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FEMINISM, MANITOBA ARTISTS FOR WOMEN'S ART AND ART EDUCATION: A WOMAN-CENTRED EXAMINATION OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN THE MENTOR PROGRAM OF M. A. W. A.

BARBARA WEIR HUBER

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Education

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Abstract

This thesis focusses on a questionnaire which solicits from its respondents their comments on, and evaluation of, the learning experience within the Mentor Program of Manitoba Artists For Women's Art. The Mentor Program is a relationship based program set up to assist women artists in dealing with the problems they face in becoming professional practising artists. The discussion of this program and of the responses to the questionnaire is carried out through a woman - centred and feminist point of view. This view is presented in the Review of Literature which introduces feminism and relates that point of view to the lives of women. It surveys the school curriculum, the structure of education, woman centred research, feminist theory and the roles both women and artists are expected play and to continue to play in our society. Much of the analysis centres on the devaluation of women, of women's social roles and of the 'feminine', of the artist and the bearing that devaluation has on our perceptions and values. It affects the arts, fine arts and craft as extensions of that devaluation of the 'feminine'. The thesis presents the arguments for a different approach to values and learning, one which is more applicable to women's experience and places the Mentor Program in this context.

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For my mother, Audrey W. Weir, who always left me reading - even when there were dishes to do. With love.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In a paper which looks at women's education in general and women's art education in particular it is perhaps not surprising that it is a visual and symbolic image that springs to mind first. It is equally unremarkable that the image is that of the prosaic, everyday patchwork quilt. It is not surprising because what follows is an attempt to make sense of, to piece together, fractured life experience. Women grow up, learn and live in a society that is arranged for the convenience of men. They experience life and learning in a society and culture over which they have little control and which they are perceived as having done little to create. It is in examining the disparate, separate aspects of women's lives and in making connections between the pieces of our lives that have until now been experienced as separate and disconnected, that we will eventually be able to sew whole cloth, a quilt designed 'from scratch' to fit women's experience.

What has been surprising, however, has been the slow emergence, the soft revelation, of a more ancient symbol, one that until recently I neither understood nor felt any connection with. It is the spiral, a symbol which

predates writing but which has come to express for me, my emerging and growing understanding not only of women's ways of knowing and being in the world but more especially and particularly, of my own.

While the primary focus of this examination is directed towards a survey of women's learning experience within the Mentor Program of the Manitoba Artists for Women's Art, of equivalent importance is the centering of that patch within the (quilting) frame made up of the many other patches of experience that comprise the whole of women's lives. This sewing together requires the seamstress to design a pattern that is not only unified and coherent but that catches the (mind's) eye and draws the viewer into an appreciation of the subtle and complex nature of the problems that face women. For the purpose of highlighting that one small patch, the other bits of cloth will be collected and examined under five general headings. These five are feminism, educational theory and practice, the life experiences of women, the specific experiences of women as artists, and the Mentor Program of Manitoba Artists for Women's Art (M.A.W.A.).

Feminist research explores and encompasses the social and cultural circumstances of women as they seek to learn and work as artists in our community. Feminist theory and research are ovarian to any study of women in

that their focus is women's own and actual experience. Feminists acknowledge that in a world created by men for men, women face particular difficulties simply because they are women and their life experiences are different from those of men. A feminist examination of educational theory and practice will show the contributions made by that theory and practice to understanding the difficulties that women face in artistic and intellectual growth.

Because educational structures and practices have simply "let women in" to a system already designed and functioning to suit the life experiences of men, such theories and structures penalize girls and women. One of feminism's first priorities then, has been the encoding, pooling and making available women's knowledge - to paraphrase Spender (1982), an education by women, for women, about women - an education that focusses on research FOR women not ON women (Klein 1983). "Human beings invent or construct knowledge in accordance with the values or beliefs with which they begin" (Spender, 1982, p. 2). So a feminist system based on a re-valuation of women, their lives, and their history will result in a different knowledge. This knowledge includes what has been left out of the human story, on the exclusion of the experience of the non-powerful, the non-white, the

non-Western, and the non-male (Spender, 1981, Watkins, 1983). Van Kirk's (1978) analysis of women in the fur trade changed the perceptions of that historical experience and Christ's (1980) study of the female quest in literature widened the scope of the spiritual and archetypal journey. Feminist scholarship emphasizes women recording their own viewpoints, the accumulation of their own individual experiences and the exploration of the problems women face from the 'feminine' stereotype and from male dominance.

Within this framework, the Mentor Program itself provides an excellent situation for examining what research and theory indicate might be valid areas of investigation. As an organization, Manitoba Artist's for Women's Art was set up by senior women artists to deal with and ameliorate the particular difficulties that they and their students confronted in the struggle to become practicing women artists. By pairing emerging women artists with senior women artists in a relationship-based program, the Mentor Program addresses the ways in which the existing educational and arts organizations have failed women. M.A.W.A.'s Mentor Program seeks to meet the needs specific to women working as artists within our own community. As such, it provides an invaluable opportunity for examining the problems some women have found in their

own particular circumstances and the solutions those same women also found. It provides an appropriate situation for feminist "ground up" theory development; that is, all theory must come from and be based in lived experience.

In its conclusions, the paper will attempt to generate a greater interest in ways of fostering and nurturing the artistic and intellectual growth of women and to do this through achieving understanding. This understanding will grow from 'listening to' women themselves. (The hearing metaphor has become increasingly important in women's writing. Because women have not been heeded, because their experiences have been dismissed, invalidated or made invisible in patriarchal society, the first step in any re-vision of knowledge is to attend to or 'hear' what women themselves have to say. This means validating all women's experiences by careful attention to the thoughts and ideas which individual women choose to express.) Not only do we study feminist theorists as they criticize existing male defined constructs of knowledge and evolve new frameworks for female experience but we also pay attention to individual women as they describe their own lives and the particular experiences of learning within those lives. In this way we continue to expand our understanding of what it is to be human.

Problem

The central focus of this thesis is on the study and description of the experiences of some of the women who have taken part in the Mentor Program of Manitoba Artists for Women's Art and their evaluation of that experience. Looking at these experiences in the context of feminist and woman-centred theory, and how these participants see themselves, and assess their relationships, their values and decisions within the context of their own lives and communities gives us a way of seeing what things are particular to women's lives and what things are common and shared. Research into woman-centered educational theory has revealed areas of inadequacy within the 'malestream' of present educational research. "The models and paradigms of existing scholarship did not simply leave women out; they did not permit satisfactory explanations of women's experiences" (Watkins, p.81). This woman-centred point of view and theory provide a framework for the examination of women's lives from a location which has greater relevance for our lives as women in this society.

The women who have participated in this program are neighbours, regular, 'ordinary', next-door people who are linked together by their common involvement in the visual arts. In all likelihood, they have completed their formal

education and their reflections on that education as well as on the Mentor Program itself will lead to greater understanding of the complex nature of women's experience of and in our society as well as of and in that educational system. In this way, we will be able to seek ways in which education at all levels might be made less problematic for girls and women.

Rationale

This examination of the Mentor Program will be set within the context of review of the current literature on feminist theory itself, on patriarchy, philosophy, religion, history, language, sexuality, violence, the institution of motherhood and on educational practice. Such a discussion will make clear the ways in which present educational practice is problematic for women and the necessity for one more woman-centred. It will also provide direction and guidelines for the development of women in a learning situation over which they have a great deal of control. The review as context will be particularly helpful to the analysis of survey data as it will direct our examination to the circumstances of women's lives that we are inclined to take for granted, but that simply because we take them for granted are obstacles to women's self fulfillment.

Women's access to education historically has been of relatively short duration and because of this there has been little evaluation of whether the educational system they have entered is one suited to their experience in and of the world. In addition, it is certainly true there is little dissemination of the research that does exist. (It might more appropriately be referred to as a subterranean seepage of information.) This research will be examined to illustrate other ways of learning which might be more effective for girls and women - ways which would allow for the integration of all aspects of female experience in a way conducive to growth and affirmation.

Methodology

The procedure used for this examination is an eclectic one. A comprehensive review of literature is integral because relatively little is generally known or understood about the nature of feminism and how it contributes to our understanding of the world, to our insight into the male bias of that understanding and to our specific perceptions about women's place in that world. Feminism has received very bad press for reasons which will become clear. This will be a more general overview of feminism rather than an in-depth exploration or critique of all aspects of feminist theory. While

there will be an attempt to suggest the complexities of feminist discourse, its importance for this study is to provide a lens through which we can fairly examine women's experience, a lens which takes female experiences as centre and measure (whereas until now the measurements have all been to men's value scales). Feminist criticism of existing categories of knowledge is included to show in some degree how these catagories have been unfair to women and is in no way intended to be a comprehensive or definitive critique. In choosing the sources for this review of literature, deliberate use is made both of academic and popular material. This in keeping with a philosophy which stresses both inclusivity and the abandonment of false categories and hierarchical evaluations.

A decision to focus on all aspects of these women's lives and not only just on cognitive development or on the learning experience and to tie these aspects together is also a consequence of a feminist perspective. Feminist theory brings with it an understanding that because women's lives are so different in many areas from the lives of men, the assumptions made about what kinds of learning are 'best', 'right', or 'good' can be inappropriate for women. The Review of Literature will look at what women have written about all aspects of

their lives and at how that experience conflicts with the expectations of present educational directions. In such a context the Mentor Program then, is a suitable vehicle for survey purposes solely because of the age of its participants. These are women who are likely to have realized the complexity of female life in our society simply because they have lived long enough to face choice and encounter conflicting expectations.

There is an equally deliberate attempt made to use direct quotes where at all possible. This is done in the first place to acknowledge the source of ideas, and to acknowledge women as that source and secondly, to document these sources for fear that as 'women's work', these words and these ideas may well be lost (Spender, 1982b). In addition, the language employed will be gender neutral or gender specific in a way which will illustrate how much of a male (biological) bias our language has. (Note the preceding "ovarian" and "seminal" as obvious examples and the perhaps more subtle substitution of "explore and encompass" for "thrust".)

Because feminism stresses women commenting on and evaluating their own experience, and because feminism stresses inclusivity, an important aspect of this study is a questionnaire which was mailed to all who have been involved as participants in the Mentor Program during its

first three years - 1985, 1986, 1987. This questionnaire is intended to elicit from these participants information about their learning experiences, relationships, values, dilemmas and difficulties as well as the systems of support. Its format relies heavily on Women's Ways of Knowing by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule (1986) but this format will be modified to make it more applicable to this specific learning program. The questionnaire itself was divided into four sections designed to obtain information on such specifics as age, place of residence, marital status as well as on how they see themselves as artists, their relationships and values and on the Mentor Program as a learning experience. Because the aim of the paper is to describe the subjective experience of woman as learner within the context of social role stereotyping and feminist theory, no attempt was made to include the Mentors within this survey. (The problems of the woman artist as teacher and mentor are grist enough for their own study.)

Care too, is taken to heed each individual writer whether in book or questionnaire and to reflect her opinions accurately. Each written 'patch' must be sewn together with the others in ways that make the design of interconnection, relationship and understanding clear. Then in fact, these isolated patches will be perceived as

not isolated fragments at all but whole cloth. Feminist theory is a way of making sense of women's experience, a way of clarifing our sense of isolation and disconnection from formal education and learning systems. In turn, this feminist inspired examination of the particular experiences of the women in the Mentor Program continues the spiral as the accumulation of experiences and understandings from those in the Program eventually leads to some conclusions - and even more questions - about women's experience of education.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

As the seamstress of these patches, the design in the review of literature is, of course, my own and arises out of the personal challenge of integrating subjective experience with the joy of pursuing ideas and combining them into new and personally satisfying patterns. The exploration of the ideas presented by the feminist critics has been both entertaining and liberating as much because these ideas are not universally accepted as because they take women's experience as a starting point and measure - and this in and of itself is not only often viewed as revolutionary but also as subversive. Not least among the values that such a view bestows is the gift of "another way of looking at it". Rather than accepting the canons of history, literature and philosophy, rather than accepting that women's difficulties (indeed my own) within the systems of our society lie in women's inadequacies, it is a good deal more invigorating to integrate logic and reason with intuitive understanding, to explore social and educational theories, and finally to construct a pattern suited to my own life experience. Like many of my women friends I am indebted to the work that feminist critics have done within their own fields to reveal the bias within those fields and also to their

ability to interrelate these fields in ways that make my learning a more comfortable and yet more exciting experience. These critics show the tensions within fields which arise from the problems of women's lived experience and from a devaluation of the 'feminine' attributes that have been associated with that experience. This review is intended to provide context for some of the inequities as they affect women in the Mentor Program, to authenticate the complexity of female reality and to disclose how inequities in the valuing of 'masculine' and 'feminine' affect all artists - be they male or female.

Feminism

Before embarking on the examination of any topic from a feminist perspective, it is necessary to spend some time explaining and defining feminism itself. Feminism is difficult to describe first, because it does not lend itself to easy interpretation and second, because it is a point of view which touches so many aspects of our lives and as such, threatens cherished views about the nature and conduct of our society. Feminism declares itself political in that its beliefs, values and view of society, if implemented, would result in a profound and dramatic change in how all of our relationships are conducted simply because those beliefs and values are so antithetical to society as it is now

disposed. The idea of a definition for feminism is also a problem for many. Feminists resist the idea of definition because a definition would exclude as much as it would include. Women's history has been a history of exclusion and so, feminists do not want to exclude the voices, the ideas or the experiences of any women. For feminists, then, feminism must remain open and inclusive.

Dictionaries, of course, are in the business of making definitions so the American Heritage Dictionary defines feminism as a doctrine that advocates or demands for women the same rights granted men as in political status and second, as a movement in support of such a doctrine. Feminists themselves say, in fact, that there is no one feminism, no one single movement, and no simple pat solution to the present situation of inequality between the sexes - in fact, no one doctrine. As Thompson (1983) stated,

> the women's movement is essentially a grassroots movement, with no official leaders, headquarters, membership scheme, or bureaucracy. Its members are all those women who recognize the oppressive consequences of male supremacy and who in a variety of settings, and within a number of different but related campaigns, are organizing ... resistance. Women fighting for equal rights at work and within trade unions, for freedom from male violence, for changes in the law, for control over their own fertility and sexuality, for better child care provision, and better education, are all, in different ways, engaged in the same process of liberation. (pp.12-13)

For Miles (1982) there are two general movements. One part of feminist activity consists of pressure from women to have access to the rights, activities and responsibilities commonly available to men, and to be "let in" to full participation in all areas of society as it currently exists. Armstrong and Armstrong (1978) described the "double ghetto" existing in present day Canada. Women are ghettoized within the domestic sphere and equally ghettoized as "handmaidens" within the paid work force. All this despite advances by women in gaining greater access to education. However, another part of the women's movement is based on a far wider sense of historical purpose. Women's concerns, their forms of practice and their vision represent a major break with the existing male-defined world and politics. For these feminists, solidarity among women - defining the world from women's point of view, building women's autonomy as individuals and as a collective power - is not merely the addition of one more constituency to an existing radical politics nor the articulation of one more interest group. It is a qualitatively new challenge to domination (Miles, p.9). In the words of Daly (1973) "this becoming of women will act as a catalyst for radical change in our culture" (p.14). It is this second view which will provide the basis for an examination and critical analysis of women's

place in education and art, and of the particular experience of some of the women involved in the Mentor Program of Manitoba Artists for Women's Art (MAWA).

This feminism exists and belongs as a political and social movement on side with the tradition of humanist thought which places its emphasis on human interests and on the importance of human development. (Not withstanding the very important fact that up until now the definition of human = male, but more about that later.) It is a movement which has arisen from women's sense of grievance and suffering resulting from a social injustice based on sex. It is founded on the presumption that women suffer wherever male supremacy exists; it rests on the belief that it is not capitalism, socialism nor industrialization which exploits women but male supremacy (Rowbotham, 1973). For feminists such as French (1985), and Spender (1985) as well as Greer and Millett who are quoted in Spender (1985), the reality of male domination is revealed in an unequal distribution of resources, a rather odd attribution of human characteristics as 'masculine' or 'feminine' and in a physical oppression of women, overtly through violence and covertly through labelling them 'sex objects'. Millett has clarified the economic issue by emphasizing that it "is not a feminist principle that women should

have half of what men have because it's not a feminist belief that men are the yardstick, or even that what they do is desirable" (p.40). To be equal does not mean to be like, and equal consideration does not necessarily mean identical treatment (Acker and Piper, 1984).

Newland (1979) related her view, that human capabilities vary along lines more complex than sex, and French, that the range of behaviours within each sex is as great as that between the two and that furthermore, mothering is learned just as aggression is learned. Ultimately, all feminists reject that women should be limited and defined by the fact that they bear children and men do not, and that their lives must be lived out and restricted by that function. That these limitations and restrictions must be learned is the province of the educational system, its curricula, and the history, philosophy and religion of the society from which it has evolved. That it is not an easy lesson is proved by the extensiveness and weight of the authority behind it.

Jagger (1983) has analyzed four major and specific theoretical conceptions of feminism: liberal, Marxist, radical and socialist. She explained these differences and the ways in which they seem incompatible but continued on to point out that the very complexity of approach and analysis has indicated the depth and breadth

of the oppression of women.

> Liberal feminists ... believe that women are oppressed insofar as they suffer unjust discrimination; traditional Marxists believe that women are oppressed in their exclusion from public production; radical feminists see women's oppression as existing primarily in the universal male control of women's sexual and procreative capacities; while socialist feminists characterize women's oppression in terms of a revised version of the Marxist theory of alienation. (p.353)

Eisenstein (1984) also dealt with these divisions in feminist thought and acknowledged the difficulties they present for the cohesion of the movement as a whole. She concluded by emphasizing her belief in activism. It is necessary to be in the world to change the world towards more woman-centred values. It is equally necessary that the efforts of <u>all</u> women in <u>all</u> directions and in <u>all</u> fields be utilized to this transformation.

The fact that there is no single directed feminist doctrine but a multi-faceted movement is a deliberate choice on the part of feminists and arises directly from lived experience as women in a male-supremist society. In her review of feminist writers, Spender (1985) saw that "at the core of feminist ideas is the crucial insight that there is no one truth, no one authority, no one objective method which leads to the production of pure knowledge" (p.5). Because women have for so long been excluded and because women's experience does not count in

a male-dominated society, it is not sensible for women to set up their own system for a hierarchical ordering of the world in which the experience of some women has no significance (p.26). Therefore it becomes important to make feminism a philosophy of inclusiveness and diversity.

