

**A DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESSES OF  
REPRODUCTION AND RESISTANCE IN THE  
MARGINALIZATION OF GIRLS BY CLASSROOM  
INTERACTION PATTERNS AND A PROPOSED MODEL FOR  
CURRICULUM INTERVENTION**

by

**AUDRHEA LANDE**

**A Thesis**

**Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

**Faculty of Education  
University of Manitoba  
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**Abstract**

This study identified problems associated with the marginalization of girls in schools and it proposed a model for curriculum intervention. It study examined, from the standpoint of feminism, neo Marxism, and critical educational theory, how, in schools, girls learn to doubt their abilities and to play a subordinated role. They learn self-limiting behaviours and attitudes through classroom interaction processes - praise, criticism, recognition or the lack thereof, joking, assistance, questioning. An extensive literature search and analysis described these interactions, how they reflect the values of the larger society, and analyzes their hegemonic function. The study considered how schools serve to maintain patriarchal relations.

However, hegemony is not a simple one-way process of domination. The study examined the internalization of oppression: the ways in which the subordinated defend, deny, challenge, cooperate, or negotiate with their oppressors/oppression. This struggle takes place on the contradictory terrain defined and defended by power and authority.

A model is presented for intervening in this "hidden curriculum" of schooling, based on interrogation of the values and assumptions of educators. In C.A. Bowers' terms, the model created an opportunity for traditional authority to be "relativized", for "liminal space" to be created where new ideas might take root. It is based on a process whereby people examine their own experience of limitation and oppression, and, from this foundation, develop a socio-political analysis of schooling and socialization. This knowledge is then drawn upon in creating an anti-sexist schooling.

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## **Chapter One: The Genesis of the Question Under Study**

### **The "Currere" Perspective: A Journeying**

A number of thinkers in the field of curriculum studies (see work by Klorer (1980), Pinar and Grumet (1976), among others.) have presented personal theorizing as a basis for the development of curriculum, and it is with regard to this method that I write my thesis. This is a method that honors the role of personal experience in one's education and development. The term "currere", a verb form of "curriculum", emphasizes the journeying aspect of learning rather than the arrival at a particular destination. This method sees, with Dewey (1940) that the ends are within the means, the goal is achieved by the process. The aim is exploration and a personal search for meaning and understanding. Pinar and Grumet (1976), make use of a "regressive -progressive-analytic-synthetic" mode of examining personal experience, relating it to the external world and one's goals, and using the insights gained, both intuitively and cognitively, as the basis for personal growth and understanding. So a student recalls her/his history, or a particular experience, and reflects on all the aspects of it. Then she/he looks to the future to see how it may be influenced by the past.



the past. This personal reflection is then expanded and informed by a reading of and relating to the external world: other people, recorded knowledge, cultural forms. This new information is then turned back into one's personal life, to build understanding, gain direction, create knowledge.

### **A Personal Remembering**

When I was a high school student, I was always at the top of my class - an "A" student. I earned my highest marks and greatest sense of satisfaction from mathematics, chemistry, and physics. I loved the balance in these subjects, the challenge of solving difficult problems, my deepening understanding of the physical world. I dropped physics half way into Grade 12, because I wasn't getting good enough grades in it, even though I was doing better than anyone else in the class. When the time came to choose my university courses, the sciences never entered the realm of my consideration. Not one teacher suggested it to me. My automatic, assumed choice was Arts. And what areas in the Arts should I pursue? A teacher suggested psychology and geography, because they were probably easiest. And I happily endorsed those choices. Why would an "A" student be

concerned about easiness of the course? Why not consider the sciences?

### **An Analysis of My History**

I believe my "choices" were gendered choices. Science was then, and still is, stereotyped as a field of male endeavour. Because I was a girl, I learned to doubt my own ability. I was schooled to disbelieve in my own accomplishments, to downplay them. Because I was a girl, I was not expected to pursue a career, and so I did not need to consider long-term interests, career advancement, development of my own intellectual potential, or contribution to the sum of human knowledge. Because I was a girl, I chose to be a teacher, thinking that this occupation allowed one to move anywhere one's husband did, and find a job. It could be taken up again after a family was raised. Most of my teachers had been women and they seemed satisfied with their work. My choice was based, not on the nature of the work, but on the perception that teaching would allow me to fulfill my expected role as a wife and mother.

This was my personal experience of a schooling that prepared me for a traditional "woman's place" in society, a schooling that did not develop in

me an accurate assessment of my ability, nor an understanding of my interests and talents, nor a sense of life-long work. A basic principle of feminism becomes pertinent here: the personal is political. My experience is what I found again and again as I engaged in a search of the literature on gender and schooling for this thesis. My experience is the experience of many women. We have been schooled for the patriarchy - for a society that operates on the principle of the rightness of male-dominance and the structural dependence of women on men - economic, social, emotional, and psychological dependence. In conducting my search of the literature, I learned a new word, "hegemony", a word that encapsulates a range of processes and ideas by which authority, influence and dominance is established over a people. Theories of hegemony explain how domination is not only externally enforced but is also internally monitored, rationalized, and maintained.

### **Placing My Experience in the Wider World**

In this study, I sought to understand these hegemonic processes by which girls are schooled to doubt their abilities and to be satisfied with second-best. I wanted to see if there are resources or qualities girls

possess with which to resist hegemony. Where in the schooling of girls, could an emancipatory education take hold and begin to change their schooling from one of subordination and self-doubt to one of development and validation?

In this study, my intent was to place the research on gender and schooling into a wider framework of feminist analysis and critical educational theory. The marginalization of girls in schools does not happen in a vacuum, or only in the bounded world of the classroom. It is part of the larger society and needs to be examined in the larger context of our capitalist and patriarchal society where various groups and ideas struggle for control and voice.

### **A Personal Style of Writing**

My thesis is written in gender-sensitive language, as recommended and guided by the APA Publication Manual. If the word man is used in the text, it designates a human male. If a noun referrent could be male or female, for example, student, or teacher, then that is made clear by the use of two pronouns; he or she. In the text I use the word students to indicate

students of either gender. When only girls are under consideration, I make that clear by naming them girls, or female students, and not using the generic term student.

Feminist scholars have criticized the use of imprecise language founded on the assumption the male-as-norm. (Daly, 1978; Smith, 1978) Third-person, neutral, objective language maintains the societal stereotypes of a male academia and hides the realities of a gendered society. Spender (1981, 1982) critiqued various disciplines and showed how language and "scientific" practice rendered women invisible. Language and thought are inextricably linked, and language has been one of the tools used by a patriarchal society to maintain women in a subordinate, silenced position.

Theorists and researchers in the critical education, curriculum theorizing and "currere" schools have recognized the important role language plays in shaping/reflecting our thought and our society, and their publications are being written in truly non-sexist language. They do not commit the error of false consciousness by noting in some forward part of their work the importance of being non-sexist, but then proceeding in the work to use

sexist language because it is more "convenient", and "less awkward".

My thesis is also written in a style that makes it clear that these are my words, my research, my questioning and my theorizing. It has been traditional practice to write academic works in the "neutral" third-person style; saying, for example, "it was found that ---", rather than "I found ---". In this manner, researchers have hoped to deny their own interest in a question, have hoped to deny any personal judgement in observations or questioning, have tried to avoid making explicit their own assumptions and politics. Such "neutral, objective" language was used to create the myth of knowledge existing apart from people, of knowledge waiting somewhere "out there", waiting to be found. But as feminists and the new sociologists who examine the social construction of reality have explained, there is no such thing as value-free knowledge. Human beings cannot divorce themselves from their experience to create a "disinterested" question or a study that does not reflect or illuminate their view of the world.

"The disciplines are moving away from 'objective' analysis whose primary result is a divorce of objective knowledge from

evaluation. The humanities are realizing that their subject matter is so thick with personal and interpersonal experience, with moral and evaluative judgements, that the "impersonal" and "value-free" methodological strategies of the Sciences are at best irrelevant and, at worst, a distortion of the subject matter itself."

(Bowles, 1984, p. 186)

Rather than trying to create the illusion that a work is neutral, disinterested, and non-political, what I and other feminist scholars attempt is to make clear the philosophical and political basis of a question and a study. Using personal forms of language helps to make such political and philosophical tenets clear. The truth and clarity of this kind of analysis and writing can readily be appreciated in the recent writings of Apple (1981), Giroux (1981), Connell et al (1982), Freire (1985), Grumet (1988), Howe (1984), and others.

### **The Personal is Political.**

A personal style of writing makes explicit the first tenet of feminist

theory, that "the personal is political". Relations of power inform all aspects of our lives. Politics is not simply a game played by those people dubbed "politicians", but is the sum of our desires, ideals, daily work, and lived experience. Freire understands and explains this through his enjoinder to the oppressed, to "name their own Word", and to "name the World". (1972) By the validation of one's personal experience, one claims the right to exist in the world and to transform that world and oneself. Thus, my research question arises out of my personal experience of schooling. It is informed by my search of the literature, which is analyzed from a feminist and critical educational stance. It examines the experience of schooling that girls encounter in various sites, with the aim of developing an emancipatory pedagogy, one that counters patriarchal domination. It is my intent, throughout this work, to be true to three principles of feminist methodology elucidated by Weiler (1988):

In this feminist methodology three major themes occur again and again, and all of them reflect de Beauvoir's insight that women must begin by defining themselves in a society and intellectual tradition that denies them subjectivity. First, feminist researchers begin their investigation of the social



world from a grounded position in their own subjective oppression. --- Feminist research, like critical Marxist theory, thus rejects the desirability or even the possibility of value-free research. Instead, feminist research begins with the unique vision of women in a male-defined society and intellectual tradition. Secondly, feminist research is characterized by an emphasis on lived experience, and the significance of everyday life. This is expressed in several different ways: by an assertion that the personal is political; by a rejection of positivism and an interest in phenomenological or social interactionist approaches; --- Thirdly, feminist research is politically committed. In rejecting the possibility of value-free research, feminists instead assert their commitment to changing the position of women and therefore to changing society.

(p. 58-59)

In making my philosophy, politics, and principles clear, I hope to create a more honest, thorough, and critically analytic piece of work. I concur with

Stanley and Wise (1983) in rejecting an objectivity that is really "only an excuse for sloppy work" (p. 169), and in rejecting an ideology which is dishonest in that it pretends to be representative and universal. My intent is to be academically rigorous, to name the world as initially experienced given my socialization to a patriarchal paradigm, and to rename and reframe that experience and its effects, given the new vision made possible by a feminist and critical socio-political analysis. Through this process of examination and reflection, I intend to create a curriculum intervention model that will incorporate these principles and address the problem of the creation of self-doubt in girls.

