleaded with my sister to cancel the wedding ... but everything was arranged and I didn't have the guts to disappoint my parents ... I couldn't dishonour their name or let the aiga down. It's a hard burden ... it's lonely being the faithful, goody-goody Samoan girl. (Josephine, born in New Zealand, 20 years old)

This is really hard for me to talk about ... my aiga planned my wedding, everything, to a Samoan minister from my dad's village. I remember, one day all my relatives came over and I just thought it was for the usual fa'alavelaves, the usual fundraising or money collecting thing ... but it was to discuss my wedding. I was 19 when this happened ... Thinking back I was so young, I had never had a boyfriend and I knew nothing about sex and having babies ... This scared me and I kept asking why me? My aunt told me that it was a prestigious thing for a daughter to marry a minister, um, that the family would be financially well off and the daughter would be guaranteed a good lifestyle ... I felt used in a way because no one ever asked how I felt, what I wanted ... This is probably a harsh thing to say but I really felt exploited ... I felt so powerless ... I couldn't do a thing to stop it ... I thought about running away, but I'd only get the rocks and things will just get worse ... I also thought of losing my virginity and falling pregnant so the wedding would be cancelled but, ah, it would cause further complications like, dishonouring my family publicly, um and facing disownment ... [cries] ... I hate my life and I hate being a minister's wife. (Trisha, born in New Zealand, 24 years old)

The anguished emotional state of these women clearly reiterates the powerfulness not only of fa'aSamoa but also of the aiga. It also characterises the intense fear of ostracism from their Samoan communities and families, especially for those from rural Samoa or traditional Samoan households in New Zealand. It becomes a further burden for urban or New Zealand born Samoan women. Their struggle to obey their aiga and traditional fa'aSamoa is particularly great as many want to be as independent as they perceive their western female peers to be. The suppression of their contempt, anger and pain is important to understand. Young Samoans are taught from early childhood to conceal their true feelings in times of adversity. This behaviour, while detrimental to the psyche of the women, is in many

ways the only way they know to cope with conflict, a behaviour that is supported by research on the public and private demeanour of Samoan people.[33]

The following discussions uncover some of the 'private' and 'silent' worlds of young Samoan women and display the lengths some women go to to resolve their unspoken conflicts and to become sexually independent. Although the intention of these women's actions was retaliatory, many of them were enacted for survival means — culturally, personally and spiritually:

> I used to respect traditional fa'aSamoa but not any more. I think it's unfair that I have to fulfil all the cultural expectations in New Zealand and in the 1990s. I used to be the honourable daughter, I did everything my parents wanted me to do, I went to church, I stayed away from boys, I did all the fe'aus [chores], I did everything. My crime was that I fell in love with a man behind my parents back. I was too scared to tell my parents so I used to sneak around, it was a big secret. One day, I gathered enough courage to tell my parents, I was so nervous. I got the biggest hiding of my life ... they were so suspicious and they made me sound like a slut. I did everything for them and this was what I got. I left home one day and took off with this guy, I had sex and fell pregnant. Sure, I've dishonoured my parents – blah, blah – but see, fa'aSamoa should be a mutual thing. In the 1990s you cannot control female sexuality, it's no longer a realistic expectation, for me to get away, I had to disgrace them, I had to break the cycle. Sure, I feel stink but at the same time I'm at peace with myself, I can take charge of my own life now. (Patrice, born in Samoa, 21 years old)

> My experience had to do with very strict parents. I felt trapped and I couldn't get out. And especially when I met this guy I really liked. I actually met him in New Zealand, he was Samoan and so when I went home for the holidays he came back with me 'cause he's from there and I thought I'd introduce him to my parents ... Anyway it was a complete disaster. My dad hated the idea of me having a boyfriend and he said that I was bringing shame into the family by having such a relationship ... worse of all he made me stay in Samoa. I was not to return back to New Zealand. My mind just went crazy. It's hard to explain. I didn't even think of my parents. I wanted to prove that they were making the wrong decision by killing myself. And so I remember going out into the plantation and I had this stuff to take and I took it ... it was weird, I felt

relieved 'cause it was the first thing I had done without someone saying I should or should not do it. (Madalena, born in Samoa, 21 years old)

I'm 20 years old and, this is hard ... I was raped by a Samoan guy when I was 16. He was supposed to protect me – huh – he was supposed to keep me a virgin – huh. I tried to tell my parents the truth but I got called the slut, the tart. I was punished and was sent to Samoa for two years. I had to be the obedient girl, I had to listen to my aiga and I had to earn a good reputation. It was really hard for me. I cried a lot and kept thinking back to all the things I did. I was the typical obedient Samoan girl. I always listened to my parents ... I felt betrayed, I felt guilty for no reason. Anyway, I [sobs], I couldn't take it any more. I went to the back of my aunty's place and I got some rope and tied it around the water tap by the outhouse, um the outside toilet. I was lucky ... my cousin found me dangling and I was sent to hospital. I made it and it's good to be back home in New Zealand. I've learnt a lot from this, um, I've learnt to speak out and I've learnt not to be scared any more. My parents now believe my story, but it may have been too late ... it goes to show what lengths some of us go to just to be listened to ... [sobs]. (Kataleena, born in New Zealand, 20 years old)

The difficulties facing young Samoan women within the traditional social structures of fa'aSamoa cannot be treated lightly. Many of the dilemmas raised in the above accounts reaffirm the ambiguous attitude some Samoans have toward young unmarried Samoan women and female sexuality. What does the girl have to do to convince her aiga that she has been sexually assaulted and raped by a male relative? Why do Samoans tend to side with the male and blame the young woman? Such stereotyped reactions indicate the immense challenges faced by some contemporary young Samoan women both in Samoa and New Zealand as they 'learn' their sexuality.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

My research findings have several implications for future sex education programmes and services for young Samoan women in New Zealand. It is critical that these programmes aim to empower the women themselves by including and involving them in the development, implementation and evaluation processes. Pacific Island community fonos (forums) should be run by the youth themselves to educate health authorities and elders/aiga/parents in their respective

communities about young people's perspectives on sexuality.[34] The term sexuality must be defined by young Samoan women so that services and programmes can begin from where the women themselves interpret and understand sexuality. To acknowledge the heterogeneity of young Samoan women the overall structure of future programmes needs to be flexible, collaborative and a reflection of both Samoan and western principles and lifestyles.

The future possibilities for young Samoan women to learn effectively about sexuality in New Zealand, and to define their sexualities, are encouraging. There is an emerging wave of young Samoan women who are beginning to challenge traditional fa'aSamoa attitudes, and who are becoming more open in discussing matters concerning sex. I believe that my research is indicative of these shifts, and shows the real possibility of sexual independence and confidence for current and future generations of Samoan women.

Giving choices enhances our capacity to attain dignity and reach our capacity as productive human beings.[35]

AnneMarie Tupuola is a New Zealand born Samoan, and she is a PhD student in Education at Victoria University. She also teaches on such topics as adolescent development and Pacific Islands education. Her current research is on the reappropriation of the terms 'adolescence' and 'New Zealand-born Samoan' and involves an exploration of hybrid identities and diaspora feminism.

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Learning To Be A Prostitute:
Education and Training in the New Zealand Sex Industry

JODY HANSON

Education and training in the sex-industry is a timely issue. Recently, charges of brothel-keeping in Wellington were virtually dismissed and a Private Members' Bill which would decriminalise soliciting may soon be presented to Parliament. Since June 1994, when I took up my current position as a lecturer in adult education at the University of Waikato, I have been doing research into the sex-industry in New Zealand. Specifically, I am interested in how women learn to work in the sex-trade. During the course of my research I have met about two hundred prostitutes in various parlours, agencies and on the streets. I have also spent time with the ship-girls in a coastal city. The data I have gathered in the course of this research ranges from nine hours of taped conversation conducted with an independent sex-worker to casual comments jotted down in my fieldnotes file after visiting a sex-work venue.

How, exactly, does a woman learn to be a prostitute? As formal training is not available, the obvious answer is through informal education processes. Education and training of sex-workers is an important, but generally unrecognised, aspect of the sex-industry in New Zealand. This article, based on some of my interviews with sex-workers – including prostitutes, madams, a receptionist and a dominatrix – explores how women learn to work in the sex-industry. It then examines the systems sex-industry people have developed to support each other. I argue that women in the sex-industry provide a service and that their educational efforts and moves towards decriminalisation of their work should be supported by women's groups, progressive educators and people who support fair employment practices.

BACKGROUND

Prostitution, like other traditionally female occupations such as child-minding and cooking, has been learned on an informal basis historically. The New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective (NZPC) is do-

ing exemplary work through their peer-education programme by promoting occupational and personal support for sex-workers. *Siren*, an acronym for Sex-Industry Rights and Education Network, a NZPC magazine, offers articles on safe sex practices, tips for new workers and personal growth and development suggestions. The NZPC video *Sold on Safe Sex* was made to help educate sex-workers who are new to the industry. A special booklet has also been produced to educate women who are beginning to work. The NZPC, which has offices in Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Tauranga and Auckland, deals with queries from both new and experienced sex-workers. Sometimes sex-workers are referred to them from agencies, by parlours or by friends. It is a small, though effective, operation with a dedicated staff, but hampered by limited funding. Much of the training and general education, therefore, continues to be done in the parlours, at the agencies and on the street, on an informal basis, by various committed people in the sex-industry.

In this paper I shall limit my focus to the informal training and education of heterosexual women who work in parlours and agencies in mid-size New Zealand cities, including Hamilton, Palmerston North and New Plymouth. My aim is not to romanticise or glamorise sex-work. Rather, it is to try to demystify the sex-trade by locating it within the personal service industry. In this context, sex-work is studied for what it is – simply a job. The women range in age from their mid-twenties to their mid-forties. Furthermore, they fall into what I refer to as the 'middle range' of the industry in that they are neither expensive call girls nor street-workers, the two images of the sex-industry which the popular media tends to portray. The women in this study don't generally work to support drug habits or to buy expensive cars. They are generally more concerned with everyday financial expenditures, such as paying their bills or buying school uniforms for their children. The prostitutes, madams, receptionist and dominatrix in this study can be described as 'average' sorts of women. This is not to suggest, however, that they represent a standard or typical overview of the people working in this segment of the sex-industry. As Jan Jordan notes:

> The search for 'representativeness' itself constitutes a false scientific objective. It ignores the fact that each of these accounts is valuable in its own right, and enhances our knowledge and understanding of women's involvement in sex work.[1]

Although some people may ignore the skills women in the sex-industry bring to their work, others, including me, argue that to fully appreciate the role and realities of women in our society, the contribution of prostitutes must be recognised. Or, as Eileen McLeod writes: 'Prostitution is not a world apart. It is bound up with wider social processes and permeated by assumptions current in society at large.'[2]

Following Sue Middleton's thesis that life history is a legitimate and worthwhile research methodology, this paper draws on interview transcripts with sex-industry workers who explain their worksite training and education in their own words.[3] As Middleton notes, one of the perils of working from a theoretical perspective is that 'as academic feminism becomes respectable, it is becoming less connected, more abstract, and increasingly remote from everyday sexual oppressions.'[4] She argues that life history may also be of benefit to the people participating in the research, 'In the course of the research process, people may describe their lives – their circumstances, their choices, their activities, their ideas in ways they have not done before. In this, they may make connections between the personal (an event or an emotion) and the political or social.'[5]

SEX-WORKERS SPEAK:

As previous studies have found, many women in the sex-industry in New Zealand started working in the sex-trade because they had friends or relatives already involved in the sex-industry. Some women make a conscious decision to become prostitutes. The following excerpt is from an interview done with Susie, a 28 year old woman, two days prior to her becoming a working girl:

> Yes, I have made an informed decision to go into the sex-industry. Absolutely. I talked to other people that have been involved in the field, and I've worked as a receptionist. I've seen how happy the girls often are. They seem to have a lot more self esteem than a lot of women I meet every day in other fields. They earn a lot of money, which women aren't usually able to do until they've spent many years at university or in getting other skills.

According to Hannah:

> Before I ever got involved with the industry I knew people who worked as prostitutes, madams, or receptionists. I have never been moralistic about prostitution. It's a job. That's how some women earn their money. End of story.

Angelique, by comparison, viewed entering the industry as a personal development exercise:

> I was very shy, very reserved. I was very scared of anything. And after being married and having kids for so many years, I decided it was time to do a few things in my life that I've always wanted to do and I had always been too scared to try. I wanted to find out *who* I was. I had been put down most of my life, so I decided to do outside escorting to see what would happen. And my first escorting appointment I was so scared I was a nervous wreck. I decided I'd have a couple of tablets just to relax me. Well, [when the appointment was finished] I didn't see what the hell all the fuss was about. People used to say 'oh, you know, they do this to you, and they do that to you' and 'you'll get hurt' and all that. Well, it was a breeze.

Some, such as Elizabeth, knew very little about the industry prior to starting work:

> I was terrified to apply for the job. First I rang up and I had two questions to ask before I would even give the woman at the agency my name. One was 'will I get busted?' and the second was, 'will I get a disease?' The woman reassured me that there was no possibility of getting busted ... and she said there was no fear of disease because they took every precaution and they practised safe sex. At this point I had never used a condom and I didn't know how to practise safe sex. Becoming a prostitute educated me about safe sex.

Prostitution offers women an opportunity to determine their own hours and to work where they wish, thus providing flexibility and mobility. Pamela says it is easy to go to work in another parlour as the chances are she will know someone who is already working in the establishment:

> My first night [at a new parlour] I walked in and there was this woman who is actually one of my daughter's friend's mother. And we looked at each other and went 'oh', and it was great because we knew each other and had this link, so we were okay.

As with other occupations, sex-workers settle into a routine and are helped through their work experiences by colleagues. Again this varies from situation to situation, but examples of peer-education, mentoring and support systems are readily found in the sex-industry. Women who have been in the trade for a while often help new sex-workers by offering advice and making suggestions. Pamela says:

> I already knew about condoms, but I'd never thought about lubricant. One of the girls where I worked said to me 'here is some lube' and 'these condoms are really good, but don't use those ones because they are terrible' and 'these condoms are good for oral [sex]'.

Other prostitutes help teach women who are new to the industry how to present themselves. Toni, a madam for twenty years, told me that women often enter the industry with negative self-images. They question whether or not they are 'good enough' for men to be willing to spend money to see them. Stevie, who worked as a prostitute before moving into reception work, offers an example of how women already in the sex-industry help these newcomers:

> And I've seen the other girls, myself included as receptionist, take [a woman new to the industry] down the back of the parlour and do her up. 'Look, there's a rack of clothes over there.' 'Try this, try that,' and they'll preen around her, you know and make her feel good. So she gets an appointment. I've seen this happen several times. And she will. She'll get it in an hour or so – somebody will walk through the door, she'll be radiating because she'll feel good inside, and she'll get that booking.

Angelique, a prostitute who bought her own parlour and is now a madam, talks about supporting women entering the trade:

> When ladies start working in the sex-industry they have to have guidance. And if they have someone there that understands them it's great. I've guided a lot of the girls. Yeah, it's a very serious job. It's one of the most professional jobs there is.
>
> You take my little treasure, Betty, for example. When she first came up here she was so scared she was biting her nails. Within four weeks of me training her, and the other ladies helping her, she became very professional at her job. She had lots of clients who rang and made bookings. She was always busy, it was incredible. She went from being a little scared bunny rabbit to becoming a professional woman in the space of three months. Yeah, that's one thing about working ladies, we stick together. If someone is in trouble we will help out.