> And if we are to have a common feminist framework then it must be all things to all women, it must be able to take account of what all women know and understand of the world even when they know and understand contradictory things. There can be no exclusions in a feminist framework. And the only way to achieve such a framework is to formulate one that is multi-dimensional, which can contain many truths, and which can accomodate many partial accounts. (Spender, 1985, p.4)

Women are not to be moulded in a feminist ideal; women have had enough of 'ideal'. Feminism is a fluid system of objectives which must encompass the needs and imperatives of all women...including those who say "I'm not a feminist but...."

Patriarchy

Feminists term present Western society as patriarchal. That is, a society in which descent and succession are traced through a male line - not necessarily a blood line - and so the rule is by men. Rather than seeing this as 'natural' or due to 'natural' male aggressiveness O'Brien (1981) has constructed a theory which proposes that patriarchy has arisen from the

male biological role in reproduction. She has linked this male reproductive role and "the alienation of the seed" to the male need for continuity, the concomitant need for oppression and the influence of both on "male-stream" thought. It is in order to mediate this separation of conception from the birth of a living child that men seek continuity and power. It is in the process of reproduction that man is negated as a parent and it is this negation that the history of man has sought to 'correct'.

> Man is negated, not as lover, but as parent. This is the nullity which men clearly 'cannot bear', and history demonstrates the lengths to which men have gone to ameliorate the uncertainty of paternity, both conceptually and institutionally. (p.43)

Because they have no continuous, direct, physical link with their own children, men have had to construct artificial bonds and have had to maintain them by force. This obviously <u>first</u> necessitates control of the mothers.

The foundations of male supremacy then, rest first, on the achievement of control over women through denying them power, and second, on the achievement of control over a human race viewed as erratic, animalistic, brutal and selfish - a race which requires strict regulation. Third, patriarchy is a militant ideology requiring not only force and control (to deny and to withhold) but also all of the intellectual weight of history, philosophy and

religion. All are considered to be designed to maintain the supremacy of men, of the fathers. And in this way patriarchy is seen as valuing power, potency, omnipotence: a valuation which implies everything must be sacrificed to power, including life itself. This also implies a hierarchical value system based on power (Gilligan, 1982). To be powerful is to be good; 'might is right'. It is French who pointed out that this emphasis on power results in the ironic situation of fostering greater contention and conflict. An ideology of power, individualism and struggle-as-a-way-of-life begets confrontation and war. She described masculine experience as rooted in power and its central act as murder; an act which rivals the female power of giving birth. All wars or disputes are simply variations on the theme of patriarchy whether over religion or land. It is not the reasons for struggle which are important but the achievement of dominance through power. (The reasons and justifications can be arranged or rearranged to the liking of the victors later.)

Because patriarchal society reveres power, and because men have power, men can assume that their experience is universal, that it is representitive of humanity, and that it constitutes a basis for generalizing about all human beings (Spender, 1985). So

whenever women's experience differs from men's it does not appear in history or philosophy or religion or any other male-defined category. Feminist theory directs its attention to re-interpreting and re-describing society and past history and to re-inserting women's experience into that society and history and to re-viewing it through a different lens.

It is perhaps the greatest irony of the patriarchal system that fathering stops with begetting. There is no word for the ongoing, nurturing care of children to their maturity which pertains to men. All definitions of fatherhood deal only with conception and not with the day to day reality of helping children achieve 'humanness' or maturity. "Consider: if it were natural for fathers to care for their sons, they would not need so many laws commanding them to do so" (Chesler, 1978, p.15). It is equally sad but fully synonymous with the feminist view that the central image of Western society is the sacrifice of the son by the father. But it is no accident. Chesler related the chronicle of father/son violence as an unbroken line of male death worship: the worship of sacrificed or murdered firstborn 'redeemer' sons. Male history is a "history that includes infanticide, homicide and full-scale warfare; a history that is encapsulated psychologically in many father-son

relationships" (p. xvii). And she has further commented on the tragedy that man has based an entire civilization on the principle of paternity, upon male legal ownership of, and presumed responsibility for children and yet countless individual men have never gotten to know their children very well. They have not - for various reasons - ever really participated in a daily kind of parenting or a more intimate way of fathering.

> The Bible is haunted by the ghost of a missing son, a firstborn son, a most beloved son: a murdered son. The first son, killed by his father Adam; the Last Son, sacrificed by his father, God. (p.12)

And "(e)ven Abraham had to be taught that an animal could serve his purpose instead" (p.13). Spender (1985) quoted Chesler herself on the significance of this for women.

> I described how fathers kill sons - literally and symbolically; and how male rage and anguish about not being loved and protected by other men is displaced onto women and children. (Spender, 1985, p.213).

Agreeing with this view, Arcana (1983) presented illustrations of the problems in father/son relationships as they are described in interviews with individual sons. Her personal emphasis was on the struggles faced by women who are feminists and who are attempting to raise sons free of "false ways of being" (p.290).

Gilligan extended the exploration of the significance of fathering to the wider concerns of

ethics.

> The blind willingness to sacrifice people to truth, however, has always been the danger of an ethics abstracted from life. This willingness links Ghandi to the biblical Abraham, who prepared to sacrifice the life of his son in order to demonstrate the integrity and supremacy of his faith. Both men, in the limitations of their fatherhood, stand in implicit contrast to the woman who comes before Solomon and verifies her motherhood by relinquishing truth in order to save the life of her child. It is the ethics of an adulthood that has become principled at the expense of care. (p.104)

Patriarchy is built on dichotomy, on defining human nature and the world through opposites, and mutually exclusive opposites at that. French listed and discussed this opposition of 'masculine' and 'feminine' characteristics. 'Real' men are 'masculine' and the 'masculine' mind is rational, logical, clear, linear, exclusionary, and goal-oriented. 'Masculine' values are control, transcendence, prowess, courage, agressiveness and physical skill (kill or be killed). The 'masculine' is fixed, permanent, structured, based in laws, prestige, custom and tradition. It emphasises ownership and possession. The male image of manliness, the hero, is one who is isolated, individual, controlled and in control, emotionless, virtuous, fair and just. "Men are men because they don't cry, don't feel, don't need" (French, p. 290). In patriarchy, these values are perceived as superior and are thus programmed into our educational

system as valuable. (This image of the hero has significance for a later discussion of the image of the artist in our society. It will also reappear in a look at that other dichotomy, arts/science.)

Women are "defined by those traits men wished not to possess" (French, p.108), traits which are nonetheless essential to the comfort and survival of the species. Those values seen as 'feminine' are devalued and relegated to the private sphere. The 'feminine' mind is seen as reflexive, associative, circular, and process oriented - the right brain as opposed to the left brain. 'Feminine' implies spontaneity, playfulness, creativity, fluidity, transcience, flexibility. It suggests nature, the flesh, procreation and so, sexuality and physical pleasure. The 'feminine' is nutritive, compassionate, sensitive to others, merciful, supportive and giving. It is also associated with the emotional, with lack of control and non-egocentric ("over-protective") loving. From the 'feminine' then come the matricentric values of love, bonding, fertility and continuation. Mother-love, "undiscriminating" love, is linked in 'masculine' terms to moral flexibility. (The wisdom is perceived as Solomon's.) But for many feminists (Chesler, 1972, Daly, 1973, French) morality is a neutral term, a set of values by which one guides behaviour and emotion. Justice, right

and wrong are masculine terms based on power and hierarchy. This duality is reflected in Christianity which teaches the 'feminine' - love, compassion, mercy, and charity - but has a powerful, male-dominated, 'masculine' hierarchy. This hierarchy encodes laws, disapproves of emotion, is anti-sexuality, demands obedience and is more important than the message - except that its ultimate message is that death means "eternal life" and is thus superior to life.

In her call for a less alienating education system Martin (1985) linked this genderization of character traits to difficulties all students face. While the estrangement of mind from body, reason from emotion, and affective from cognitive exacts a price from all, it stikes women most acutely. They not only deal with this schizophrenic separation but with a gender biased de-valuation of ability.

> Whereas a male will be admired for his rational powers, a woman who is analytical and critical will be shunned or will be told that she thinks like a man. Even if this latter is intended as a compliment, since we take masculinity and femininity to lie at opposite ends of a single continuum, she will thereby be judged as lacking in feminity and, as a consequence, judged abnormal or unnatural. (p.76)

This is the belief system of our culture and our circumscribed view of the world. In the words of de Beauvoir, "men in our societies have internalized...a

superiority complex, an image of their own superiority. They are not prepared to surrender it. They need the inferiority of women to enhance their own status" (Schwarzer, 1984, p.24).

Western culture invests all real value in the male and in those qualities deemed 'masculine'. The specific distribution of qualities and characteristics from gendered male/female, into 'masculine'/'feminine', superior/inferior is without basis in fact, logic or biology (Fausto- Sterling, 1985). Such an equation arises out of the tradition and history of patriarchal thought and is not inherent in gender. "Only the ability to give birth is absolutely gender-related, and that is paralleled by the essential male contribution to procreation" (French, p. 92).

The confusion that results from the application of the feminist principles of equality and inclusiveness, the integration and incorporation of 'masculine' and 'feminine' into the holistic 'human', can be readily clarified when the patriarchal idea of power and control is removed. The characteristics of aggression and passivity and superior/inferior in the dichotomy are removed from the equation. The brain works, holistically, not only literally but metaphorically, and not as separate, dichotomized halves but as an interrelationship

of equals.

Patriarchal Knowledge and Feminist Analysis

Now what are the means that patriarchy uses to sustain the idea of male supremacy? By what means do men grant themselves supremacy? No small portion of that authority exists as curricula of subjects to be taught in education systems. It is enshrined in men's history, men's philosophy, and men's religion. That it does not and has never reflected the experience of one half of human kind is of no consequence; that it is founded in inequality has no meaning; it is still what we teach. For feminists, it is no longer enough. It is not only a question of right or wrong, not only a question of true or false, but of what has been excluded; what has not been accounted for (Spender, 1982b). In the feminist critic's view, male biases, limitations and judgments are called knowledge and used against women to deny them their equality and their heritage (Spender, 1985)

Through a feminist lens then, the study of men's history is the study of the dynamics of gender oppression and has implications for all aspects of society. Gender oppression crosses class, race, culture and time and results in a profound condition of alienation (Daly, 1973, Rowbotham). This alienation, this division into 'masculine' and 'feminine' with its attendant devaluing

of the 'feminine' exists within each individual human being who must deny one half of the Self. After learning to deny or devalue that one half, it is relatively easy to learn to deny other human beings because of colour, race, gender, sexual orientation, lack of wealth or lack of 'education'. It is also possible that this denial is far more rigidly applied to boys and men. It is more acceptable, indeed encouraged, for women to exercise aspects of their 'masculine' selves particularly as it pertains to the work force or sports. It is strongly discouraged for men to exercise 'feminine' qualities. 'Feminine' men are simply suspected of homosexual tendencies. It is easy to speculate that because suppression of the 'feminine' is so much more an issue for men, so too is greater intolerance and denial of the 'other'.

In feminist terms, the failure of Marx and subsequent revolutionary groups rests in their inability to recognize the fundamental schism in human life and society. "There was no room in Marx's mind for love, ordinary human imperfection, charity, or self-analysis; his values were traditional patriarchal values, with the tempering of the Old Testement requirement of justice and provision for the poor" (French, p.120). Chodorow (1978) noted the failure of male theorists to recognize that the

denigration and oppression of women predates capitalism and Mackinnon (1981) stated it succinctly. "Sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: That which is most one's own, yet most taken away" (p.1). And further, Spender (1985) reflected on the patriarchal understanding of power as an issue in history.

> Revolutionaries who confined themselves to the overthrow of class on the grounds that other forms of oppression would then presumably wither away not only failed to deal with racism and sexism, they failed to come to terms with the nature of power itself, and were therefore engaged in nothing other than redistribution of power among the rulers rather than a revolution which would transform power - and relationships. (p.82)

Women's history bears no resemblance to the history of a social studies curriculum. Thus, an American Revolution which created men equal was followed by a French Revolution trumpeting Liberty, Equality, Fraternity while removing rights held by French women before 1791 (French, Jansen-Jurriet, 1982). The Renaissance in western Europe, regarded as a rebirth and reflowering of art and knowledge after the "Dark Ages", in fact heralded both the 'witch' burnings in which thousands upon thousands of women were burned at the stake (Daly, 1978) and also a dramatic increase in prostitution (Peterson and Wilson, 1976). His story is not hers, but as it is his, she must learn it to succeed. History does not document the human costs paid

by women for 'progressive' times nor the justification of culture by a specific distribution of power only to men (Watkins, 1983). Women are not only left out, but where they are visible there is no adequate explanation of their experiences. In this context, feminist analysis of history is not just an analysis of women nor is its struggle limited to women; it has major transforming potential because its beliefs touch all aspects of life. Its vision is based on a reproduction of self-actualizing human beings, on empowering, rather than on a control of the production of things, on power over.

> The holistic, collective, intuitive, co-operative, emotional, nurturing, democratic, integrated, internal, and natural are affirmed against over-valuation of the competitive, analytical, rational, hierarchical, fragmented, external and artificial (man*-made). (Miles, p.13)

A brief examination of some aspects of the tradition of Western philosophy - Matthew Arnold's "the best that has been known and thought" - will suffice to describe the misogyny which many feminist philosophers see as one of the fundamental cornerstones of that intellectual thought. In Women in Western Political Thought, Okin (1979) has given a concise and thorough description of "women's place". Even though we are told that the generics, "man", "mankind", "he" and "human", refer to both male and female, an examination of the philosophic

writings seminal to the western tradition reveals their bias. "'Human nature' ... as described and discovered by philosophers such as Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, and many others is intended to refer only to male human nature" (p. 6-7). Female human nature is otherwise. Whatever Plato may have stated about the potential equality of ability, he chacterized wives and daughters together with children and animals, with the immature, the sick and the weak. Note his views on the human family.

> The original creation consisted only of men, and those who conquered their passions and lived virtuously during their stay on earth were allowed to return to the happiness of the stars from which they came. For any who failed on earth, however, by being cowardly and unrighteous, the punishment was to be reborn a woman. (p.26)

Women's association with sexuality and procreation are further denigrated but for 'subjective' reasons.

> Plato's own homosexuality, taken together with his conflicting belief that anal intercourse was "contrary to nature" - a degradation not only of men's humanity but of his animality - explain much of the origin of the idea that the physical aspect of love ought to be conquered and transcended so that the real object of love, which is the idea of beauty itself, can be attained. (p.23)

The relationship becomes clear. Because women are so obviously, biologically bound to the reproduction of the species, the physical, they are said to be unsuited to the achieving the idea of beauty, the intellectual. Like

Plato "Socrates denigrates mere physical procreation - the production of 'offspring of the flesh', in favour of that superior procreancy which is of the mind, and whose adherents 'conceive and bear things of the spirit'" (Okin, p.26). Again O'Brien has related this development in the male intellectual and philosophical tradition directly to the male role in the reproductive process and to men's conciousness of this role. It is this sense of alienation for which a tradition of male dominance and superiority compensates - the construction of the ultimate in 'subjective' knowledge. It is a construction intended to exclude women from any creative endeavor save the biological simply because men seem excluded from the biological.

> Plato is struggling with the biologically based realities of male reproductive conciousness. The products of female reproductive labour - species integration and genetic continuity - are deprived of their unity of understanding and action precisely because this unity is not immediately accessible to men. It must be mediated. The experiential moments of female reproductive conciousness, confirmed in actual labour, are thus denigrated and dehumanized, given a low value while they are quite frankly imitated in a 'higher' sphere, the creation of concepts in a male intercourse of spirit and thought. (O'Brien, p.132)

To this Aristotle contributed the hierarchical system and teleological view of the world: "In the world of nature as well as of art the lower always exists for the sake of the higher" (Okin, p.75). Thus the subordination of wife

to husband, child to father, and ruled to ruler - the creation of a ladder of importance within a pyramidal society.

One of Rousseau's primary concerns was the equation of paternity with female morality.

> The need for a man to know that his children are his own, and to have others also believe this to be so, is the basic reason why Rousseau completely separates both morality and moral education for women from what he prescribes for men. (Okin, p.115)

To this end Rousseau suggested gender based ways of maintaining chastity and morality.

> God has endowed both sexes with unlimited passion but he has given reason to man, and modesty to woman, in order to restrain them. Here, then, female resistance becomes essential ... as a curb to the boundless desire of both sexes. (Okin, p.117)

Dworkin described how this concept of virtue influences attitudes towards women's intellectual development and replicates the biblical fall. "Seduction (or rape) means knowledge, which is sexual desire; sexual desire means descent into sin and inevitable punishment. As a cultural symbol, the good female is innocent: innocent of sex, innocent of knowledge - chaste in both ways" (p.205). And so Rousseau's conclusion "that Emile should be educated to be his own man, while Sophie is educated to be his own woman, is in accordance with the dictates of nature" (Okin, p. 119). But it is Rousseau's own 'dictation' of what is 'natural'.

Ultimately, there are strong influences of Rousseau's idea of the virtuous and perfect mate (for men) which linger in our own society.

> Far from being an autonomous or even a distinct person, Rousseau's ideal woman should be strong only so that her sons will be strong, reasonable only to the extent required to preserve her chastity, converse with her husband and bear his children wisely, and even attractive only to the point where she appeals sexually to her husband but does not threaten his peace of mind. (French, p.60)

When views such as these are combined with Judeo-Christian teachings, it is little wonder that feminists reject "malestream" history and philosophy.

> Tertullian who informed women in general: "you are the devil's gateway", or Augustine who opined that women are not made in the image of God...Thomas Aquinas...who defined women as misbegotten males...Martin Luther's remark that God created Adam lord over all living creatures but Eve spoiled it all (and) John Knox (who) composed a "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women". (Daly, 1973, p.3)

All these and similar remarks will not engender much support from feminists but they do trumpet their own view of the misbegotten nature of such hatred and fear of women.

Hegel and Nietsche continued the tradition of the female being equated with nature and the natural. "Women have been identified with nature, with the earth, and with the despised body, with carnality, with the finitude of decaying matter, and with non-reason" (Vickers, 1982,

p.30). It is a nature which is associated only with death. And in sharp contrast, O'Brien remarked that birth has never been considered as a subject worthy of philosophical discourse. "Birth was not, and will not become, a worthy subject for male philosophy" (p.156). Ortner (1986) explored the relationships between the patriarchal paradigms of nature, culture, female and male and the relative values placed on each. Because of these paradigms, women are excluded from making their own creative and intellectual contributions to 'culture'. It is this tradition that underpins Western culture, and permeates all levels of our educational systems (Martin, 1972). It sets the rules which ensure women will feel ill at ease within men's education. Because it is hidden, part of the background, it also ensures women are never really aware of why they are not completely at ease within that culture.