**Chapter Two: The Literature on Gender and Schooling: A  
Description of the Classroom Interaction Patterns  
by which Girls are Marginalized**

In this chapter, I review the literature that speaks to the impact of schooling upon girls, upon their perceptions of themselves and the world. The research studies are numerous and varied. Some are qualitative studies which used focused, in-depth interviews and questionnaires or videotaped lessons. Some are quantitative studies which used a variety of instruments to count and code interactions, or tests of achievements, or surveys of attitude and self-efficacy. Some are detailed case studies of individuals or small groups of individuals, while others use populations of over a thousand students. Studies are based in differing geographical and cultural areas: Europe, Britain, the United States, Australia, and Canada. The studies cover a wide age range of students, from primary school to entry-level college students (ages 5-6 through 18-19 years). The literature is extensive and I have attempted to provide as thorough a review as possible, given the limitations of time and space. Needless to say, I have not reviewed every single study carried out. That is not

practical, nor, I believe, necessary. The detail, variety and foundation developed by the many studies I did examine provide a solid background for the question under review.

**Girls underestimate their own ability.**

Several studies examined how girls perceive their own achievements and abilities. They showed that girls, by and large, had an unrealistically low estimation of their ability. Licht and Dweck (1983) examine the differences between boys' and girls' expectations of success when learning new skills or knowledge, and their differential evaluations of their achievements. They found that girls were less likely than boys to seek challenges, and were more likely to see themselves as inadequate, even when their actual performance provided evidence to the contrary.

Lobban (1978) cites three studies (Sears and Feldman 1966, Torrance 1963, Wylie 1963) which showed that girls in the higher levels of primary school and in secondary schools make unrealistically low estimates of their ability whereas boys of equal ability do not undervalue themselves.

Sears (1963, cited in Sears and Feldman, 1974) similarly found in a study of bright Grade 5 and 6 students, that girls were significantly lower on scores of self-concept of mental ability than boys of equal intelligence.

This self-doubt of their own ability has been documented in other studies on girl students. Keys and Ormerod (1977, quoted in Deem 1980) found that in choosing courses in high school, girls were more likely to choose on the basis of perceived "easiness", whereas boys were less affected by such criteria. Harvey (1985) did a quantitative study of 2900 high school students in Britain. He found no difference between boys and girls scores on science tests, yet "There is, however, a great deal of evidence showing that, in the third and fourth years, girls are opting out of science, particularly physical science." (p. 182)

Deaux' (1977, quoted in Deem 1980) too, found that temporary and unstable factors, such as luck, were consistently called on to account for women's successes (by women and men alike) whereas such external factors were only applied to men's failures. Men's successes were usually attributed to internal factors (ability, hard work, personal character), while lack of such

internal factors were used to explain why women failed. It would seem that people in this study thought that women's failures were their own fault or shortcoming, while their successes were not due to their ability or effort, but due to luck, or other factors beyond their control. Greenglass (1982) cites numerous studies (Parsons 1975, Frieze and Bar-Tal 1974, Feather 1969, Simon and Feather 1973, McMahan 1971, Nichols 1975) that corroborate and enlarge these findings. Wolleat et al (1980, cited in Fennema 1984) found that when girls succeed at mathematics, they are more likely than boys to attribute their success to factors other than their own ability (eg. luck). In the Fennema-Sherman study (Fennema, 1984) boys from grade six to eleven showed greater confidence in their ability to do math than girls did, although in most instances there was no difference in achievement.

Schunk and Lilly (1984) reviewed the research on sex differences in students' performance expectations and attributions prior to carrying out a quantitative study on self-efficacy and performance feedback on girls and boys in grades six and eight. Their search concludes:

"Although there are some exceptions, the typical findings are that girls hold lower expectancies for success and are less likely to attribute success to ability than boys, particularly on masculine-type tasks. ... Similar results also have been obtained in studies of mathematical achievement..."

(p. 204)

Their study involved 60 students and they found, as predicted, that the female students entered the experiment with a lower sense of self-efficacy than boys. No actual gender difference in learning or performance was found in the study, and as a result of performance feedback, the gender difference in self-efficacy disappeared on the post-test measure.

Stanworth reviewed the work of Dweck (1980) and Bisseret (1979), both of whom explored how women viewed their achievements, and concluded:

"...in a society where 'ability' is highly prized, whether women succeed at any academic task or whether they fail, neither they

nor others who appraise them are left with any confidence in their ability, with faith in their capacity to sustain a good performance or to change a poor one."

(1981, p. 51-52)

**Girls used as a 'negative reference group' for boys.**

Stanworth (1981), in her study of seven entry-level college classrooms in Britain (students aged 17-18) found that girls tend to underestimate their ability. She asked both teachers and students to rank the members of each class according to their successes in the subject. She found that, in 19 cases out of 24 where pupils' rankings were different from those of the teacher, all of the girls underestimated their rank, and all but one boy overestimated theirs. Two thirds of the errors in ranking were in regard to classmates of the opposite sex: girls downgraded themselves relative to boys, while boys upgraded themselves relative to girls.

In personal interviews with the students of these seven classrooms, Stanworth found that boys often couldn't conceive of a girl doing better than they, or of girls having any serious career ambitions. She asked



students to name other classmates whom they wished to be like, and found that when a boy named a girl as possessing a trait or ability he admired, he was also quick to draw attention to her shortcomings as well. When asked whom they would least want to be like, all boys named only girls. This behaviour provides evidence for Shaw's contention (in Deem, 1980) that boys use girls as a negative reference group.

In my search of the literature on gender and schooling I found examples of researchers themselves negating the positive achievements of girls. In their study of problem solving in several modes McGlynn and Schick (1973) conclude:

"No sex differences were found in the present study, with the exception that females required less time to solution than males, extending the previous finding (Laughlin and McGlynn, 1967) that females required less time with both discussion and competitive formats."

(p. 339)

Rather than trivializing this finding as "no sex difference, with the exception that....", McGlynn and Schick could have presented it as positive evidence of girls' abilities.

**Girls' achievements are downplayed and devalued.**

Stanworth suggests that this kind of devaluation of girls is the "typical consequence of interaction in these classrooms"; that is, in coeducational classrooms:

"These data on pupil rankings, combined with comments of the pupils themselves, strongly support the contention that the prominence of boys in classroom interaction plays an active part in the regeneration of a sexual hierarchy in which boys are indisputably dominant partners. Girls appear to boys - and more importantly, to themselves - as less capable than they "really" are."

(1981. p. 44)

Spender and Cline (1987) describe interviews they had conducted with adult women regarding their school experience. Most women interviewed believed that a systematic attempt was made to undermine their confidence. Those women who did not have this conviction had, without exception, been educated in single-sex schools. All those from mixed-sex schools and some from single-sex schools reported feeling that schools raised self-doubt in them and that this same process was not applied to boys. They hypothesize that this is how women are undermined: they are taught to doubt their own abilities, the ability of women as a group, and to deny their own psychological and intellectual resources.

The literature documents the creation of self-doubt in girls and examines the dynamics that operate to deny their abilities. Girls in primary school are described by empirical testing, by teacher opinion, and by the girls themselves as better students than boys (Clarricoates 1978, Douglas 1964, Sharpe 1976). Yet, as they proceed through school, girls' perceptions of their abilities change, to the kind of under-estimation I present herein.

Clarricoates (1978) termed this process "the wholesale theft of girls

intelligence". Her research in British primary schools substantiated girls' achievement; they were more successful than boys at the primary level, especially in reading, writing, English and spelling. However, even though teachers noted this achievement, they downplayed it, attributing it to girls' conformity, their willingness to please and to do what is expected. It seemed that ability in girls was not believed to be "true" ability.

Clarricoates found teachers to say they preferred to teach boys, thinking they are more interesting, with more independence and original thought. Girls' conscientiousness and diligence made them less bothersome but also less interesting, and less likely to be seen as "truly able".

"For girls, there is a 'Catch 22' in the hidden curriculum. If the girl learns her lessons well, speaks appropriately, is considerate in all she does and is no bother to the teacher, she is even then not accorded the full status due her appropriate behaviour, unlike her opposite number. Indeed she is scorned for having 'nothing about her', for being a 'goody-goody'! By conforming to institutional expectations, she will invite

ridicule and criticism as a lesser being than a boy; she will be perceived as weaker and less intelligent. She will learn submissiveness and self-depreciation, qualities which society does not hold in high esteem. Self-depreciation is derived from her internalization of the opinions her teachers hold of her."

(Clarricoates, 1978, p.363)

The researchers in the foregoing studies found that teachers, boys, and girls themselves have a low estimation of the abilities of girls. Their achievements are often attributed to luck, or other external factors, or are passed off as evidence of a girl's nature (wanting to please, doing what is expected, conscientious) rather than being taken as evidence of real ability.

**Classroom interaction patterns magnify boys, marginalize girls.**

The literature suggests that the dynamics of classroom interactions are one of the contributing factors in the creation of self-doubt in girls. I found numerous studies which examined the number and quality of interactions in various levels of classrooms, in order to reveal and analyze the kinds of messages students received in classrooms, from both the overt and the

covert curriculum. By overt curriculum, I mean the subject and content studied, the ideas explored, the skills practiced, the questions asked, the "stuff" of schooling. By covert curriculum I mean all of the assumptions and structures on which a classroom or school operates, the political and philosophical underpinnings that shape a school and are seldom examined or even acknowledged. Davies and Meighan (1975, p. 171) define it thus:

"The hidden curriculum is a term used to refer to those aspects of learning in school that are unofficial or unintentional, or undeclared consequences of the way in which teachers organize and execute teaching and learning."

Who is asked questions and the type of question asked, who gets attention and who doesn't and why, the kind of attention (if any) given to late-arrivals, misbehaviour or good performance are examples of the working of the hidden, or covert, curriculum.

The literature shows that classroom interaction is dominated by boys, to varying degrees depending on the study, but almost always dominated by

boys, even when they are the numerical minority. I did find one study (Randall, 1987) in which girls were more active than boys in classroom interaction, and it will be examined in the latter part of this chapter.

Stanworth's book "Gender and Schooling: a study of sexual divisions in the classroom" (1981) is based on detailed work done for her doctoral dissertation. It is a disturbing account of teachers' preferences for boy students, of how boys dominate classroom interaction, and how girls are marginalized. It focused on seven "A" level classrooms of a humanities department of a college of further education with a large sixth form intake - a relatively liberal co-ed setting. About twice as many students were girls as boys, aged 17-18 years.

Students in the study were divided into pass and fail categories, since research has shown this to be a criterion of teachers' acceptance or rejection of students. Teachers were then asked to name the students they were most attached to, most concerned for, and most likely to reject. In the pass category, boys were twice as likely as girls to receive concern designations and three times as likely to receive attachment designations.

Only boys at a pass-fail borderline received concern designations, no girls in this category did. The teachers did reject some girls in the pass category, while no such boys were rejected. In the fail category, girls were twice as likely as boys to be rejected. Both male and female teachers showed this pattern of preference for boys, but it was more pronounced for men. Boy students were twice as likely as girls to receive concern designations from women teachers, but ten times more likely than girls to receive that designation from men teachers!