Stevie, a woman who worked as a prostitute prior to becoming a receptionist, provides further account of the type of support and encouragement a receptionist offers:

> When you are working on reception you're in a kind of confidence position. People will come to you for condoms and for this and for that, or

for information about which room to go into. Because of this, if you're an open person and can listen, they come to you with their problems too. You're viewed as a wise person.

Working girls come to a good receptionist with a wide variety of problems from 'oh my God, I've got a sponge stuck up there, what do I do? I can't get it out!' to personal concerns. Some workers can divorce their personal lives from their working lives, but others can't. You hear things about their private lives.

This, however, is not to imply that people in the industry are always supportive towards one another. Pamela, for example, reports:

She [the owner of the agency] always gave me a hard time, and I got sick of that. She would say things like 'stupid blonde', 'you're just a dizzy blonde' and stuff like this. And she kept calling everyone 'girlfriend'. I really just didn't like the woman. And she sometimes sent us out on jobs which I felt weren't safe.

Apprenticeships are another way of learning to work in the sex-industry. Mistress Ann, a Bondage & Discipline specialist, for instance, undertook an apprenticeship which lasted approximately a year. In working with a gay Bondage & Discipline Master, her first lesson was to undergo a session herself. She was ordered to strip and to bend over a chair.

When he brought the whip within millimetres of my buttocks I began to appreciate the power of terror and to recognise the thin line between pleasure and pain. He didn't actually hit me, but it was so close I jumped every time the whip came near me.

Her second lesson of her apprenticeship was to administer a session on the Master. She modulated her voice by lowering it, as he had taught her, and she spoke slowly. Mistress Ann, however, miscalculated how hard she had beaten her teacher and she underestimated his pain threshold. The Master returned a few days later, saying he was disappointed as there weren't any physical marks left on him from their session. She improved her technique and after the third lesson he returned and said 'that was good. Now you have to learn to listen to the clients and to adapt your style to their needs.' Now that Mistress Ann is deemed to be an expert in the area of Bondage & Discipline she works with younger prostitutes who are interested in learning the speciality. And, as she says 'there seems to be a growing demand for dungeon work.'

Sex is actually a small part of the job of being a prostitute and the job frequently requires more mental than physical work. A summative statement many working girls agree with is 'for a one hour booking, the actual bonk usually takes about five minutes and then you have to talk to the guy for another fifty-five'. Many prostitutes I have interviewed mention counselling as being a major part of their jobs. Elizabeth illustrates this aspect of her work as an independent prostitute:

> And if [a client] is very tense, I say, 'look, let's just lie down where we're comfortable and have a bit of a cuddle, and forget about the sex part, it's not really important.' We'd just have a cuddle and a talk, and those sort of things put them at ease. But another thing that's happened is that I have found that I have what I suppose is a type of gift. When I go into counselling mode, when I go into a genuine counselling state of mind, it's as if that I cease to exist, it's as if I'm channelling. I hear myself speaking, and sometimes I say things that I didn't even know I knew. I listen, and I leave myself very open. It's like when I'm writing music, I just let it flow through and I often astound myself, I often know what's wrong with a person without having to think about it. And the first time this happened was when I saw a client who was a counsellor, he was a psychologist. And counsellors have a need to be counselled. They can't be counselled by other counsellors because they know them all. They need someone that's removed from them.

According to Michelle, an ex-sex worker, learning to work safely in the sex-industry also requires certain skills:

> Listening skills – part of being a good communicator is the ability to listen. And negotiation skills, being able to recognise a potentially explosive situation and having the skills to negotiate its negation. Good sex-workers also have to be able to separate their working lives from their private lives, to be able to leave the sex-worker persona at work and be who they really are in their private lives. Certain acting skills are required in the work setting to be able to do this effectively. Knowledge of sexual health, law, safer sex skills is important. The skills to seek and retain information, whether it be by communicating with more experienced people or by reading appropriate material, is also essential.

Tarren, a part-time worker, echoes the idea of prostitution being a skilled personal service occupation:

> You have to have a lot of patience. If you get an older guy who needs reassurance, for example, you have to talk to him to make him feel

> comfortable. You also have to have compassion. Some guys take longer to cum so you need to be understanding. You can't just get on and get off again five minutes later.

Many people in the sex-industry learn what can loosely be defined as 'street smarts'. Rather than being able to weigh, measure or test these skills in a formal educational sense, 'street smarts' can only be evaluated in real-life situations. They include being able to assess situations quickly, following one's gut reactions and acting almost on instinct. Women have told me about predicaments they got into when they ignored their gut reactions. When presented with a difficult situation, a sex-worker sometimes has to rely on her negotiation skills, as Michelle suggested earlier, or her ability to run, to get away uninjured.

Another skill some prostitutes develop is the ability to switch from their personal to their professional selves on short notice. The following is an excerpt from my fieldnotes:

> Tarren was laying on the couch covered with a blanket. We were talking about my trip through South East Asia. She was telling me that she hadn't been out of New Zealand and she was already 36 when the buzzer rang, indicating that someone was coming into the parlour. When the door knob didn't turn after a few seconds it meant that it must be a customer. People who come and go regularly either walk in, or if the door is locked, turn the knob. That action indicates their familiarity with the premises. If a person turns the knob, whoever is inside the parlour will usually open the door without bothering to check the identity of the person on the other side. When the door knob didn't turn, the silence signalled a client. Tarren threw the blanket off, and almost in one motion, stood up and pushed one foot into a black high heel shoe. She was slightly off balance and hopped a couple of times before she put her other foot into her other shoe. Her face and body language visibly changed from a relaxed pose while having a friendly conversation with me to being a professional working woman.

Becoming a prostitute involves informal training and education. To learn to work in the sex industry effectively, a woman has to rely on peer-education, mentoring and industry support. She also has to develop informal 'street smarts' if she is going to work safely in the sex-industry. The training and education required to work in the personal service aspect of the sex-industry is frequently ignored and many tend to concentrate on the more negative, stereotypical images of the industry.

SUMMARY AND FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Acknowledging that working as a prostitute involves informal training and education is an initial step in moving towards recognising the contributions of sex-workers. Accepting sex-work as located in the personal service industry, requiring a high level of skills, is another important consideration towards occupational recognition. Further, supporting prostitutes in their struggle to decriminalise sex-work is an area in which non-industry people can be involved. The Business and Professional Women's Association and the YWCA, have for example, has recently come out in support of decriminalising sex-work.

As well as recognising sex-work as a political struggle, non-prostitute women also have to grapple with how the sex-industry affects their personal lives, both directly and indirectly. On a personal note, I have found my research into the sex-industry in New Zealand beneficial. After all, how many researchers come away from their field studies convinced that they are, in fact, sexually reasonable and well adjusted? Perhaps further discussions on sexuality is an area we can explore with prostitutes, as they are women who deal with this topic in the course of their daily work. Mistress Ann, for instance, says 'Hell, I don't have any fantasies left because I've tried them all!'

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NOTES

1 Jan Jordan, *Working Girls: Women in the New Zealand Sex Industry Talk to Jan Jordan* (Penguin, 1991).

2 Eileen McLeod, *Women Working: Prostitution Now* (Croom Helm, 1982) p.1.

3 Sue Middleton, *Educating Feminists: Life Histories and Pedagogy* (Teachers College Press, 1993).

4 ibid., p. 7.

5 ibid., p. 75.

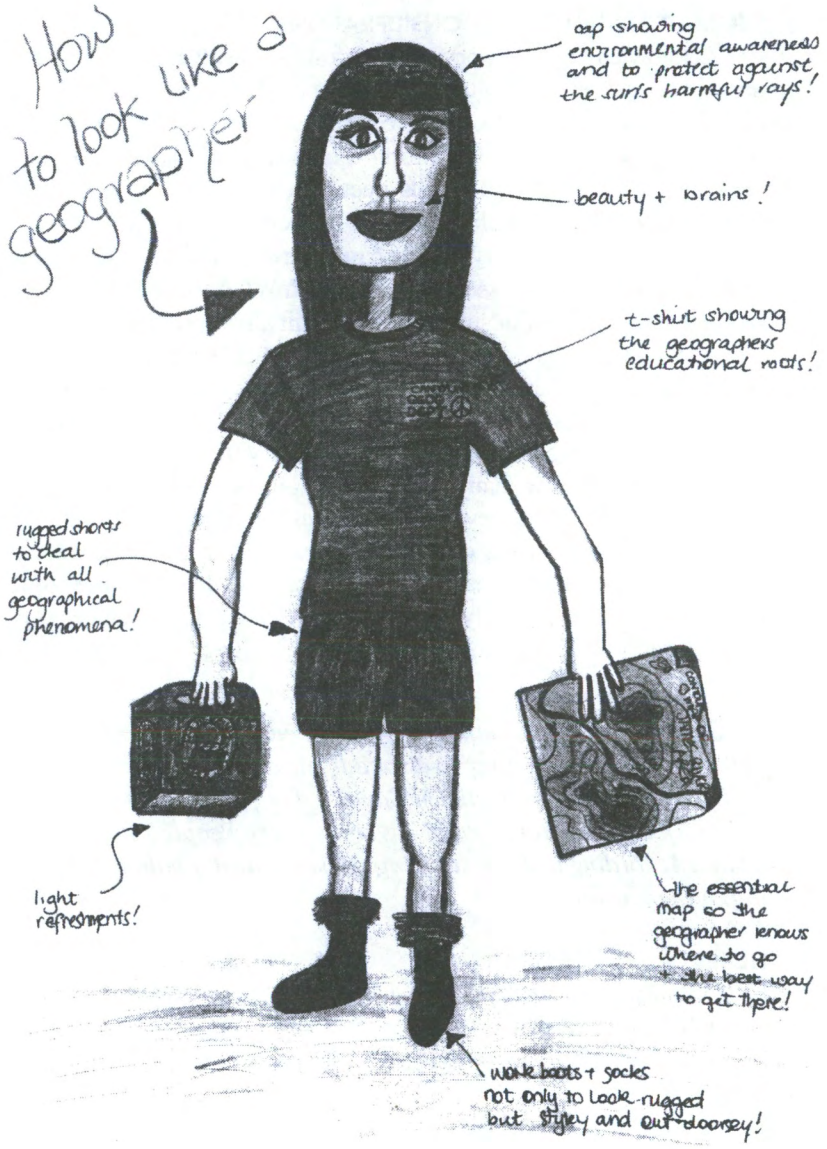

Figure 1: How to look like a geographer

Parties on Geography Fieldtrips: Embodied Fieldwork?

KAREN NAIRN

The picture 'how to look like a geographer' (Fig. 1) was drawn by a female student during her first year of university geography and can be read as a metaphor for culture. It depicts a woman geographer with attributes that are associated with notions of femininity and masculinity. The captions written by the student on her drawing describe this geographer as someone who has 'beauty and brains!' She wears 'rugged shorts to deal with all geographical phenomena!' and 'work boots and socks not only to look rugged but styley and outdoorsey!' And, most significantly for the following discussion, she carries a '48 pack' of Canterbury Draught Beer for 'light refreshments' in one hand (the means for geographers' re-creation?) and 'the essential map' in the other hand to provide evidence of the geographer's work. This geographer's body is a rich metaphor for understanding the culture of geography and, more specifically, the culture of geography fieldtrips.[1]

My second image of what it is to be a geographer is taken from the 1994 handbook for geography students at Canterbury University. The opening paragraph of a section entitled *Knowing One's Place: Why Geography Matters* reads as follows:

> Everyone likes to know their place. We feel comfortable in particular surroundings. Enter a room full of strangers, as at a party, and most of us begin to explore. We get talking, meet new people. We make the room seem less unfamiliar: we make it, in other words, a more comfortable place.[2]

A party metaphor is utilised here to explain how people (an undifferentiated 'people') get to know their place and make this a comfortable space. The link between this metaphor and the title *Knowing One's Place: Why Geography Matters* suggests that geography is like (or could be like) going to a party, meeting new people, and making places more comfortable for ourselves. The metaphorical and the 'real' are interconnected; the representational, the discursive, are tied in with 'the reality'.

To demonstrate how the metaphor of a party becomes 'real' on residential[3] geography fieldtrips, how the '48 pack' of beer in the geographer's hand is both representational and 'real,' I will focus on residential geography fieldtrips as one significant site in which we learn how to be a geographer and to do geography in Aotearoa/New Zealand. It may seem frivolous to write a 'party piece'; however, it is precisely these frivolous, these social, these invisible, these taken-for-granted dimensions of the fieldtrip enterprise that my doctoral research (in process) is concerned with. I am a geographer who has occupied different positions to do with the fieldtrip enterprise – as geography student on high school and university fieldtrips, as party participant, as geography teacher and organiser of high school fieldtrips during which I became adept at preventing parties, and now full circle to being a researcher of geography fieldtrips (and fieldtrip parties).

To study field trips is to increase understanding of geographic learning more broadly. To study geographic learning, it is necessary to explore the system of social relations in which individual geographers 'operate'. Residential fieldtrips provide a unique site in which to explore both the social relations of teaching and of learning geography. The bringing together of a group of individuals for a continuous time period in a particular place for the sole purpose of a residential geography fieldtrip, intensifies and amplifies the social relations of thinking, talking, and doing geography. As one Chair of a Geography Department put it, the purpose of the residential fieldtrip in university geography is to teach the students to think (and I would add 'to act') like geographers.

How is the socialising component of fieldtrips experienced by individual students? How do they experience the social pressure to conform to a particular version of 'geographer-in-the-field'? There is evidence of this version of 'geographer-in-the-field' in the drawing (Fig. 1) and it is one of a particular masculine identity that has evolved over time.[4] I shall show that while some men and women geography students relate to and/or accommodate this masculine identity, others are alienated by and/or resist it.

EMBODIED' AND 'DISEMBODIED' FIELDWORK

Currently, the 'literature on fieldwork in geography ... is largely about assumed benefits, descriptions of particular field courses and specific field techniques'.[5] This literature is predominantly about a

disembodied fieldwork, fieldwork still dominated by masculinist notions of the objective geography student going out into the real world to look.[6] During the initial phases of my research, I asked first-year university students to define what a geography fieldtrip is and the response became a predictable incantation which one student encapsulated in the following statement:

> [A fieldtrip is] seeing it for yourself, that it is true, what they are telling you ... so you get given a theory why something happens and then you go out there and see it happening and you believe it, because people can tell you till they are blue in the face but you still don't believe it until you see ... with your own eyes.[7]

Fieldtrips are one site/sight in which geography students learn how to 'do' geography. Rose claims that 'undergraduate fieldtrips are the initiation ritual of the discipline'. Fieldtrips instil the ethos of geographical knowledge into the student, and it is an ethos of science triumphant'.[8] Geography as an observation science is played out in both human and physical geography fieldtrips where geography students learn to maintain an objective gaze, an analytical distance between themselves and the landscape/the people.[9] This objective gaze, whether upon the non-urban landscape or upon people's homes in an urban area, implies a *disembodied* geographer, and I would argue that geography students are learning this masculinist approach to fieldwork in a particularly intensive way on fieldtrips.