Firestone in Spender's (1985) look at feminist writers saw the patriarchal idea of dichotomy at work in the division of academic endeavor into arts and sciences. Science is the 'masculine' province and this correlates with the idea that knowledge can be pure and objective, separate from prejudice, bias or emotion. Science has been constructed as the epitomy of the 'masculinist' philosophical system. It is absolute, abstract and seen

as existing separate from those who formulate its precepts. Scientific thinking is linear and goal-oriented, seeming to exist outside of, and free from, everyday concerns. The goal of scientific understanding is the ability to predict and control natural phenomena and is thus an extension of 'power over'.

Such an imposition of 'objective' order is illusion; one cannot separate the knower from the known. The idea that phenomena to be studied can, or even should be, separated out from their surroundings is to imply that objects can be stripped of non-quantifiable aspects and furthermore that this is a good thing, because it is 'better' or 'truer'. Where the goal of much of present science is to control, predict and have 'power over', we can assume a feminist science would examine interconnections, interrelationships, and social, cultural and natural or environmental consequences of scientific and technological procedures and decisions.

Science as it is presently constructed is men's studies (Spender, 1981). It is in science and technology where the exclusion and denigration of women is most obvious. Schiebinger (1987) has asked some of the obvious questions for us. What is wrong with science that it has no place for women? What is wrong in the scientific ethic

that it excludes women? Why have the names and work of women scientists been lost? While present science 'works' and is a powerful tool, it is not monolithic or 'objective'. It is, in fact, a complex social institution very much connected to the rest of society in spite of the myth of purity and isolation. It remains subjectively tied to industry, the military and the ruling elite, the epitomy of 'masculinist', patriarchal knowledge (Cohn, 1987).

Keller (1981) criticised androcentric bias particularly in the problems chosen for research, in the design of experiments, and in the interpretation of their results. Jagger also dealt with the feminist examination of the ways in which scientific assumptions both conciously and unconciously reinforce male dominance. Such a view of the 'natural' order of things reinforced by 'objective fact' influences society far beyond the ivory tower. Buerk (1985) echoed Gilligan when she tackled the problems facing women who wish to study math. She has differentiated between separate and connected knowing and emphasized the fact that mathematics is based largely on process, and that there are many methods and approaches for reaching the 'right' answer. As the sciences are taught now however, they appeal more to the separate, 'masculine' learning styles to the detriment of

our understanding of process and interrelationship.

Franklin (1984) has seen a similarity in the problems facing women in technology. At issue is the varience between present technological values and feminist, woman - centred ones.

> As feminist insights provide fresh and more detailed pictures of the women's world we begin to appreciate the basic contradictions between women's values and the operational principles of the technological order, an order that we must regard as the current evolutionary successor of the traditional male hierarchical power structure. (pp.84-5)

Franklin has affirmed that women must have the education to contribute to and take part in a technological society, but not at the expense of humanness or humaneness. Technology needs techniques for examining interrelationships, inter-connections, and we must be aware not only of what technology frees us from doing, but also what it prevents us from doing.

Klein (1981) also wrote of the difficulties presented by the concept of dualism (dichotomy), the tendency to look for opposites and incompatible differences. Feminists in science look for the process, the context, and the concious subjectivity of the researcher, an inter-subjectivity, as well as an inter-action of fact and feeling. Rather than isolating objects or phenomena from their rightful place, both scientists and the population at large would be encouraged to an

awareness that any change in our environment will have profound implications for the web of our relationships with and within the natural world. It is no accident that there is a close association between feminist and environmental ecology groups (Norwood, 1987, Ortner). It is more than just the old identification of woman with nature.

Benston (1982) placed the idea of scientists in the 'masculine' hero mold. "The stereotype of scientists themselves is as loners, coldly logical, committed only to their investigations, uninfluenced by personal desires, social factors or qualms about the uses of their work" (p.51). And: "Men who are brought up to deny their own enotions and to be seperated from their own selves, find it easy to believe that pure, isolated rationality is possible (p.60). She then continued to discuss how this stereotyping presents obstacles for women. "Men can do science with little or no role conflict, no need to examine or change basic assupmtions about their world. The opposite is true for women" (pp.51-2). When women do in fact, "do science" it is often at the expense of a sense of community with other women (Franklin, 1983). Such women have to achieve without the support of their natural community.

In Benston's opinion this dichotomy also has

resulted in a view which mechanizes the natural world and dehumanizes the social one. Many people are more and more alienated because they "increasingly become means to ends outside themselves" (p.52). Science has been used to legitimize male norms, focussing on questions pertaining to nature, to industry and to the military, through technology and the 'scientific approach'. (Suzuki's "A Planet for the Taking" and Gwyn's "War" are both film series which critically examined these assumptions and their inevitable conclusions.)

> Humanism in its many forms has been the major counter-force to such tendencies, asserting the value of non-technical rationality as well as other modes of thought and experience. Humanism has provided a constant critical look at uses of and claims for science and technology. Feminist analysis continues this tradition and brings a major new dimension to the critique. (Benston, p.52)

The claim that science is "value free, objective and purely rational is ideology and not reality" (p.64). When this view of science is placed in the context of history, philosophy and the daily experience of women's lives, it is no wonder that girls and women "can't do" science. They have learned their lessons only too well.

Because of the patriarchal stress on dichotomy, the arts are seen to be, by implication, 'feminine' (i.e. non-science). They are assumed to be more open to the participation of women. But here too, women have been

invisible (French, Spender, 1981, 1982b, 1985).

> We live with textbooks, research studies, scholarly sources, and lectures that treat women as a subspecies, mentioned only as peripheral to the history of men. In every discipline where we are considered, women are perceived as the objects rather than the originators of enquiry, thus primarily through male eyes, thus as a special catagory. That the true business of civilization has been in the hands of men is the lesson absorbed by every student of the traditional sources. (Spender, 1985, p.190)

As the 'feminine' half of the arts/science dichotomy, the arts also have a problem with image. They are seen as less - less important, less valuable, less necessary, less worthy; chronically in need of funds, chronically attempting justification for existence through an appeal to reason (Dobbs 1978). The hierarchy of importance ranges upwards (or downwards) in direct relation to distance from 'pure' science and the rational. Consequently, the early Twentieth Century love affair with Impressionism and later, the development of cubism and abstract art, can be seen as linked to the rise of the cult of the individual and of science and technology as the new gods of commerce in the United States (Guilbart, 1983). The more closely artists can associate themselves and their work with the more highly valued 'masculine', the more closely they may approximate the prestige of the scientist and science (Garrard, 1979, Wayne, 1979).

A further division exists even within that subdivision of the visual arts. The fine arts are seen as more valuable and important than crafts (Read, Donegan, Martin, 1982). This division follows the male/female, 'masculine'/'feminine' hierarchy of importance and has significance for women artists. As the development of the abstract was seen to develop out of the reverence for the scientific, so too, it was seen equally not to arise out of the design inherent in women's work of quilt making, weaving and pottery. Even where source and influence might legitimately be seen to come from the 'feminine', it is not acknowledged but is conveniently overlooked and ultimately 'lost'.

The Structure of Education

It is not only within the content of the history and philosophy underpinning the educational system, not only within the structure of knowledge itself, that patriarchal society continues the inequalities in rights and privileges granted each gender (Martin, 1982, 1985). Feminists have also examined the structure of the system for the specific practices and arrangements which combine to make the attainment of an education problematic for most girls and women. French examined the issues of power and hierachy and their influence on the school system. "The educational establishment is ... a hierarchy

primarily concerned with power, with maintaining its own power, and with teaching students to adapt in whatever way, to power as the highest good of our society" (p.388). The students are without power; teaching has less prestige than administration and administrators receive the most money while being the farthest removed from the student. This hierarchy exists at all educational levels and so does the teleological value system - another ladder of importance within a pyramidal society.

Co-existent with this hierarchical system is, of course, sexism. In 1975, the International Women's Year Conference concluded that "even if education were made universal, the institutional sexism in the formal education system would still be a barrier to women's achievement of equality" (Newland, 1979, p.31). Teachers, texts, course selection and content all re-inforce traditional (patriarchal) expectations of women's roles and women's 'inferiority'. "Be good sweet maid and let who will be clever". Girls are discouraged from areas not regarded as 'feminine' and into health, education and nurturing roles. Education is "a production process designed to turn out people who can fit into the dichotomized and unequal positions which society depends on for maintenance" (Spender, 1982, p. 89). For women

this process is a downhill struggle as they experience continued devaluation. It isn't surprising that girls and women end up where society expects them to; the surprise is that so many can escape the message they are supposed to be stupid until they get to high school (Greer, 1970, 1979, Spender, 1982).

As Spender (1981, 1982, 1985) stated, education is for men, by men and about men and is therefore an object lesson in male supremacy. It's a lesson that even reaches within the dynamics of the classroom.

> In mixed-sex classes, males are the authority figures, males do the talking, and lessons are designed to cater for male interests because as most teachers acknowledge, if males do not get what they want, they are likely to make trouble. (Spender, 1985, p.54)

While Spender wrote specifically about the British school system, there are many other studies to verify her conclusions. Frazier and Sadker (1973), Howe (1984), Pottker and Fischel (1977), Stanworth (1983), Stock (1978), Sutherland (1981), Schniedewind and Davidson (1983), and Weiner (1985) all have documented the patriarchal attitudes, prejudices and obstacles that face girls in the traditional education systems. It is studies such as these which re-enforce the feminist regard for education as created and controlled by men to sustain male power, designed to present sexual divisions of

labour as natural and inevitable, and arranged to discredit female ability and motivation.The system has institutionalized male subjective experience as truth and its fundamental character has not changed even though women are tolerated within the system. (Dagg and Thompson, 1988, might argue they are not even tolerated.) Girls are still educated with one eye on the patriarchal ideologies of the female role, domesticity, and femininity. "The world that women have lived in has always been circumscribed by what they have been taught" (Stock, p.11).

Access to education is no longer an issue but the only education available is men's education. Boys monopolize teacher attention, receive preferential treatment, talk, question and challenge more than girls do (Stanworth, Spender, 1982). Boys perform better in mixed sex schools; girls do not do as well (Spender, 1982, Sutherland). The education system does not challenge sexism or discrimination but replicates the division of labour required by capital, teaches new recruits the values required by labour and defines 'success', 'failure', 'achievement' and 'incompetance' so that present society is verified and affirmed (Frazier and Sadker, Rowbotham, Spender, 1982, Weiner, 1985). Girls learn that they are not as worthy, that they do not

count as much and that what conpetence they have is usually restricted to a specialized sphere which does not rank in the male scheme of values (Holly, 1985, Spender, 1982, 1985). Girls learn that just as boys take up most of the playground space (Holly), they take up the majority of occupations available in society (Armstrong and Armstrong). Sadly, girls most often learn that it is easier and more 'sensible' to accept what they are taught and to believe in their own inadequacy and inferiority. It is simply too risky and dangerous to defy or disbelieve the overwhelming evidence of men's education.

Spender's (1982) discussion of what happens to girls in mixed sex classes and schools illustrated the preparation girls get for taking their place within a patriarchal society. They are used to exist in contrast. They are the category boys don't want to be part of. They promote boys' positive self-image because it is against girls that boys are shown to stand out. In mixed discussions ideas presented by girls are often ignored, later to resurface, voiced by a boy and then treated with respect. This in preparation for a future in which women's ideas generally, are appropriated by men (Spender, 1982, 1982b). Discrimination in testing seems equally universal. Weiner noted that in Britain, girls are required to have higher scores on the 11+ exams to go

on to grammar school. French also illustrated this bias in relating the history of the Sanford-Binet I.Q. test in the United States. In 1916, in the first test, females outscored males of the same age and at all levels by 2 to 4 percent. The test was subsequently altered by removing questions on which girls did particularly well (p.385).

Woman-Centred Research

Aside from this discussion of the more formal issues - the weight of history and philosophy, the structures of knowledge and its valuation and of the school system - there are five other areas which affect girls and women as they learn and work in our society and which must be considered. These five are the role motherhood plays in women's expectations and achievements, women's experience of sexuality, violence against girls and women, women's use of language and the developing awareness of a value system which seems more compatible with women's growth. The research on all these issues has grown from the decision to ask women to describe and explain their own lives. These issues are also seen as interrelated; they do not easily confine themselves into neat containers; they spill back and forth into each other.

Spender (1982) and Lakoff (1975) demonstrated that perceptions about language penalize women and that the different ways men and women use language represent

different value systems. Spender (1982) labelled men's use of language as competitive - about who will gain the right to speak. What results is an exchange of speeches, pontifications of personal opinion. Women in group discussions tend to take turns. They are co-operative rather than competitive, more concerned about fair share than with winning. There is an emphasis on achieving concensus and avoiding confrontation. This way of speaking has generally been regarded as weak or deficient. It is often exploited by men who will simply speak over and speak louder thereby 'winning' the discussion. Feminists on the other hand, have come to regard male pronouncements as shutting people out and intimidating them, thus impoverishing conversation. Further research has disputed the trivialization of women's language by showing its importance in kinship groups (di Leonardo, 1987) and society in general (Miller, 1986). This in itself leads to concerns about such developments as assertiveness training where women learn to speak more "like men" and so society itself loses essential affective nurturing qualities (Jenkins and Kramarae, 1981, Miller).

Lakoff has documented three further differences in women's use of language which tend to deprive women of 'masculine' authority and force. First, the use of tag

questions such as "isn't it?", "eh?", "O.K.?" at the end of statements indicates to male interpretation an unsureness, a fear of assertiveness and a need for reassurance. When looking at the effects of such questions it is equally clear they might indicate generosity, sociability and a willingness to be open to the exchange of ideas. Second, Lakoff documents that women tend to use a questioning tone in response to questions. The 'masculine' view of this is that the person lacks confidence. In fact, it may simply indicate a desire to meet the needs and desires of others, a valuation of harmony and the ability to be flexible. Similarly, the third characteristic of women's use of language, the avoidance of strong statements, (women will ask rather than demand or order) to some is an indication of lack of authority and power. To others, it indicates respect for and sensitivity to another's wants. It can show and does require great personal strength and assurance. "In general women's language aims for harmony with others rather than an expression of control over them, and ...the former seems preferable to the latter as a societal standard" (French, p.487).

While Lakoff examined those ways in which women and girls are socialized to speak, that is, being relegated to those areas of verbal expertise not considered

important to men and which don't violate the male ego, she also noted the ways in which a patriarchal society denies women value through language. This covers everything from the use of 'lady' or 'girl' both to trivialize the individual and imply 'something wrong' with being a woman, to the use of such words as 'woman sculptor', 'Madam chairman' and even 'mistress, all of which imply the 'natural' dominance of the male.

> The overall effect of "women's language" - meaning both language restricted in use to women and language descriptive of women alone - is this: it submerges a woman's personal identity, by denying her the means of expressing herself strongly, on the one hand, and encouraging expressions that suggest triviality in subject matter and uncertainty about it; and, when a woman is being discussed, by treating her as an object - sexual or otherwise - but never as a serious person with individual views. (p.7)

This loss of voice continues as an important theme throughout any discussions of women in our society and will recur with particular emphasis in a look at women's moral development and ways of learning.

Feminists have continued to explore the issue of language in many different ways. Daly (1973) was the first to reveal the essential difficulty for women in the use of language and knowledge constructs originated by men; men have had what she calls the power of naming. Women are thus in the position of reacting to, or adding to, existing paradigms. Daly has also explored the ways

that language has been used to deny women their religion or spirituality (1973) and to reconstruct their history (1978) to mask the violence done to them by men. The French feminists too, influence others in that they have turned to the identification of woman with nature and the body to de-construct those patriarchal relationships (Moi,1985, Nye, 1987).

Studies have also been conducted to assess why women seem to avoid success. Using a male standard, a study by Horner in the 60's made interpretations about women's lack of success in the business world (French). That is, men show a desire for success so if women do not, they show an inadequacy. "What's wrong with women?" New interpretations indicate women are less afraid of success than of its negative consequences. For men success does seem to bring money and status, and that money and status seem to bring love and intimacy. Women know however, that even for men success and power are achieved at the expense of the personal, at the expense of love and intimacy, at the expense of the family (French, Ehrenreich, 1983). The fact that many women refuse to achieve success on those terms may mean women have more integrated personalities. What feminists have emphasized is that women's standards are not identical to men's, that the differences may not indicate inferiority

and that men would likely be better off with more 'feminine' standards. In any event, these values are not present in values education as it was expounded by Kohlberg.

The recognition that women might have different moral priorities resulted from a reexamination of Kohlberg's work on moral development. This work existed within the tradition of Freud and Piaget, all of whom subscribed to the "byword of patriarchy that women as a sex are by nature deficient in moral sense and character" (French, p.479). This deficiency is evidenced by girls' continuing (pre-oedipal) attachment to their mothers, their lack of anxiety about castration, and their lack of respect for rules in games. Not only was Kohlberg's study grounded in this tradition, it was based solely on results of studies on adolescent males, and seems to be not so much a moral scale as a scale of power.

> In the early stages the person must defer to others to gain a sense of rightness and identity; in the late stages the person transcends other people entirely, and guides his behaviour by legal or moral codes.... Kohlberg's vision of the self in the world is antisocial, rooted in traditional male values - independence, isolation and disconnectedness. There is no connection with others except through transcendence and power. (French, p.479)

Gilligan's work dealt with the failure of Kohlberg's model to deal with women's experience. She based her conclusions on three studies, of college

students, of women who had made a decision about abortion (a specifically female moral dilemma), and of responses to questions on rights and responsibilities. Not only do these studies lead Gilligan to make many positive re-evaluations of women's moral strength but they also lead her to make observations on the roles in which women must function in this society and the conflicts these roles entail. First a summation of this value system:

> the principles of responsibility and care underline women's moral judgments, responsibility for the effects of one's actions on others and care and concern for other people. Non-violence, avoidance of harm to people is an important concern in shaping women's moral decisions. The developmental sequence for women's moral judgments seems to proceed from a focus solely on personal survival, to a concern for the welfare of others excluding oneself, and finally to acceptance of responsibility for one's own welfare as well as others. (Wine, 1982, p. 83)

It appears superfluous to add these seem to be happier principles on which to base a society. Relegated to the private sphere, however, they too, punish women.