Stanworth asked the students to name those to whom the teacher pays the most attention. In the student responses, boys' names appeared two and one half times more frequently than girls - and this in a population that included twice as many girls as boys! According to these pupils' accounts boys in the study were:

- 1) four times more likely than girls to join in discussion or offer comments in class
- 2) twice as likely to demand help or attention
- 3) twice as likely to be seen as 'model' pupils
- 4) twice as likely to be asked questions by the teacher



- 5) twice as likely to be regarded by the teacher as highly conscientious
- 6) twice as likely to be the ones with whom the teachers "get on" best
- 7) three times more likely to be praised by teachers
- 8) slightly more likely to be criticized by teachers
- 9) slightly more likely to be the ones for whom teachers display concern
- 10) three times more likely to be the ones teachers appear to enjoy  
teaching
- 11) five times more likely to be the ones to whom teachers pay the most  
attention

In separate in-depth interviews, nearly all students made spontaneous, unsolicited comments regarding the favoritism showed male students, particularly by male teachers. Stanworth took as credible, and recorded, only those incidents and comments that were corroborated by several pupils. One-time remarks were dismissed, and she still found the overwhelming perception/evidence that male students are central in the classroom.

French and French (1984) counted interactions in a fourth year junior

school (students aged 10-11 years) classroom of 29 students (16 girls, 13 boys) and reported these findings:

Turns taken:		
	teacher	81
	pupil "chorus"	33
	unidentifiable	8
	boys	50
	girls	16
Total		188

No girls were found to make unsolicited comments, only boys did. The interactions were dominated by four particular boys (who were involved in 17, 10, 10 and 5 interchanges each) and one girl (who had 5 interactions). Two observations become startlingly clear from this study: the dominance of teacher talk in classroom interaction, and the imbalance of "air time" that boys take as compared to girls.

#### **Boys actively contribute to the marginalization of girls.**

Pat Mahony (1983) described interactions in a mixed-sex classroom showing how boys actively contributed to the marginalization of girls. Boys spent time and energy denying or degrading the academic ability of girls, by re-defining the questions girls answered as 'easy', by overt putdowns, laughter, jeers, groans, sighs, and other verbal or non-verbal

ways. They often referred to a girl's appearance as a way of "putting her in her place" eg. to a girl whose essay a teacher praised, a boy said "Let's have a look, Monkey Legs", referring to her hairy legs.

Mahony contends that some of the boys' verbal abuse constitutes sexual harassment and operates as a pressure on girls to withdraw from public participation in lessons. Some of the abuse she documented took the form of many perjorative terms for girls (eg. cow, bitch, tart, bird, scrubber). In her study she found only one such term used for boys - pouf - meaning a feminized man. She found too, that male teachers tended to condone, rather than challenge, boys on their sexist attitudes behaviour, and indeed, indulged in such behaviour themselves in order to be seen as 'one of the lads'. Stanworth (1981) made similar observations:

"For example, in the sixth form department where my research was conducted, male teachers often interspersed their lectures with good-natured jokes of a mildly flirtatious sort "Good heavens, Jane, I didn't realize you had legs' (this addressed to a pupil who appeared for the first time that year in a skirt) is a

typical remark".

(1981, p. 22)

Shaw also notes how teasing and joking, especially along lines of sexuality and appearance, is directed at girls in school:

"At another level the observation that girls, as a category, are laughable and become even more so as they mature, especially sexually, may go some way towards explaining the increasing polarization and 'voluntary' segregation of girls from boys that characterizes the later years of schooling. ....girls similarly have little option but to withdraw from the danger zones where their presence simply invites abuse."

(1980, p. 73)

**Classroom interaction patterns give girls and boys different messages about themselves.**

The literature shows, then, that classroom dynamics devalue or ignore the achievements of girls, develop a perception of boys being more interesting

and challenging than girls, and emphasize, often in a negative way, the sexuality of girls. The covert curriculum's message to girls then would seem to be that, academically and personally, they are second to boys. It develops a sense of girls being a negative reference group for boys; that, whatever else they may be, they are "not a boy". What is being constructed is the ideology of the male as the norm and female as sex.

Lockheed (1984) reviewed the literature on gender and classroom interaction. The studies and findings are echoes of what has already been described herein:

Spaulding (1963): twice the proportion of criticism that girls receive is for 'lack of knowledge or skill' teachers accorded boys' work and efforts in class more approval than girls; teachers spent more time teaching and listening to boys.

Brophy and Good (1970): girls receive less praise for correct answers.

Delefos and Jackson (1972): girls receive praise for a random set of activities while boys were praised for academic

performance.

Sikes (1972) teachers encourage the intellectual growth of boys by asking them more abstract questions.

Hillman and Davenport (1977): teachers ask boys more product questions.

Dweck, Davidson, Nelson and Enna (1978): elementary school teachers praise boys more than girls for intellectual aspects of their work, but girls received more criticism of intellectual performance than boys.

Lockheed et al (1981): teachers report that they find the questions and answers of boys more interesting.

Good and Findley (1982): teachers ask boys more process questions.

Lockheed also quotes several studies of mixed-sex groups that show children, by late elementary school, are more likely to perceive boys as leaders.

Spender (1978) found that girls and boys received different messages about

themselves through the processes of linguistic interaction in the classroom. They learn that it is normal

- 1) for the teacher to ignore girls for long periods of time, but not boys
- 2) for boys to move out of their seats, call out, push one another
- 3) for boys to dominate classroom talk
- 4) for boys to be addressed individually, girls collectively

Thus, it can be seen that patterns of classroom interaction actively build a perception of boys as more dominant (noisier, more noticeable, more interesting, more individual) and more intellectual, while girls are quieter, more amenable to direction, less academically challenging. The research shows that teachers emphasize the role of boys in the classroom and girls, as a consequence, learn that they take second place.

**Boys receive both more negative and more positive contact with teachers than do girls.**

In a study of sixteen junior high classrooms, Brophy, Good and Sikes (1973) looked for evidence that female teachers were biased against boys. Their research concluded (as I reported herein, earlier) that boys got poorer

grades than girls in elementary school and their research study looked for reasons why. Their review of the literature found, as mine does here, boys are highly salient for teachers - they receive more positive and more negative contact with teachers than girls do.

They used the Brophy-Good Dyadic Interaction coding system to count and analyze the interactions during 10 hours of instructional time in each of the 16 classrooms. They found that:

- 1) female teachers initiated many more positive contacts with boys than with girls, while male teachers showed only a negligible tendency to favor boys on this variable
- 2) male teachers were more likely to praise boys but simply affirm the correct responses of girls
- 3) female teachers showed no difference on praise following correct responses but were slightly more likely to affirm boys' responses
- 4) with a single exception, boys received more of all types of interaction than girls
- 5) boys initiated more questions and contacts than girls did; they called out more often and guessed more frequently



- 6) teachers provided boys with more response opportunities on all types of questions (direct, open self-reference, procedure, process, product)
- 7) boys as a group received more positive and more negative affect from teachers

This study forcefully demonstrated that high achieving boys received the best of everything in the classroom, and low-achieving boys received the worst. Low-achieving girls received low rates of teacher contact, even less than that of low boys, because low boys were heavily criticized for behavioural reasons. The low girls were found to receive high rates of criticism on academic criteria, and to initiate a very low number of teacher contacts.

Brophy, Good and Sikes' summary of their study is an interesting example of blindness to the effect of classroom interaction on girls - even in this study where the results were so overwhelmingly seen to favor boys:

"In summary, this study suggests that male students per se, in secondary schools, are not being treated inappropriately by

teachers of either sex. Student sex differences provide little evidence that boys are treated in detrimental ways, except perhaps with regard to discipline (and here the difference is probably a function of student behaviour rather than teacher bias)."

(p.85)

The researchers discuss their research findings without any mention of the impact such interaction patterns might have on girls.

**Dependence is encouraged in girls while achievements are ignored.**

Randall's (1987) study would at first reading, seem to provide contradictory evidence to the general pattern of boys dominating classroom interaction. Randall criticized Stanworth's work for being based on pupil and teacher perceptions, which were ascertained by interview and questionnaire, and not on actual counts of pupil-teacher interaction. She did concede that pupil perceptions may be more important than 'objective' reality, but she set out in her study to do a quantitative count and coding of pupil-teacher interactions in a mixed comprehensive school (students aged

11-18 years). She observed classes in science, art, and industrial arts, but the data she reported in detail was from the woodworking shop lessons.

She reported these findings:

1. In 17 shops demonstrations, boys were centrally located in the classroom 8 times, girls 5 times, and 4 times there was no clear cut distinction.
2. For both lessons where interactions were scored in detail, boys were centrally placed, girls were on the margins of the group.
3. The group in the detailed count listed below consisted of 10 girls and 9 boys.

	girls' average contact time with teacher	boys average contact time with teacher
Lesson 1 (mainly classroom time, almost no practical work)	49 seconds	43 seconds
Lesson 2 (much longer practical session)	3 minutes 45 seconds	56 seconds

Only one girl in the second lesson did not have a longer contact time than any of the boys. This girl was named by the male teacher as the best in the group. He praised her ability and independence, and gave her very little

attention. On the other hand, the boy named as second-best in class had relatively long contact times in both classes. He received more attention than the other boys because the teacher said he was "keen" and "showed hard work". On one occasion, the teacher let this student do a piece of cutting work for himself while the teacher held the wood. For all other students (including the best student) the teacher did this task. In the second lesson the teacher gave direct "hands-on" help to girls 5 times, and to boys twice. In lesson one, where there was almost no practical work, he gave such help equally to both sexes. In pilot studies, too, Randall reported that instructors gave more hands-on help to girls, while giving boys verbal or directional instructions. This direct "doing for" kind of assistance given girls by teachers has been documented in other studies (Serbin et al, 1973, Safilios-Rothschild 1979 both cited in Safilios-Rothschild 1986). When the data gathered here is subject to analysis, what can be seen then is a scenario where girls are "helped" and boys are "taught". Girls did receive much more teacher attention than boys because this was a shops situation - a traditionally masculine site. The girl who did excel was ignored, while the boy who did good work received more interaction and trust. The surface data would seem to contradict the usual pattern of male dominance, but an

analysis of the "hidden curriculum" reveals that the usual pattern of learned female dependence and ignoring of female achievement is maintained.

**Teachers prefer and reinforce sex-typed behaviour.**

Clarricoates (1978) quoted a number of studies which showed that teachers preferred sex-typed behaviour in students. They liked dependent girls more than dependent boys. They had high regard for boys with sex-appropriate (i.e. rough and tumble) behaviour and were worried for those who didn't. Conforming girls were ignored, or even despised, while girls with inappropriate, unladylike behaviour were a damn nuisance. The lowest rating of preference was given to independent assertive girls.

Clarricoates found that teachers have more of a problem with "nuisance" girls than with unruly boys. Such behaviour was not expected from girls; teachers were much less tolerant and more negative towards it. This finding supports Martin's study (1972, cited in Lobban 1978) which found girls with problems to be neglected by teachers. Girls with problems rated equally severe as boys with problems received significantly less attention

than those boys. Girls were expected to get on with their work with less teacher attention whether they were quiet and conforming or outspoken and unruly. Both types may have had academic problems but this possibility was less recognized and the girls received less teacher concern and attention than comparable boys.