While the idealised image of the geographer is one of disembodied objectivity, the residential fieldtrip provides the context for both embodied and disembodied performances. In other words, students may learn about the processes of doing disembodied research/fieldwork as part of the 'official' fieldtrip programme, for example, observing the landscape from a hilltop, surveying land-use in an urban area. At the same time, fieldtrip participants may learn about doing embodied fieldwork as part of the 'unofficial'/unstated components (for example, parties, meals) of the fieldtrip. In other words, participants may experience the fieldtrip with all senses rather than just sight which has been privileged in the disembodied accounts. So it may be that students on fieldtrips learn to shift between disembodied and embodied performances/fieldwork. Or it may be that disembodied performances are simultaneously embodied in unexpected ways. In other words 'the body' turns up on residential fieldtrips in ways

that confound the notion of the disembodied geographer/researcher.[10]

My research is primarily concerned with what geography students/teachers/lecturers remember and say about their memories of fieldtrips some time after the event. Bodily experiences, whether it be how cold, how uncomfortable, how far they had to walk, eating lunch at the side of a road, and so on, seem to recur in many respondents' first words about fieldtrips. The experience of living and working together as individuals, as students, as geographers for the duration (two or more days) of a residential fieldtrip is a complex entanglement of the everyday and the extraordinary. There are the everyday activities of eating, sleeping, washing dishes as well as the extraordinary activities of sitting across the breakfast table from one of your lecturers, being in your pyjamas with people you have sat beside in a lecture theatre previously. As one lecturer and longtime fieldtrip organiser expressed it, the everyday and the extraordinary are intertwined:

> When you're ... getting up, having breakfast, washing dishes next to someone, sitting down having your meal with someone, it's those little practical day-to-day things that I think allow you to relate to other people a lot better, it's cutting away all the crap and all the pretentiousness that goes round, in this place, within a university, both with staff and students, and it is cutting through those barriers, you know, you see that someone you know, acts just the way that you do when you are in a domestic situation if you like ... I think by breaking down that staff student barrier for example, a hell of a lot gets achieved on both sides, because staff learn a lot as I hope students do as well *by sitting over a plate of cornflakes and talking about the world,* I think that is enormously valuable experience.[11]

These embodied everyday performances take on new meaning when the personnel with whom we eat our breakfast were previously behind a lectern in a large lecture theatre. The combination of geography and cornflakes first thing in the morning may appeal to some people and not to others; another geography lecturer commented to me that he would not want to talk about the world over his cornflakes.[12] There is a sense conveyed in the above statement by Jim that we eat, live, breathe geography on a residential fieldtrip, that we are embodied geographers. I call this embodied fieldwork. As Bordo has said 'the body – what we eat, how we dress, the daily rituals

through which we attend to the body – is a medium of culture ... The body may also operate as a metaphor for culture' as the body in the drawing does.[13]

Fieldwork does not end when the assignment is completed and the evening meal is served. Embodied fieldwork is part of every waking moment on a residential fieldtrip and constitutes ways in which we/our bodies come to understand (consciously and unconsciously) what it means to think like a geographer, act like a geographer, eat and drink like a geographer, and so on. 'What is "learned by the body" is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something one is'.[14] But becoming a geographer is not just about individual bodies, it is also about the 'corporate body' of geographers.

THE 'CORPORATE BODY'

The concept of a 'corporate body' of geographers is the idea that a collective or community of geographers exists. In the context of the university residential fieldtrip, this collective or community of geographers consists of the academic geographers – both staff and students – who have already experienced residential fieldtrips. Individual bodies, new to the culture of geography fieldtrips in New Zealand/Aotearoa, become part of a process of learning to be a geographer, 'a process of disciplining the body and mind into pre-dispositions for behaviour as part of a larger group, or a corporate body'.[15] The residential geography fieldtrip becomes a critical site/sight where some individuals make the rite of passage into the 'corporate body' of geographers, and others do not. For 'learning to position oneself as a [geography] student 'subject' means becoming more like everyone else, minimising difference'.[16] In the images with which this paper began, both the drawing and the party metaphor in the student handbook are rich sources of information about what it means to become 'more like everyone else, minimising difference',[17] to being a part of the 'body corporate'.

There are particular aspects of fieldtrip practice that 'define and differentiate interaction and subjectivity ... These areas [such as parties], however, are often highly significant in the production and performance of the individual as part of the body corporate'.[18] The production and the performance of the 'party' is perceived as evidence that a body corporate exists, and as evidence of membership in this

body corporate. The production and performance of the 'party' is not unique and specific to the residential geography context, rather the 'party' draws on 'existing social discourses and patterns of peer interaction' that are 'also highly gendered', as well as sexualised within the university and within society.[19] The individual bodies of the fieldtrip participants as well as the 'corporate body' of geographers are therefore gendered and sexualised.

What does it mean to become more like everyone else on a geography fieldtrip? What or who is everyone else expected to become like? I will answer these questions by considering what it meant for one woman and one man who did not want to become part of the body corporate, who did not want to become like everybody else, who did not want to join 'the party'. During the residential fieldtrip, the embodied fieldwork of individual participants may be influential in this process of resisting and/or becoming part of the body corporate.

THE 'REAL' PARTY

One male lecturer who went on a university geography fieldtrip in Aotearoa/New Zealand for the first time describes and analyses the centrality of 'the party' to this particular university's fieldtrip tradition:

> I went to bed early one night ... I woke up the next morning and I asked a colleague, 'what happened after I went to bed?' He and the students were all sitting around talking, and as it turned out, they were mostly women, I don't know whether that is important or not, and he said 'oh, you know just sat around, had a bit of a yarn, nothing violent.' But I found that really telling, like it was meant as sort of a joke, but it was also kind of a coding for, you know that sort of heavy drinking, is frowned on but expected and allowed and even encouraged in all sorts of contradictory, mixed ways during the fieldtrip experience. The students knew to bring beer, and when we stopped for a toilet break, they knew to go and get beer. And there was drinking after we had done our jobs but everyone was so tired there was no real heavy drinking but you could tell that there were [staff] who wanted that to happen, they wanted the heavy drinking, partying and that kind of thing, and they wanted the bonding that comes out of that ... shared drunkeness when you bond with people when you are drinking with them. There were other [staff] who didn't, who made that explicit to me, who wished fieldtrips could be drier and hated that kind of loss of control.[20]

Mark's words provide a fuller picture of 'the party' (in this case the fieldtrip party). The party in which we as geographers might meet others and make a place feel more comfortable, is a particular kind of party – one that involves the drinking of alcohol (lots!), and supposed bonding between participants. It is interesting to wonder whether the presence of 'mostly women' precluded a party that night, or whether a party did happen from the perspectives of those involved but because it was 'nothing violent', it did not count as a party. It is important to note that the notion of 'the party' on a fieldtrip is a contested one amongst staff members – there were those who 'wanted the heavy drinking' and those who 'wished fieldtrips could be drier'. But the primary question that remains, is despite underlying contestation, what kind of party takes precedence? Who and what defines the party on fieldtrips?

Perhaps there is a clue in another statement from the Canterbury University Geography Department's handbook for students: 'as we grow up, we realise we can also make places. On a good night we can take over the party: it becomes a place we are making to suit ourselves'.[21] I will respond to this by highlighting the words of one female student and one male staff member who did not take over 'the party', who did not define 'the party', whose embodiment meant that their inclusion in this particular component of fieldwork was contingent upon smiling on the fringes and on 'passing'. Each experience is a kind of embodied fieldwork through which each of them comes to know who counts as 'real' geographers and what counts as 'real' geography.

One of the participants in my research is a woman who had been a student in a university geography department and had gone on the second-year residential fieldtrip in 1977. Her memories of this trip centre around the socialising/the parties. Trudy's words indicate that the expectation of heterosexual relationships was part of this so-called socialising:

> There is a lot of this sex thing in geography ... we weren't just students together we were all potential sexual partners and relationships just jumping up ... I think there were less women, I think we were quite a small minority and the only way we really got looked at was as potential sexual partners and that's what the fieldtrips I think do, gave opportunities to be together, it was on the fieldtrips that a lot of those relationships took

> off, people actually started sleeping together ... It had that kind of meat markety sort of feel about it, I felt very nervous on the fieldtrip because if you hadn't been hit on before, you were generally more likely to be hit on in that situation where we were together socially, there was bonfires and I seem to remember drinking ... ['hit on' means] uninvited or coercive behaviour on the part of the men in the group, just assuming that the women would fall in ... there was a sense that was going to happen to all of us and to stand apart from that flirting, sexual game playing and banter which was quite a big part of the socialising marked you off, sort of prudish and uptight because those were the sexually liberated 70s.[22]

Trudy's memories are of an embodied fieldwork that is about an assumed, normalised heterosexuality that is played out during the fieldtrip, and these performances of heterosexuality are defined by and initiated by the men at the party so much that Trudy refers to the process as being 'hit on'. For Trudy, the party was not a place where she actively sought out people to meet, or a place which she made her own as 'promised' in the student handbook, rather she describes:

> Feeling on the outside but feeling like you had to participate as well because you can't let yourself be totally on the outside ... I suppose I would smile at the jokes and stay on the fringe, it was like an ordeal, getting through it but not rejecting it totally, just staying on the fringes, being seen as little as possible. That was often hard when you were female anyway because you kind of got more attention because that was one of the agendas of those fieldtrips was really to socialise and to let your hair down and everybody was kind of waiting for, I suppose women to go and let their hair down a bit.[23]

Another participant in the research is a gay man who is also a staff member. His experiences of a recent fieldtrip show that the normalised heterosexuality that Trudy remembers so clearly is still an integral part:

> In terms of that fieldtrip thing is, I am forced to pass. My sexuality is just completely erased from that geography of the field experience. It has to be because otherwise we couldn't have a fieldtrip, you know ... Who would I sleep with ... that came out wrong, who would I bunk with? We'd have to confront it, we'd have to make something private, public, which everyone knows anyway, I am sure all the students know that I am gay ... I don't make a secret about it, at least I don't think I do, but it just gets erased. [24]

Heterosexuality is so integral to the culture of residential geography fieldtrips that to recognise other sexualities would mean that (in Mark's words) 'we couldn't have a fieldtrip'. For Mark, the fieldtrip means that he is 'forced to pass', to be someone that he is not, his embodied fieldwork is about the absence of particular sexual identities rather than the presence. Yet Mark's very bodily presence challenges these absences:

> It is one of these situations where my sexuality completely busts up the structures through which we live our lives, or we teach our students or we do geography ... It is also a very pragmatic example of how sexuality and geography confront one another that I really never thought about ... but nobody talks about, it's hard to talk about it. [25]

Both Trudy's and Mark's words describe and 'bust up' all of the cosiness and assurance conveyed in the quotations from the student handbook. Neither Trudy nor Mark feel comfortable at the fieldtrip party, neither of them get to define the party; rather than 'the room' becoming less unfamiliar, it seems to have become more so, even alienating. It would be highly unlikely that Trudy or Mark, even on a good night, would be able to or even want to 'take over the party' and make it a place to suit themselves. Thus the party metaphor becomes meaningful/less both in terms of what is said and what is left unsaid.

CONCLUSION

On residential geography fieldtrips, we never stop learning about being geographers – a particular kind of masculine, beer drinking, heterosexual, confident geographer – who is sure of who he meets, the space he is in. Even when the 'official' fieldwork stops and 'the party' begins, embodied fieldwork continues. I have argued that the fieldwork that is done on fieldtrips can be read as both embodied and disembodied fieldwork. In particular, individual participant's experiences of fieldtrip parties may be experienced as particularly intense forms of embodied fieldwork. Heterosexual performances are welcome at the party, but other sexualities are erased. The metaphorical party and the 'real' party on a fieldtrip are meant for certain kinds of geographers.

The metaphorical party which was used in a publication intended for prospective geographers and the 'real' party which some staff allow on residential geography fieldtrips (so that bonding between

participants may occur) are not coincidental. Rather the metaphorical party and the 'real' party of the residential fieldtrip, work together to introduce, constitute and entrench specific ways of doing geography and being a geographer. What might the possibilities be if the opening metaphor in a student handbook had likened geography to a ballet performance?[26] What might geography fieldtrips be like then?

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NOTES

1 Fieldtrips are defined as trips away from an educational site and may be one hour, one day, one week long.

2 Canterbury University Geography Department, *Geography at Canterbury: A Handbook for 100, 200 and 300 Level Students* (Canterbury University, Christchurch, 1994).

3 Residential field trips involve students staying away at least one or more nights.

4 See J. G. Hammond, 'The Institutionalisation of Geography in New Zealand. An Interpretation', PhD, Massey University, 1992; G. Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993).

5 J. R. Gold, A. Jenkins, R. Lee, J. Monk, J. Riley, I. Shepherd and D. Unwin, *Teaching Geography in Higher Education* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1991) p. 27.

6 L. Berg, 'Masculinity, Place, and a Binary Discourse of "Theory" and "Empirical Investigation" in the Human Geography of Aotearoa/New Zealand', *Gender, Place and Culture*, 1:2 (1994) pp. 245-60; G. Rose, 'Geography as a Science of Observation: The Landscape, the Gaze and Masculinity', in F. Driver & G. Rose (eds), *Nature and Science: Essays in the History of Geographical Knowledge* (Historical Geography Research Series, No. 28, February, 1992) pp. 8-79.

7 Interview, 'Linda', November, 1994. The names of all the students and staff in the article are pseudonyms.

8 Rose, 'Geography as a Science of Observation', p. 9.

9 ibid., pp. 8-79.

10 Rose, *Feminism and Geography*; H. Nast et al., 'Women in the Field: Critical Feminist Methodologies and Theoretical Perspectives', *The Professional Geographer*, 46:1 (1994) pp. 55-102.

11 Interview, 'Jim', November, 1994.

12 Fieldnotes, October, 1995.

13 Susan Bordo, 'The Body and the Reproduction of Femininity: A Feminist Appropriation of Foucault', in A. Jaggar and Susan Bordo (eds), *Gender/Body/Knowledge* (Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 1989) p. 13.

14 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1990) p. 73, cited in B. Kamler, R. Maclean, J. Reid and A. Simpson, *Shaping Up Nicely: The Formation of Schoolgirls and Schoolboys in the First Month of School*, A Report to the Gender Equity and Curriculum Reform Project, Department of Employment, Education and Training(Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994) p. 124.

15 B. Kamler, R. Maclean, J. Reid and A. Simpson, *Shaping Up Nicely. The Formation of Schoolgirls and Schoolboys in the First Month of School*, A Report to the Gender Equity and Curriculum Reform Project, Department of Employment, Education and Training (Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1994), p. 3.

16 ibid., p. 4.

17 ibid., p. 4.

18 ibid., p. 3.

19 ibid., p. 3.

20 Interview, 'Mark', June, 1995.

21 Canterbury University Geography Department, *Geography at Canterbury.*

22 Interview, 'Trudy', October, 1995.

23 ibid.

24 Interview, 'Mark', June, 1995.

25 ibid.

26 I would like to acknowledge the ballet metaphor as my supervisor Robyn Longhurst's idea.

'Claiming an Identity They Taught Me to Despise':[1] Lesbian Students Respond to the Regulation of Same Sex Desire

KATHLEEN QUINLIVAN

No recognition means silence, repression and isolation. (Isobel)

It was a rumour that was going around and I just stopped denying it. People would just say to me 'Are you a, a, a, an?' and they wouldn't be able to say the word so I would say, 'A vegetarian? a pilot?', and they would in the end ask me and I'd just say, 'Yes'. (Belinda)

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Constructing young lesbians and gay men as a marginalised 'at risk' group within equity discourses is dangerous for both queer students and their schools. As Shane Town and I have pointed out in our collaborative article, positioning lesbian and gay students as 'other' legitimates heterosexuality. And in framing their 'problem' as personal rather than institutional, the students' feelings of difference and dis-ease are reinforced.[2] The construction of lesbian and gay sexuality as an individual student 'problem' means that school communities seldom have to examine the extent to which lesbian and gay students' needs are met within their institutions and are unlikely to work towards changing their practices to ensure that their schools are inclusive of queer youth. Furthermore, constructing lesbian and gay students as passive victims makes it is easy to ignore the many ways in which they resist and in come cases, undo the regulation of sexuality experienced by them in schools.