> Women's place in man's life cycle has been that of nurturer, caretaker, and helpmate, the weaver of those networks of relationships on which she in turn relies, But while women have thus taken care of men, men have, in their theories of psychological development, as in their economic arrangements tended to devalue that care. When the focus on individuation and individual achievement extends into adulthood and maturity is equated with personal autonomy, concern with relationships appears as a weakness of women rather than as a human strength. (Gilligan, p.17)

As she continued, it is those very attributes that make

women 'good' in our society that also make them morally 'deficient' in our society. "To admit the truth of women's perspective to the conception of moral development is to recognize for both sexes the importance throughout life of the connection between self and other, the universality of the need for compassion and care" (p.98).

Accordingly, Gilligan's In A Different Voice disputed both Kohlberg and Freud as it presented a 'feminine' moral development which had been left out of their concepts of 'masculine' separation and aggression as the only bases for human development to maturity (p.47). Her description was of life seen as a web of relationships rather than as a succession of relationships, and the isolation of autonomy is seen as dangerous while attachment is regarded as valuable (p.48).

> The experience of inequality and interconnection, inherent in the relation of parent and child, then give rise to the ethics of justice and care, the ideals of human relatioship - the vision that self and other will be treated as of equal worth, that despite differences in power, things will be fair; the vision that everyone will be responded to and included, that no one will be left alone or hurt. These disparate visions in their tension reflect the paradoxical truths of human experience - that we know ourselves as separate only insofar as we live in connection with others, and that we experience relationship only insofar as we differentiate others from self. (p.62-3)

Newland (1979) expressed this voice in its implications for society.

> Matricentric societies are spontaneous, organic; the mother cares for the baby until it is able to move about easily by itself, find food, and protect itself without her. The mother "rules" by greater experience, knowledge and ability, but the intention of her "rule" is to free the child, to make it independent. (p.27)

Thus a feminist 'curriculum' would emphasize care and responsibility, co-operation and concern for others and the pattern for the teacher/educator would be one of maternal guidance from a position of experience, knowledge and ability. Such a pattern is already present to some extent in early education. As Shack (1973) stated, women

> have inherited the primary school because no one else wanted it. Having admitted that, I must nevertheless emphasize that they have taken the inheritance and brought to it a kind of concern that is found nowhere else in the school system. (p.59)

She continued by pointing out the advantages for society as a whole. "In an educational system which is becoming yearly larger and less personal, this feminine feeling...is helping to keep the school healthy" (p.78). And further:

> If by training and culture, women are indeed specially equipped to work with individual children, to give them the understanding and sympathy and encouragement no machine can produce, then the automated educational institutions of the future will have a dire need of their services. (p.79)

It is important at this point to stress the differences between the concepts of 'individuality' and 'individualism' because central to feminism is the positive stress to be placed on 'individuality' and the parallel de-emphasis on 'individualism'. Again in Gilligan's terms, individuality views the integration of self into the web of relationships as a healthy kind of centredness which values self equally with others - "thy neighbour as thyself". Individualism, on which present society places much emphasis, values the individual above the community and its credo is "each man for himself" in the belief that if all men "look out for number 1" society as a whole will benefit.

> A final, but powerful, reinforcer of inequality is an emphasis in schools and society on competitive individualism - the notion that an individual's success or failure in life depends solely on his or her efforts and merits, and that each person has an equal chance to compete and succeed. (Schniedewind and Davidson, 1983, p.15)

Such exploitation, however tacitly implied, has no place in a feminist ethic. For feminists, the focus centres on the growth of each person's unique potential and full range of abilities - the process of self-actualization. This range and potential is not realized outside of society - it is a product and process of social interaction. As Anyon's (1981) study has demonstrated, the learner's success may depend more on expectation and

status than on individual effort. Our society seems to concentrate on promoting success for those already successful and giving advantage to those already advantaged.

From this emphasis on the individual and subjective learning experience arises the question of who makes the decisions about schooling. Within an ethic of care it is clear that these decisions must be made by those most directly involved with students. And certainly feminism rejects the hierarchical, teleological and patriarchal system in which the 'lower' exists for the 'higher' and power is invested in an authority who is removed from the intimate process of nurturing human beings (Bezucha, 1985). In contrast to our present situation where the decision-makers and wielders-of-power are the ones least involved with students on a daily basis, teaching itself would be the most prestigious of jobs and those teaching the youngest and most dependent would be most important. As Richards (1980) pointed out, as long as those engaged in society's most important work - raising the next generation - are without status, we have the wrong values. So the learner and the quality of her subjective experience should be the cornerstone of educational philosophy (Hoffman, 1985). Rather than achievement and control, emphasis would be on experience; rather than

linear thinking and standardized tests, on exploration and personal experience (Culley, Diamond, Edwards, Lennox and Portuges, 1985).

As in the area of language and values, woman-centred research has shed light on another of the aspects of patriarchal culture that remains 'hidden'. Violence which is directed at females by males and the universality of that violence affect women's conduct and choices throughout their lives.

> Men/boys who violate us are not unusual. They are 'normal' men: all classes, ages and roles of men are capable of sexual violence.... Men/boys who do not sexually harass women/girls benefit from those who do as it maintains their power position as a sex class. (Jones, 1985, p.23)

As with all forms of male violence, there is within the patriarchal society a public silence. Man disappears into rapist, wife-beater and child-molester. Brownmiller (1976) equated women's fear of rape to a kind of mass terrorism; such fear prevents women from acting as if they were free. It keeps women at home, passive, quiet, afraid of drawing attention to themselves. This fear, moreover, incapacitates women throughout the education system. Rich has described how that fear and anxiety affect the quality of all female learning.

> The undermining of self, of a woman's sense of her right to occupy space in the world, is deeply relevant to education. The capacity to think independently, to take intellectual risks, to assert

> ourselves mentally, is inseparable from our physical way of being in the world, our feelings of personal integrity....How much of my working energy is drained by the subliminal knowledge that, as a woman, I test my physical right to exist each time I go out alone? (Rich, 1985, p.25)

Sexual harassment and molestation are equally debilitating and represent a kind of 'mind rape'. Again, though Rich described adult experience it is likely that such an experience occurring earlier would be even more devastating to self-confidence and self-esteem.

> Most young women experience a profound mixture of humiliation and intellectual self-doubt over seductive gestures by men who have the power to award grades, open doors to graduate school, or extend special knowledge and training. Even if turned aside, such gestures constitute mental rape, destructive to a woman's ego. (Rich, p. 26)

Violence against women is disguised by its being confused with sexuality. Rape is a sexual offence women 'enjoy', 'ask for'; "no" means "yes"; the victim's conduct and clothing are suspected of causing males to 'lose control'. (If only women remembered their Rousseau.) Because of this presumed sexual component, any criticism of male sexual aggression is immediately labelled right-wing, prudish, repressive and uptight (Dworkin, 1983, Jones). An awareness of the frequency of sexual abuse, incest, assault and molestation has been due primarily to feminists who have publicized women's experiences. By encouraging women to speak of themselves

and their own individual and personal experiences in "conciousness raising" sessions, feminists have fostered the realization that the fault "lies not in ourselves", and "not in our stars" but in the construction of a social order which relies on the coersion of women for the maintenance of an order of male (sexual) privilege (Moeb, 1975). The effects of such abuse on women are only beginning to be understood but loss of trust in others, in women for their inability to protect their daughters, in men as care-full father figures, loss of self esteem and a corresponding sense of inferiority, of being 'wrong' or 'dirty' (Ideas, C.B.C. Radio, March 2nd, 1988), certainly have a direct bearing on women's experience of education in a male run educational system. Women's Ways of Knowing reveals that the authors found it necessary to include questions of physical and sexual abuse in their survey because it appears to be "a shockingly common experience" (p.58) and "a far more serious problem than is acknowledged by the medical and psychiatric establishment and public at large" (p.59).

> A pervasive background theme in the women's stories of loss of trust in male authority was that of sexual harassment and abuse.... (W)omen spontaneously mention childhood and adolescent sexual trauma as an important factor affecting their learning and relationships to male authority. (p.58)

To recognize and deal with sexual harrassment openly

is to recognize it as a flaw in male development and socialization (Chesler, 1978, Dworkin, 1983, Ehrenreich) and so is a first step for girls/women taking responsibility for their own well-being. The fathers, both biological and metaphorical, cannot be trusted to "take care" or "be responsible". Radical feminist discussion (Chesler, 1972, Dworkin, Greer, 1970, 1984) about male violence in sexuality has lead to a recognition that much of it is based not only on the 'masculine' belief that sexuality is a power struggle (intercourse as conquest) but also on the failure of men to provide nurturing, loving support and acceptance for their sons. Gilligan and Chodorow compare the development of girls within an intimate and continuing mother/daughter relationship with that of boys who must achieve same sex identification with their fathers. By implication the violence which men see in intimate relationships not only grows out of the necessity for boys to "deny the Mother", and recognize themselves as "not female", but also out of the rejection in the distance, alienation and isolation implicit in the failure of the father/son relationship.

Nowhere has the lesson of woman as 'other' been so much turned against women as in the patriarchal institution of motherhood. Chodorow, Dally (1982), and

Rich (1976) have all focussed on the ways in which our attitudes, customs and beliefs in what is 'natural' have been turned against women to the detriment of both men and women. Rich (1976) employed both dry (hard) and wet (soft) data, subjective experience and objective research to explore the potential as well as the limitations of the ability to bear the next generation.

> Both childbearing and childlessness have been used to negate women. "Mothering and nonmothering have been charged concepts for us, precisely because whichever we did has been turned against us" (Rich, 1986, p.253).

The use of words such as "barren" and "childless" referring only to women, echoes the dichotomy of good woman/bad woman - purity, goodness, motherhood, Mary vs. sexually active, knowing, Eve - the Victorian "angel wife" vs. the Victorian prostitute - the female body as pure, asexual, beneficent and nurturing vs. the female body as corrupt, impure, a source of moral and physical contamination - the source of life vs. the source of death. This dichotomy allows for women only two roles or role models (a standard with which Bolen, 1985, has taken issue), both of which are circumscribed by the body. The irony of this is that women are alienated from their bodies by the very fact that our culture imprisons us within them (Dworkin, Rich, 1986). If we have the illusion that the sexual revolution has erased this

Rousseauan philosophy, Kostash (1987) has disabused us of that quite thoroughly.

> Virtue is a function of female sexuality .... Thus the designation "slut". A slut is a girl who goes to bed with a guy she has no feelings for. (Note that it is not a question of the boy's feelings. It is universally assumed that boys will screw anybody who lets them, irrespective of their own feeling about their partner, since the sex act itself is deemed to have an inherent value in male culture.) (p.187)

This division of women into two dichotomized catagories also promotes the divide-and-conquer ethic of patriarchal society and includes a class component. The middle class girls defend, or perhaps more precisely, attempt to mask, their own precarious security from "the lawless rapacity they sense is brewing in boys' culture" (p. 187) by denying sisterhood with the 'other' sort of girl (p.188).

Women have been relegated to the role of sole caregiver and childminder and this care and work has been taken for granted and given no real value in society - done "for love" (Kome, 1982). Pressure is exerted on all women to remain 'giving' to men through all their lives, as sisters, as classmates, as girl friends, wives, mothers. Men are allowed to remain as children who are taken care of emotionally. Because they remain nurtured, they cannot become full nurturing partners in parenting. It takes emotional adults to succeed at the difficult tasks of parenting. Ehrenreich in fact, has contended

that one of the major reasons which made necessary women's search for social and economic equality, access to "family wages", is the failure of men to accept their responsibilities as parents by succumbing to the "Playboy Revolution", and seeking "the good life" as promised by the consumer society. Looking out for "number 1" is raised to the status of religion. Responsible fatherhood is definitely not "hip", "awesome" or "bad".

Women's experience of motherhood reinforces their understanding of the world as connected and interrelated. Rich believes that women's experience of the fetus during a pregnancy, as "me" and "not me" contributes to their apprehension of the world as continuous process and not dichotomized. The boundary lines between individuals are not sharply drawn but permeable. This feeling builds upon and re-enforces the experiences of girls who grow up with a close bond of identification with their mothers.

This sense of inter-relationship and responsibility poses problems for women in patriarchal society. Chodorow has quite clearly pointed out the conflict between the achievements feminists seek and the needs of the child. Because the majority of men still do not take responsibility for the care required by their children, this conflict has remained a problem for women. In her look at the beliefs and attitudes of right-wing women,

Dworkin noted their fear that if there is any undermining of the patriarchal institution of marriage, women are going to be left with the total responsibility for the emotional, physical and financial care of children with not even monetary support from fathers. Present statistics on the "feminization" of poverty, the lack of financial support from fathers and divorce settlements for women seem to bear out that view (Chesler, 1985, O'Connell, 1983).

Both Rich (1986) and Chodorow have distinguished between myths about motherhood and myths of motherhood. Rich (1986) particularly differentiates between the experience and potential of the mother/child relationship and the experience of the institution of motherhood under patriarchy which is used to curtail and control female potential. Because childrearing is left to the mothers, because it is made into a lonely and all consuming role in our society, young women are quite literally faced with the choice of being a mother and being an individual. The conflict is between self-preservation and the desire to have children, between being a woman who achieves on society's terms and rewarded on those terms and being a woman who reaches middle age with 'nothing but' children: "a woman's fantasies of her own death in childbirth have the accuracy of metaphor" (Rich, 1986,

p.166). Until fathers are more inclined to accept responsibility for the chores and joys of parenting, until society pays more than lip service to the importance of children to us all, women's work outside the home, any direction of her energies away from her children, will be seen as impoverishing them and not as freeing both (Greer, 1970).

Moreover, the ritual of childbirth itself has been mechanized, 'masculinized' and taken away from the woman giving birth. Doctors 'deliver' babies from women made passive through drugs (Arms, 1975, Kitzinger, 1983, 1987). Kitzinger has likened such childbirth to rape, an experience that can "shatter a woman's self-confidence, make her doubt her ability to mother her baby, destroy joy in the expression of her sexuality, and attack her very sense of self - the roots of her identity" (p.11).

It is not only in the experience of childbirth that women are estranged from their bodies. In a patriarchal culture those bodies are regarded as useful only insofar as they contribute to male society. (Since fatherhood is seen to be out of "fashion", and children more a financial burden than boon to one's old age, the female body fashion is to be "fit" for male sexual pleasure.) While the erotic display of breasts has been criticized, relatively little has improved the image of their

biological function. Breastfeeding isn't centrefold but it remains a conflicted image for women as it recalls the annihilation of self required of mothering in a patiarchal society.

Rich (1986) has drawn parallels between medicated childbirth and the idea of sexual liberation in which women are sexually 'liberated' to a sexuality convenient to men. For Kitzinger (1983), too, the emphasis on genital and heterosexual intercourse is a patriarchal attitude to sexuality imposed on women. Sexual liberation has not brought women the autonomy or the freedom to act in their own best interests and they are still not free to determine their own sexuality, to experience their own bodies as more than a vehicle for someone else's pleasure. Again Kostash's observations on her conversations with girls about their sexuality and sexual relationships have revealed clearly how little has really changed.

> They may take the pill, but it could make them ill, and they may obtain an abortion, but only if they're lucky or very sure of themselves. They may have babies outside of marriage, but only at the price of pauperization. They may consume pornography, but at the risk of a certain debasement of spirit. They may screw whoever and whenever they like - and join the ancient sorority of sluts. (p.196)

And similarly, Mackinnon (1981) has quoted Sontag on what sexuality or freedom women are to be liberated to enjoy.

> This already 'freer' sexuality mostly reflects a spurious idea of freedom: the right of each person, briefly, to exploit and dehumanize someone else. Without a change in the very norms of sexuality, the liberation of women is a meaningless goal. Sex as such is not liberating for women. Neither is more sex. (p.7)

(Such a call for change might start with a look at Gilligan's ethic of care and resposibility.)

Kitzinger (1987) has continued to dispute the artificial separation of sexuality, birth, and breastfeeding by asking women themselves to talk about their experiences of each.

> For breastfeeding is a sexual activity (one reason perhaps, why some women hate it), and part of the very wide spectrum of sexuality in a woman's life, ranging all the way from her image of herself as a woman, through making love and the process of childbearing, to the different ways in which she deals with her sons and daughters as they grow up through childhood and adolescence, and her reactions to menstruation and to the menopause. (p.204-5)

By listening to women talk of the sexuality and sensuality of conception, birth and breastfeeding we hear that women's experience cannot be separated or dichotomized. "Whatever it is for a man, for a woman sex consists of a whole range of experience that is not just genital" (p. 9).

Women in Art: Women as Artists

In an earlier paper (Huber, 1987) an exploration of the problems facing girls in school art programs revealed some of the biases and obstacles confronting any girl or

woman who wishes to make her way as an artist. In short, she must achieve in a system which was established by men for the promotion of male art interests. (Hall (1971) presented the male rationalizations for women's difficulties in art school.) It is a system, moreover, which in its reverence for Man the Creator, has, in true dichotomized reasoning, vilified woman (as he created her). Not only are we without a pattern of being artists that is compatible with our sense of ethics, our sense of values, our sense of being interrelated within and to our world (Broude and Garrard,1982, Greer, 1979, Slatkin, 1985, Parker and Pollack, 1981) but instead we are also faced with images of ourselves that diminish our own abilities so that we conform to the 'masculine' need for a mirror - in Wolfe's words "possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size".

Like the definition of feminism itself, feminist art aims at openness and inclusivity. Reed with Donegan and Martin (1982) has concluded: "A single coherent vision of feminist art does not exist" (p. 288). She wrote of feminist aims in art as being conciousness raising, affirmation and exploration. These aims also included proposing the establishment of a community of support that is non-hierarchical and non-competitive, and that is

collective and consensual. Unless women create alternative networks and develop nurturing communities which will foster excellence without undermining any woman's efforts at achieving it, women will remain isolated in what amounts to an alien community of male artists. Feminist artists are faced with the fact that 'good' art is seen as apolitical, and that woman = 'feminine' and 'feminine' = small delicate, intuitive, emotional = weak. Artists who are feminist not only proclaim its theory but also reclaim what has been the denigrated 'feminine'. To do this they express women's experience not by generalizations but by the accumulation of individual and personal artistic expressions.