Croll (1985) did a systematic observation in 34 second-year classrooms, using a rigorous schedule of counting and recording interactions. He had hypothesized that the gender imbalance in classroom interaction documented in so many studies was due to the influence of special needs children in the classroom, most of whom just happen to be boys. His study found that the identified special needs boys and girls received equal amounts of individual attention, but in the control groups of "regular" students, boys got more attention than girls. The nine male teachers and twenty-five female teachers in the study had identical patterns of increased individual attention to boys. Although this more recent study contradicts Martin's earlier work, cited above, which found special needs girls to be neglected by teachers, it still supports the theory of male dominance in the classroom.

Lobban (1978) found that girls were criticized for academic failure, but ignored for academic success. Misbehaviour in girls was seen as a character defect (they were called insolent, stubborn, bitchy), while in boys the same misbehaviour was interpreted - by the same teacher - as a desire for self-assertion.

Feshback (1969) found junior school (students age 6-12) teachers to prefer compliant pupils and that the ratings were mediated by gender. The lowest ratings of preference were given to independent girls. Lippitt and Gold (1959, cited in Sears and Feldman, 1974) found that teachers generally made more supportive remarks to girls and critical remarks to boys. Teachers in that study were much more supportive of low-power girls than of low-power boys, and less critical of them. It appears that teachers support the lack of self-confidence in girls, and prefer that behaviour from them.

Ricks and Pyke (1973) in a Canadian study of 60 teachers found the majority to believe that boys are more aggressive, girls more passive. The majority preferred to teach boys because they were seen to be more

interesting, more critical, and more important career-wise. Torrance (1962, cited in Sears and Feldman, 1974) asked teachers to describe incidents where they had rewarded creative behaviour. Of 172 incidents where the sex of the child was clear, 74% were boys, 26% girls. Teachers appeared to identify and praise creative behaviour more readily in boys.

**Girls bear negative consequences for both silence and non-silence.**

Davies and Meighan (1975) made a study of fifth form girls in two urban comprehensive schools, to gain an overview of factors in school affecting girls' self-concept. Through interviews, they found that teachers talked with conviction about equality and equal treatment, but then made sweeping generalizations about differences between boys and girls in ability and behaviour. These teachers perceived girls as excelling in "devotion to work". They were conscientious, precise, organized, and better at written work. Boys, they thought, were more logical, more enthusiastic, quicker to grasp new concepts, better orally. Seventy-two percent of the teachers said they preferred to teach boys, because of the attributes noted above, as well as the ease of relationships and greater career prospects.



Girls who displayed inappropriate behaviour were called "devious, insidious, insolent, resentful," while boys' discipline problems were seen as "prank-playing" - they were "mischievous, naughty", but "always owning up". In a questionnaire, the fifth-form girls made many references to the differential treatment they received from staff.

The double jeopardy for girls in classrooms - silence and non-silence - both of which carry negative consequences, is also noted by Stanworth (1981). She found that classroom teachers remembered more easily the names of all boys and of girls who spoke up in class. The pupils whom teachers had difficulty in remembering were, without exception, girls. They frequently attributed this to the girls' quietness and anonymity. In this study, boys too rejected girls because of their "facelessness", their quiet conformity which was taken to indicate a lack of ability, ideas, character or ambition. The occasional girl who spoke up in class was accorded more respect by boys.

This silence of girls made it more difficult for teachers to identify individuals, to call them by name. Stanworth found this criterion (a

teacher knowing a student's name) was important in a student's self-evaluation, as was other interaction with teachers (being asked questions, their opinion, being praised).

"Small expressions of attention or concern---are taken by pupils as evidence of the teacher's interest or indifference. When pupils are not singled out for attention in class, they tend to assume (in spite of good marks) that teachers hold them in low esteem. Hence the attitudes and expectations expressed by teachers---can have important consequences for the views girls and boys develop of themselves."

(Stanworth, 1981, p. 50)

Thus, it should be no surprise that girls come to doubt their own ability. Classroom interactions magnify the responses, concerns, and efforts of boys. Teachers encourage dependent and passive behaviour in girls, and interpret their attempts at independence and assertion as character defects. When girls are quiet and conforming, as they are expected to be,

they go unnoticed, their achievements taken for granted, rather than celebrated.

**Teacher expectations made visible in the classroom.**

Persell (1977) suggests that it is reasonable to expect teacher behaviour to have an impact on student self-esteem. She cites twelve studies which showed that teachers spent more time interacting with students for whom they had high expectations. In these studies, teachers' positive expectancy was communicated by

- 1) a general "warmth" in affect
- 2) more praise for performance
- 3) more actual teaching
- 4) more opportunities to respond

Rowell (1971, cited in Whyte 1986) found that when science teachers expected boys to achieve at higher levels than girls, actual differences in grades were larger than in classes where the teacher had a more egalitarian attitude.

Spear (1983, cited in Whyte 1986) made similar findings. Science teachers evaluated identical pieces of work randomly assigned to boys or girls. When the work was attributed to a boy, it received higher ratings for scientific accuracy and understanding of principles. Boys were judged to have significantly more aptitude, more favorable attitudes and a greater interest in science.

Fennema (1984) says that the hypothesis of differential teacher expectation is intuitively logical. (ie. that differential expectations of success affect how teachers behave towards students and thus influence how students see themselves and what students expect of themselves.) Brophy and Good (1974) found that teacher expectation was related to the way they interacted with students. Becker's study (1979) of tenth grade students confirms this.

**Teacher recognition and approval is important for girls.**

The literature suggests then, that girls can be caught in a self-perpetuating cycle of silence - lack of identification - lowered teacher expectation - lack of interaction - lowered self-esteem - silence. This is unfortunate,

since it seems that recognition and approval by teachers is more important for girls than boys. Research suggests that girls are more dependent on adult approval. Raphaela Best in "We've All Got Scars", (1983) documented how boys began detaching from teacher approval and forming peer supports between grade one and two, while this did not happen for girls until grade four. Spender (1982) found that girls took a more personal approach to their schooling, relating to the people in that context, whereas boys related more to the subject content. Persell (1977) suggests that, given the less powerful position of lower class and minority children in society, they appear to be more influenced by teacher expectation. To those two groups I would add females, since of every class or minority group, women are the underclass. Therefore, lack of recognition or interaction with teachers would seem to have especially negative consequences for the self-esteem of girls.

**Criticism directed to girls most often relates to achievement or ability.**

In an European publication "Girls and Women in Education", Safilios-Rothschild (1986) reviewed European and American literature on

gender and schooling. She made similar findings to what I present here: that teachers treated girls differently from boys, that boys dominated classroom interactions, being both praised and criticized more frequently, that teachers' behaviour showed they had higher expectations of boys. She cited three studies that found only one-third of the criticism directed towards boys related to the intellectual quality of their work, while two-thirds of the criticism directed towards girls was of this nature. Conversely, 94% of the praise directed towards boys related to intellectual factors, while for girls 79% of their praise was of this nature. It seemed that the intellectual capability of boys was recognized and/or implicitly assumed, while for girls it was more ignored or its lack was pointed out. Safilios-Rothschild found that for boys, eight times more often than for girls, teachers attributed a poor performance to lack of motivation, rather than lack of ability. She contends that the overall effect of teacher expectation and behaviour is that boys come to be seen by themselves and others as academically more capable than girls.

"The impact of this sex-differentiated behaviour of teachers is that the use of negative evaluation for boys becomes

indiscriminate since it is employed more often for non-academic matters, while for girls it remains more salient since it is frequently related to the quality of their work. Given that the academic shortcomings of boys, more than girls, are blamed on lack of motivation and, hence, insufficient application to study and that they are more often praised than girls for good academic performance, these factors lead boys to treat the criticisms of teachers as ambiguous and an invalid assessment of their level of ability. ---Since the inadequacies of girls are attributed in lesser degree to lack of motivation or inadequate study, and they more frequently receive criticisms that refer directly to the poor quality of their work, girls cannot disregard negative evaluations as ambiguous or invalid."

(Safilios-Rothschild, 1986, p. 41)

Spaulding's study (1965) showed similar sex-differentiated behaviour by teachers. In 21 classes of Grade 4 and Grade 6 students, all teachers interacted more with boys on four levels: approval, instruction, disapproval, listening to the child. Lack of attention was the most frequent

cause for disapproval. This accounted for 40% of the disapproval given to both girls and boys. However, another 40% of the disapproval aimed at girls was for lack of knowledge or skill, while just 26% of the boys' disapproval was for this shortcoming.

**Being outspoken and independent carries risks for girls.**

The research shows, then, that silence in the classroom has negative consequences for girls. It would seem logical, then, that being assertive and outspoken would have positive consequences for them and positive effects on their self-esteem. However, Clarricoates' (1978) study cited earlier disputes this theory. Her review of the literature showed that teachers gave a low rating of preference for independent, assertive girls, and loud, outspoken girls were a damn nuisance. Two other pieces of research show that being outspoken carries risks for girls.

Stanworth (1981) asked students to indicate which of their classmates they admire or reject. The ones that girls rejected were all girls - but not the same ones that boys rejected. Girls rejected other girls who were outspoken, the very ones teachers in some studies reject too. The boys,



too, rejected only girls but the "faceless" ones. The outspoken girls were the ones that got some respect from boys.

"When asked whom they would least wish to be like, it is not boys, but other girls, whom girls reject. All but one of the female pupils named girls (and only girls) as the persons they would least wish to be like. The reasons they gave suggested they were not simply adopting the standards of the boys, and disowning the members of their sex who were held by boys in contempt; on the contrary, many of the girls who were rejected by female classmates were more than ordinarily outspoken, and were condemned for "speaking out too aggressively" or "hogging the limelight."

(Stanworth, 1981, p. 47-48)

Paula' Caplan (1973) found in a study of elementary school children who were repeating the grade, girl repeaters had significantly more disruptive classroom conduct than promoted girls, while the two groups of boys (repeaters and promoted) did not differ in conduct. Low achieving girls who were promoted anyway were significantly better behaved than low

achieving girls who were made to repeat the grade. Apparently, teachers decided whether or not to promote girls partly on the basis of their behaviour not just on achievement as they did for boys. Furthermore, the teachers' behaviour ratings of the girl repeaters was much lower than that of the boy repeaters.

**Classroom dynamics create self-doubt in girls.**

The research shows then that teacher expectation and attitude and the male-dominated dynamics of coeducational classroom interaction are two factors in the creation of self-doubt and lowered self-esteem in girls and the general lack of authority and credibility accorded women.

"The experiences they have there (the classroom) are an important source of evaluations of their own, and the other sex - of their assessments as to how successfully boys as a group and girls as a group, match up to the demands of the adult world, when boys are more outspoken and manifestly confident - and especially when teachers take more notice of boys - pupils tend to see this as evidence that boys in general are

more highly valued, and more capable, than girls."