Drawing on queer post structuralist conceptions of sexual identity as an unstable, shifting and evolving construct and resistance theories, this article explores the ways in which lesbian sexuality is regulated and constructed as deviant within the hetero normative discourses operating in the micro-educational contexts of New Zealand secondary schools.[3] However schools are not the only context within which lesbian and gay youth explore their emerging sexual identities and their 'stories of desire and friendship persist despite hostile condi-

tions'.[4] Therefore I also describe the resistance strategies ten young lesbian secondary school students in Aotearoa/ New Zealand drew on through their own lived experiences in order to survive and in some cases to challenge and transform their schools. Ultimately isolated acts of student resistance cannot change school practice and it is the responsibility of institutions, not students, to ensure the needs of queer students are met. I therefore close by suggesting that the curriculum may benefit all students by re-conceptualising sexuality as a fluid and changeable continuum rather than an either/or choice.

RESISTANCE THEORIES

Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital can be used to understand the regulation of queer sexuality in schools.[5] Within educational institutions heterosexuality could be perceived to be one form of cultural capital, especially amongst students. Lesbian and gay students who do not possess this commodity are rendered silent and have to investigate other avenues to explore their emerging sexuality. Britzman suggested that the notion of 'sexual capital' may help us to understand how sexual identities become normalised and also outlawed. This 'political economy of sexualities' can account for differences between the use and exchange values of heterosexuality and homosexuality.[6] It can explain ways in which lived experiences are exchanged and valued for social acceptance and perhaps most interestingly can account for the fact that individuals can pursue expressions of desire and pleasure which have no market currency and can even result in social ostracism and rejection.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Institutions such as schools are important agents for the transmission of sexual beliefs and values. Foucault argues that it is the representation of subjects in language organised by particular discursive systems, including schools, that position subjects in relations of control, discipline and moral regulation.[7] Representations of sexuality are a highly contested arena within schools. Watney suggests one reason for this is that schools represent 'a double threshold, between the privacy of the home and public space as well as between the categories of child and adult'.[8] Within this context the neo-conservative moral right emphasise traditional ideas about gender and

sexual relations. Their values vie with those of liberal sexual pluralists who argue for more fluid and diverse representations of sexuality within schools.[9]

Recently educational research has begun to explore the ways in which Foucault's sexual categories and the social practices which sustain them operate as discourses to shut down representations of lesbian and gay sexuality within schools.[10] The first of these constructions is that of the asexual child, the commonly held belief that childhood is a period of sexual latency. As Watney points out this can be particularly disastrous for lesbian and gay youth because it denies them an identity in relation to their sexuality and shuts down discussions of their own sexuality.[11] It also calls into question their relationships with lesbian and gay adults, effectively severing them.

When the discourse of the asexual child combines with the construction of lesbian and gay adults as perverse, lesbian and gay youth are further alienated within their schools.[12] It is this discourse that is responsible for the stereotype of the predatory homosexual preying on innocent children. This construct ensures that lesbian and gay educators stay hidden in their schools for fear of losing their jobs and experiencing harassment from students and colleagues. As a result few mentors and role models exist for lesbian and gay youth in schools.[13]

Shane Town and I have undertaken collaborative qualitative studies into the secondary school experiences of young lesbians and gay men. I conducted interviews with ten young lesbians in 1993 and he with ten young gay men during 1994. This approach has allowed us to focus on the differences as well as the similarities between the participant's experiences. While the experiences of lesbian and gay youth may have some similarities, because of the gendered constructs surrounding male and female sexuality, they manifested themselves differently and were dealt with in fundamentally different ways.[14] The data used in this article draws on my M.Ed. thesis investigating the secondary school experiences of ten young lesbian secondary school students, and our joint article exploring what queer pedagogy could offer in meeting the needs of lesbian and gay youth in schools.[15]

The lesbian participants were difficult to find, which proved later to be an indication of the silence that surrounded lesbian sexuality at

their schools. They were gained from a wide range of contacts in the lesbian community. The ten lesbians ranged in age from 15 to 25 and all self-identified as lesbian and pakeha. Therefore the perceptions of young lesbians who experience the complex oppression of race and sexual orientation are not within the scope of this study. When they were interviewed in 1993, the youngest participant was currently attending school and the oldest had left ten years ago. They were selected across two urban sites and attended a range of single sex and co-educational schools. Two schools were situated in provincial towns, the remaining eight in urban or suburban centres. Two young women moved from single sex schools to what they perceived as more progressive co-educational schools in their final year of school.

From the beginning I endeavoured to make my subject position as a lesbian educator and a feminist clear. Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the interviewees over two to three months during 1993. These were based on an interview schedule constructed by myself and were viewed by the participants prior to being interviewed. The scope of the interviews allowed the participants to explore their perceptions of the following areas; the school curriculum, educators' and counsellors' attitudes, peer cultures, social and sexual activities, forming a lesbian identity and identity management strategies. The participants were consulted at each step of the process as fully as was possible to provide feedback on my framing of their experiences. Pseudonyms were used for all participants and some details of schools were blurred to protect the participant's confidentiality.

CONSTRUCTING DESIRE ON THE MICRO LEVEL: Regulating Lesbian Sexuality in Secondary Schools

'We're not here to teach about homosexuality, we're here to teach mathematics and English and physics and subjects like that. All this nonsense about 'isms'... just detracts from what education is really about.' (secondary school Principal)[16]

Despite the fact that sexuality is a constant student preoccupation within schools its representation within the curriculum is tacitly heterosexual.[17] Positive constructions of lesbian and gay sexuality are either conspicuously absent or marginalised as one off sessions within the curriculum.[18] Recent research has shown that heterosexuality within the school context functions as a form of social regula-

tion and control and that heteronormative discourses serve to police gender roles and reinforce male/female binaries.[19] My findings show that this regulation leaves young lesbians in schools at best feeling invisible and isolated and at worst being on the receiving end of harassment and intimidation from their peers. In some cases, this is a process in which teachers collude.

Four of the participants felt that the whole area of sexuality was dealt with inadequately at school, especially the two young lesbians who attended Catholic schools. They noted a lack of information and an emphasis on biological identification and processes at the expense of relationships. Isobel perceived that the information she received about female sexuality constructed it as a problem:

> Everything in sex education is pathologised. Your bodily functions are treated as problems. The problems of contraception, menstruation etcetera. I had a negative sensation about these functions and the things that were happening to me. (Isobel)

Isobel's comments reflect the findings of Fine's research conducted into the sexuality education of adolescent girls.[20] She revealed that positive constructions of female desire were conspicuously absent from the curriculum. It featured few positive constructions of female sexuality and advocated young women learning to defend themselves against active male sexuality by 'just saying no'.[21] Ryan also refers to limited representations of female desire within school sexuality education programmes advocated by the neo-conservative right.[22] Sexuality is tied firmly into heterosexual framework of marriage and babies. Within this context, expressions of female sexual desire, including lesbianism are unlikely to be heard.[23]

Previous research has drawn attention to the social construction of heterosexism in health curricula and classroom practice by identifying the silences that surround gay and lesbian sexuality.[24] Five of the lesbian participants could not remember any mention of lesbianism in the classroom. The lack of any acknowledgment of her emerging lesbian feelings by educators at Melissa's school until she became a senior student demonstrates how discourses of childhood innocence operate to shut down and limit representations of female and lesbian sexuality in the curriculum[25] :

> It was either the fifth or the sixth form before we were told, 'hey, lesbians exist'. (Melissa)

Eight of the participants had attempted to find information on lesbian sexuality in their school libraries, seven of them found that their school libraries contained no information about lesbian issues.

The silence which surrounded any mention of lesbianism gave a message to the lesbian participants that there must be something wrong with it. Isobel felt that the lack of acknowledgment of lesbianism as a positive choice limited her opportunity for personal growth. The effects of institutional silence are that young lesbian women must either collude, thus silencing themselves, or be subject to multiple ostracisms from their peers and teachers.

The limited mentions that were made of homosexuality referred to men. Generalised tentative and vague mentions of lesbian sexuality, a lack of information and educators using homosexuality as an attention getting device reinforced the young womens' feelings of invisibility:

> The one time I ever heard anything about homosexuality was in Art History, snigger, snigger, Michelangelo was gay, yet happy to be a really good artist ... it was one of those attention getting things and ... it just wasn't addressed at all. (Vita)

Negative peer reactions to the mention of lesbian sexuality in class reinforced their feelings that there must be something wrong and unacceptable about lesbianism.

HARASSMENT AND HOMOPHOBIC ATTITUDES

The peer group is a site in which much of our knowledge about 'acceptable' gender and sexuality roles is constructed. Connell suggests that students are active makers of sex/gender identities, in which they have complex social and psychic investments.[26] Peers play an important role in formulating adolescent beliefs and regulating their behaviour. Acting as self-regulators, peers police each other, shutting down representations of sexuality which do not conform to traditional gender roles in order to maintain the homo/hetero and male/female binaries. Students who step outside these categories are abused and ostracised.

Verbal harassment was experienced by several of the young lesbians from their peers. It took the form of general insults. One of Belinda's friends colluded with peers telling jokes about lesbians and gays which she found painful and insulting. Two examples of harass-

ment focussed on the threat of discovery, being identified as a lesbian was regarded as so distasteful that it was an insult. One student was keen to find out if Belinda was a lesbian and relentlessly pursued her to get an answer. Melissa was on the receiving end of abusive graffiti. Perhaps because less privilege is attached to femininity than masculinity, none of the young women experienced physical abuse because they were known to be lesbians.[27] However all the participants felt unsafe at school and feelings of exclusion from peers increased five of the young women's feelings of isolation.

Six of the lesbian participants knew of lesbian and gay teachers being harassed because of their lesbian or gay sexuality. This increased the students' feelings that there was something wrong with being a lesbian. Seven of the young women felt that many of their teachers and counsellors were uncomfortable and in some cases, judgemental in their attitudes towards homosexuality and perceived that their negative attitudes spilt over into the classroom. Educators had colluded with the homophobic behaviour of students in several situations. Isobel felt very hurt when a teacher that she trusted silently colluded with the rest of her classmates against her, implying that she may have been a lesbian:

> There was one other time which was where she really hurt me ... and we were doing that really yukky getting to know you thing in class ... I turned around to this guy and he said 'So, have you had any boyfriends?' and I just remember hearing this silence in the class and all these giggles and (the teacher) turning around from the blackboard and looking straight at me and giving me this really kind of sly grin of complicity but with them not with me. Like this sort of 'ha, they've got you now'. I remember it really hurting and I was devastated. (Isobel)

Seven of the young women I interviewed perceived counsellors to be ill informed, untrustworthy and not worth talking to. Three of them perceived their school counsellors to be untrustworthy and lacking in confidentiality. For these reasons they did not approach them. Three young women were lucky enough to have the support of guidance counsellors who enabled them to feel more comfortable and positive about themselves as young lesbians. The small number of the young women interviewed who received a great deal of support from strong women teachers and counsellors perceived that the support and modelling played a crucial role in improving their school experiences.

The regulation of lesbian sexuality within the participants' schools resulted in discourses which to some extent either silenced or negated constructions of queer sexuality. This resulted in all of the young women feeling isolated and disempowered. However they utilised a range of strategies in order to maintain themselves and continued to find ways to explore their sexualities within both erotic and political contexts.

LESBIAN STUDENTS' RESISTANCE STRATEGIES

It was seldom possible for the participants to explore options in secondary schools which moved beyond the limited conceptions of sexuality presented by hetero normative discourses; however they all developed resistance strategies to survive. Silence can also be perceived as resistance and within hostile school environments, it was often a very sensible strategy for the participants to adopt.[28] All but one young lesbian perceived that 'coming out' at school would endanger their physical and emotional well being. Therefore seven lesbian participants chose not to disclose their sexuality to other people for fear of receiving verbal and physical abuse, increasing their feelings of isolation from their peer group, and having to deal with rejection. Rachel perceived her silence made her feel safe. Cathy compartmentalised her lesbian life, leading it secretly outside school.

Constructing a heterosexual identity was another resistance strategy employed by the participants to keep themselves safe and be accepted by their teachers, peer group and family. Vita perceived that even though people saw her not conforming to feminine gender expectations, pretending to be heterosexual was enough to disguise her attraction to women:

> (Having relationships with guys) also disguised how others wouldn't think that I was gay ... The fact that I had boyfriends was good enough. People knew that I was like a tomboy but they just didn't click on. (Vita)

Adopting asexual roles was another form of resistance employed by the lesbian participants to keep themselves safe. These strategies included; projecting a 'feminine' image so that you did not fit into stereotyped perceptions people had of lesbians as 'masculine', over-achieving academically, culturally and on the sports field (this was a valuable one because you received praise and recognition from the school) and playing the role of the class clown and the

problem solver/ counsellor amongst peers.

Many of the survival strategies lesbian and gay students use to resist the regulation process caused the participants a great deal of distress. The effects of them have been documented widely in educational research and include depression, low self-esteem, deterioration of school-work, truancy, dysfunctional peer group and family relationships, alcohol and drug use, self destructive behaviour and suicide ideation.[29] These effects were all experienced to some extent by the participants.

Jackie felt that the isolation she experienced as a result of being a lesbian has affected her level of openness with people later in life. Cathy felt that having to hide her lesbianism for a long period of time has made it difficult for her to express her feelings. Isobel felt that the negative messages she received about being a lesbian meant that she has repressed the sexual side of herself which has affected her ability to be intimate with other people:

> I think that deep down I've felt it's not okay to feel those things that it's really quite disgusting to feel physical pleasure or attraction or desire for another woman and I never thought of that as having anything to do with my sexuality before as it relates to other women but I think now that it probably does. (Isobel)

While five of the lesbian participants contemplated suicide, none of them actually attempted it. The five who contemplated suicide said that it was because of a number of factors, only one of which was being a lesbian.

CHALLENGE AND TRANSFORMATION

Four of the young women moved beyond the use of survival strategies and created new venues within which they could explore their emerging lesbian identities.[30] Several decided to come out to their friends which in most cases made them feel less isolated and better about themselves as young lesbians. Two of them consciously moved to liberal co-educational schools where there were identified gay and lesbian staff. Out lesbian teachers taught at the last school that Alice attended. In addition to creating an atmosphere that was safe for her as a young lesbian, they modelled a range of ways of being a lesbian, she perceived this widened her choices as she created herself as a young lesbian:

> I think that I was lucky that when I was coming out I had a few lesbians around me, like at school, old and young, closeted, butch, femme so I was never confronted with one particular image of what a lesbian is. (Alice)

Eight of the young women often felt more comfortable interacting with adults than with their peers because their emerging lesbian identity placed them on the outside of their peer group. The adults included feminist, lesbian and gay teachers at their schools and within the wider community. Five of the lesbian participants felt their attractions had a strong sexual component with one student having a relationship with a teacher at her school, while the remaining four perceived that they worshipped the women from afar. Whatever the form the relationship took, the adults served as important role models to the young women, encouraged them to develop their talents and in some cases provided them with information about support agencies outside the school.