Schapiro (1979) described teaching methods used to effectiveness in the Womanhouse Project in California. There were no fixed authoritative rules. Classes were held in a circle to emphasize equality and democratic participation. Each person was responsible for contributing from her own life and knowledge because the 'personal as political', incorporated as a central philosophy, stressed theory developed from the affirmation of individual experience. Dealing with difficulties in the personal or private sphere was seen as integral to learning and not separate. And finally, what had formerly been considered trivial subject matter

in art training (anything to do with being female in the world), became acceptable as content for art. Raven (1979) also discussed how collectivity is seen as a precondition of individual women's creative work. This collectivity in turn depends on conciousness-raising, shared goals and values and on mutual and responsible support and criticism.

There is not only the attempt to reclaim the lost work of past women artists but also to create new images of women to counteract the sterility of stereotypes. Effort is directed at creating new forms of visual expression, new language to express more adequately the complexity of women's experience and a new reclamation of crafts which have long been denigrated as 'not art' (Read with Donegan and Martin, Lanier, 1982, Lauter, 1984, Loeb, 1979). (The distinction made between art and craft is seen as a peculiar inversion of the useless over the useful but illustrates clearly how those things taken seriously by men will bring "fame and fortune" but those associated with 'women's work' do not.) It is based on the recognition that women are ghettoized within the art community as they are within the economy in general. And moreover, while women make up two thirds of art students they are rarely present on the faculty (Dagg, 1986).

Two issues facing women involved in artmaking are

male control of images of women in our society, and also the deconstruction of those images which have been the property of men (Kent and Morreau, 1985). Corne and Yeo (1988) have related the difficulties of presenting a show of women's images, "Woman as Viewer", to counterbalance a show entitled "Images of Women " containing a majority of works by men - this during the Winnipeg Art Gallery's tribute for 1975, International Women's Year. The not-so-surprising-when-you-think-about-it aspect of this is that it was assumed to be 'natural' for male artists to be the sole representers of the images of women, defining what "woman" is.

Berger (1972) has written about the ramifications of seeing for the woman as artist. "In the average European oil painting of the nude the principal protagonist is never painted. He is the spectator and he is assumed to be a man" (p.54). That man is assumed to be the viewer has particular importance in how women feel about themselves. "Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. The surveyer of woman in herself is male: the surveyed, female" (p.47). So we see that, in addition to being perceived as without agency, women's experience has itself become dichotomized by the prevailing 'masculine' society. Because she looks to others to see a definition/reflection of herself, she

becomes self concious and internalizes immobility; she is "an object of vision: a sight" (p.47).

Berger also links the importance of the development of perspective in Western art to the idea of male dominance. "The visible world is arranged for the spectator as the universe was once thought to be arranged for God" (p.16). Other forms of spacial organization - labyrithine, spiral, serpentine, open, hollow, non-monumental - are denigrated as they are not academic or classical. This likewise recalls and returns to our previous discussion of the scientific ethic. The viewed becomes objectified; the viewer is unnaturally separated from the surroundings and is given an exaggerated importance. When we put together perspective, dichotomy and hierarchy we can begin to comprehend the ramifications of their influence on woman as viewer.

> Women are depicted in quite a different way from men - not because the feminine is different from the masculine - but because the ideal spectator is always assumed to be male and the image of the man is designed to flatter him. (p.64)

Since the original dichotomy was set up to flatter men, this flattery is at the expense of an inadequate, disparaging depiction of women. As a result the woman as artist who portrays female experience then, by her very existence has a profound and subversive effect by re-integrating what has become fractured in female

experience. Such a re-integration would be threatening to the community of men as it implies women's reconnecting with a source of strength, a complete vision.

Another 'natural' extension of women's concern with images of themselves is the issue of pornography. While a full discussion of all the legal ramifications is not relevant here (see Finn, Hughes, Manion in Kroker et.al., 1985), its connection with the dehumanizing of women and the denial of their individuality through the fragmentation and exploitation of the female body can be tied to the objectification of women in high art. "Pornography conflates femininity with femaleness, femaleness with female sexuality, and female sexuality with a particular part of the female anatomy" (Borzello, Kuhn, Pock, Wedd, 1985, p. 40). Women's sexuality is reduced to fragmented body parts existing for another's use and visual pleasure. Acting in conjunction with this is the unspoken taboo against the representation of male genetilia (Kent and Morreau). Women's images of men generally undermine the masculine mystique as men are portrayed as human, vulnerable and frail. As these images by women do not conform to the man-as-hero stereotype, of man as being strong and in control, such images are profoundly subversive.

Perhaps the greatest obstacles to women's

achievements as artists within our society lie in the accepted definitions of both artist and greatness. Each is defined in such a way as to exclude women. For their book on the exclusion of women from the history of art, Parker and Pollack (1981) chose the title Old Mistresses. In its allusion to the reverential title "old masters" it is a clear illustration of the way language has been used to the detriment of women even in the use of what might have been roughly equal titles of respect. So too, Feldman's (1982) examination of the artist in historical and contemporary society remains rooted in the 'masculine' definition of artist in the use of catagories and in the use of a hierarchy of importance. The artist is assumed to be male; the hyphenated artist, the woman artist is not a great artist (Petersen and Wilson, 1976). Successful women artists are depicted as legends, as unusual, and so are not role models for 'ordinary' women. Only 'exceptional' women can be artists. Either way the effect is the same; women are discouraged from the practice of art (Greer, 1979, Nochlin, 1972).

Recalling the relative values designated in our discussion of the arts/science dychotomy, Wayne (1979) has described the attitudes of Western culture in that the male artist is stereotyped female/'feminine' - "inept, unworldly, insecure, gossipy, cliquish,

flirtatious, indirect, devious, manipulative, overimaginative, emotional, intuitive, unpredictable" (p.132). Broude and Garrard described the effect of this attitude on male artists.

> Men in the field have taken great care to preserve appropriately virile images for the roles of artist or art historian and to ensure that the more prestigious work is done by males, lest the profession become female dominated and hence weak in image. (p.139)

And Lippard (1979) observed that "men who have chosen such a "feminate" vocation have had to protect their virile images with a competitive vengeance, which has been concentrated on separating themselves from female artists and from the female in themselves" (p.52).

Greer (1979), Lippard and Nochlin (1971) have looked at the myth of genius in art making to show it has not been genius but predictable circumstance which allows the 'born genius'. (Borzello and Ledwidge, 1986, have provided a clear and simplified discussion suitable for school use.) Lippard continued with a description of the male artist's "machismo" as a reaction to the 'feminine', "sissy" image of the arts. Thus the woman artist bears the double burden of the necessity for denying her femaleness twice over. They are doubly 'women' and 'feminine' as practicing artists. The choice is explained by Greer (1979).

> A woman knows that she is to be womanly and she also knows that for a drawing or painting to be womanish is contemptible. The choices are before her: to deny her sex, and become an honorary man, which is immensely costly proceeding in terms of psychic energy, or to accept her sex and with it second place, as the artist's consort, in fact or in fantasy. (p.325)

If women do in fact think "like a man" or paint "like a man" the effect is still that women are inadequate misfits who can neither think nor paint ("fit" only as mistress). We return to Rich (1985) who has articulated the dilemma for woman as artist the way she articulated the burden for woman as student.

> To "think like a man" has been both praise and prison for women trying to escape the body-trap. No wonder that so many intellectual and creative women have insisted that they were "human beings" first and women only incidentally, have minimized their physicality and their bonds with other women. The body has been made so problematic for women that it has often seemed easier to shrug it off and travel as a disembodied spirit. (p. 40)

The art market is equally problematic for women. In Canada, despite the fact that women number one-half of working artists, and "although governments of Canada spend many millions of dollars each year on the arts and culture of Canada, most of the money goes to male artists and furthers the male bias in our culture" (Dagg, p.6). Male juries are the norm and they fund male projects; galleries and art history books include disproportionately few women in their collections and in

their pages. Dagg has maintained that male society has a vested political interest in denying women's art because an acceptance of it implies an acceptance not only of women's equality but also of women's independence. Men seem to fear women's honesty and what is perceived as their willingness to go beyond what is proper - what "they" have deemed proper. It is of some interest to note that the works of men currently lionized such as Fischl and Salle, men who take the feminist exploration of the images made of and about their own bodies and their own place in society, and have turned such images into those which, at best, seem to indicate an ambivalent attitude which veres towards dislike and at worst, seem to threaten violation and rape. Perhaps what they are expressing is the male fear of women's independence and the male's traditional last resort for keeping women in their place - violance, threatened or actual. That these men are lionized for their work while countless others are not, exemplifies Berger's contention that value in art is related to the marketplace and not to intrinsic artistic merit. Art historians, critics and collectors who give artists their fame do not deal in the image or its meaning "(t)hey deal with who commissioned the painting, who owned it, its likely date, the families of its owners" (p.22). None of these areas is likely to be

open to the influence of women and it has the effect of promoting what we have seen as the 'masculine' value system - "that art makes inequality seem noble and hierarchies seem thrilling" (p.29).

M.A.W.A. and the Mentor Program

Both Butler (1986) and Philp (1987) have described the development of Manitoba Artists for Women's Art as a response to the needs of women artists which were not being addressed by the present educational system. The problems faced by women artists and art students were seen as being the predominantly male and unsympathetic power structures, the double isolation of gender and powerlessness, the lack of visible role models in women artists and professors and the lack of support from a social network. These compounded the already present and specific feelings of self doubt and inadequacy arising from the roles women are seen, conditioned and expected to play in our society. A supportive network was necessary for reinforcing women's ambition, ability and skills through the exchange of practical information about grants and exhibitions and through critiques and dialogue with other women artists.

Butler and Philp have also stressed the choice made at MAWA's inception to remain part of the wider community, to avoid "ghettoization". M.A.W.A. itself grew

out of a study initiated by the Board of an artist run, co-operative gallery called Plug-In, and has remained closely associated with it. Butler commented on the advantages of this association. "Primarily, this growth from within mainstream organization gave some protection against the limitations of ghettoization, provided a base to begin fund-raising efforts, and offered physical facilities for meetings and office work" (p.25).

Within this association and to fulfill its mandate, M.A.W.A. has developed two types of programs: a Community Program which provides lectures and workshops by local and visiting artists for the general membership, and a Mentor Program which is a relationship based, non-hierarchical learning situation employing established women artists. An important aspect of the Mentor Program is this emphasis on financial remuneration for the mentors. Within the "malestream" art education system women art instructors often found themselves exploited in trying to answer the needs of a largely female student population inadequately understood or encouraged by their male instructors. Thus female staff, almost invariably part-time, poorly paid, without job benefits or security, were doubly exploited. M.A.W.A. does not continue this practice. The mentors are hired by a committee of the Board; the mentors then select the program participants

from applications. Up to three women are accepted per mentor and mentors receive payment accordingly. All agree to five one hour meetings per month and discussion may focus on work in progress, theory, techniques or practicalities such as exhibitions or grant resources. Each session ends with a show. "Therefore, participants have advice and support through a complete process of developing a body of work and exploring the structure for its public exposure" (Philp, p.3). So, it is clear, M.A.W.A.'s Mentor Program provides a unique opportunity to examine what women artists have seen to be problematic in their learning experience, what they regard as helpful as they address those problems and inequalities and how they go about creating a community of support. (M.A.W.A. instituted a review of the Mentor Program in 1988 and has since revised the format of the Program.)

While the Mentor Program participants' own words will provide the means for this examination of the learning process, it is first important to set the framework of the inquiry. Since their words will be examined through woman-centred and feminist research practice about both that research practice and women's learning, and this practice and learning differ from the prevailing academic approach, it is necessary to describe, review and explain this feminist and

woman-centred learning and research practice. Because this practice has arisen out of what feminists have regarded as inadequacies in standard academic custom, it is important to examine what these inadequacies are seen to be, why feminist researchers have chosen the particular methods that they use and how they see women's learning practice is different.

Chapter 3

Woman-centred Learning and Feminist Research Practice

The focus and direction of the questionaire for examining women's learning through the Mentor Program, has grown out of an examination of feminist scholarship on woman-centred education. This feminist scholarship has been directed towards the development of a theory and methodology compatible with women's experience and knowledge of the world. Bowles and Klein (1983), Culley and Portuges (1985), and Roberts (1981) all edited collections of articles on the theory and practice of feminist learning. (Examples in themselves of women's propensity for the collective.) These scholars worked toward the development of patterns of collaboration and co-operation between teacher and student and the development of stategies for woman-centered change by borrowing from existing approaches and departing from them when these approaches are seen to be inadequate. As feminist methodologies, they openly acknowledge bias and subjectivity and view the affirmation arising from sharing personal experiences and feelings - conciousness raising - as a release of energy toward change and toward deconstructing patriarchal myths. Emphasis is on the subjective nature of knowledge, on personal experience and personal validation. Together these subjective

experiences form a collective knowledge, "'made' rather than received by all who participated" (Spender, 1981, p.167). The recognition of the totality and plurality of human experiences and the combining of emotion with intellect is central. "Reason without desire is empty, as desire without reason is blind" (Young-Bruel, 1987, p.215). Research is carried out for action, for the understanding of the social causes of individual privation and for political activism through groups and in co-operation with other women. Competition is avoided and de-emphasised.

The form is non-hierarchical as the teacher role circulates among the learners (Moed, 1975, Schniedewind, 1983). In addition, the idea of the teacher-learner is not appropriate as there is no prescribed curriculum in conventional terms. Feminists seek an end to hierarchies and imposed, constructed, external standards on the grounds that while they may be inherent in a stratified society, they are not inherent in learning (Spender, 1981, p.169). The value of women's studies is in its multi-disciplinary quest for knowledge. It emphasizes diversity and an equal importance placed on the contribution of all participants not just on the expertise of the few. If human beings can make or 'give birth to' their own knowledge, the educator is changed;

she becomes more like Friere's (1971) "midwife" rather than like a "banker". There are no right or wrong methods only successful or unsucessful ones. The verification of such methods requires a collective response, a collective system of discussion and criticism. "(I)t is important to realize that most of our thought is still conditioned, constrained and limited by the fact that we first learned to think using tools and catagories devised by men to understand their reality, not ours" (Finn, 1982, p.44). The goal is not to pass a series of tests but to gain and maintain autonomy, to analyze "malestream" education and its structures and to control the content of one's own learning.

In abandoning the ideas of objectivity and authority, all issues are open to question as there is no recognition of authority or supremacy. There is an acceptance that there can be more than one truth and that no one group has a privileged way of knowing. Tudiver (1982) and Martin (1982) have both discussed what it means for the reform of educational practice and philosophy. It necessitates the elaboration of new learnings, new teaching methods, the identification of non-traditional methods of learning for, by and about women, and the research and development of resources about women's history and the nature of women's

experiences. Because so much has been suppressed and left out of the patriarchal curriculum, much remains to be challenged and explored. The stuff of this problem-centred learning would be the very areas that present patriarchal disciplines avoid - religion, gender roles, sexuality, politics, violence, morality. The independent thought encouraged by the raising of these issues, the challenge to dominant (patriarchal) values, and the fear this engenders in male and female alike, are issues emotionally and intellectually significant to all.

This created knowledge has implications for many aspects of women's lives. By crossing discipline boundaries, artists, and art historians, Lippard (1983) and Stone (1976) have re-examined ancient cairns, monuments, texts and relics, the preserve of male archeologists and theologians, to rewrite the story of the much maligned Goddess religions. The C.B.C. Ideas radio series of January 1986, "The Return of the Goddess", by Stone, documented the influence these ideas have on women working presently in the fields of psychology, sociology, religion, and the arts. The freedom sought in such studies, in the overturning and challenging of conventional patriarchal scholarship, is to find the freedom of other fairer and better ways of living together. Images such as those of the Goddess help

to point the way for cutting through the dichotomies and stereotypes of our present culture. "It is an invitation to all women to join in the search to find out who we really are, by beginning to know our own past heritage as more than a broken and buried fragment of male culture" (Stone, p. xxv).

In Women's Ways of Knowing, Belenky et al. note that self concept and learning are intertwined, that women frequently find formal education as peripheral or irrelevant to their learning and that traditional ways of education often do not serve women's needs. In dualistic terms, traditional education is less often concerned about interdependence, intimacy, nurturance, contextual and connected learning. It is most often concerned with intellectual, cognitive, separate learning. Where separate knowing has grown out of the scientific ethic and men's experience in the world, connected knowing has grown out of the ethic of care, women's use of language, and maternal practice. Responsiveness to others woven together with a willingness to listen and to suspend judgment, a willingness to understand others on their own terms, and the ability to ask appropriate questions are all integral parts of connected knowing.

The metaphor adopted by Gilligan and carried through by Belenky et al. is of voice and loss of voice. (This

they contrast with the male use of the metaphor of vision.) What is equally dramatic is that while women's voices have been stilled, women themselves place great emphasis on listening. Again this is different from men's experience.

> The tendency to allocate speaking to men and listening to women impairs the development of men as well. The frequent failure of men to cultivate their capacity for listening has a profound impact on their capacity for parenting, for it is mothers more often than fathers who are most likely to still their own voices so they may hear and draw out the voices of their children.... As dialogue is the primary means for preventing or resolving conflicts, not listening and imagining the other invites coercion or withdrawal. (p.187)

If this is the case, then, the issue is what kinds of learning experiences and institutions would women choose for themselves? Belenky et al. have written about several. The first priority is the development of a community as a source of strength. Women need confirmation. Because they are already consumed by self doubt, any questioning or doubting, debilitates rather than energizes women. The adversarial system of present educational institutions, which may have grown out of male developmental stages, does not fit women's experience. "For women, confirmation and community are prerequisites rather than consequences of development" (p.194). Within a community which provides reassurance, education, the search for one's own truth, can only begin

with what each individual woman knows. This is necessary to dispel the sense of being wrong, of feeling stupid, which has been re-enforced by men's education.

Because of the burdens of responsibility and the ensuing lack of time or energy, "burn out" is a concern. Structure then, is important as it provides a framework both for security and for clarity. There is also a need for choices, for formal recognition that there is no right way of doing things, only ways that are more compatible with the experience of individual women.

Structure and choice lead to a consideration of the issue of standards and excellence. As has been argued both have been used to exclude women in all fields. It is also questionable, for their appropriateness in the context of what we now know as female development processes. Because of women's concern with others, and because of their socialization in our culture to be 'good' girls, women can easily be turned from a pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and for their own good, towards trying to please. "But for nice girls ... the standards act more as impediments than as goads to independent thinking, distracting their attention from the intellectual substance of the work and transforming their efforts to learn into efforts to please" (p.208). In their willingness to please, women are often

sidetracked from their own goals into the goals other people want for them.