(Stanworth, 1981, p. 41)

Smith (1978) suggests that the deprivation of women's confidence and women's learned compliance with male control make it difficult for women to treat one another as relevant figures and to assert authority. The research I have presented here shows how this happens in coeducational classrooms, from primary school through colleges of higher education. Qualitative and quantitative studies alike have given evidence of male dominance in classroom interaction and the effects this has on girls' perceptions of themselves and the nature of society.

Given the overwhelming evidence presented here regarding the nature of coeducational classroom interaction, the question arises: How can this behaviour be understood and, furthermore, how can this understanding be used to change classrooms in order to create an educational setting that is more conducive to the development of girls' positive self-concept and confidence?

### **Chapter Three: The Processes of Reproduction: One Analysis of the Classroom Interaction Patterns that Marginalize Girls**

The research on gender and schooling presented in the previous chapter can be analyzed in the light of two recently articulated theories of schooling: the theory of social reproduction and the cultural reproduction theory. Both theories recognize the large amount of influence that social and cultural structures have on the development of student identity and ability. Various factors in the social and cultural environment shape a student's perceptions of self and the world and so give rise to particular behaviours and attitudes.

In this chapter I shall outline the two theories of schooling noted above, and analyze the research from chapter two from those perspectives. I will also analyze these two theories from a feminist perspective. By feminist perspective, I mean with the insight of one who takes as problematic the structural dependence of women upon men, and who has an understanding of the historical, political, cultural and economic subordination of women.

#### **Social reproduction theory of schooling.**

**Social reproduction theory of schooling.**

The social reproduction theory was elaborated by Bowles and Gintis, who looked at the structures of schooling and saw how they mirrored the structures of the workplace. They outlined a "correspondence theory" of schooling:

"The educational system helps integrate youth into the economic system, we believe, through a structural correspondence between its social relations and those of production. The structure of social relations in education not only inures the student to the discipline of the workplace, but develops the types of personal demeanor, modes of self-preservation, self-image, and social identifications which are crucial ingredients of job adequacy. Specifically, the social relationships of education - the relationships between administrators and teachers, teachers and students, students and their work - replicate the hierarchical division of labor."

(1976, p. 13)

Thus the institutionalized structures of schooling - attendance, schedules,

deadlines, routines, holidays, start-time, end-time and the human relations that operate within it - a hierarchy of domination/subordination, evaluation, peer supports, separation of public and private spheres - correspond to the requirements and nature of capitalist labor and prepare students for it. Moreover, ruling class students are prepared for appropriate positions within the division of labor (management, ownership, intelligentsia) while working class students are prepared for theirs - manual labor, trades, services.

#### **The role of ideology in social reproduction.**

While Bowles and Gintis examine in detail the external structures of education in their analysis of schooling, Althusser (1971) stresses the role of ideology in reproducing society. Ideology is the rationale explaining how/why individuals and the world exist as they do, the justification of the present by the past and by ideas that are posited as "universal", "natural", and law-like. Ideology is expressed through norms, values, habits of behaviour, sets of material practices, as well as sets of imposed ideas. The role of schools is to impose an ideology upon, as well as to develop it within, human subjects. Ideology creates the human subject. People thus come to embody class specific roles, class specific ways of thinking and

believe that "this is the way the world is", "this is what is best for all of us", "this is my station in life". In Paulo Freire's words, this is the "oppressor within...":

"The very structure of their thought (that of the oppressed) has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to be men (sic), but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of 'adhesion' to the oppressor. Under these circumstances, they cannot 'consider' him sufficiently clearly to objectivize him -- to discover him 'outside' themselves. ---their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression."

(Freire, 1972, p. 30)

Furthermore, "Submerged in reality, the oppressed cannot perceive clearly the "order" which serves the interests of the oppressor whose image they have internalized." (p. 48)

Freire thus explains how the oppressed believe the view that the oppressor has of them. They have internalized and adapted the ideology of the powerful, which legitimates their power and explains as "natural" the conditions of the oppressed. The ideology of the powerful serves to reproduce the social status quo.

**Social reproduction theory parallels a feminist analysis of schooling.**

The theory of social reproduction shows how schools both impose and develop a way of thinking, a way of seeing and relating to the world, a particular class-specific identity that serves the interests of capitalism, the division of labor, and the ruling classes. Bowers also examines the persistent, conservative, and inescapable nature of socialization, which gives an individual the tools to operate within a culture, but also acts as a limiting force, maintaining the culture. There is a very clear parallel between these analyses and a feminist analysis of the research on gender and schooling. In schools, interaction patterns inform girls that they are of less importance, interest, and impact than boys. Girls come to distrust their own ability when they experience important others - teachers and boys - belittling or ignoring their accomplishments. The expectation that



their own ability when they experience important others - teachers and boys - belittling or ignoring their accomplishments. The expectation that girls should be quiet and conforming and the rejection that accompanies both that behaviour and its opposite (assertion, unruliness) informs girls that no behaviour is correct for a woman. Women are just wrong; they are the Other (deBeauvoir, 1961). Thus, women are schooled to subordination, to an acceptance of, support for, and a belief in the rightness of patriarchal domination. They are socialized to a work force that needs masses of cheap labor for service industries and monotonous manual labor, to a division of labor that reserves supervision and management for men, to a division of public and private work that negates and makes invisible the labor of child birthing, child rearing, and "house" work. They are encouraged to believe that these are personal choices and not legitimate work. Their experience in schools teaches them to expect sexual put-downs and innuendo from males, to feel that their appearance and sexuality is their real value, not their intelligence or ability. The research on gender and schooling shows that the education of girls, in co-educational schools at least, reproduces the social relations of patriarchy.

**Cultural reproduction theory of schooling.**

The second theory of schooling to which I refer is the theory of cultural reproduction as developed by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) and Bernstein (1979). They concerned themselves with the reproduction of class cultures and the legitimation of certain forms of knowledge, language, and patterns of interaction. Bourdieu used the concept of cultural capital (certain ways of speaking and acting, particular types of knowledge) to explain how a particular culture comes to be the ruling one and how it maintains its dominance. Bernstein examined the processes of transmission, whereby certain knowledge is legitimated and made accessible, while other knowledge is invalidated or denigrated. One of the ways that ruling classes maintain domination over subordinate classes is by the legitimation that socially-accepted knowledge accords them, their values, behaviours, and beliefs. These processes whereby some people exercise influence, authority, or domination over others have been termed hegemony.

"Thus for Bernstein, as for Bourdieu, different class language and knowledge lead to different educational paths; schools, by employing and legitimating the language and culture of the

existing dominant groups, act to reproduce existing class structure."

(Weiler, 1988, p. 11)

**Schools claim to be neutral, classless, non-political.**

Schools do this hegemonic work, the work of maintaining the status quo, in a guise of appearing neutral and non-political. Schools seem to be relatively autonomous institutions that say they have the best interests of each individual child at heart. They cultivate a belief in meritocracy and objective, universal value-free knowledge.

"The fact that schools maintain a neutral stance, employing elaborate testing procedures, qualifying requirements, etc. allows them to remain relatively autonomous from the power and class structure of existing society. Bourdieu and Passeron argue that the school's 'relative autonomy enables it to serve external demands under the guise of independence and neutrality, i.e. to conceal the social functions it performs and so to perform them more effectively. (1977, p. 178)'."

(Weiler, 1988, p. 10)

However, as the "new" sociology of education reveals, knowledge is socially constructed (Bowers 1974, Berger and Luckmann 1966, Smith 1979). There is no such place as detached or neutral thought. All thinkers are human and cannot escape from their history and experience. In Bowers' terms, people cannot step outside of their history and socialization, to create theory, analysis, or knowledge that is somehow "liberated", or culture-free. We always speak from an interested, evaluative and prejudiced position. We are intimately involved (personally, socially, historically) with what we know. Bowles (1984) refers to Heidegger and Derrida, who suggest that truth is to be found in the spaces between words. Freire, too, understands that language is a tool that constructs our consciousness and our "reality":

...every time we are engaged as teachers in some practice of education, the problem of language must be, for us, constantly a challenge. We must be aware of this. Language, as the structure of thinking, as expression of culture, as dimension of identity and also as expression of social classes --- language is not exclusively an instrument for communication. Language

is itself communication. Language is also knowledge. Language is also doing.

(Friere, quoted in conversation with  
Bruss & Macedo, 1984, p. 217)

Thus, the theory of cultural reproduction suggests that one of the ways that the ruling classes maintain their dominant position is by putting forth their language, their knowledge, their achievements and values as the universal, unbiased, non-political one, and all other kinds - such as dialects, history of labor, native spirituality - as political, biased, of limited interest and lesser value. Schools participate in this process of domination by appearing to be neutral institutions, utilizing and distributing universal, objective knowledge, and decrying any "political" interferences.

**Cultural reproduction theory parallels a feminist analysis of schooling.**

Again, there is a distinct parallel between this analysis of schooling and a feminist analysis of how schools replicate the patriarchy. Dale Spender in Invisible Women: The Schooling Scandal (1982) and Man Made Language

(1980) examines in detail how the English language and school curriculum renders women invisible. From the use of the word "man" to mean all of humanity, to the exclusion of women writers, artists, musicians, composers and other artists from "male stream" culture, to the ignoring of their contribution and roles in history, medicine, and science in the surface school curriculum, women are marginalized or non-existent in the patriarchal paradigm:

"While both sexes may have been making theories for as far back as we can trace, only one sex is seen as the theorists, one sex has its theories accepted as legitimate, only one sex owns the realm of theory. This is not surprising: only one sex controls information in our society. Totalitarian regimes are in a position to put forward their own version of the facts, and to suppress alternative-subversive-versions. And patriarchy is a totalitarian regime. It is the dictatorship of the male. It can put forward its version of the facts and erase alternatives: it can even insist that its propaganda is the 'truth'. This way highly political theories formulated by men which legitimate inequalities of sex, race and class, can be judged to be neutral,

while theories put forward by those who are not men can be judged to be political and subversive. --- If we live in a society where women's knowledge and theories are notable by their absence, in which women's ideas are neither respected nor preserved, it is not because women have not produced valuable cultural forms but because what they have produced has been perceived as dangerous by those who have the power to suppress and remove evidence".

(Spender, 1983, p.1-2)

Thus, cultural reproduction theory and feminist theory both examine the power of language and the definition of what constitutes accepted knowledge and use this understanding to analyze how schooling maintains a particular culture as the norm, as unexamined, taken-for-granted reality. Both theories ask "Whose knowledge is being internalized as truth?", "What view of the world is being propagated, and whose interests are being served therein?" and "What is being negated, denied, trivialized, or misrepresented - in some way relegated to the wasteland of "non-knowledge" - in order to maintain a particular cultural paradigm?".