Feminist and lesbian communities provided venues for four of the lesbian participants to explore their emerging identities. In addition to informal friendships formed through lesbian and feminist organisations, groups such as Womens Icebreakers[31] and lesbian and gay run telephone services were perceived by the participants to be important. Firstly to establish initial contact and later to provide a venue to explore constructions of lesbian and gay sexuality and gain ongoing support:

> I think sub-consciously that (the Womens Centre) was my stepping stone. I didn't realise it at the time but that was the way forward for me to come out in a safe environment. (Melissa)

In the sexual relationship she enacted with a teacher, Cathy's exploration of lesbian desire was pleasurable and exciting, despite the fact that it placed her on the outside of her peers and she risked social ostracism.[32]

Despite Cathy experiencing difficulty with the secretive nature of the relationship and the differences in their ages, her affair with the teacher provided her with a way in which to explore the erotic dimensions of her emerging sexuality. While the relationship was secretive and removed Cathy from her peers, it provided a powerful venue for her to explore her sexual attraction to other women:

> In a way it was almost like the storybook, living out one of those fantasies ... it was all very romantic ... I found her incredibly attractive and very knowledgeable and grownup. (Cathy)

During the course of the research, Belinda, the youngest of the lesbian participants and the only one currently attending school made the decision to come out as a lesbian at her school. The 1994 Human Rights Act and the recently revised Ministry of Education Guidelines legislation provided legal backup which she could call on to ensure her school knew that it had a clear legal obligation not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation and to ensure that it provided safe physical and emotional environments for students.[33]

While she acknowledged that it was not an easy process, Belinda perceived that she has gained the respect of her peers and teachers because of her openness about her sexuality:

> People seem to respect me more because I'm so open about it and proud, I'm not scared to openly say I'm a lesbian. (Belinda)

The presence of Belinda and young lesbian and bisexual women at her school, within the dominant school hetero normative discourses has critiqued and revealed their construction and has enabled her to challenge and transform hetero normative discourses within the school. To this end she has worked with staff to incorporate lesbian and gay sexuality into the Health curriculum and established support for lesbian and bisexual students formally and informally within the school. The principal used the Human Rights legislation during one assembly specifically to talk about how the school would not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation after she received complaints about harassment from the lesbian and bisexual support group Belinda established within the school.

These four students moved beyond survival. While several actively enacted strategies which allowed them to develop their sexuality personally, Belinda resisted dominant hetero normative discourses within her school in order to transform school practices, making it a more inclusive environment for lesbian and bisexual youth. The research process played a crucial part in enabling a number of the participants to explore a range of representations of sexuality and transform the lives of themselves and others.

QUEERING THE PITCH: Implications For Educational Practice

The research process provided one of the first venues for most of the participants to articulate their experiences and have them validated. While their stories were often painful, their telling proved to be an empowering and in some senses, cathartic experience, both for the participants and for Shane and I.[34] This venue provided an opportunity for the participants to understand their constructions and marginalisation within schools which had silenced positive representations of lesbian and gay sexuality. It also enabled them to positively claim their sexual identities and provide support and encouragement for their friends. In Belinda's case she decided to come out at school and attempted to transform it to meet her needs. Toni gained the personal strength to come out to her mother and establish a venue for other young lesbians to support and affirm themselves:

> Being part of this research was a bit of an awakening ... It gave me the strength to come out to my mother ... and it has moved me to take positive action so that the isolation I felt need not be felt by others that follow ... I think I got more out of this than you did. (Toni)

The research process also provided an opportunity for the participants to explore aspects of their sexuality which moved beyond limited constructions of sexuality as an either or choice within the limiting homo/hetero binary. Within this context, sexuality was able to be perceived as a shifting changing continuum and a place where pleasure and variety can be explored. Cathy was interested in exploring the continuum beyond the narrow prescriptions of the lesbian label:

> At the moment, I'm thinking quite seriously about bisexuality ... I'm thinking, oh god, if they can say they are (bisexual) and haven't slept with any men and I've slept with men and I'm staunchly sticking to being a lesbian, then it's the word that people are using differently rather than the actual meaning behind it. (Cathy)

Ultimately, it should not be the responsibility of students such as Belinda to educate her own teachers and peers. As Melissa pointed out, there are enough strains on young lesbians in schools as it is:

> [It should be] done for them. [Young lesbians] shouldn't have to do it themselves, it's tough enough anyway. (Melissa)

The solution to the regulation of lesbian and gay sexuality lies

within educational institutions. Schools need to work towards re conceptualising sexuality as fluid and changeable. This would allow students, regardless of their sexual orientation, to explore a range of sexual identities and their implications along a continuum. Within this framework heterosexuality can be discussed, deconstructed and its construction as a discourse explored rather than assumed.[35]

This 'universalising' rather than 'minoritising' view of sexuality would destabilise heterosexuality, benefiting gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual youth alike through a recognition of the diversity and difference which exists within communities.[36]

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NOTES

1 The title of the first novel written by lesbian Jamaican/North American writer, Michelle Cliff, *Claiming An Identity They Taught Me To Despise* (Persephone Press, Watertown, Massachusetts, 1980).

2 Kathleen Quinlivan and Shane Town, 'Queer as Fuck? Queer Pedagogy, Educational Practice and Lesbian and Gay Youth', in Deborah Epstein and James Sears (eds), *A Dangerous Knowing* (University of Chicago and St Martins Press, Chicago, forthcoming).

3 Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (Routledge, New York, 1993); Diana Fuss (ed), *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (Routledge, New York, 1991). Warner uses the term heteronormativity to describe discourses which construct heterosexuality as normal and marginalise queer sexuality as deviant in Michael Warner, *Fear of a Queer Planet* (University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1993).

4 Deborah Britzman, 'What Is This Thing Called Love?', *Taboo: The Journal of Culture and Education*, 1 (Spring 1995) p. 68.

5 ibid.

6 ibid., p. 69

7 C. Luke and J. Gore (eds), *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy* (Routledge, New York, 1992).

8 Simon Watney, 'Speaking Out: Teaching In', in Diana Fuss (ed), *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories* (Routledge, New York, 1991) p. 394.

9 Allanah Ryan, 'The 'Moral Right', Sex Education and Populist Moralism', in Sue Middleton (ed), *Women and Education in Aotearoa Volume 1* (Allen and Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, Wellington, 1988) pp. 114-126.

10 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume I* (Pantheon, New York, 1978); Jonathan Silin, *Sex, Death and the Education of Children: Our Passion for Ignorance in the Age of AIDS* (Teachers' College Press, University of Columbia, New York, 1995); Watney, 'Speaking Out'.

11 ibid.

12 Foucault, *The History of Sexuality.*

13 Madiha Khayatt, 'Surviving School as a Lesbian Student', *Gender and Education,* 6:1 (1994); Kathleen Quinlivan, 'Ten Lesbian Students Reflect on Their Secondary School Experiences', M.Ed. thesis, University of Canterbury, 1994.

14 Khayatt, 'surviving School'; Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

15 Quinlivan, 'Ten Lesbian Students'; Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

16 *Sunday Star Times,* 31 March 1996, p. 3.

17 Michelle Fine, 'Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females: the Missing Discourse of Desire', in Michelle Fine (ed), *Disruptive Voices: The Possibilities of Feminist Research* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1992).

18 Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

19 Bronwyn Davies, *Shards of Glass: Children Reading and Writing Beyond Gendered Identities* (Hampton Press, London,1993); Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

20 Fine, 'Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females'.

21 'It is ok to say no' is one of the principles the Minister of Health has advocated recently to curb teenage pregnancies in, Ministry of Health, *Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy* (Ministry of Health, Wellington, 1996).

22 Ryan, 'The "Moral Right" '.

23 Khayatt, 'Surviving School'.

24 Fine, 'Sexuality, Schooling and Adolescent Females'; James Sears, *Growing up Gay in the South* (Haworth Press, New York, 1991); Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

25 Silin, *Sex, Death and the Education of Children.*

26 Robert Connell, *Masculinities* (Polity Press, London, 1995).

27 Khayatt, 'Surviving School'.

28 Magda Lewis, *without a word: teaching beyond women's silence* (Routledge, New York, 1993); Britzman, 'What is This Thing Called Love?'.

29 Khayatt, 'Surviving School'; Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'; Sears, *Growing Up Gay*; Lorraine Trenchard and Hugh Warren, *Something to Tell You* (London Gay Teenage Group, London, 1984).

30 Shane Town, 'Is It Safe To Come Out Yet?' The Impact of Secondary Schooling on the Positive Identity Development of Ten Young Gay Men. Or, 'That's a Queer Way to Behave' (Paper presented to the New York meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April, 1996).

31 A group for young women who are thinking that they may be lesbian or bisexual, run by trained lesbian and bisexual facilitators of a similar age.

32 Britzman, 'What is This Thing Called Love?'.

33 Ministry of Education, 'National Education and Administration Guidelines', *Education Gazette,* 23 April 1993.

34 Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

35 Khayatt, 'Surviving School'; Quinlivan and Town, 'Queer as Fuck?'.

36 Eve Sedgwick, *The Epistemology of the Closet* (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1990).

Hetero-sexing Girls:
'Distraction' and Single-Sex School Choice

SUE WATSON

Research into single-sex schooling for girls has pointed out some of the discourses of femininity that are invoked in such a context; desires for academic success and equal opportunity as well as for 'appropriate, safe, socialisation'.[1] While this research examines the relationship between single-sex schooling and discourses of femininity, the focus is on the ways in which these discourses are negotiated and contested. It does not consider how femininity is itself produced in such a context. Femininity, and related notions of gender and heterosexuality, are taken for granted as pre-existent, 'natural' categories of identification. Following contemporary feminist theorists such as Butler, feminist educationalists have come to understand gender and heterosexuality as effects of discourse, which are produced in and through the schooling process.[2] It is therefore in the negotiation and contestation of discourses of femininity, that the very notion of femininity is itself constituted and sustained.

From this perspective, the focus of research and theoretical work for feminist educators is on exploring the ways in which discourse works to produce effects, such as gender and heterosexuality. If we can understand something of the ways in which discursive effects are produced, we can then begin to think about how they might be contested or undone. Butler develops the notion of performativity to describe the process of discursive production. She describes performativity as: 'the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effect that it names'.[3]

The reiterative power of discourse is such that it not only produces gender and heterosexuality as effects, but it also regulates and constrains them. Indeed, it is in the process of regulation and constraint that these effects are materialised. Butler argues that this process is achieved through reiteration of the 'normal' as well as the 'abject'. By abject, Butler refers to: 'those "unlivable" and "uninhabitable" zones of social life' which constitute the boundaries of social life. It is the abject which defines the boundaries of what is allowable

and in doing so, constitutes the 'normal'. So, while these discourses are constituted as binaries; they are in fact interdependant and serve to define one another. For example, the process of assuming a gender identity, that of 'girl', is one in which certain sexed identifications are enabled and in which others are 'dis-allowed'.[5] The emphasis, then, is on what kind of girl one should be and while this work is being done, the focus is taken away from questioning how or why the category 'girl' comes to be at all.

In relation to girls' schools, the notion of reiteration opens up the possibility for a different perspective on their potential for subversion of the gender regime. It is my contention that reiteration of the 'norms' of gender and heterosexuality will be most necessary and forcible at sites where their 'naturalness' most risks exposure. Rather than seeing girls' schools as sites where gender and heterosexuality are taken for granted, perhaps they can be viewed as sites where the 'naturalness' of these discourses is threatened and therefore, where they are most in need of reinforcement? In other words, girls' schools can offer the potential for subversion and contestation of the discourses of gender and heterosexuality.

My interest here is in the ways in which gender and heterosexuality are constituted via single-sex schooling and how these effects are both produced and regulated. Rather than undertaking research in girls' schools as a kind of 'archaeological dig' to search for the sedimented effects of the discourses of gender and heterosexuality, I have focussed on the reasons why some girls and their parents choose single-sex schools. The processes by which school choices are made may be viewed as a discursive field through which girls and their parents must negotiate their way.[6] As will be apparent from the interview extracts presented here, in the case of single-sex schools, this discursive field is a rich source of discourses related to gender and heterosexuality – discourses which constitute and define the norm as well as the abject. Choice of school is therefore a focal point which will enable me to begin to explore girls' schools as a site of discursive production.

The interview material was derived from interviews I undertook with three families from different social-class backgrounds, whose daughters wanted to attend the same state girls' secondary school (Sheppard High) the following year.[7] All of the girls were 'out of

zone' for the school which had a high social-class intake and was able to operate an enrolment scheme as it was oversubscribed. In each family, I interviewed the parents together, and then their daughters who, at that time, were twelve or thirteen years of age and in Form Two. I wanted to get a sense of the processes and reasoning that were underlying their choice of Sheppard High, as well as some understanding of the educational histories and life experiences of the parents which might be seen as influential in their choices.

Taking up Butler's theory of the ways in which discursive production works to produce the effects of gender and heterosexuality, here I re-visit the interview data to unravel some of the apparently contradictory aspirations expressed by the girls and their parents for choosing Sheppard High. If, as Butler theorises, one of the ways discursive production works is via reiteration of both the normal *and* the abject, I would expect to find evidence of both of these types of discourse throughout the interviews in relation to gender and heterosexuality. Furthermore, if single-sex schooling for girls contains the possibility for subverting dominant discourses of femininity, and thereby undermining the binary relation by which femininity is constituted in relation to masculinity, then such schools may also have the potential to disrupt the hetero-sexual imperative supported by the binary of gender. If the hetero-sexual 'norm' is seen to be threatened by the single-sex character of the school, I would expect to see the 'naturalness' of this form of sexuality reinforced.

As the interviews were undertaken with families from very different backgrounds, the extracts presented here begin to show the ways that heterosexual discourses are mediated through differing social class contexts.

THE HUNT FAMILY

Sarah and Richard Hunt live in a middle-class suburb with their three children. Sarah is a registered nurse and Richard is a partner in a relatively large law practice. Both attended single-sex schools. Richard began by asserting that the single-sex character of the school as well as the curriculum were of equal importance in their decision to send their daughter Anna to Sheppard High. For Sarah, the curriculum was key. However, when Richard went on to assert his belief in the value of single-sex schooling, Sarah defended his argument.

Richard: 'I think the courses [were behind their choice] and the concept that we wanted a single-sex school.'

Sue: 'Why?'

Sarah: 'In my case [when she was at school], there was no choice. But having said that, when we looked at what the options were, we still felt, that whether it was a coed. school or single-sex, the main thing was the curriculum they offered. If you prioritise it, if you look at the curriculum then you look at the other features that you want, that's why we did it.'

Richard: 'I don't believe it, sorry. When you're at school, it's good not to be distracted, that influenced me.'

Sarah: 'It may seem to some people that it's a narrow view but ...'

Richard: 'But you certainly don't have to worry about ...'

Sarah: 'But you see these days, it's certainly not like when we were at school. I mean these kids don't seem to have a problem relating with boys or the boys don't seem to have a problem relating to girls because they have a lot more things where the boys come to the girls' schools. They're always having dances, and they're always having lunch time things where the boys come over. It's not something silly like it was in our day. I mean if a boy came to our school, the poor boy was probably so embarrassed, the girls would go hysterical and cram into the windows, I mean, that sort of thing doesn't happen ...'

In this extract, it seems that the Hunts believe a single-sex school is able to offer freedom from the 'distractions' of boys, yet they do not intend that the girls will have no contact at all and therefore be unable to 'relate' to them. It is as if girls' schools offer a means by which contact with boys can be controlled so as to enable the girls to study away from distractions, but not at the expense of their 'normal' heterosexual development.

The view of distraction from their daughter Anna's point of view is different to that of her parents who think that girls will be attracted to, and therefore distracted by, boys. In contrast, Anna describes some of the gender dynamics of the Form Two co-educational class she was in at the time where (at least at her age) far from being attracted to the boys, she describes the ways in which some of the boys actively set out to distract her away from her school work.