And finally, the mother - midwife who knows the right questions is ovarian in the learning experience. Trust in the student's learning experience is the core of feminist learning. "To trust means not just to tolerate a variety of viewpoints, acting as an impartial referee, assuring equal air time for all. It means to connect, to enter into each student's perspective" (p.227). While the authority in the teacher-midwife role means she is not like the students, it is clearly an authority based on co-operation. This deflating of patriarchal definitions of authority is a powerful educational experience in itself. As Ways of Knowing concludes:

> Educators can help women develop their own authentic voices if they emphasize connection over separation, understanding and acceptance over assessment, and collaboration over debate; if they accord respect to and allow time for the knowledge that emerges from first hand experience; if instead of imposing their own expectations and arbitrary requirements, they encourage students to evolve their own patterns of work based on the problems they are pursuing. (p.229)

Melamed and Devine (1986) cooberated this in their study of women and learning style. Context, collaboration, relationship, intuition, metaphor, experience and process all describe women's preferred ways of knowing - a knowledge based in feeling rather

than one "which originates in the "mind's eye"" (p.13).

> To think like a woman in a man's world means thinking critically, refusing to accept the givens, making connections between facts and ideas which men have left unconnected. It means remembering that every mind resides in a body; remaining accountable to the female bodies in which we live; constantly retesting given hypotheses against lived experience. It means a constant critique of language.... And it means that most difficult thing of all: listening and watching...for the silences, the absences, the nameless, the unspoken, the encoded - for there we will find the true knowledge of women. (Rich, 1985 p.28)

It is in this spirit that we attend to the responses of the individual women who have taken part in the Mentor Program. The questionnaire which follows has arisen out of a personal response to the research and scholarship of women about experiences which might more fully satisfy the search for a personal and meaningful education. The questionnaire relies a great deal on Women's Ways of Knowing.

The Survey

SURVEY: MENTOR PROGRAM

MANITOBA ARTIST'S FOR WOMEN'S ART

A. PERSONAL DATA

1. AGE: 20'S _____
30'S _____
40'S _____
50'S _____

2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE: WINNIPEG _____
OUTSIDE WINNIPEG _____

3. MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED _____
SINGLE _____
DIVORCED _____
SEPARATED _____

4. CHILDREN: NO _____
YES _____ number _____
gender _____
age(s) _____

5. YEAR IN PROGRAM: 1985 _____
1986 _____
1987 _____

B. IN YOUR ROLE AS ARTIST:

6. What do you find rewarding and positive about working as an artist?

What kinds of things have been difficult and problematic?

Explain how you feel about saying "I am an artist" when asked what you do?

7. Is the way you see yourself as an artist different now from the way you saw yourself before taking part in the mentor program?

What led to the changes?

Has being in the program changed the way you think about yourself, the art community, or the larger community?

If so, describe this change/these changes.

8. What is your life as an artist like now?

What do you care about? think about?

9. What does being a woman artist mean to you?

Do you think there are differences between women artists and men artists?

If so, what do you think are the important differences?

10. What do you think your life as an artist will be like 15 years from now?

C. RELATIONSHIPS, VALUES AND DECISIONS:

11. Have your relationships with family, friends or any one particular person affected your concept of

yourself as an artist?

Specify the relationship and explain its effect on you.

12. Remembering your most effective teacher in any situation, in your opinion what made that person effective as a teacher for you?

13. Have you ever been subjected to sexual abuse such as incest or rape, or to sexual seduction or to molestation by someone in authority over you - a family member, teacher/professor, doctor, boss, etc.?

If so, how old were you? _____.

Will you briefly describe the situation and the nature of the abuse?

What was your immediate reaction at that time?

How do you feel about that abuse now?

Do you think that abuse has affected how you relate to others?

Do you feel that abuse has affected in any way your creative ability or work as an artist?

14. In your life as an artist were you ever presented with a situation in which you were not sure what was the right thing to do?

What was the situation?

What was the conflict in the situation?

In thinking about what to do, what choices did you consider? Why those particular choices?

Were there any other things you thought of, in trying to decide what to do?

How did you weigh the importance of the alternatives or choices?

What did you decide to do? Why?

What happened?

Looking back on it now, did you make the best choice? Why or why not?

Thinking back over the whole thing, what did you learn from it?

D. ON THE MENTOR PROGRAM:

15. What conditions did you experience as supportive to your learning experience in the program?

Non-supportive?

Challenging?

Non-challenging?

16. What do you think will stay with you about your experiences in the mentor program?

What has been most helpful about the mentor program?

Were there things the mentor program didn't provide that are important to you?

17. Now you are out of the program, how do you go about

learning?

Who or what do you rely on?

18. Over your <u>whole</u> experience as an artist describe a really important and powerful learning experience in or out of a class or program.

19. Are there any other issues, ideas or feelings about your experiences in the mentor program that are important to you and that you would like to include in this survey?

Chapter 4

The Survey Response

There were thirty women who took part in the first three years of the Mentor Program - eight in 1985, twelve in 1986 and ten in 1987. As one participant moved out of the country, twenty nine survey questionnaires were mailed out. One survey was returned as it was incorrectly addressed. As I was unable to learn the new address, only twenty eight returns were possible. The questionnaires were mailed with an accompanying self-addressed, stamped envelope and a covering letter which explained its origin as part of a Masters' thesis in Art Education. Approximately two weeks later telephone contact was made with most of the participants in order to encourage response. At that time two respondents indicated they would not answer the questionnaire because of the question it contained on sexual abuse/molestation. A third questioned the validity of the survey as it "was not scientific" because the results could "not be measured or quantified". A final thank you letter was mailed as the work of collating the material was begun. This included a request for any questionnaires that had not been returned. The actual return was twelve questionnaire responses.

While every attempt was made to encourage response

and participation, the choice of responding remained with the participants. The letter introducing the questionnaire also made clear that replies were voluntary and anonymous and furthermore, that individuals were free to refrain from answering any question within the survey.

Essentially this is a survey of the subjective, a collection and description of individual women's feelings, experiences and responses, gathered and presented through the filter of research and reflection. The inclusion of a survey of women who have taken part in an educational experience like the Mentor Program is meant as an effort to contextualize. Research is contextualized within experience; the participants' experience is contextualized within the program's aims and the program itself is contextualized within the lives of the participants. It is also meant as a way of affirming experience - either good or bad - within the context of life and community.

The Survey Results

A. PERSONAL DATA

The ages of most of the respondents were over forty. Two were in their thirties. Seven lived outside of Winnipeg; five in Winnipeg. Ten were married; one was divorced and one single. Eleven had children; one did

not.

One had pre-schoolers, one had elementary school children, and the remainder had children twelve years and older.

B. ROLE AS ARTIST

All the respondents stressed some aspect of self-expression as their primary reward working as an artist. The positive aspects of self-expression came from feeling in a happier state of mind when working, a sense of fullfillment found in making tangible (visible) ideas and feelings, and the continuing challenges of that expression. Most also mentioned the importance of communication as a positive aspect of their work as artists. Whether this was referred to as "response", "continuing feedback", or "sharing" it is clear that a relationship with the veiwer was regarded as very important and if it was a secondary concern, it was certainly a close second.

As might be expected, time was the most frequently mentioned difficulty for these women artists. Other things stated as problematic implied lack of time as a basic issue. Marriage, children, guilt, energy and the "supermom syndrome" all have underlying and implicit the knowledge that it is the emotional and physical labour of

family maintenance that leaves women without the time or energy to pursue their own "bliss". Accompanying this lack of time was a lack of nurturance for the women themselves. While not always mentioned directly as a problem -"lack of emotional support" - it was present in statements like "not being taken seriously", "lack of feedback", and "isolation" or "remoteness". Isolation had a professional component as well particularly for those working outside Winnipeg. Some commented that because they have grown out of former styles and have taken chances they are often cut off from former community-based sources of support. At the same time some not only feel physically isolated from the larger community in Winnipeg in distance but also do not themselves feel comfortable yet in that milieu. They are mid-stream, moving away from one bank that is at least comfortable in its familiarity but not yet safe on the other. Equally important with lack of support and nurturance was lack of money. Finances, the business of art making, studio space and adequate equipment were all listed as problems. Because their work is not supported, it is not viewed as important; because it is not viewed as important, it is not supported. Support in its tangible and intangible forms was revealed as the central problem.

The respondents were almost equally split in their feelings about calling themselves artists. Those who did call themselves artists say they are proud to do so "now", they can "now" but "it's been a struggle". Those who had difficulty calling themselves artists, mention the lack of time for work as a reason and use painter or artist-homemaker as a way of naming themselves. Selfconciousness, shyness and fear of calling attention to themselves were mentioned as blocks in the path of giving themselves "permission to call myself an artist".

All the replies acknowledged a difference in the perception of self after the program. The answers ranged from "somewhat" to "definitely". The overwhelming change was towards greater self confidence. This confidence was not seen to arise from a change in circumstance or environment but from changes in perception. They wrote of recognizing that their problems were faced not only by their peers but also by women they saw as having achieved success in the (male?) art world. That others faced the same problems of insecurity and balancing the roles of housewife/mother and artist was reassuring. Demystification of the art world, of "city artists" and of successful women artists as well as feeling accepted within that world and those groups fostered growth and change. Many emphasized the importance of the mentor and

that relationship as well as the encouragement to do "lots and lots of work". In fact, the reason given most often for the change in confidence was the mentor relationship. Very little mention was made of their perception of the larger community although two mentioned an increased understanding of the important function art plays in society.

In referring to her life as "schitzophrenic" one of the respondents summed up the conflicts inherent in the lives of these women artists. Their lives as artists now were described positively as busy, exciting, and satisfying. They spoke of growth and personal satisfaction as artists and of finding their own work exciting. Individual women mentioned reasons to explain these positive aspects. Those listed were as various as having more exhibitions, as having more studio time when children mature, as having contacts for feedback and support, and as having a better idea about how to proceed with a career. Three women expressed clearly in their lives the undercurrents that seemed to be present in the others as well. "I am not doing enough work" and "struggling" expressed the conflicts in their lives that prevented their working. Family commitments, the priority given children, both young and maturing, take time and energy. Husband's expectations and community obligations

present continuing conflicts also. "Not that I would eliminate these but I would like to get to a point where I have more control of my time". The issue was seen to be balance, integrating responsibility to others with the desire for self-fullfillment.

As a group these women cared and thought about those fundamental problems which face our society on so many levels. Social issues - women's rights, pornography, wife/child abuse, the environment and pollution, politics, and spirituality - were mentioned predominately. These concerns grew out of caring for family and friends, caring about relationships, caring about "the most constructive way to raise children". As might be expected art making ranked very high as well. "Though my family is very important to me, nothing can describe how I feel about art." It was however, one respondent who put the impression of over crammed lives into perspective. After listing a full time job, teaching painting, partnership in a business, and raising two children, she concluded, "Frankly my main thoughts are about survival".

When asked what being a woman artist meant to them the women responded in three general ways. One stated it meant nothing as she was not interested in women's issues. Similarly, one woman felt it did not affect her

life as she separated her role as helpmate from her role as artist. Another felt that it was not pertinent as becoming an artist was such a struggle anyway whether the artist was male or female. Artists are not taken seriously in our society. Most however, felt that being a woman did affect their lives as artists. In a positive sense one felt that being a woman artist meant that her art was interwoven with her personal life. Another felt that being a woman was an advantage because her husband supported her financially and this gave her the freedom to work. The remainder of the women saw being a woman artist as leaving them at a disadvantage. These disadvantages were listed as having to struggle harder for acceptance, being viewed more often as hobbyists, having to struggle financially, seeing conflicts in "boots for the baby" rather than art materials (in one case of deciding whether to have children at all), and in having less physical strength and less confidence in their ability to cope. Being a female artist also meant seeing life from a different persective than that of a male artist. (I noted that it was her perspective that was the different one.) One woman artist also pointed out the restrictions on her life as an artist because of her sense of lacking physical freedom and safety.

Being a woman, I'm not free to go outside and

> paint....I'm no oil painting and men never look at me - until one is alone outside and then cars stop.... One has to go in two's - so have limited freedom!! (I take a baseball bat along!!)

Not even an obvious and delightful sense of humour detracts from the overall impression of anxiety. The shift from the use of "I" to "one" seems also to indicate a wish to separate from the physicality and physical restrictions of that situation.

When asked whether they perceived differences between men and women, two felt there were no differences and three expressed ambivalence. One pointed out that there seemed to be greater differences between urban and rural artists and another minimized gender differences by noting those such as young/old and smart/stupid. The remainder who saw differences saw many reasons for those differences. Women artists were perceived as more insecure and less confident, as having more demands on their time both in the home and as community volunteers, and as more likely to lack the support of family and friends. One also noted the difficulty women have in talking about their own work. "Women have been brought up to be modest and demure and therefore find it hard to speak freely about their art." What has been instilled as modesty in this instance seems to be perceived as not taking one's own work seriously and might also affect the

attitudes of others. It was felt that women's art was seen as a hobby; men's art is more likely to be taken seriously, shown and reviewed.

This sense of modesty persisted through the answers women gave to the question regarding what their lives would be like in fifteen years. The enthusiasm and passion for art and art making present in some of the earlier responses were not as evident in their views of the future. In fifteen years their lives as artists would be "probably better" and "fairly similar with a few more issues resolved". The positive aspects of the future centred on the belief that with the children leaving home there would be more time for actual art making and less need to be "practical", more time for "new things", "new methods", experimentation. One expressed a wish to be well known and others mentioned hoping to have shows. Two specifically felt they faced the either/or dilemma of professional, "serious" artist vs. "hobbyist". While one felt it to be a problem of starting too late, since the other who felt she might face the same dilemma was twenty years younger it's an issue that is not specifically related to age. The response that was the most startling was the one which attested to "having no sense of future, either as artist or person" written by a woman in her forties. (I remember very clearly similar feelings - the

blank or empty future and the anxiety it brings. Expecting a future outside of the family is still new in women's lives. We need to learn how to paint it in.)

C. RELATIONSHIPS, VALUES and DECISIONS

Two of the twelve respondents felt that relationships have not affected them. The remaining ten felt they had been influenced both positively and negatively by those relationships. Four of the women felt that a special older woman "gave permission" for them to become artists. Whether the woman was the artist's mother, grandmother, teacher or mentor the permission given seemed to be less a direct statement and more of an encouragement to let go of internalized prohibitions against non-traditional work and success. The negative relationships were all similar in that the women did not feel themselves taken seriously by their families. The positive were equally similar in that the women felt respected. In this respect they found support, encouragement and inspiration. Such communication also eased the sense of isolation for those outside of Winnipeg. The positive responses mentioned artist friends, mentors, daughters and program participants as being most supportive to their work.

Only one did not respond to the question concerning

what made a teacher effective for her. Eight of the remaining eleven noted the importance of encouragement as being central to their belief in that teacher's effectiveness. It was variously described as "encouragement to be the best", "confidence in my ability to become an artist before I did myself", and "(making) me work faster and harder ... lose my controls and find my true self". The teachers' high expectations were linked to the women's feeling respected and this respect meant honesty, sincerity and fairness. One respondent noted the importance of compatability along with a teacher's ability to recognize "latent talent". One person specifically mentioned knowledge of the subject as being important. This might also be implied in replies which noted the importance of constructive criticism, "pushing to do different things", and having "concrete ideas for artistic development". Another also noted the importance of the teacher being able to express clearly what is wanted.

Two of the twelve responded in the affirmative to the question of whether they had been subjected to sexual abuse or molestation by someone in authority over them. One told of a continuing situation which occurred when she was thirteen. The teacher "would sit close to me and the other female students who asked any questions

requiring his help". He "would be too close and made me uncomfortable". When writing of her immediate reaction she stated I eventually dropped his class because I detested the habit and avoided speaking or asking questions" (emphasis added). She continues, "so did other female students in the class and his other classes". In retrospect she sees "that his behaviour prevented me from obtaining knowledge that I could have expanded on in the following years". While she does not feel that the abuse affected her creative ability or work as an artist and while she states "no" when asked if the abuse has effected how she relates to others, she continues by saying, "But I am aware that other peoples feelings and space should be respected". It seems she discounts her own ability to turn a negative situation into positive growth of character, increased sensitivity to others.

The second woman described a situation that ocurred in her employment when she was twenty one. In a "mostly male office" she was "set up as the office sex kitten". "I went out of my way to dress in an unsexy way but it made no difference". "My reaction was to feel humiliated and to try to maintain perfect decorum". In writing how she felt about that abuse she noted "now I know how to deal with that sort of seduction". She also stated that other women in that same office "threatened to report

that type of behaviour to the Human Rights Commission - so the men behave better". Thus she reinforced her own feelings with corroboration. She had been affected to the extent that she is "more guarded about getting socially involved (with men) at work" and is "more comfortable with women bosses". In response to the question about the effect on creative ability or work, she stated "No" and then "though at the time it affected negatively the day to day quality of my work".

It is interesting to note that the woman who carried the baseball bat on sketching trips did not consider that she had been in a situation of molestation or abuse. And also another woman in replying to the question stated "No not really, the usual tries by men, no incest. I guess some situations could have been termed seduction". Such replies seemed to suggest that she views male sexual aggression as 'normal' and that women simply have to put up with such in the 'normal' course of events. If there were experiences and if they were unpleasant, they seem to have been discounted - and by the person most affected.

When asked about a situation involving values and choice, five of the women replied negatively. "Not yet", "too minor to document" and "I tore up my answer after realizing all situations between artists, etc. are

generally based on envy or jealousy either on my part or on the other person's part" qualified three of the responses. The remaining seven related pertinant life situations and these are described briefly below.

(A) One woman's choice centred on the decision of whether or not to take an Honours degree and attend graduate school after completing a B.F.A. She states that she did not consider any choice as she did not think moving was possible - "my husband would not have wanted to move". She decided to look for work. In evaluating the choice she wrote "I don't know" and "If I had gone on to graduate school, I would have been in direct contact with artists for a longer period of time, but being in the work force is a valuable learning experience, too".

(B) Another respondent distinguished between creative and personal choices. In treating creative choices she wrote about questioning the direction of her work. This she resolved through "advice from someone I respected". It was the second, or personal situation around which her reply centred. This concerned "being a juror when a friend's work is under consideration". " I couldn't give her a grant because it would be encouraging her to continue without thinking about the direction her work was taking - yet I could really identify with the rejection she would feel". She also considered "whether or not she'd know I was a juror but rejected that". She weighed the alternatives by "thinking about what was the most responsible decision to be made". She decided "not to give her a grant and hope that by doing so it would motivate her to think about some of the issues that were important to the future growth of her work". The respondent felt that the best decision had been made because "it was my job as juror to make choices that were professional and competent". She wrote that she learned "to go with my gut feelings, and to make decisions appropriate to the situation".