**Coeducation as the schooling of women for subordination.**

The feminist scholars quoted below see that coeducation thus far has meant the indoctrination of women to the patriarchal paradigm, and increasingly, they are questioning the value of coeducational schooling, and suggesting single-sex schools as an alternative:

Florence Howe:

"It is still as true today as it was in the 1870's that most women's colleges provide women with a more supportive environment for imagining future achievement than co-educational colleges can manage. It is still as true today that the dominant tone of co-educational colleges is closer to that of men's colleges than to women's colleges."

(1978, p. 22)

Jennifer Shaw:

"Two final points need to be made to counter the view that approving of a return to single-sex schooling is necessarily regressive and politically reactionary. --- I have attempted to understand this by looking closely at some of the social conditions of secondary schools, and would urge that, if



whatever benefits we think education confers are to be more equally distributed than at present, then the policy of co-education must be seriously questioned."

(1980, p. 75)

Rachel Belash:

"It is not that good co-education schools cannot offer girls these things; it is that girls' schools do so consistently. We are fail-safe producer of first-class citizenship for girls in a world in which they are not guaranteed this opportunity elsewhere. We, like the women's colleges, provide not only "equal opportunity, but every opportunity," to quote Dr. Nannerl Keohane, the president of Wellesley College".

(1988, p. A19)

Pat Mahony:

"An argument which has enjoyed wide currency has been that whilst girls appear to perform better academically in single-sex groupings, it is nonetheless more normal socially and therefore more desirable, that they be educated with boys.

However, on closer inspection it appears that what we are being asked to accept as normal is the marginalization of girls from education by the processes of interaction particular to mixed-sex groupings."

(1983, p. 111)

These educators see that our traditional schooling teaches women that they are second-class scholars/citizens, that women have a limited place in the world, and that male dominance is natural and right. They suggest that a single-sex setting might be more conducive to developing girls abilities, talents, and confidence. The female voice would not be drowned out in the clamour of male competition, bravado, and denial.

Virginia Woolf, examining the education of "the daughters of educated men" in Britain in 1938, saw clearly how women were schooled to a subordinate place in society, schooled to "reflect men at twice their natural size". She claimed that women would be best served by remaining outsiders to such a system, that women should be a "society of outsiders, alien, critical, ironic, and indifferent to the imperatives of bellicose nationalism". (Lee, 1986, viii).

Jennifer Shaw (1980), critiques Roger Dales' examination of single-sex and mixed-sex schools in Britain (Dale, 1974). She suggests "The achievements of the most advantaged are equated with the collective good, and once more a conflict of interests is disguised". (p. 73) Dale found the achievement of girls to be higher in single-sex schools, while the opposite was true for boys. He also found that boys' behaviour improved in coeducational schools (discipline was less of a problem), and he finds the coeducational situation "more normal socially". His conclusions are that coeducational schools are better than single-sex schools! The advantages mixed-sex schools give boys are equated with the collective common good, while the negative effects on girls are ignored. This kind of research is one more tool serving to maintain patriarchal hegemony. Knowledge that is of benefit to men is made known, while knowledge that is critical of or detrimental to men remains unacknowledged or is subject to sceptical disbelief. Another tool is the view that knowledge is theory, information, and skill, but that confidence, self-knowledge, and self-valuing is not, and therefore need not be the concern of schools. Such a view allows the marginalization of girls to go unchallenged, thus continuing the creation of self-doubt in girls and domination by males.

In summary, in this chapter, I have shown how the research on gender and schooling can be analyzed from a feminist viewpoint, and in the light of the theories of social and cultural reproduction. Classroom interaction patterns can be seen as hegemonic forces, acting to develop an attitude of subordination in girls and thus maintain the domination of patriarchy. The attitudes and expectations of teachers, made explicit in their behaviours, teach girls that boys are central in the classroom, boys are more interesting, more creative, truly intelligent, more liked. Girls, on the other hand, are expected to be quiet and certainly not to be bothersome. Their achievements are ignored or downplayed. Thus, schooling acts to maintain the status-quo, wherein male knowledge and activity is dominant and females are invisible.

It can be seen then that socially acceptable behaviour (polite, quiet, biddable, pleasant) is more expected from and enforced in girls. This same behaviour has negative consequences for the way girls impact on classroom interaction patterns, negative consequences for how teachers and boys view them, and negative consequences for their self-image and their estimation of their own ability.

**Chapter Four: The Processes of Resistance: A Further Analysis  
of the Classroom Interaction Patterns that  
Marginalize Girls**

Growing out of, and in response to, theories of social and cultural reproduction has been a movement to examine the role of human agency and consciousness in the construction of self-image and world view. The two theories of structural determinism discussed in chapter three provide an analysis of the limiting and oppressive nature of schooling. This understanding is valuable as the first step in change, but what is needed now is an application of these theories to the practice of education. Some educational theorists, while acknowledging the power of structural forces at work in education and the larger society, have developed a dialectical view of hegemony. The Marxists and Neo-marxists who developed the theories of social and cultural reproduction, such as Giroux, Apple, Freire, Bowles and Gintis, have been criticized by Bowers, among others, for providing unrealistic solutions to the problems they have helped to analyze. Somehow, through "revolution", they expect people to escape their context, their socialization to create a "new world".

In this chapter, I shall outline the thinking of the critical curriculum theorists, the ones who argue that human agency and consciousness work within the structures imposed by society to create a negotiated reality. Then I shall examine how this thinking has been applied to schooling in various sites. It will be seen that the hegemonic processes described in chapter two and analyzed in chapter three can be mediated by the intent and understanding of the subjects.

### **Critical curriculum theory.**

Critical curriculum theorists argue that human beings have consciousness and good sense and struggle for ever greater realization of their understanding of what it is to be human. Human beings work towards greater consciousness, albeit in a context where others struggle against them to maintain domination:

"Production theorists are concerned with the ways in which both individuals and classes assert their own experience and contest or resist the ideological and material forces imposed upon them in a variety of settings. Their analyses focus on the ways in which both teachers and students in schools produce

meaning and culture through their own resistance and their own individual and collective consciousness. These theorists of cultural production --- are concerned in varying degrees with the social construction of knowledge and the ways in which dominant forms of language and of knowledge can be critiqued and made problematic."

(Weiler, 1988, p. 11)

The critical production theorists look for an interplay, a struggle, a dialectic between structural determinants and human agency and consciousness. They look for ways that the subordinated resist domination, in order to construct a radical pedagogy, a pedagogy for freedom. In chapter one I defined the concept of hegemony as the processes whereby domination, authority and influence are imposed upon people. Gramsci used this concept of hegemony to analyze the way in which dominant classes impose their conception of reality on subordinate classes, and the possible ways the oppressed might create and express their experiences and their own reality through alternative cultural and political institutions. (Weiler, 1988). Gramsci's thought is that hegemony is always contested, that the oppressed struggle to "name their own world"

and the dominant classes struggle to keep their version of reality and truth intact and in control. Gramsci sees that human beings have "common sense", a term he takes to refer to a complex consciousness, constructed of hegemonic ideas and residual, historically generated concepts, as well as self-critique (or the possibility of it) and an intuitive sense of self and future possibility. This common sense enables every person to be a philosopher, to critique the world and transform it. The philosophy of such "organic intellectuals" emerges from experience and understanding of the everyday world, and a sense of the historical and economic forces which have shaped it. (Weiler, 1988) Gramsci felt that the schools were the instruments for the development of these "organic intellectuals" and placed high priority on the school as a site for developing a counter-hegemonic understanding.

### **Freire's counter-hegemonic education.**

Paulo Freire, in "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" (1972) put forward his educational method for creating a counter-hegemonic understanding while teaching illiterate peasants to read. His analysis of oppression began with an understanding of the oppressed. They are divided, unauthentic beings who have internalized the oppressor's view of them. They are emotionally



dependent on the oppressor, they lack self-confidence, they are self-deprecatory and fatalistic. "--- because of their identification with the oppressor, they have no consciousness of themselves as persons or as members of an oppressed class." (Freire, 1972, p. 30) They have been so submerged in the paradigm of the oppressor they believe that the status quo is the natural way, the deserved, "meritocratic" way.

This analysis of the nature of the oppressed and the dynamics of oppression grows out of the theories of social and cultural reproduction. But Freire did not stop at this analysis. He offered a way out - a pedagogy of the oppressed, which began with dialogue, a "naming of the world", a "naming one's own word". The oppressed, with the active participation of a teacher/learner who is at one with the oppressed, begin to examine their experience of the world, to compare their feelings and understandings, to look to one another, rather than to the oppressor, for support and validation of what reality is. So begins a process whereby the oppressed come to see themselves as subjects, able to experience the world, to trust and name their experience, to cooperate with or resist the intentions of the oppressor, and thus able to transform the world and themselves. In the process, they come to see that the oppressor is simply another human

being, like themselves, with no greater right than themselves to name the world and impose that reality on others. They gain an understanding of power and politics, and the role of their cooperation in the maintenance of their oppression. Freire thus provided a rich possibility for human consciousness and agency to counter hegemonic forces and so to transform the world. Human beings, challenged and encouraged to critique their experience, can become agents of their own freedom.

#### **Giroux's dialectical model of reproduction.**

Henry Giroux also looked for a role for human agency and struggle in resisting hegemonic forces. He put forth a view of society and hegemony that recognized that the oppressed also have power.

"As Foucault (1979) points out: 'Power is never monolithic, it is never completely controlled from one point of view. At every moment power is in play in small individual parts.' (p. 60.) The insight that power both forms and works through the individual, that power can be desirable and not just constraining, has not been acknowledged adequately in either theory of reproduction."

(Giroux, 1981, p. 12)

Giroux looked for ways that the oppressed groups co-operate with and express hegemonic forces or struggle against these forces to create their own meaning. A dialectical model of reproduction considers the deterministic dynamics of structural forces in constant interplay with the human dynamics of self-formation:

" --- that is, a mode of analysis emerges in which the self-formation of the working class is grounded not only in acts of resistance but also in a limited political awareness of the nature and possibilities of such resistance."

(Giroux, 1981, p. 12)

He argued that ideology, too, is not a monolithic, one-way construct, but that it, too, is a dialectic, created by an interplay between hegemonic and resistant forces.

"In other words, there is no sense in these perspectives (the structural, reproductive theories) of how ideology is constituted within both society and the subject or how, in the dialectical relationship between subject and society, ideology

is both acted upon and transformed in the ongoing dynamics of daily life."

(Giroux, 1981, p. 15)

Thus, for Giroux, the concept of ideology implies the capacity for critical thinking and a transformative consciousness. Each person has the capacity to understand and critique his/her own experience and the "external" social reality, and thus to act as a counter-hegemonic agent.

### **Hegemony as negotiated reality.**

Michael Apple, too, has been exploring the ways that ideology and hegemony are contested and operate on contradictory terrains. Although he began by analyzing schooling as a reproductive process, he has found these theories to be too simple and mechanistic. He continues to acknowledge their importance -

"Economic and cultural capital were inextricably linked. The kind of knowledge which was considered most legitimate in school and which acted as a complex filter to stratify groups of students was connected to the specific needs of our kind of

social formation."