Sue: 'What do you think about single-sex schools as opposed to coed?'

Anna: 'I like coed. schools but I think I could handle single-sex be-

cause sometimes the boys, you have to act like quite a rebel around them, sort of act quite cool around them otherwise they'll hassle you sometimes. And they sometimes annoy you when you're working.'

Sue: 'Who do they hassle and pick on then?'

Anna: 'Sometimes like if you're doing your work and they don't want to do it or something they sometimes hassle you for doing the work. Sometimes they say things like "goody good" or something like that.'

Sue: 'What do you do when they say that?'

Anna: 'I just ignore them. It doesn't happen too often but it's just anyone that's working. Sometimes I think I would like a single-sex school 'cause you can make quite a lot of friends and you'd be able to get down and work and it'd be quite fun.'

One of the reasons Anna wants to go to Sheppard High is that it offers a kind of sanctuary away from the behaviour of the boys and she looks forward to the prospect of making friends and being able to work undisturbed in a single-sex school. The view of distraction expressed by Anna's parents suggests to me a kind of anxiety, as if they feel the need to defend the merits of single-sex schooling against a perception 'out there' that it will lead to 'abnormal' development. They want Anna to become neither overly-obsessed with boys, nor unable to relate to them. Anna's apparent unawareness of this need for 'normal' development means that she looks forward to being in an all-girls environment where she can get on with what is really important to her, her school work. The friends she wants to be with are girls and it is apparently of no importance to her that she maintain some contact with boys.

THE ALLEN FAMILY

The Allen family, while sharing the same desire for their daughter to achieve educationally, have very different backgrounds and life experiences to the Hunts. Rita Allen attended her local co-educational high school and left at the end of the Fourth Form to work with her mother in a railway cafeteria and since that time she has always had unskilled or semi-skilled work. She now works full-time as a meat packer. Her husband Bruce left college after eighteen months to do an apprenticeship which he never completed and from there had a series of unskilled jobs. His main interest was the guitar and he

spent many years playing in bands. He now works as an itinerant music teacher. The Allens both have children from previous marriages, none of whom completed their School Certificate year. Because of their own lack of educational opportunities, and those of their older children, the Allens are determined that Patricia's experience will be different.

Rita: 'I want Patricia in a sense to try and be one of the next generation that would not be unemployed, on the dole. I mean, who knows, she could probably throw this all off in our face and be a mother at sixteen or seventeen. I hope not. I can say I hope not. I want her to do something, do something with her life. Work in a career, whatever she chooses to do, you know. I want her to stay at school as long as it takes.'

Bruce: 'I'd like her to get to university or something like that. That's what I've got in mind. I'd like her to do things like that.'

The threat of an 'unwanted' pregnancy is, for the Allens, an event that would materialise Patricia's failure and educational achievement is to be the way up and out of such a fate. Rita and Bruce believe that the way in which Patricia will achieve is to be around students who want to learn and they do not see this being provided by the coeducational schools in the working-class area where they live. It is therefore the social class mix of students at Sheppard High, rather than the single-sex character of the school, which initially attracted them. However, through the interview process with me, they began to think about the latter.

Sue: 'Do you think there is something a single-sex school can offer that a coed. can't?'

Bruce: 'Put their mind on learning rather than worrying about what the other ...'

Rita: 'Well, I think, now since you said that to me over the phone and why the interview, I thought, oh, I never thought about it that way. But why, is there a reason, and Patricia's was, she actually said to me. I said: "Why do you want to go to Sheppard High?" At one point, and she said, "I don't want to go to the same school as the boys, they distract me". She actually said that. Whether it's just out of the mouth of babes I don't know. But anyway, I just left that hanging. And I think too, I looked at it this way, that there's this sexist thing, male versus female. I can do anything you can do better type of thing. You get that in a competitive type

of – I don't know how to put that in words. You got that, but um, I think, distraction, yes she will be, she could be. But I never really thought that's because sending her to a single-sex school. Once again, we wanted her educated.'

While the Hunts are anxious to ensure that Anna develops 'normally' in a single-sex environment, the Allens are resisting 'normal' because for them, normal is educational failure, and/or an 'unwanted' pregnancy. The threat is not about what Patricia could become if she attends a single-sex school, but what she might become if she does *not* attend.

There is a huge weight of expectation and responsibility riding on Patricia. It is as if she is going to make up for the lost opportunities of her parents and step-brothers and sisters a responsibility she is well aware of.

Sue: 'What do you think your parents want you to do with your life?'

Patricia: 'Don't throw it away but just do what I want to do but don't throw it away like my brother did. I wanna kill him. It's a waste of a life.'

Patricia is convinced that being at a single-sex school is essential if she is to succeed and like Anna Hunt, she was subject to sex-based harassment at the co-educational school she was attending at the time.

Sue: 'Why do you want to go to Sheppard High?'

Patricia: 'I don't know, I just wanted to go there. I didn't want boys around cause of all the things they do to you. They become a pain, especially when they get older, ugh. I can work easier if the boys would just leave me alone. And if they're there, I just get weird and get all aggro, can't work. It just puts me off working. Plus when you get to an age, I thought, oh, I might get to this age so I thought oh, um, well I might be interested in boys and if they're at my school I'd get distracted and always get into trouble for not working and then not handing in my homework on time. But if they weren't at the school I'll get all my stuff done, I can do whatever I want.'

Patricia wants to escape the sex-based harassment she experiences from the boys now, but she also believes she will one day become interested in boys herself, thus moving from aversion to desire. This attraction has a kind of inevitability to it as if it is a process that is beyond Patricia's control. It is an inevitability she seeks to avoid

before it happens, while she is still not interested in boys and therefore able to action her resistance. Patricia seems to see two possible outcomes as mutually exclusive. The first is heterosexual desire and the second is educational achievement. The means of escaping the outcome of heterosexual desire (educational failure) is to be in a single-sex school since a girls' school provides a means of protection from her own desires.

THE SMITH FAMILY

Doug Smith left home at fifteen to go to a farm training school but because his father was unable to finance him onto a farm, he followed his brother into the police force and he is now a senior police officer. Wendy Smith was encouraged to achieve at school and on matriculation in Australia she went to teachers' college, although she left after the first year. Wendy works part-time as a sales representative and her employment makes a vital contribution to the family finances.

Wendy and Doug express definite opinions about 'equality between the sexes'. They believe there are innate differences between boys and girls, and express resistance to liberatory discourses which, in their view, challenge these differences. Wendy and Doug believe that boys and girls should be given the same opportunities and that the outcomes are a result of either free choice or biological difference. Wendy has appropriated some feminist ideas about equality and she challenged the local school about the resources they were providing to cater to the needs of girls. In their home life, Wendy described the way she and Doug share some tasks.

Wendy: 'I mean, I've been lucky in that I've been away on holidays on my own. I mean he's not chauvinist but then I wouldn't say I'm particularly the hairy leg brigade either. I think we have a fairly balanced type of household, don't you?'

Their ideas about gender equality provide a backdrop for understanding their views on single-sex schooling for girls. The Smiths wanted their daughter Karen to attend Sheppard High because of the single-sex character of the school.

Sue: 'Do you think there is something a single-sex school can offer girls that a coed ... can't?'

Wendy: 'Yes, definitely ... at a coed. school you're competing against your peers. It is often hard to be seen to be better than the boys.'

Doug: 'It's all a part of growing up. If boys are in the same environment as the girls there's more chance of them interacting to the detriment of their education. They can meet boys after school which they do anyway.'

Wendy: 'In a situation, boys tend to be more dominant.'

Sue: 'Girls interact with boys and get distracted at school, is that what you were thinking?'

Doug: 'I think that's life isn't it? I mean Karen is now sort of giggling and talking about boys.'

Wendy: 'You know, I think it is generally acknowledged that girls do better at a single-sex school. I mean, she is quite academic.'

The contradictory nature of discourses of femininity are highlighted in this extract. First, boys are seen to be more dominant than girls. Secondly, in terms of their sexuality, Doug believes that girls are attracted to boys and thereby distracted by them. This attraction is regarded as both normal and inevitable, but 'detrimental'. Thirdly, there is the notion that bright girls benefit from a single-sex environment since it enables them to achieve academically without distractions. The implied corollary of this is that less able girls are 'allowed' to disregard academic pursuits in favour of 'romance'. This tension between academic achievement and heterosexual desire echoes that expressed by Patricia Allen.

While wanting to protect their daughter from the distractions of boys, the Smiths are equally keen to ensure that she develops heterosexual behaviour and that she is not kept entirely separate from the male sex; 'they can meet the boys after school'. Resisting sexual harassment is one thing, but it mustn't be taken 'too far'. Wendy's reference to the 'hairy leg brigade', her term for radical feminists, materialises this particular threat for her.

Karen looks forward to attending a single-sex school as a means of escape from the disruptive behaviour of the boys, and, like her parents, she thinks that girls will be attracted to boys, and that this will take their minds off their work.

Sue: 'What do you think about single-sex schools?'

Karen: 'The girls would probably, you'd do better because you'd like, you won't have the boys sort of being stupid and showing off.'

Sue: 'Is that what you notice at your school?'
Karen: 'You won't be distracted by them.'
Sue: 'Are you distracted by boys now?'
Karen: 'Not really, but when they get a bit older they probably will be.'
Sue: 'Why would you be happy just to be with girls?'
Karen: 'College is important and you should make the most of the opportunities. Keep your mind on your work and stuff.'

The impression is that while Karen is not attracted to boys now, she believes a change will come over 'them' (girls) as 'they' grow older. It is interesting to note her use of the third person pronoun (they), apparently as a means of distancing herself from such girls.

Like Anna and Patricia, Karen wants to succeed educationally. Sheppard High offers fulfilment of their desires because, as a single-sex school, it is perceived to be able to offer a sanctuary away from the more harmful, 'distracting' aspects of heterosexuality. However, at the same time, the normality and inevitability of heterosexual desire remains uncontested.

The term distraction was used in two very different ways in the extracts; both related to the dynamics of heterosexual desire. The first view of distraction relates to the tension between harassment and attraction. All of the girls describe the ways they are distracted away from their school work by the sex-based harassment they experience from the boys now and yet they all see themselves as one day being attracted to and therefore distracted by the boys when they are older. This is a belief also shared by their parents. Somehow, the girls' desire must be transformed via the hetero-sexual imperative from a desire to be away from boys, to a desire to be with them. Here, the productive and regulatory effects of discourse are manifest as the 'naturalness' of heterosexuality produces and shapes the girls' desires.

At the same time as the girls (and their parents) believe they will and should become attracted to boys, the consequences of this attraction are seen as potentially dangerous. A tension is set up between sexuality and intellectuality whereby the expression of one will be at the detriment of the other. This works both ways so that in separating girls from boys to enable academic achievement, there is always a threat that they will fail to develop their heterosexuality. On the other hand, girls who engage in the dynamics of heterosexual desire threaten their chances of educational success. It is a point similar to that which

Walkerdine makes in exploring the contradictions for girls' achievement in mathematics.[8] She discusses the tension between discourses of passivity associated with the nurturing work that women are to do and the capacity for reason and rationality which are seen to be the basis for performance in mathematics.

Single-sex schools balance a complex array of discourses. On the one hand they are seen to be able to offer educational success to girls but on the other there is always the threat that they will do so at the expense of the heterosexual imperative. Girls' schools provide a kind of 'time-out', an escape from the dynamics of heterosexual desire, but at the same time they must prepare girls to accept and willingly take up their place within these dynamics when they leave school. It is tempting here to think of girls' schools as a kind of nunnery but with a key difference. While nuns take a vow of chastity for life, these girls are to make a vow of limited tenure only. Chastity and separation from boys is to be for the purpose of academic achievement; it is not intended that the girls' removal from heterosexual dynamics be permanent. The girls are expected to achieve but not at the expense of their 'normal' heterosexual development.

HETEROSEXUAL SCHOOLING

I began by suggesting that girls' schools may be read as sites where gender and heterosexuality are discursively produced. Butler argues that it is in reiteration of both abject and normal discourses that discursive production occurs and that these discourses are constituted as binaries which serve to materialise one another. I would therefore expect to find evidence of both the abject and the normal in the reasons given by the girls and their parents for choosing a single-sex school. The abject takes on different forms in different familial and social contexts. For the Hunts, the abject is materialised by girls who lack discretion in their relationships with boys or who are unable to 'relate' to them. For the Allens, the abject is materialised in the pregnant body of a teenage girl, while for the Smiths, abjection is personified by the 'hairy leg brigade'; radical feminists who have taken things 'too far'. But perhaps the ultimate (and unarticulated) form of the abject for these parents would be if their daughters 'failed' to identify as heterosexual at all?

Through these abject discourses the limits and expressions of heterosexual desire are defined. In these terms, girls' schools can be

read as sites which are seen as being able to regulate heterosexual desire and yet, in the very process of regulation, heterosexuality is reproduced as both natural and inevitable. Furthermore, the heterosexual imperative requires and regulates the regime of gender based on difference, one which is taken for granted by the girls and their parents and which is founded on a relation of dominance. As the Smiths state, 'In a situation, boys tend to be more dominant'; therefore, girls can only be dominant in a context in which there are no boys. Single-sex schools are seen to be able to provide a respite from the relations of dominance sustained by gender and the discourse of equal opportunity also encourages girls to struggle against this hierarchy. However, as for heterosexuality, while some of the effects of gender are contested, the naturalness of gender is not. Indeed, single-sex schools by their very name piroritise gender as a primary form of identification.

SUBVERSIVE POSSIBILITIES?

But what possibilities do girls' schools offer for subversion of the regime of gender and for the imperative of heterosexuality to be questioned? I have argued that these schools are sites where the normal and the abject are most in need of reiteration precisely because they are sites where the 'naturalness' of gender and heterosexuality may be contested. If this is the case, what form might this contestation take? Butler argues that it is in the process of discursive production that the potential for a 'productive crisis' or a 'failure to repeat' is to be found. The parents envisaged a potential crisis for their daughter's heterosexuality by separating them from boys. Is there something in this separation that offers the possibility for the girls to critically re-think the ways in which gender and heterosexuality are constituted as normal and inevitable ? Does this 'space away' provide a powerful opportunity for the girls to consider other ways of doing gender and of expressing sexuality?

It is of interest that these girls are entering a single-sex school at the very time that they are beginning to question and resist the dominance and sex-based harassment from the boys in their classrooms. Girls' schools may be seen as providing a means of silencing their resistance by channelling it into the pursuit of academic success. However, they may also provide a context in which girls can voice and action their resistance and to consider how and why it is that gender relations are socially produced via compulsory heterosexuality.

Sue Watson worked as an English teacher, then completed her Masters degree in education policy. For the past three years she has been employed as a Research Fellow on The Smithfield Project at Victoria University where she is now a fulltime PhD student.

NOTES

1 Valerie Lee and Helen Marks, 'Who Goes Where? Choice of Single-Sex and Coeducational Independent Secondary Schools', *Sociology of Education*, 65 (1992) pp. 226-253. See also,

2 Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (Routledge, New York, 1993)

3 ibid., p. 2.

4 ibid., p. 3

5 ibid.

6 Jane Kenway, Sue Willis, Jill Blackmore and Leonie Rennie, 'Making "Hope Practical" Rather Than "Despair Convincing ": Feminist Post-Structuralism, Gender Reform And Educational Change', *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 15:2 (1994) pp. 187-210.

7 The interviews were undertaken as part of the research for my MEd. degree in 1994. Sheppard High is a pseudonym, as are the names of the families and people quoted in the interview extracts.