(C) One stated that she had not ever been presented with such a situation but wrote about one "where I knew what was the right thing to do but was tempted to compromise". The situation involved seeing others

selling their work at art shows when "I knew my work was better". The conflict was between sacrificing artistic integrity and having commercial success with work that was "totally meaningless". She decided to retain her style and not try to imitate someone else. "(A)rtistic integrity was more important than money". She felt she had made the right decision - "if I had compromised I would now be in a rut and not growing as an artist". She learned to "Be true to yourself".

(D) Conflict over commission and artist fees was described as a conflict in values. "I refused to pay our local library a 10% commission for selling my work. I felt as a taxpayer I had as much right as anyone to hang my work in a public building. In fact artist fees should have been paid...." She first thought about "not making a fuss" and then she "considered the treatment of artists in general" and "decided against hanging my work, wrote the board of directors and had a fee or commission removed". As a result she was "blackballed " and hasn't "used the library since". She did not continue the fight as she had no support from any other artists in the community. "Everyone still exhibits their work there except they do not pay. I am still the bad guy for my stand. No one even understood what I was even talking about. As for artist fees they thought I had gone completely mad". She feels she made the right choice. "It hurts but I put myself above of the people for being so little. I haven't lost - the community has".

(E) A second respondent also described a conflict over adequate reimbursement for a drawing. "I approached Via Rail with a drawing I had made inside the CNR station. They did not want to buy the drawing but wanted to put it in their newsletter". She viewed the conflict as one of professional respect. "I thought I should be paid (for my work)". She decided not to give them her work for free and they did not take her drawing. In looking back about whether she made the best choice she stated " I suppose so". "I still think an artist should be paid for the work they do".

(F) Another conflict described also centred on a sense of isolation from the community and stepping toward the unknown. "I'm rather cautious and always

afraid of rejection." This artist describes two situations - trying for a large grant to study out of the province and putting work in a show which "I knew was good but which would probably upset my small community". In each case she saw the conflict arising from a fear of rejection - rejection by authority (those who grant grants) and by her neighbours. In making her decision in the first instance she felt she could have used her own funds or chosen not to travel to study. In the other example she felt she could show other drawings "which were also good but not as good. These drawings found far more acceptance." Two other women, an artist and a curator were mentioned as influential in the decision making, one in each case. "I said "damn the torpedoes" it's time I did something I want to do". "I tried for the grant". "I hung the paintings". "I got a ... grant ... and discovered myself as an artist". "The paintings were a great success with people I respect. Neighbours thought there was something wrong with me but I found I didn't care". She felt she made the right decision to study as "it has made me an artist". About the decision to show the paintings she is less sure in spite of praise. "I hope so .... Artists I really respect came to me and told me that I was finally working to my potential". She learned to "have more confidence in my work" and to "take chances".

(G) Another woman faced a dilemma over job selection while facing an interview panel. The conflict arose from "not realizing how intimidating it was ... and realizing I was not as well prepared as I believed I was". Her answers "became less confident and shorter because I found the whole situation out of my control. I did not make particular choices". She felt she learned that in first experiences one can never prepare enough or know how one is going to react under a different situation, but should always be open and prepared".

D. ON THE MENTOR PROGRAM

In describing the most supportive aspect of the Mentor Program six of the women acknowledged emotional

support.This they variously described as sympathy, sharing common experiences and problems, exchanging ideas and emotional support and finally simply as friendship. One commented that such networking is "crucial in a field which is usually so isolating in nature". The second most important aspect mentioned by five was the interaction of ideas within the group. Group 'crits.', studio visits, discussion, feedback on their work and listening to other artists talking about their work was seen as a positive learning experience. The mentor was noted as a supportive influence by three and this was because she gave no "false praise", no "empty talk". One appreciated the mentor being "frank and brutal almost when dealing with questions of artists' survival in the real world". One listed the support provided by the director acting as facilitator and another related the positive support in the general acceptance of any work as valid art.

Only three wrote of non-supportive conditions and one of these dealt with the lack of public recognition and not with the conditions within the program. A second artist wrote about negative feedback received on her first group critique. This left her feeling demoralized. The third was concerned about what she perceived as over-analysis and a lack of spontanaety in her groups approach to art. "I wondered, and still do, if works of

art have to be analyzed and criticized quite so much. Even one mentor commented on this - so I wasn't quite alone". She also wondered if this might be a result of the degree program.

While two did not respond to the question, there was some agreement in what the participants found challenging in the program. Most of that agreement centred on issues of work. One person found a challenge in isolating and concentrating on one theme to create a body of work. Assessing her own work and working consistently in a disiplined manner was important to a second. The processes of discussing another artist's work, working towards a goal and setting up the final show were all new challenges to a third participant. Another mentioned taking chances pursuing career goals and setting short and long term career goals. For a fifth, looking at new art, meeting artists working in other media and "having to change my whole concept of art as a means of communication" was challenging. Completing work on time for a show, and giving constructive criticism in the group provided challenge to one woman while another wrote of the necessity of "extending herself". One respondent summed up the entire experience. "It was a completely exciting, confusing, frustrating and certainly challenging year". And for one other person simply

understanding what the mentor was trying to tell her was a challenge.

There were no replies to the question regarding what they found non-challenging.

When asked what they would retain from the program, four mentioned specific aspects of the relationship with the Mentor. Three of these were positive and dealt in one case with the continuation of that experience and the others wrote of the quality of the assistance they received. One felt, however, that she would retain a sense of anger with, and disappointment in, her mentor. Three who identified themselves as rural artists, felt their associations with other artists, particulaly urban artists, were important. Two stated the warmth and support they felt in the Program were important and would stay with them. Two others felt learning the business of art, things they would not have learned on their own, would stay with them. Additional things noted were an awakened interest in galleries, a desire to be a good artist, a sense of purpose and of confidence. In conclusion, one acknowledged that the pressure of time constraints led to a growth in self discipline which she would retain.

Eleven replied to the question on what they found most helpful in the program and of these, seven mentioned

meeting, continued contact with, and support from, other women artists in the program as invaluable. Talking with other artists and gaining insight into their work were two other important aspects of that association. Four listed the specific information they received about the profession of art. This included a wider experience of art, information about grants and shows, gallery tours, and books. Continuing through a theme, using books and materials to help with the problems in her work, having a theme and how to make a statement through her art, were listed as helpful for one participant. One also learned "to take herself seriously".

The question on what the Mentor Program didn't provide was left blank by three. One stated "It was a very good year ... right now I don't know of anything the program didn't provide to me". Another thought that perhaps her expectations had been too high - "it is only an advisory programme ... most of the learning comes by doing!" Of the remaining, six wanted more: more structure to the program, more group meetings, exchanges and discussions and more unsupervised contact with other program participants. Finally, one noted that "most of the (art) community's power is male dominated" and that the program has left her "until recently ... fairly ghettoized in my contacts ...." One felt the experience

would be improved if the mentor also worked in the same media and for rural artists, that the mentor be more familiar with the problems peculiar to rural artists.

The most frequently mentioned ways in which these women artists go about learning now are through workshops (5), reading (5), gallery visits , openings, and looking at other artists work (5) and maintaining contacts for informal discussions (5). Others listed working and experimentation (4), lectures (3), arranging critiques (2), and M.A.W.A. activities (2). One replied that she did "nothing"; this due to isolation from the art community.

Eight rely most on other artists for support but nine rely most on themselves. Two mentioned family - one specified her mate - and one mentioned friends as being supportive but did not specify if they are artists or not.

Two did not answer the question on an important and powerful learning experience. A third wrote of her learning being "cumulative and from many different sources". "The most important thing I've learned is to take myself seriously and learn whatever I need to do whatever I want to do". That kind of self reliance was echoed by the woman who learned "that I have to be my own best judge" and a third who viewed accepting rejection

from shows as part of learning to be an artist. "I realize failures are never true failures. I just keep learning and growing." One experienced a positive learning experience in a disagreement with her mentor who remarked that her painting "did not quite work". "At that point, I knew it worked very well - It said what I wanted it to convey - No matter what any one said". Three experienced powerful learning experiences through struggle. In a workshop, the feeling of being "pushed, pushed" caused one to "lose control and discover a new way to solve painting problems". Similarly, another described struggling with a drawing "and being told that because the 'struggle' was evident, (the) drawing had a life of its own. I still approach each new work with (that) attitude, <u>real</u> not imagined, <u>that I do not know</u> - and the job is to find out". The third found the challenge of putting together a body of work was important. For another, anger and disappointment in the mentor, vented on canvas, motivated a "loosening up experience" that was very positive. One woman found discussions with a friend and with her mentor, both of whose judgements she respected, provided the spur needed for two separate creative periods. One individual found that teaching her own classes, preparing support materials and the examination that goes with research

drew her back into art making.

Issues, ideas and feelings were added by seven respondents. Most of the comments were favourable and even those not so were not regarded in any way as critical of the program but "the luck of the draw". Three regarded the mentor as important to the success of the program. Mentors should be "really interested in teaching" and not just in for the money. The mentor should be able to view the participants' work objectively and not be do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do hypocritical. While one participant felt she got a raw deal she had no regrets and would not have missed the program. She also reiterated that her criticisms were not personal and stated she may herself have been difficult to deal with. On the positive side one mentor was described as "helpful, encouraging, enthusiastic and caring". Another participant felt more than one mentor might provide a balance. A suggestion for the program was a hands-on workshop in addition to the critiques of finished work. One artist stated that she did not feel her problems were so much because she was a woman artist but because she was a rural artist. One felt that the obstacles she faced were personal, that she had to free herself from restricting attitudes. She had to give herself permission to be an artist, to set goals and to stop sabotaging her

own success. She "found the mentor program and the M.A.W.A. organization an important forum for discussing issues peculiar to women (artists)".

The Survey Analysis

The respondents' use of language within the questionnaires conforms to the research previously described. In spite of the stress on anonymity, the responses were more like one-half a conversation than responses to questions, each one an end in itself. Personal comments, such as wishing the researcher success on the project and hoping that the writing was legible made person to person contact. Questions occurred frequently, some rhetorical, others more direct, assuming a response as in "What do you want here?" In response to the question dealing with abuse, an implied criticism was defused into a question, which left the researcher with the benefit of the doubt. "I hope that's not your concern?" The use of both non-emphatic interjections such as "I think", "I suppose so", "I guess", seemed to imply an expectation of return, some re-enforcement or affirmation. Throughout the questionnaires, question posing and interpersonal comments were obvious in the respondents use of language.

The idea of exchange and of conversation was

strengthened by actual writing style. Generous use of quotation and exclamation marks, and of underlining for emphasis provided a rhythm like that of a conversation. It seems an interesting confirmation of the voice and hearing metaphors noted and used by Gilligan (1982) and by Belenky et al. (1986). In spite of the fact there could be no response from the researcher, nonetheless she was recognized as a person behind the paper.

Language also played a part in revealing attitudes towards, and the perceptions of, differences between men and women artists. One respondent referred to her attitude as being different from that of a man, not that his was different from hers, another reminder that the standard of behaviour for human activity remains a male standard. And again the discussion of differences reveals the strength of the patriarchal paradigms of separation and competition and how much we take them for granted. Pointing to age and intelligence as other equally valid distinctions, one woman discounted the differences in gender experience. Rather than interpreting the interconnections of age, gender and intelligence discrimination as privilege for one particular group and aspects of a prevailing ideology (as has been argued in the Review of Literature), they were seen as competing isolates having no relation to each other or to the

"whole picture". Such a comment also reveals the truth of Gilligan's theory about women's valuing care and responsibility. The respondent, by recalling what discriminations others must face, is "taking care" that they are not left out either. She is also diluting her own problems with discrimination. In combination with responses to later questions about family commitments and community responsibilities interfering with self fulfillment, her remark illustrates the conflicts self actualization might engender in women. In our concern for others, we may put aside our own desires and ambitions in the belief that by so doing we are helping others, that by giving up some rights others will receive more of a fair share. It is one area where the prevailing ethic of competing rights conflicts with an ethic of care and responsibility and the ethic of care and responsibility seems to help women lose. One might almost argue women help themselves to lose. Perhaps it is only in feminist theory that we can vision a win/win resolution.

In a more direct way the differences that these women perceived might be directly linked to language and the social constructs of 'masculine' and 'feminine'. Insecurity, lack of confidence, modesty about their own work can be ascribed to the circumstances of being 'born wrong'. Female personhood, women's work and female

biological function are all devalued. Overtly or unconciously, as women we are aware of this (and are apologetic).

In discussing the results of their survey, Belenky et al. (1988) noted digressions of thought, twists and turns in perspective, themes of the first-hand experience and gut reaction, and the elaboration of points of view which were unexpected (p.14). These were also present in this survey and have received some comment in the survey results. Certainly digressions and comments on first hand experience and gut reaction are present as are attention to detail and close observation. These women have acknowledged and made room for complexity in their lives and relationships. This attitude was present in the comments about the questionnaire itself.

The unexpected point of view which surfaced was the number of women who wrote of the need for "giving themselves permission" to work and the importance of an older woman who helped by giving that permission. Those who speak of "giving themselves permission" seem to have internalized the restrictions of what is seen as the 'feminine' role. That one third of the respondents actually thought in direct terms about needing "permission" was very surprising and to me illustrates the stength of our conditioning into the 'helper' rather

than the 'doer' role, as facilitators rather than actors. It seems for many women part of becoming an active artist is first, to become aware of these restrictions and second, to recognize that these restrictions are so strong that "permission" is required or needs to be bestowed. For many too, naming themselves other than "wife" or "mother" is problematic - even for those who can name themselves artists "now". It also reveals the aura that continues to cling to "the artist".

It is the myth of the hero applied to the craft, to the artisan. As one woman stated she could call herself a "painter" but not an "artist". The creation of the title of artist has caused a separation from the craft of art making, taking it from the realm of the practical and technical where women seem quite comfortable to the realm of theory and philosophy or aesthetics which have been 'masculine' constructs to explain male experience (O'Brien) and from which women have been largely excluded. The mystique that surrounds the artist is a mystique of separation and ego which does not fit with many women's experience of self or self-in-relationship (Gilligan). For this reason, to conform and succeed as artists in our culture women must consciously learn that language and cut themselves to that pattern. It becomes a conscious or unsconcious assumption of a possibly alien

pattern and not a natural evolution. In any case it would require an extra expenditure of energy above and beyond the exigencies of craft.

What co-exists with this image problem, is the importance for these women of work outside of what can be referred to as the relationship duties, the importance of work as an expression of talent, value and well-being. This sense of the importance of work comes into conflict with the traditional roles of women as wives and as mothers. The domestic role is presented as one that supports and affirms someone else's quest for fulfillment and success. While the hero journey, the male quest as described by Christ is relevant for men - who are aided by women and men throughout - such a Self centred journey for women is less available within a patriarchal society. Thus the comments referring to the "giving of permission" by one's self or by the Mentor are crucial to the fulfillment of art making potential.

That it is an older woman who "gives permission" for achievement seems also to be important. Thus in the Mentor Program a senior woman artist who can not only show ways of proceeding but who can simply through a kind of professional acceptance "give permission" seems to fulfill a need that previous (predominantly male) instructors were not able to meet. As such, the female

role model seems to perform an important function in both symbolic and developmental ways. That women be encouraged to succeed in non-traditional terms by other women mentors, seems to be a preferable and more healthy growth than by having a male mentor. In symbolic terms, being 'mother-born' is arguably a more positive integration of biology and achievement than that of the 'father-born' Athena, the pseudo son who is encouraged to achieve as a pseudo-male in 'masculine' terms and at the expense of (female) body integration. Recalling and paraphrasing Rich (1985, 1986) learning to paint "like a woman" who is a successful and respected artist and a successful and respected female human being provides a model for the integration of all aspects of the female self.

While being open to contention, the concepts of the man-identified woman and the woman-identified woman have appeared in the various streams within the feminist movement. While such divisions are often exploited to divide women, a recognition of the ways in which women can and do achieve within a patriarchal system is essential to any analysis of women's education. It seems likely that a more sensitive examination of the positive and negative influences of men and women teachers is overdue.

That these women experienced growth and confidence

from a close association with a mentor who has experienced similar life circumstances and problems is not surprising. This new awareness is based on the understanding that in many cases it is circumstance which has limited them and their achievements and that these same circumstances face women at all levels of success. If even successful women artists, the mentors, face similar daily problems of family, work schedules and obligations, the women apprentices are freed to get on with the job. The debilitating sense of being inadequate to the task, of being the only one in that situation disappears. Such sharing of similar experiences, conciousness-raising, is important for woman-centred education. This change in perception frees energy for personal achievement rather than for the impossible task of perfecting the self.

Thus a crucial aspect of women's achievement of success as education through conciousness-raising is confirmed repeatedly by the responses of these women. The rush of energy towards self-fullfillment is generated by an understanding that it is not individual weakness that prevents women's achievements but a system that does not 'fit' them or their experience. The system does in fact seem to result in the active discouragement of their plans so that their energy is detoured to assisting

another to achieve his goals in his chosen life's work. In a system based on competition, hierarchy, and survival of the fittest, discouraging half the race to the cheering section cuts down the opposition "considerable" and diverts that energy to the support of the remaining (male) half.

Friere (1970) also echoes through the words of these women for many seem to have become their own gatekeepers. As the oppressed internalize and accept the standards of behaviour of the oppressors so have many of these women internalized the prevailing community standards of appropriate behaviour. These respondents perceive the good teacher or mentor as one who has forced the student to "lose my control and find my true self". While the women in the Mentor Program found the exchange of insecurities, the universality of their problems and the demystification of the process of acheiving success a liberating experience, they also stress the encouragement to do "lots and lots of work". I do not think this injunction to WORK can be over-emphasized. Frazier and Sadker as well as Spender (1972) point out that when boys fail in school or in sports, they are encouraged to work harder to acquire the necessary skills. Girls, on the other hand "can't do it" and are allowed to drop courses that are "too difficult" or take a "watered down".

version. If girls fail, they can't do the work and are told to drop the course; if boys fail, they repeat the course and are told to work harder. (Here in Manitoba, it might be a useful illustration to compare the resources directed towards remedial reading, a largely male problem, with those directed towards remedial math, a largely female problem.)