(Apple, 1981, p. 34)

However, Apple, more recently, has now contended that ideology and hegemony are enacted through real people, and real people bring their own consciousness to bear on the ideas and activities that they engage in to create/express hegemony and ideology. In examining resistance and contestation in various sites (schools, workplaces), he finds that these forces, too, may be filled with contradiction.

"For workers do resist. They develop complex work cultures and often contradict and partly transform, modes of control into opportunities for resistance and for maintaining their own informal norms which guide the labor process. Whatever reproduction goes on is accomplished not only through the acceptance of hegemonic ideologies but also through opposition and struggle."

(Apple, 1981, p. 36)

Apple concedes that this resistance does occur on the terrain established by capital, or the dominant classes, and not on terrain established by the workers. This is the limitation on resistance or change imposed by structural forces. He also finds that informal cultural resistances may act in contradictory ways that may ultimately tend to be reproductive in their net effect. By resisting the dominant ideology and asserting their own, the subordinate classes may be creating their own sense of value and culture, but this is not of great enough import to have any impact on the accumulation or legitimation of capital in general. (The studies of Willis and McRobbie discussed later in this chapter give a fuller development of this phenomenon.) Localized resistance may function to build individual self-esteem and greater internal value of one's social group, but it does not have the power to transform the larger social relations of capital, or our society. Apple thus builds the idea that resistance is part of the active building of hegemony, that the dynamics of hegemony include concession, negotiation, and consent:

" --- the notion of hegemony is not free floating. It is, in fact, tied to the state in the first place - that is, hegemony isn't an already accomplished fact but a process in which dominant groups and classes 'manage to win the active consensus of

those over whom they rule'. (Mouffe, 1979, p. 10) As part of the state, education then must be seen as an important element in attempting to create such an active consensus. --- Thus to maintain its own legitimacy, the state needs to gradually but continuously integrate many of the interests of allied and even opposing groups under its banner (Mouffe, 1979, p. 182)."

(Apple, 1981. p. 38-39)

Here then, may lay a hope for change: hegemony is not a monolithic entity, not a one-way process of imposition, but a contested, negotiated process whereby people come to consent to and cooperate in a certain conception of reality. Inherent in this notion is the power of the people to withhold or withdraw their consent and cooperation, and thus force the ruling paradigm to shift. Apple makes it clear, however, that individual contestation is insufficient for this end. It is collective understanding and action that is required.

### **Bowers' theory of socialization and social change.**

C.A. Bowers criticizes the thinking of Giroux, Apple, and other neo-Marxists as romantic and over simplified. Their hope for a "revolution" in which

people will throw off their oppression and create a new liberated society is impractical. It asks people to do the impossible - to rise above their socialization. Bowers thinks that our socialization is so thorough, accomplished in many invisible ways, that asking us to rise above it is akin to asking us to think without words. He believes that social change can be accomplished in a gradual way, and via a process he calls "communicative competence".

His theory suggests that when traditional authority - schools, churches, the patriarchal family, in other words, the agents of hegemony - is questioned, and people begin to examine whether or not this authority is morally right, then a "liminal space" is created within which other ideas, challenging to the traditional one, may take root. At this vulnerable time, the people who have a "communicative competence" have the power to influence change and shape society to mirror their values and interests. Bowers uses the example of feminist thinking and the impact this has had on women in the paid labor force, day care provisions, and the role of the father in parenting. Traditional views of the family and "women's place" became relativized under the force of the women's movement and economic change. The questioning and changing needs created a liminal space, in



which the authority of the patriarchal family became less accepted. The ones who had a "communicative competence" - an understanding of the power bases of society and how this power translated into everyday lives - had opportunity to create change in society's institutions, in our values and attitudes, and in people's daily lives.

This theory is important for it gives appropriate recognition to the weight of hegemony, to the conservative and persistent nature of socialization, and to the degree to which our daily lives operate on unexamined assumptions. It also provides a model for change, for realistic change based on lived example. The key here is in developing a communicative competence, an analysis of our society, why it takes the shape it does, and how power, authority, and change operate.

It seems to me that this idea of "communicative competence" is akin to Freire's "conscientizacao" and to a feminist analysis which uses the personal as political: an examination and understanding of the experiences, assumptions, and forces of one's own life is the basis for understanding society. This personal understanding can be the basis for change.

**Hegemony and resistance in schools.**

Gramsci, Giroux, Freire, and Apple developed their theories to explain how capitalism and a classist society perpetuate themselves, and the role education plays in the re-creation of inequality. They looked for the ways that the lower classes (peasants, workers, illiterates, the poor) struggled (or could possibly struggle) to change their lived situations. The thinking of these critical educational theorists has been applied in studies of schooling in various sites. These studies critique the ways in which schools embody the ruling class notions of how the world should be, that is, how schools do hegemonic work, and then observed various populations of students to see how they adopted or resisted the dominant ideology. While the foregoing part of this chapter dealt with theoretical notions of resistance and struggle, the following section deals with resistance as it is enacted in schools.

Aggleton and Whitty (1985) define resistance as forms of behaviour that apparently challenge the routine and structuring of the schooling process. Resistances are acts of challenge directed against the power relations operating widely and pervasively throughout society. Many behaviours may fall into this category: repeated tardiness, lack of attention, disruptive

behaviour, rudeness, refusals, and so on. Resistance behaviour runs counter to the "accepted" school norms of politeness, quiet, academic work, promptness, and competition for good grades. The following studies give examples of resistant behaviour and some analysis of its effectiveness and counter-hegemonic possibilities. Willis, in his study of working class "lads" in "Learning to Labor" (1977) did not find much radical possibility in the resistance to schooling that he documented. His subjects rejected the mental labor espoused by the school and glorified the manual labor done by their own working class families. They embodied a rough macho masculinity that scorned book work and had a very sexual and sexist view of girls and women. They planned to drop out of school as soon as possible in order to go to work. Their behaviour in school was rude, oppositional, and disruptive. They would join forces to subvert the flow of a lesson, and refused to participate or cooperate in learning activities that they felt were inappropriate for their macho self-image. They clearly exemplified how an oppressed group became embedded in its oppression by the very nature of its contestation. They effectively participated in preparing themselves for a working class culture, and a reproduction of capitalist society, although their intent was to resist and denigrate the ruling ideology.

McRobbie (1978) documents a similar kind of behaviour, with similar effects, among working class girls. They rejected the traditional feminine stereotype (quiet, conforming, polite) expected by schools and teachers. They were loud, boisterous, unruly, They emphasized their sexuality, flaunting it in front of teachers, being sexually aggressive verbally.

Academically, they had poor grades and dismissive attitudes. McRobbie, along with their teachers, expected they would join the ranks of low-paying low-skill jobs in the clerical or service areas, with marriage and motherhood in working class families as their "fulfillment". The resistance of these girls to the stereotype schooling held as proper for women served only to further embed them in the stereotypic women's role of marriage, motherhood and poverty.

Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett studied 15 Australian secondary schools and did complex, focussed interviews with 100 students aged 14-15 years, half boys, half girls, half from coeducational working class public schools, half from ruling class single-sex private schools.

They explored these schools as sites of contradiction, struggle and ideology. They saw that the structures of schooling very often acted to reproduce stereotypes and the traditional hierarchy, but also acknowledged that schools have also been vehicles for women who wished to construct their own lives and careers. They acknowledge the fundamental conservatism of schools:

"The schools are an arena in which a complex, often contradictory, emotionally and sometimes physically violent politics of gender is worked out. The strength of the reaction against well-meaning minor reforms is understandable."

(1985, p. 35)

and also their radical potential:

"Yet the central fact, perhaps the most important point our interviews have demonstrated, is that the complex of gender inequality and patriarchal ideology is not a smoothly functioning machine. It is a mass of tensions, contradictions,

and complexities that always have the potential for change."

(1985, p. 47)

They documented the educational experience and personal consciousness of three strong girls whose strong mothers appeared to greatly influence their rejection of traditional feminine stereotypes and their ambitions for their own lives. Heather, one of these girls, an excellent athlete, was described by her teachers as "hell to teach". She was loud, boisterous, laughing, and often stirred up the class. She resisted the school's attempt to create traditional femininity (controlled, polite, biddable) and had many personal stories of what she saw as teacher injustice. Heather's mother worked in low-paying manual labor, but, as the researchers noted: "she is an equal partner in the family and vigorously resists any attempt to impose authority on her from any quarter, including the school". (Connell et al, 1985, p. 39.) The other girl resisters had similarly strong mothers, who seemed to provide role models for their daughters. These women and their daughters were making themselves heard and felt in society.

The Connell et al study also documented the change at Auburn College, a women's high school that changed its focus from being an elite, social,

"finishing" school, to one of challenging and nurturing academic "high flyers". They described these changes as being influenced by the general movement of women into careers and as being driven by feminist teachers on staff. The new elite of the school were the academic stars, the girls who aimed to go into law, medicine, science, and public life. The "old elite", the girls whose interests lay in the traditional feminine social activities, dating, and marriage were no longer dominant. Thus, the school as a whole could be seen to challenge patriarchal views of appropriate behaviour for girls.

Aggleton and Whitty (1985) looked for resistance and contestation in middle class students aged 16-20 years, and found no radically counter-hegemonic resistance among them. They found that students' opposition to schooling was non-collective. These students preferred not to be involved in student groups or student councils, preferring to personally and individually challenge the school's routines and societal norms in general. This kind of contestation was found by others (Willis and McRobbie) to be a dynamic that acted to reproduce the existing order, rather than challenge it. Simple, surface contestation is not transformative, but reproductive. It results in a consolidation of existing

class and gender relations because it plays into the hands of the status quo by rejecting schooling as a way out, by confirming in the teachers the idea that certain students "don't belong" in schools, and by allowing the idea of schools as meritocratic institutions to go unchallenged.

Aggleton and Whitty did note that the behaviour and critique of school and society observed in numbers of their female subjects did hold the possibility of real resistance that could potentially force change in society:

"Though the critique of patriarchal relations offered by the female respondents showed some signs of developing into an alternative mode of collective practice within the group, it did not become actively oppositional to the continuance of patriarchal relations in general. Nevertheless, it might have developed differently in different circumstances, and it certainly displayed more potential for becoming an effective resistance than did any of the other contestations identified in this study."

(1985, p. 70)



These girls did have some understanding of and identification with feminism and the issues being raised by the women's movement. They attached great value to the personal development possible in female friendships and several were involved in lesbian liaisons:

"For some females at least, their interest in establishing personally developing sexual relationships encouraged them to participate in homosexual relationships. Such motivations may take their origins, at least in part, from the influence of new feminist ideologies within respondents' homes: ideologies emphasizing the expansion of boundaries relating to permissible sexual relations and challenging patriarchal nature of sexual commitment as practiced within the nuclear family. As such, these practices may be seen as affirmations of the political and ideological commitments of both generations of females in the present study. However, it would be equally important to view such explorations as cultural challenges winning ideological space from modes of patriarchal surveillance practiced subculturally for males." (p. 69.)