8 Valerie Walkerdine, *Counting Girls Out* (Virago, London, 1989).

Commentary: The Nineties ... Men in Women's Space

At two recent meetings of the new Auckland collective of the *Women's Studies Journal*, the *Journal's* policy that only women should be published was discussed. Full membership of the Women's Studies Association (NZ) is restricted to women and the Women's Studies Journal is the journal of the Association. The majority of the collective felt that times had changed and that it could now be appropriate to accept male contributors. However, some members felt strongly that the Journal should only accept contributions by women. Any decision to change the current policy will have to be decided on at the AGM of the Association, which will be held at the next conference in Massey in February.

THE ARGUMENT FOR MAINTAINING THE STATUS QUO

Linda Hill, *Alcohol & Public Health Research Unit, University of Auckland*

No, I don't want to have to explain to women's studies members why, in a world run by men to the detriment of women, there need to be women-only spaces like the *Journal*, the conferences and the Association itself. This is well recognised in the WSA's rules and statement: that it is 'a feminist organisation to promote radical social change through women's studies'.

Nor did I want our space taken up by exactly the same discussion of the matter at the two WSJ meetings – in the first case prompted by a male women's studies student at a university (not a feminist or radical organisation) submitting an essay for a *Women's Studies Journal* competition, and in the second by one of our number (not the authors) suggesting the inclusion of articles by a male on masculinity and by a man and woman on queer theory. While these may be of interest (personally I've found little feminism in queer theory or politics), surely there is no shortage of mixed or male-dominated publications to receive them. Anyway, I had thought that the outcome of both discussions was that :

1) the membership had made a clear decision on this just a few years ago

2) it was a matter for discussion at the conference rather than in the *Journal*.

As an association of members, the rules and policies we set need not be dictated nor influenced by any university. That is the point of having a WS Association and a WSA journal. Or is the journal to become just another academic career vehicle? I find this prospect – and this debate – enormously depressing.

THE ARGUMENT FOR CHANGE

Alison Jones, *Education Department, University of Auckland*

The main argument for excluding male authors and co-authors from publication in the *Journal* seems to have been that women need a '(pure) space' where we can be published, without competition from men. This simply no longer holds – women are now widely published, and significant overseas women's studies journals (none of which to my knowledge have a policy of excluding male authors) have no apparent problem in publishing male authors.

To imply that women scholars or writers for the *Journal* need 'protection' from male competition seems to me not only outdated, but also patronising to the excellent women scholars who publish their work in New Zealand and overseas. Women's feminist scholarship is thriving internationally and in New Zealand, and it is simply inaccurate to suggest that potential male authors may prevent some women from publishing in women's studies journals. It must be remembered that the Collective only publishes articles after they have been read and judged by competent reviewers, and that all articles – by women or men – would go through the same rigorous process. There seems to be a whiff of quasi-hysteria around this topic – as though if we allow one male author, women will never get another look in. That is absurd. It may be (and is likely) that we will receive very few articles by male authors.

Another argument might be that men cannot, or should not, write on feminist issues. That men cannot write material of interest to feminism is patent nonsense, considering the contributions of such authors as Bob Connell, who has published well-regarded articles on gender and education in Australia. The argument that men should not contribute to feminist debates seems simply to invoke the kind of blanket exclusion most of us would oppose in the name of open dis-

cussion. Also, women's studies journals are one of the sites for publication of queer theory and gay studies. Male contributions to these theoretical areas might be welcomed. Men also may write critiques of feminist theory which might be seen positively as an aspect of scholarly discussion in feminist theory.

A further significant point is that (a few) male students enrol in Women's Studies courses, and get degrees in Women's Studies. These students should not be *a priori* barred from contributing to the journal of the disciplinary area in which they do their research. And there is the issue of male co-authors. Our present policy excludes women who write with male co-authors from publishing in the *Journal*.

While I do not oppose all 'women only' spaces, I do not think it is necessary for the *Journal*. Indeed, its protectionist implication detracts from our status as a *bone fide* academic journal which publishes top quality feminist research and scholarship, and which is recognised as such in local and international feminist communities.

READING THESE TWO POSITIONS THESE ARE QUESTIONS I ASK

Aorewa McLeod, *English Department, University of Auckland*

- Has our world changed enough that women no longer need or want exclusive women's spaces in the nineties?
- Do we welcome nineties men because they want to be part of Women's Studies?
- When the *Journal* was originally set up in 1984 was the issue protection from male competition?
- Is there a need to be seen to have matured into gender inclusiveness?
- Do we need to include men to be recognised as a *bona fide* academic *Journal*?
- With lesbian theory often subsumed under the gay or queer label, should we be opening the *Journal* to gay male queer theorising?

CONFERENCE NOTICES

New Zealand

Women in the 1990s and Beyond
Women's Studies Association Conference
7- 9 February 1997
Massey University, Palmerston North

Please send expressions of interest to:
Books for Women, P.O. Box 509, Palmerston North

Australia

The Return of the Repressed: Feminism in the Quad
Saturday, 2 November 1996
9:00 am - 5:00 pm
The University of Sydney

Further information from: Pat Davies, Women's Studies,
University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia

Migration to Mining:
Medicine and Health in Australian History
7 - 11 July 1997
Northern Territory University, Darwin

Further information from:
P.O. Box 40359, Casaurina, NT 0811, Australia

United Kingdom

Violence, Abuse and Women's Citizenship
10 - 15 November 1996
Brighton, U.K.

For further information:
'Violence, Abuse and Women's Citizenship' Conference
P.O. Box MT7, Leeds L5175XJ, United Kingdom

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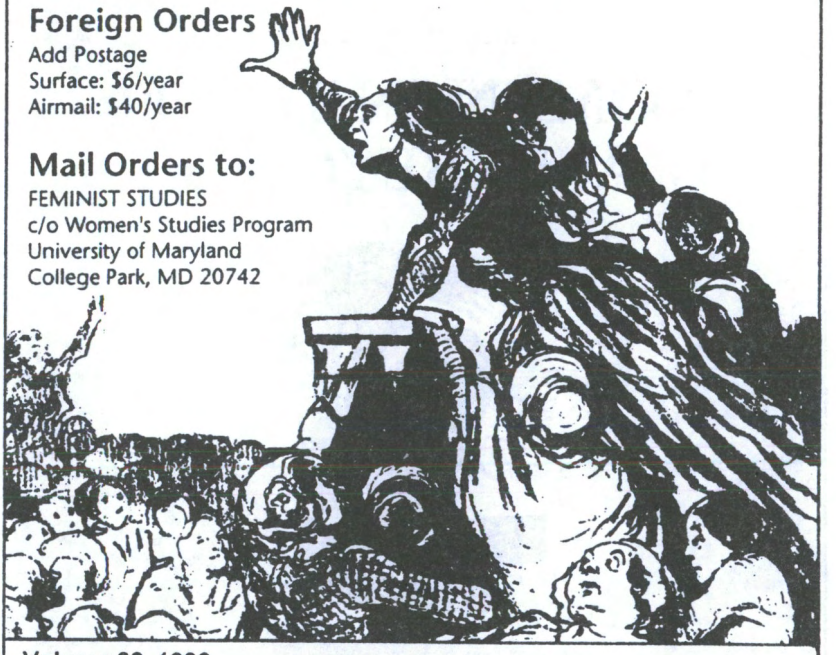

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Rebecca Biron, Feminist Periodicals and Political Crisis in Mexico. **James Brooks,** Negotiating Captivity in the New Mexico Borderlands. **Janet Chernela,** A woman's Narrative Performance in the Brazilian Amazon. **Bonnie Thornton Dill & Maxine Baca Zinn,** Theorizing Difference from Multiracial Feminism. **Laura Edwards,** Gender and Narratives of Political Conflict in the Reconstruction-Era United States South. **Veronica Fischer,** The Origins of Mid-Nineteenth-Century Dress Reform in the United States. **Estelle B. Freedman,** The Prison Lesbian. **Nancy Caro Hollander,** Women and the Latin American Terrorist State. **Emily Honig,** Women at Farah Revisited. **Seung-Kyung Kim,** Exploitation and Empowerment among Women Workers in South Korea. **Cynthia Mahabir,** Rape, Prosecution, Culture, and Inequality in Postcolonial Grenada. **Maureen T. Mahoney,** The Problem of Silence in Feminist Psychology. **Elana Michelson,** Feminist Epistemology and the Assessment of Experiential Learning. **Claire G. Moses,** Made in America: "French Feminism" in Academia. **Nicole Polier,** Sexual Transgression and Social Accommodation in the Life Narrative of a Papuan Migrant. **Leslie Salzinger,** Gendered Meanings under Production in Mexico's Export Processing Industry. **Hammed Shahidian,** Women and Clandestine Politics in Iran, 1970-1985. **Katherine Teghtsoonian,** "Choices for Women" in Canadian and American Child Care Policy Debates. **Anna Wilson,** Lesbian Detective Fiction and the Killing of the Coming-Out Story. **Susan Yadlon,** The Effects of Breast Cancer Discourse. **Susan Zeiger,** Motherhood, Conscription, and the Culture of the First World War. CREATIVE WRITING by **Lisa Chewning, Su Fidler Cowling, Tamara Friedman, Jesse Lee Kercheval, Kate Light, Shirley Geok-lin Lim, Susan Manchester, Viviana Mellet, Virginia A. K. Moran, Barbara Wilson.** REVIEW ESSAYS by **Felica Kombluh, Francille Wilson.** ART ESSAYS by **Helen Klebesadel; Elaine Kim** on **Hung Liu, Yong Soon Min, Hanh Thi Pham; Terry Gips** on **Joyce J. Scott.**

Book Reviews

NATTERING ON THE NET: WOMEN, POWER AND CYBERSPACE
Dale Spender

Spinifex Press, Melbourne 1995

Nattering on the Net is, according to its author Dale Spender, not simply another book on computers but a book 'about people' and the impact computers and information technology are having on human society. Spender's main thesis is that the invention of information technology and occurrence of cyberspace is a revolution comparable to the fifteenth century revolution of the printing press and that it will, similarly, alter the course of human history. Spender claims that, because of patriarchal structures, women were not part of both revolutions. However, as a complete 'convert' to computers, Spender claims that societies 'cannot permit white male dominance of the new communication technologies'. With this book she wishes to enthuse and prepare women to become full members of the cyber-community.

Readers who expect information about information technology, the Internet, computers, CD-Rom, Eudora, Lists, their possibilities and uses for and by women will be disappointed. Well, to be honest, they have been warned. However, readers who expect an analysis of social processes, and a feminist perspective on the subject will be even more disappointed. The book is badly written with an abundance of factual, historic and analytical mistakes and a total lack of insight into historical and socio-cultural processes. Spender singles out one aspect of the fifteenth century, the invention of the printing press, and without placing this event in its wider historic and social context, compares it with the twentieth century rise of information technology. Furthermore, the abundance of unreflected statements such as 'the priests of the church were displaced by the priests of science' makes it hard to take the whole project seriously. Even more disturbing is the fact that the data Spender presents and the analysis she makes are hardly ever underpinned with primary and secondary sources.

The unreflected claims and statements set the tone of the book.

In seven chapters, Spender sketches a universe in which men basically are harassers and oppressers and women are victims who either don't have access to the new information technology, are not encouraged in classrooms to take part in computer courses, or, if finally overcoming the barriers and linking up to the superhighway of communication technology, become the targets of 'flaming' and 'date raping'.

Knowing that in the first place the book is not written for an academic audience nevertheless, as a feminist cultural sociologist, I would have been interested in reading something about the impact of computer use and information technology on social and cultural interactions between gender, on aspects of culture, race and ethnicity and on social processes in general. For example, it could be interesting to see how institutions such as universities for example, within their framework of local culture and political correctness, will react when it comes to issues of EEO politices and policis against sexual harassment. To give one example, the University of Waikato recently deleted all sites with the title 'sex' in it from the WWW to avoid possible pornographic issues or uses of the Internet. Clearly, this was done to protect the female users of the net. However, such an act of protection may well be counterproductive, especially for those academics, such as myself, whose research is in the field of the body, sexuality, medicalisation and gay and lesbian studies. Furthermore, I personally question institutions, bureaucrats and officers who, with the intention to shield me from pornography or other vices of this world start censoring information. We don't have to under-estimate the fact that men will use and are using the Net as power play, sexually and otherwise. However, with the rising numbers of women using the Internet, and the growing trend to use browsers and other shifters of information, the communication patterns will change and will become more and more user-friendly. And of course there are always tactics to be found when it comes to getting rid of disturbing messages and harassing action. In my opinion, computer-wise women are smart enough to find either collectively, or individually, ways to deal with these issues.

The question that still puzzles me is for whom Dale Spender did write this book and what exactly is its purpose. In my view it would have been wiser to put her book where I believe it belongs in the first place: on the Internet, in that gigantic shop of texts, images and games

where everyone can put her and his ideas, thoughts, serious analysis and sheer nonsense, where groups and individuals can discuss, communicate and natter along and where I, as a regular visitor and user of this shop, judging by my own critical and academic sense would have the intensely treasured freedom to read, print or simply delete *Nattering on the Net.*

MARION E.P. DE RAS, *Women's Studies, University of Waikato*

TE PUA, VOLS. 1-3 (1992 -1994)
Linda Smith and Reina Whaitiri (eds)

Puawaitanga, Te Whare Wananga o Tamaki Makaurau, University of Auckland

For submissions and subscriptions contact:
Editor, Te Pua, Education Department, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland

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It is a difficult task to review a journal like *Te Pua* which, in its three volumes to date, contains such a wide range of academic discourse, creative writing and personal reflection. For the reviewer who finds herself in the unfamiliar territory of being a Maori woman reviewing Maori women's writing for yet another women's journal, the task introduces a kind of fear and awkwardness to the difficulty. But Linda Smith, one of the journal's two editors, quickly points out that if not for *Te Pua*, this unfamiliar territory might not even exist.[1] Besides, the task of reviewing *Te Pua* is not nearly as formidable as the task for which Te Puawaitanga, the journal's publisher, has chosen to be responsible, that is, to provide an ongoing and published forum for Maori women's writing.[2]

Te Pua defies easy definition, and appropriately so. It is a journal that publishes what Maori women write. Immediately, as the editorial of the first volume suggests, readers can expect diversity (of experience, viewpoint and representation) and multiplicity (of lives and identities). Its offerings then, are Maori, feminist, raw, honest, theatrical, intelligent, political, lyrical, cynical, evocative and chal-

lenging – as Maori women are. *Te Pua* publishes the women themselves as much as their contributions, especially those women who are so generous and intimate with their audience as to pen their anger, sadness, confusion, joy, aspirations and secrets. *Te Pua* is the deeds of Maori women in print, and in practice. Maori women write, submit, collect, and edit the contributions. They pay for and publish the journal and now, even review it. In return for their subscriptions, readers are engaged at a number of different levels – emotionally, intellectually, politically, and humorously.

Academic articles are a promised and delivered feature of all volumes of *Te Pua*. Again, any attempt to define *Te Pua* opens rather than ends at this juncture. As a university-based journal, it stands alone, offering a refreshing mix of academic and creative writing. The volumes contain poems, short stories, and reflections on personal lives and incidents. The academic contributions are variously instructive, theoretical, positional, and investigative. *Te Pua* includes articles and papers that have been previously published, presented, and even performed. The diversity of its content is reflected in the diversity of both its contributors and its subscribers. As many non academics as academics read *Te Pua*. It is a text in universities throughout the world as often as it is read by families in their homes. To date, the feedback from readers has all been positive.[3]

Te Pua probably offers numerous opportunities for criticism, especially from those who might see the journal as too great a departure from academic tradition and convention. Reina Whaitiri readily admits, in the editorial of the second volume, that *Te Pua* defies the usual constraints of academia. In doing so, it transcends disciplines and allows Maori women's writing to develop and embrace its own characteristics. Some contributions are written entirely in Maori without translation, as in Merimeri Penfold's 'Poi atu, poi mai'.[4] Other contributions contain whole passages, mihi and whakatauki in Maori without translation. Still others intersperse writing in English with occasional Maori words and phrases. Debbie Kupenga is the only contributor who translates her reo.[5] Yet, her translations somehow flow with the text, rather than interrupt it.