In analyzing the responses to the questionnaire, one of the ironies that was most pronounced was the reply, "I'm not doing enough work". It is only too obvious that these women are working exceptionally hard but that in terms of their creative development and growth, it is not 'meaningful' work. While their labour inside and outside the home, paid or unpaid, is crucial to their families and their communities, these chores have disappeared, as Rich (1986) says, into their lives. Their lives are taken up by work which leaves little time, energy or emotional reserves for their own profession. In Gilligan's (1982) terms, a remaining developmental task for such women is the integration of self, the needs and desires of the self, into that sense of duty and responsibility which is so important to women grounded in the relationships of home and community. Again, observing and listening to other women, emerging and senior artists, as they reconcile responsibility and career is profoundly

important to indicate practical and observable ways of having something more (as opposed to the impossible, illusory, "having it all".) Resolution of this conflict brings another stage of maturity in this developmental pattern. That this would be such a strong pattern in the questionnaire responses likely has much to do with the ages of the respondents. As noted earlier most women who responded were in their forties.

While the respondents indicate that they think about 'the big picture' - social problems, environment, pollution - they seem to remain unconnected with the means of addressing these issues. Such means 'at hand' remain for them indirect, the 'hand that rocks the cradle', out of Victorian mythology by Rousseau. While the learning experience of the program was enhanced by demystification, this demystification has not seemed to move past the personal connection with successful women towards the idea of personal agency in the world. Only one wrote of translating this sense of personal agency into the politics of the 'art scene' to effect some change. For most of the others, there is as yet, little movement from the awareness of angst towards action.

By and large most women remain confined within cultural patterns and while we may pay lip sevice to women's greater involvement outside the home and make use

of their earning power within the home, many do not see it necessary for women to meet their own expectations let alone have them. Some may not choose to 'for love', others cannot choose 'for circumstance'. However it may be and for whatever reason, women find their 'greener pastures' circumscribed by fences. And there is no doubt that some of these fences are self-constructed.

The hope that if you are not interested in women's issues, they will go away recalls Rich's (1985) comments about the denial of the body as an aspect of women's academic experience. While she wrote specifically of the body, it might also be expanded to encompass the total cultural construction of women's situation. Not acknowledging women's issues means avoiding the perception of the ghetto. It means being able to avoid confronting the fences, either internally constructed or externally imposed. It is not hard to understand that it is often easier to accept failure as the result of personal inadequacy rather than as the result of structural intransigence. Berger's perceptive observation that women are always the viewed and are always aware of themselves as viewed objects fails to acknowledge the scent/sense of danger in that awareness. If the ideal spectator is male and any image is designed to flatter the male, then any re-valuation threatens that male

viewer. While as Berger (1972) pointed out, this may result in an internalized male perception and self-conciousness which are debilitating in themselves, the real and more direct source of disquiet and anxiety is the sense of danger and of being prey. Women seem to be both conciously and unconciously aware of the danger that being noticed brings them. In youth it may bring a sense of power, sexual power over men. But for all women such attention carries great risk. The respondent who felt it necessary to carry a baseball bat on a sketching trip revealed that kind of anxiety about her personal physical safety.

As one respondent was aware, no artists are taken seriously in our society, be they female or male. For men, it is the problem of the status accorded the 'feminine' arts which puts them in jeopardy. For women it is the double jeopardy of being female and thus directly associated with the 'feminine'. Male artists can survive by the creation of one of any number of 'masculine' myths to compensate for loss of status. Some of these might be a) the lumberjack myth complete with work boots and plaid shirt, b) the Moses myth with greying beard and adoring acolytes, c) the rake as gunslinger complete with notched bedpost and inflatable libido, d) the intellectual with pipe and leather elbows, and more recently, e) the biker

myth with black leather and studs. The artist as housewife, mother, sales clerk or daycare worker does not carry the same authority. Even the artist as teacher as (intellectual) male is able to adopt a myth that is not usually available for the artist-teacher as (spinster) female. The woman who commented on her husband's financial support made no note of the probable household labour which was the likely exchange in the equation. This 'freedom' to work is not freedom at all but earned and 'spare' time.

All of these attitudes, a seeming lack of comfort with the role and title of artist, a sense of being without respect either as a woman in society or as an artist, an unequal distribution of domestic and relational labour, has an affect on future expectations as well. While most can forsee a life less governed by practical concerns of family life, the sense that they can construct a future more to their own designing is missing. "More of the same but slightly better" does not look like a prescription for a self directed life. The responses all indicate women arranging what they really want to do around necessity and that necessity is not their work or their careers but others' needs and others' desires. Perhaps that accounts for the aura of sadness about these responses.

And I suppose it is not even surprising to note how few of the married respondents mentioned their husbands as being supportive. Only one mentioned family as being supportive - her daughters and their husbands. Among this group at least, support comes from "kindred spirits" outside of the family. Artist friends, mentors and program participants, most, if not all, by implication women, comprised the list. I think it fair to deduce also that while these women support and nurture their families, and both male and female members of those families, these women in turn are nurtured primarily by other women. What is reenforced is the idea of the home as workplace and not as refuge or emotional support. That emotional refuge is some other woman's kitchen.

Conflict and decision about values as described by the respondents involve resolution within context and relationship and this we might have expected from Gilligan's work. Each woman described a situation in which she came to terms with the conflict over her own feelings of right and wrong and others' wishes or expectations. Whether about graduate school, evaluating a friend's work for grant purposes or receiving hanging fees as a professional right, the women made decisions which seemed to place great weight on what others' thought, felt or how best to 'care for' others in a

responsible manner. The replies also suggested that other people involved were not (in some cases could not be) consulted directly but their replies were assumed or taken for granted. A husband who "would not have wanted to move" and friends and neighbours rejection seemed to be understood on some non verbal level rather than directly communicated. If their assessments are accurate it suggest a high degree of skill in non-verbal communication as another useful way of processing information for decision making. Conversely, it might be an example of internalized fences, of women choosing to limit their own horizons. Either way again, such methods and assessments used by women are important to women and as such should receive attention in their education. An awareness of the uses to which women put non verbal communiation, its uses as well as its potential for inaccuracy or misuse are valid and neglected areas of information assessment and processing.

Almost equal in strength was the emphasis put on responsibility which in one case was directly voiced as "what was the most responsible decision to be made". This sense of responsibility also emerged in relation to their creative work. Maintaining artistic integrity, being responsible for and to one's own work means not exploiting one's own work for money but also not allowing

one's own work to be taken for granted or exploited by others. Respondents (F) and (E) not only reveal their own value systems but illustrate also the issue of artistic value as 'feminine' and thereby being of little worth in society. As Nemser (1979) and Wayne (1979) described, art production itself is regarded as a peripheral activity and is problematic even for men. Here within the responses is the issue revealed as doubly difficult for women artists. Not only is art production not seen as valuable, their work is seen as volunteer activity to enhance public buildings for free and to contribute commissions to the community library. These women are not seen as needing adequate remuneration for their labour. The idea of male labour "feeding the family" and female labour as unessential frill dies a slow hard death.

A positive response of 2 out of 12 replies to the question of abuse/molestation seems to be similar to other studies in Manitoba (Free Press, September 22, 1988). There also appears to be a tendency to downplay such situations and their effects. Language use again indicated a desire to reveal honestly, yet cover up and protect. One incident described clearly Rich's (1985) contention that male sexual aggression, even the invasion of space in a sexually threatening way can limit and curtail the learning situation for girls in a drastic

way. Most teachers are aware of the tendency of girls not to speak in class, and while research has demonstrated many causes (Jones, 1985, Spender, 1982), one respondent to the questionnaire directly linked uncomfortable infringement on personal space to her lack of class participation and to her eventually dropping that course.

This respondent also credited an increased sensitivity to others as an outgrowth of this experience. Again this confirms Chowdorow (1978 and Gilligan (1982) who perceive women's ego boundaries as less separate than those of men and so they can more readily empathize. Furthermore, the respondent commented also that other girls were similarly affected by that one teacher. Moreover, the second respondent also stated that other women in the same office had similar experiences in that office. What might be an underlying issue here is the extent of women's silence even in so destructive an area as abuse and molestation. Have these women supported their own experience with the similar experiences of those in the same circumstances because they know that what they say has no weight and will not be 'heard'? As they are quite clear and direct in their own descriptions of the event and its consequences, I think we can safely assume they do not seek support simply to justify their own judgement or experience. It would seem more likely

that such supporting evidence is protection, a 'natural' protective device in a potentially hostile environment. Again too, it becomes another instance of women's seeming inclination to inter-relationship. Both women saw their experience as shared with others and automatically seen to affect others. Taken together with "the baseball bat" these women convey the sense of living their lives with an underlying awareness of danger. If even these women, advantaged as they are, experience life with such a sense of physical danger and the need for self-protection, what must life hold for the less advantaged girl or woman?

While performance in front of a job interview panel may not directly relate to choices and decisions, it voices another issue underlying many other replies. That woman's loss of confidence was related to finding "the whole situation out of my control". Care and responsibility for oneself means "one can never prepare enough or know how one is going to react ... but should always be open and prepared". We saw how the loss of controls was necessary to progress in work and to not having control over enough time for creative work, but this control refers to a planning for future or unfamiliar situations. Those who have little sense of effective direction of their present lives will find this need to plan a future problematic. As the avoidance of

abuse or molestation rests on self control - how to dress or act or where one can freely go - so the construction of a future is seen to depend on controlling the self. There seems to be little belief in the ability of women to effect change either in their families or in the larger community. All these women seem to feel 'free' to control is the Self. Such a feeling will also explain why these women participants were so encouraged by the developing sense of community with other women. Changes in their perceptions about themselves and others resulted from the increase of self confidence they acquired from their association with other women artists. The community is necessary to any change in women's personal status and in women's social status.

It is not surprising that the participants regard the program's main strength as emotional support. Again whether the emotional support is necessary because of women's position in the big picture or whether it is due to exchange and interrelationship as sources of strength, its importance to all the respondents is clear. Directness, frankness, exchange and sharing are references that seem to assume a lack of pretension or false pride among equals. It is natural in that case that the difficulties in the program are equally seen to hinge on the failures of relationship. Most destructive among

those cited was the sense of demoralizing criticism. Criticism was seen to be demoralizing if it was not felt as grounded in a genuine care for the growth of the other person. The criticism thus was not seen to be given in the context of care and reponsibility.

Belenky et al. (1986) in their discussion of women's use of the hearing metaphor contrasted with men's use of the vision metaphor was of intense interest particularly as this study focussed on women artists. This was a group that might reasonably be expected to use metaphors of vision, even to 'see' life in terms of vision. It was in fact stunning to note that these women commented on their work in terms of communication and sharing. They spoke of their work not only in terms of self expression but as part of an exchange, a dialogue, an interaction with the larger community. Problems arose when there was some disruption in that communication and in the artist's relation to the viewing community. Separation from that community left these women artists with a sense of being vulnerable. The woman who fought for artist fees (D) did not feel able to pursue the fight as she had no support. In a similar case (F) was able carry on successfully as her situation led to a positive association with other artists. In whichever case, the issue was sharing, communication and support. Artistic endeavor was viewed

as a link, a way of joining together the artist and her community.

While the questionnaire was not intended to examine directly what Women's Ways of Knowing refers to as the five perspectives or catagories of knowing from which women view the world, nevertheless, some echoes of these catagories are certainly present in the responses. It is likewise within this aspect of these replies and descriptions of decision making that the notion of the spiral begins to take hold. Comments throughout the questionnaires raise the possibility that in reading and thinking, through personal observation and discussion, we tend to make use of all five categories or perspectives at various and appropriate times. From the respondent who "could not visualize a future" to the one who felt driven back into silence during an interview to the apprentice who traced the path of decision making for her friend's grant application, has developed the idea that indeed many women have a pattern of decision making that is like the symbolic spiral. During the course of learning and evaluating knowledge and experience, and in making decisions women appear to make use of all the perspectives they have acquired and do not seem to discard those earlier methods of knowing. At the same time this parallels Christ's (1980) summation of women's

quest. This quest is first described as an experience of nothingness, then the courage to see and to see in new ways and ultimately, this new seeing leads to a new naming, a new knowledge. As a pattern it corresponds in a general way to the catagories of knowing: from silence through received knowledge to subjective, procedural and finally to constructed or integrated knowledge. Again as (B) who wrote of evaluating a friend's work for grant purposes noted the process she went through in making that decision, it seems probable that it is a method of decision making rather than a hierarchical series of stages that are outgrown and no longer used.

Thus the pattern of these perspectives is not linear but spiral. This spiral is evident too, in the explanation given by the woman who experienced a return to silence with the infringement of her personal space in the classroom and within the interview situation. In both cases her return to that silence began the process of reevaluation that led to new perceptions and increased understanding. It is not simply a case of retreading the same path but a process of growth and maturity that carries on throughout life. Thus the process of learning and evaluating might be seen as a journey that continually deepens and refines or expands and widens comprehension towards decision and understanding. In this

way, the spiral as an archetypal symbol could continue to have resonance for women's epistemological perspectives and systems of learning. Such a pattern would emphasize the uniqueness of each woman's experience and allow for multiplicity and complexity. While some of the questionnaires seem to imply such an intriguing possibility too little evidence is available here to make any definite conclusions. For me it has become a fascinating issue and definitely a question for further exploration.

It also appears that it is doubt that pushes women back into silence. As Belenky et al. observed, for connected knowers, the adversarial or doubting approach to educational practice is debilitating for girls and women. Doubting is seen not as a game but as a deeply personal threat. (At the same time such a threat can be turned to constructive growth as we have seen.) The experience of the critique was successful when it was viewed as non-adversarial. Because connected knowers make the shift from the facts of others' lives to others' ways of thinking, friendship and affection, and the development of empathy and trust play a crucial role. This belief that the other has something valid to say, requires an attitude that is non-judgemental. Evaluation and direction induce positive growth when they are

presented within a concept of care and responsibility. Negative comments are not effective and do not work because they are perceived as breaking the connection by asserting a superiority of the self. The women in the Mentor Program who responded positively even to strong criticism did so because they understood it as coming out of care. The negative responses to criticism and to the Mentor experience were equally seen to arise from a failure of care and was not blamed on the program itself. How then are we to deal with grading and evaluation? If it is true, as it appears to be true that women require confirmation and community as prerequisites to learning (Belenky et al., p. 194), then evaluation, judgement and marks can inhibit and can deter women's learning rather than spur them on to greater achievement. In an educational system based on levels, tests, evaluation and measurement, connected knowing and learning is, like working as a woman artist, another double jeopardy for women. Not impossible, just doubly difficult.

Responses dealing with working as a woman artist did not acknowledge any concerns that feminist critics have raised about the basic structure of the art world as it presently exists; they only revealed a desire to be considered part of this world. Another question for further study might be whether the price is worth it.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

Drawing together these pieces of ideas, constructing some whole cloth from notions that will not stay neatly in bed sized rectangles is no small Procrustean task. Little, even trivial scraps vie for their place with misty, romantic tulle and sturdy no nonsense corduroy. The commonplace, the obvious and the ordinary co-exist with hints and visions of grander implication. Like the particulars shared by those women who responded to the questionnaire, conclusions about women's learning have ranged from the seemingly unimportant but concrete details of everyday life to the tantalizing, often vague glimpses of design and pattern and theory beyond.

The obvious restated. Women grow in relationship. Relationships continue as fundamentally important throughout their lives. Relationship in family, in friendship, in society and within the world community is essential to the well-being of all of us. To neglect women's strengths in this area, to penalize in fact, this 'natural' ability leaves us all the poorer. A system for schooling which at every level skews the search for excellence, for doing one's best, into a hierarchical valuation of human worth, demeans the very idea of an education. In concrete terms it means we must hold to the

concepts of care and responsibility, basing learning on particular and personal knowledge, and establishing empathy and trust as pedagogical imperatives.

The women who took part in the survey all regarded themselves as operating within a social network. All, conciously or not, by their responses, indicated the validity of Gilligan's research on women's values. The Mentor Program was seen to succeed as the mentor - apprentice relationship was seen to succeed. Equally the critique was successful (and growth inducing) only when it was perceived as non-threatening. Even the harshest criticisms or perceptions were relished if given within a caring relationship.

On many levels - physical, mental, and emotional - we girls and women feel threatened in our society. This threat of rape, physical or mental abuse is real and the fear well founded. It is a threat we seem to feel secure about meeting only when we control and circumscribe our own actions. Not only is our freedom limited by a threatening environment but it is also limited from within. It also seems that we set internal limits for our own protection. We control our own physical actions, our body language, as we control what we say and how we say it. That we seek safety by seeking to please is tied to our desire to maintain relationships. The external fences

are closely paralleled by the internal ones and seem to re-enforce them. Like the Mentor Program, an effective education for girls and women will encourage, will "give permission", for desire, for action and for accomplishment. An education for girls and women will be successful if it is able to release and enable rather than hold in and restrict. Research and 'ordinary' experience both illustrate how important it is for women's well being that we develop communities of women as a resource and support for individual and collective growth. Such a community not only provides an external protection but also encouragement for the woman herself to deal with the internal barriers to self fulfillment.

While freedom essential; so too, is structure. Without a frame of reference, a maternal guidance, roots and stability, women's (and men's) intellectual development and growth is unlikely. Girls and women seem to feel they do not receive accurate evaluations of strengths or weaknesses. False praise is as demoralizing as acid criticism. Building trust in the fairness of the structure as well as in the fairness of the people who manage it is requisite. Because women have had a history of unfair treatment and because success for many has been a question of pleasing someone else, clear expectations and guidelines reduce the possible misunderstandings.

And fairness will not be acheived without a revaluation of the 'feminine'. Beginning in the body, in female biological function, with the creation and nurturing of life, a revaluing of the relational is imperative if society is to meet the needs and challenges of the future. While humanism, humanist philosophy and religion have attempted such fairness none have accorded the female and the 'feminine' their real and full value. So even their fairness is based on inequality. An affirmation of the 'feminine' also necessitates real and full fatherhood, not the fatherhood of patriarchal control but a fatherhood of nurturance and acceptance. To accept the wisdom and strength of the 'feminine' in all human life and relationships and in each individual search for meaning and agency is to accept life as far more complex, rich and variable than we have until now, envisioned or articulated it. In true and perfect irony, the refashioning of female life and education would allow male life a new, more gentle and intricate design. In true and perfect symbolism women could continue to (re)birth both genders.

We might be seeing the beginnings of change in a wider acceptance of alternative attitudes to ways of learning by hearing what it is that women have to say about their own life experiences. What some of the women

who have taken part in the Manitoba Artists for Women's Art Mentor Program have had to say about their learning within that Program exemplifies this beginning.

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