There are no apologies for writing in Maori without translation, and nor should there be. Readers unfamiliar with the reo might decide to invest in a Maori language dictionary. Other readers are completely comfortable with the blend of tongues that sets *Te Pua* apart,

the 'Haerenga to Great Turtle Island' and 'Constitutional Reform and Mana Wahine'.[6] This is not just Maori women's writing, but Maori women's voice, which allows such nuance to proliferate. It is a voice that is sometimes fluent and sometimes deprived. Contributors have grown up with Maori as their first language, or have learned later in life. Many contributors though, are of a generation of Maori women for whom the benefits of bilingual or total immersion education were unavailable. The patient reader may yet see *Te Pua* make use of glossaries or other forms of translation, particularly as the number of overseas subscriptions continues to increase.

Admittedly, I found some contributions unattractive, being either too bitter or despairing, or the introspection and romanticism overdone. However, it is unrealistic for a single reader to expect to enjoy every contribution. And if every contribution had appealed to me, I would say that *Te Pua* was inefficient in its use of the diversity of Maori women. Rest assured though, there is something for everyone. For those who accept the invitation, *Te Pua* is a privilege to read. Readers may receive instruction from women authorities on media, mythology and whakatauki. They may view some very intimate experiences of individual Maori women, an aspect that adds courage to the character of the journal. There are many articles that invite readers to react and respond. Often the contributions I found unappealing were also the ones to which I reacted uncomfortably, and where I found myself questioning myself and my own location in the world.

There are some criticisms to make which, while intended as useful suggestions, also represent the things that irked me personally as I read. I would have liked all the editorials to be modelled on the first. It reflected on the predominant theme of the first volume, and briefed the reader on the contributors. While this is not an obligatory function of editorials, it is both helpful and pleasant to know a little more about the writers than their name and tribe. The editorial is a useful opportunity to contemplate the common themes that link the contributions and their authors. Also, perhaps too many basic errors (grammar, punctuation, typing) slip through to the final copy. But in making this comment, I am reminded of the view of Keri Hulme, who is willing to forgive such errors when what is written is compelling: 'It is not patronising to ignore small flaws when presented with large gifts'.[7]

Te Pua challenges. It pushes the boundaries. It challenges readers to open their minds beyond the constraints of their academic

training. It challenges Maori men on issues of Maori leadership, for example. It challenges Pakeha women on issues of feminist theory. Ironically, yet happily, *Te Pua* also challenges and defies itself. It comes out from under the oppression, and breaks through the barriers that are so often the topics of its articles. But although challenging and defiant, *Te Pua* is not stroppy. Without self-righteous indignation, it offers a quiet and firm statement of the struggle that Maori women have experienced in pursuing publication. *Te Pua* simply gets on with the job, providing a vehicle for publishing Maori women's writing, and promising to be available long-term. *Te Pua* is Maori women writing. It is Maori women marking out a space on the bookshelves of Aotearoa and the world, and getting on with the business of filling it.

Above all, *Te Pua* is formative. Many of its contributors are being published for the first time, although they keep the company of a number of well-established Maori women writers. Behind the scenes, Maori women work with Maori women, coaxing their writing from each other, developing their skills, and learning to own and command the tools with which they write. Promised for the future is an issue entirely in the Maori language, and an issue related to Maori women and art. Reviews will also become a feature.[8] With *Te Pua* on the job, Maori women will soon become familiar and comfortable with reviewing not only our own writing, but other peoples' writing, men's and women's. These promises indicate that *Te Pua* is rising to its immediate challenge – to survive. The challenge for the future, perhaps, is to remain formative long-term – to always have new writers with new offerings and skills that are developing rather than honed to avoid slipping into a rut and becoming a safe haven for a few.

In providing a home and being a mentor for Maori women's writing, *Te Pua* has accepted a daunting responsibility. It has launched itself into uncharted waters, yet is comfortable and confident with its developing shape and character. It boldly urges and gently encourages Maori women to write and to recognise, as Keri Hulme points out, that: 'When the words are your own you can do *whatever you like* with them'[9]

This review is complete. But in *Te Pua* style I am left still to write the experience – Maori woman: simultaneously sister and critic. No reira koutou ma, wahine ma kia kaha ra i o tino mahi, te tuhituhinga

i a tatou moteatea, a tatou awangawanga, whakaaro, korero, kaupapa. Me paihere kia puna te aroha e hoa ma, wahine ma.

AROHA HARRIS, *University of Auckland*

NOTES

1 Personal communication, Linda Smith, 8 August 1996.
2 Te Puawaitanga is a Maori women writers' collective.
3 Personal communication, Linda Smith, 8 August 1996.
4 Merimeri Penfold, 'Poi atu, poi mai' in *Te Pua* (1:1), Auckland, 1992.
5 Tuporo Kupenga, 'A farewell tribute to a black sister' in *Te Pua* (2:1&2), Auckland, 1993.
6 Andrea Tunks, 'Haerenga to Great Turtle Island' and A Sykes 'Constitutional Reform and Mana Wahine' in *Te Pua* (3:2), Auckland, 1994.
7 Personal communication, Keri Hulme, September 1993.
8 Personal communication, Linda Smith, 8 August 1996.
9 Personal communication, Keri Hulme, September 1993.

'MY HAND WILL WRITE WHAT MY HEART DICTATES': The Unsettled Lives of Women in Nineteenth-century New Zealand as Revealed to Sisters, Family and Friends

Frances Porter and Charlotte Macdonald with Tui MacDonald (eds.)

Auckland University Press with Bridget Williams Books, Auckland.

Writing to former New Zealand premier Robert Stout in May 1889, Anne Wilson expresses mixed reactions to the British reviews of her recently published book of poems, *Themes and Variations*. After discussing the routine pleasantries and 'cheek' of her reviewers, she makes the admission that 'they seem to have read the little book through which is the sincerest form of flattery and just what I want'. While Wilson's words seem to echo the desires of any author or editor, the size of the volume in which her letter is contained is a long way from being the 'insignificant looking' creation that Anne felt her own 'little book' to be. Spanning almost a century from the early 1800s to the early 1900s, *My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dic-*

tates comprises more than 500 pages of primary source documents relating to women's lives in colonial New Zealand: letters, diary and journal entries, Maori waiata, official government documents and the occasional newspaper report. As such it is a valuable source-book of New Zealand social history.

Many of the original documents which make up this sizeable collection are held in the Alexander Turnbull Library; additional sources have been gathered from other New Zealand libraries, archives and repositories, as well as a few private collections. Arranged under the overarching theme of 'unsettlement', *My Hand Will Write* represents part of a continuing archaeology of women's colonial history which began in the early 1970s, which has unearthed and made accessible a wealth of valuable primary source material, and which has recently attracted substantial scholarly interest. Unsettlement, both for the colonisers and the colonised, takes many different forms in the lives of the women whose documents make up this collection: isolation, war, disease, death, earthquakes, failed businesses and marriages, the hazards of travel and the weather in an alien landscape, the under-supply of servants and the over-supply of children. Their unsettlement was not only emotively recorded but also physically manifested: 'By the Way', wrote Jane Bolland to her parents in 1843, my hands are very nearly double the size they were in England'.

In mapping out this diverse rubic of unsettlement, *My Hand Will Write* is divided into eleven broadly thematic chapters, each of which is prefaced by an introduction outlining the theme in relation to its changing socio-historical context over the period. For the most part, the various chapters capture women writing themselves through various milestones in the lifespan (i.e. falling in love, engagement and marriage, childbirth and child rearing, death, and grieving), as well as recording the attendant social, familial and domestic routine. While these sections follow a broadly linear pattern which comprises the central bulk of the text, the wider experiences of emigration, encounters with Maori, land disputes and Maori wars are also given significant voice. Although the ordering of the sections is sometimes problematic (encounters with Maori, for instance, appear before the chapter on voyaging out and settlement), the framing of each individual item with an italicised preface provides a succinct biographical or historical context which precludes the need for lengthy and distracting an-

notations and gives each document a sense of being part of a continuing life narrative.

The majority of the material which appears in *My Hand Will Write* is gathered from middle-class Pakeha women who, despite the burden of domestic cares, had the advantages of literacy (and the traditional epistolary and diary formats) in communicating with friends and family. Maori women are also given voice, in waiata, government documents and a handful of letters; however, as the editors admit, the scarcity of primary source material written by Maori women is as much a reflection of Western archiving practice, as it is of the largely oral and communal nature of Maori culture.[1] Working-class women find their representation primarily through government documents such as magistrates', coroners' and asylum reports which, despite the formal language, give some insight into the trials of these women during the period. Despite the disparity of material held in archive libraries, *My Hand Will Write* manages to strike a rough balance between Pakeha women's letters and diaries and the more marginalised material.

While the diversity of the material at times gives the collection a fragmented and uneven quality, the editors make no claim for seamless unity. Rather, they see the project as a 'capacious patchwork quilt' which, while acknowledging the common patterns of women's lives in nineteenth-century New Zealand, is also a testimony to the multiplicity of experiences and attitudes these women encountered and recorded. It is a credit to the editors that they have retained material which allows the women's voices to speak in conflict as well as in unison. In cases where large bodies of material from one family are held in manuscript collections (such as the Williams and Richmond-Atkinson families), readers of the collection are able to trace the currents of several family groups of women through the various phases and occurrences which make up the fabric of their colonial experiences.[2] The fact that several of the women represented are related to or acquainted with each other aids in the cohesion of the collection and gives a sense of a web of interconnecting relationships and close-knit community ties despite the distances between correspondents.

While many of the themes explored in *My Hand Will Write* are not new, what emerges from the multiplicity of women's voices which comprise this densely textured collection is not merely a repetition

of issues relating to the ëwomen's sphereí exhausted by other literary sources of the period. In an important sense, the collection speaks against the primacy of an historicised European male subjectivity, by allowing ordinary women to give voice to their own sense of their particular experiences. As such, *My Hand Will Write* is a significant recuperative project which, while linking up with broader social, religious and domestic themes in nineteenth-century women's writing, filters these themes through a colonial lens, giving a specific light to their experiences. For the women speaking here, settlement necessarily encompasses unsettlement, and their sense of displacement is tellingly reflected in their responses to the New Zealand landscape: despite continuing to yearn for the 'finished garden-like appearance that years of cultivation can alone give', Maria Richmond also speaks for many of the women represented in *My Hand Will Write* when she writes in November 1853: 'I certainly have never felt so wide awake as I have done since I landed in New Zealand'.

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NOTES

1 Maori material, where available, is given in both original and translated form. While common Maori words used in the editors' prefaces are usually not translated, a glossary for non-Kiwi scholars would have been helpful in these instances.

2 Biographical sketches in the index aid this sense of continuity.

THERE IS HOPE FOR A TREE
Pauline O'Regan

Auckland University Press/Bridget Williams Books, Auckland, 1995

I've always thought that a bit of history (better still, herstory) is a good thing. History is Pauline O'Regan's forte and she is also a good story-teller. Pauline O'Regan would be known to many readers of *Women's Studies Journal* as a commentator on National Radio and as a writer about her community development involvement. The quality of writing in this collection of personal reflections on change in the Catholic Church and other events in the life of the author ensures pleasurable reading.

However, I must be honest and say that, for me at least, the book misses its mark. The book is written if not for, then with in mind, those Catholics who have left the Catholic church and have found no other spiritual home. Essentially it is about making sense of and being reconciled with the Church which itself is experiencing change and struggle within itself. The author's method is to situate the Church and aspects of Catholicism in an historical context. In this way, O'Regan seeks to illuminate things like the development of the doctrine of papal infallibility and to place in a more adequate perspective the papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Does she succeed?

O'Regan recounts her travels to Ireland and Scotland, and her experiences in Ireland of the Protestant-Catholic divide and of the papal visit to Dublin in 1979. From this temporal and geographic grounding, she reflects on the human condition, and, in particular, on the place of Catholicism in fostering peace and justice. The particular experiences associated with O'Regan's travels are intensely personal and held less interest for me than other excursions into different periods of the history of the European west.

Certainly, hers is a fascinating account of the wider historical milieu in which the Church finds itself – in the nineteenth century and earlier, in the early twentieth century, and in the 1960s. There are also glimpses of the features of individual biographies which have influenced the character of particular papacies. We learn of the German Church's acknowledgment of its role in allowing the Holocaust

to take place through its support of anti-communist Hitler. All this reinforces the point that the Church is an institution made up of imperfect human beings. What this does not exonerate, however, is its persistent refusal to address the iniquities of male-dominated hierarchy (indeed an exclusively male hierarchy). The Roman Curia is presented as the villain in O'Regan's attempt to rationalise the 1968 papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* which condemns the use of contraceptives (a position which remains unchanged nearly 30 years later). Yet other mainstream Christian churches have responded to the imperatives of justice and participation for all members. Not even the notion of co-responsibility (shared decision-making by all the bishops, in which the Pope as Bishop of Rome is but one participant), which O'Regan promotes as a means of ensuring authentic teaching, is adequate when we are talking about an all-male club of bishops.

The title, *There is Hope for a Tree*, reflects one of the core elements of the author's Catholic faith and of her vision for the Catholic Church. One has to admire O'Regan's faith and optimism that the Catholic Church has the resources and capacity to confront the contemporary challenges which it faces. At the same time, one has also to acknowledge the empirical evidence of a Church (albeit like many mainstream Christian denominations) which is increasingly being deserted by women and men who expect justice for women and for lay people in general. In addition, the Church faces financial crisis as a result of declining support and moral bankruptcy in its belated acknowledgement of sexual abuse by its clergy and other church workers.

The final chapters focus on dissent in the Catholic Church and the most recent pronouncements about the status of women. I find these discussions somewhat irritating in their reticence about the psychological and spiritual violence done by aspects of the Church's teachings. Without doubt, there is criticism in these chapters of the Church's treatment of divorced and remarried Catholics and of women generally, and O'Regan points to chinks in the edifice which suggest a possibility that punitive teachings may be revised ... but this is precisely the problem. Mild criticism and informal obviation of unjust rules need to be replaced by outrage, unambiguous rejection and public repudiation of such teachings. O'Regan's final comments about the Church's treatment of women leaves begging the question of why any women would remain in the Catholic Church because, as she

does acknowledge, even in the mid 1990s there appears to be no willingness to promote women's leadership and equality within the Church.

In the end, the question is one not so much of whether there is hope for a tree but whether it needs radical pruning (to continue the biblical metaphor) and possible uprooting. Those who have left have done so largely because the necessary spraying and pruning have not taken place and the specimen is becoming highly diseased. This book then is really only for those who remain and need to be persuaded to challenge the institution and demand change.

CHRISTINE CHEYNE, *Social Policy, Massey University*

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Book Reviews

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'My Hand Will Write What My Heart Dictates': The Unsettled Lives of Women in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand as Revealed to Sisters, Family and Friends, Frances Porter and Charlotte Macdonald (eds.) with Tui MacDonald, *Tiffany Urwin*

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