In Britain, Mary Fuller studied a group of students, struggling under the triple oppression of being working-class, black, and female. (Fuller, 1980) Her indepth interviews reveal how these girls were educationally ambitious, yet scornful of schooling, with its routines and attempts to "domesticate" them:

"The black girls conformed to the stereotypes of the good pupil only in so far as they worked conscientiously at their school work or homework set. But they gave all the appearances in class of not doing so, and in many others ways displayed an insouciance for the other aspects of the good pupil role. They neither courted a good reputation among teachers nor seemed to want to be seen as 'serious' by the staff or other pupils. --- Neither meek and passive not yet aggressive, and obviously confrontationist in their stance towards teachers, the girls were something of a puzzle to some of their peers and teachers."

(Fuller, 1980, p. 59-60)

These girls had a high academic standing in the school, second only in rank to Asian boys. They had plans of taking the Advanced level exams and getting good jobs. They had an analysis of how society and black boys in particular would scorn these ambitions and try to divert them. Rather than dismaying these girls, this understanding served to increase their determination to succeed. They had a pride in being black and female, much of it arising from their mothers and a sense of black women being strong and capable. So here was a sub-culture of girls, using education as a route to improving their life chances, rejecting and resisting the attempts of schooling and the larger society to subvert them to an acceptance of inequality, to an acceptance of a passive quiet conforming female role.

Fuller refers to Lambert (1976) who documents a similar pro-education, anti-schooling attitude among girls in a grammar school:

" --- her description of the Sisterhood (a group of third-year pupils) suggests a very similar conjunction of academic attainment and non-conformity to the rules, regulations, and routines of school. (Lambert, 1976, P. 157-9.)

"They had a sense of fun bordering often on mischief; and they were careful of the 'respect' they

have to teachers --- despite its deviance, the Sisterhood existed as a focus for girls with more than average ability.

(Fuller, 1980, p. 63)

Fuller's and Lambert's two studies revealed the radical potential brought to education by the students themselves. Their consciousness, their pride and human character resisted the attempts by conservative structures of schooling to "school" them to less than their full human potential.

Wright (1987) also found this to be true of the Afro-Caribbean girls in her study. They were disaffected from the norms of schooling, yet were committed to the qualifications it could grant them. They were often discipline problems in school, yet were hardworking when it came to assignments. As Wright says, they were a constant source of bewilderment to the teachers, who could not understand the contradictions they presented.

Anyon (1984) described an ethnographic study of five fifth-grade classes in contrasting social-class settings, looking for the ways that the schools

reproduced social and cultural patterns and the ways that students resisted this determination.

She interviewed one hundred fifth graders, 50 boys and 50 girls, from three working class and two upper middle class schools. She described several instances in which a girl's behaviour seemed to both accommodate and resist the traditional female stereotype. In one case an upper middle class girl, a talented violinist who earned very high grades and aspired to a career in music, said that "men were number one", "strong women wouldn't be pretty" and "I don't think I'd like to be as strong as men". Her behaviour (excelling in music and academics) would seem to challenge traditional female stereotypes, yet her words accommodated it. Anyon argued that sex-role socialization is not a one-way process of imposition by society of values and attitudes that girls internalize. It is instead an active response to social contradictions. For example, girls are concurrently presented with "appropriate" female images (passive, nurturant, attractive) and images of North American success (careers, travel, self-assurance). Just as Giroux argued that hegemony is not a one-way process of imposition, but a contested, negotiated process, so Anyon argues for sex-role socialization. In this contradictory terrain, a person can choose with which ideas to

cooperate, which to resist, and how to develop as a full human being.

"The dialectic of accommodation and resistance is manifest in the reactions of women and girls to contradictory situations that face them. Most females neither totally acquiesce in, nor totally eschew, the imperatives of 'femininity'. Rather, most females engage in daily (conscious as well as unconscious) attempts to resist the psychological degradation and low self-esteem that would result from total and exclusive application of the approved ideologies of femininity, such as submissiveness, dependence, domesticity and passivity."

(1984, p. 30)

Thus, human consciousness and agency mediate the contradiction between femininity and competence as these are socially defined and girls become agents in their own development or restriction. This process of self-restriction, the accommodation of aspects of hegemony that are too overwhelming to resist, becomes part of the dynamic of domination/subordination. This cooperation by the subordinated ones is an

integral aspect of oppression. It is the "oppressor within" as described by Freire.

Anyon (1983) observed six types of behaviour in schools that she interpreted as having both accommodative and resistant aspects:

1. Excelling in intellectual, artistic, or athletic achievement
2. Appropriation of an exaggerated femininity
3. Tomboyishness in matters of dress, activity, behaviour
4. Appropriation of sexuality
5. Being a discipline problem
6. Distancing and alienation, via absenteeism, daydreaming

She believes these behaviours provided individuals with choice, but choice in a limited field of action. They may have provided individuals with defense but individuals acting alone are not enough to change the limiting structures of a patriarchal society.

"That is to say, while accommodation and resistance as modes of daily activity provide most females with ways of negotiating individually felt social conflict or oppression, this

individual activity of everyday life remains just that: individual, fragmented and isolated from group effort. It is thus politically weakened. While, as Anthony Giddens argues, the actions of individuals do mediate immediate environments and affect them, individual women acting alone (I would argue) cannot reorganize or transform the legal, economic, religious or other cultural sanctions and bases on which certain men get - and attempt to keep - social power. To change these relations of power, not only is individual activity necessary, but it will be necessary for women to join together to take collective action."

(1983, p. 34.)

This chapter has shown how critical education theorists have looked for a role for human agency in shaping and developing human consciousness. This search arose in response to the limiting closed nature of schooling as described by theories of social and cultural reproduction. These theories posited that the structures of schooling and society shaped the individual in ways that would maintain the dominance of the ruling classes. The ideas of the critical education theorists were then applied to schools in various studies. These studies showed how individuals resisted the attempts of



schooling to shape them to a predetermined image. These resistant behaviours were sometimes successful on an individual level, creating greater personal power, greater self-esteem or self-development. Sometimes these resistant behaviours played into the hands of the status quo, reinforcing class or gender stereotypes. The researchers were agreed on one point: individual resistance is not sufficient to change the structures of an unequal society. For such change to occur, collective action is required.

## **Chapter Five: Implications of Research and Theory for a Curriculum Intervention Model**

### **Summary of Research**

The literature on gender and schooling that I presented in chapter two, and which is summarized diagrammatically in Model M1 (vide Appendix), showed conclusively that patterns of interaction in mixed-sex classrooms marginalize girls. Studies that made detailed counts of types of interactions (Brophy, Good and Sikes, 1973; French and French, 1984; Croll, 1985), studies that described student perceptions (Stanworth, 1981; Davies and Meighan, 1975; Spender, 1978), and previous reviews of the literature (Lobban, 1978; Lockheed, 1984; Clarricoates, 1978) all document and describe this pattern of male-domination of classroom interaction patterns. Boys talked more and teachers talked to boys more, giving them more negative and more positive feedback. Boys actively contributed to the marginalization of girls (Mahony, 1983; Stanworth, 1981), using them as a negative reference group (Shaw, 1980). Girls who were more outspoken and independent were accorded more respect from boys, but they ran the risk of being rejected by other girls (Stanworth, 1981) and by teachers.

The literature showed too, that, although teachers do not consciously intend to discriminate or create a second-class female citizen, their unexamined belief systems are manifested in their behaviour, which communicates, overtly and covertly, expectations and attitudes that maintain girls in subordinated roles. Clarricoates (1978) found that teachers devalued girls' achievements dismissing them as being the result of girls "doing what's expected, wanting to please, being diligent". Spear (1983) and Rowell (1971, both cited by Whyte, 1986) found that teachers expected boys to be more scientific and this was reflected in their grading of work. Torrance (1962, cited in Sears and Feldman, 1974) found teachers to recognize and praise creative behaviour more readily in boys than in girls. Numerous studies quoted by Lockheed (1984) showed that teachers asked boys more questions of all types (product, process, abstract) while other researchers documented teachers' feelings that boys are more interesting, more intellectually capable, and more important in terms of career prospects (Ricks and Pyke, 1973; Clarricoates, 1978). The literature showed how teachers prefer sex-typed behaviour in their students, encouraging dependence in girls (Randall, 1987; Safilios-Rothschild, 1986) and having difficulty relating to independent assertive girls (Clarricoates, 1978; Feshback, 1969; Caplan, 1973).

Teachers transmit much of the ideology of our capitalist, patriarchal society through their own acceptance of the dominant beliefs about power and status differentials of men and women, and through their behaviours that arise from that acceptance. This "hidden curriculum" of schools is taught and learned largely unconsciously by teachers and students (Wolpe, 1974; Clarricoates, 1981; Lobban, 1978). The hidden curriculum is part of the deep structure of our society and, as such, is not often interrogated. (Simon, 1983)

Lobban's review of the literature (1978) showed that girls, more than boys, tend to underestimate their ability. Girls are more likely to see themselves as inadequate, even when achievement scores should lead them to see otherwise (Sears and Feldman, 1974; Harvey, 1985; Fennema, 1984). Girls tend to lack confidence in their ability and to see their achievements as dependent on luck, other people, or other external factors (Deaux, 1977, cited in Deem, 1980; Greenglass, 1982). Thus, it should not be surprising that girls tend to avoid challenging situations (Licht and Dweck, 1983), or to make decisions regarding high school courses on the basis of perceived easiness of the course (Keys and Ormerod, 1977, cited in Deem, 1980). When the bulk of teachers' criticisms of girls relate to their academic

work (Spaulding, 1965; Safilios-Rothschild, 1986) and researchers have found the opinions of teachers to be important to girls (Best, 1983; Spender, 1982), it is natural that girls should come to believe that they are not very capable, that the teachers' criticism is accurate and reflective of their true ability.

Thus, two inter-related aspects of classroom dynamics combine to manufacture self-doubt in girls. The domination of classroom talk by boys, the active teaching to and directing of questioning to boys by teachers, and the active marginalizing of girls by boys all contribute to a silencing of girls, to the perception of girls as less interesting, less intellectual, with less to contribute or develop. Additionally, the unexamined behaviours and expectations of teachers reinforce passivity and dependence in girls at the same time as they downplay, ignore, or devalue, girls' achievements. Thus girls come to disbelieve in their own ability and achievement, and, further, to believe that their subordination is natural, and that they have earned second place. This hypothesis arises out of my search of the literature on gender and schooling, and it arises from my personal experience of schooling.

### **The theoretical construct**

The literature and theorizing in chapter three showed how the dynamics of classroom interaction, working to maintain the subordination of girls, could be understood as hegemonic agents. Social reproduction theory coincides with feminist theory in illuminating how the structures and organization of schools reproduce a capitalist and patriarchal society. The roles played and legitimated by boys and girls, men and women in schools reflect the larger society, its division of labor and power relations. Cultural reproduction theory parallels feminist theory also, in showing how certain forms of knowledge, language and culture are legitimated in schools. Schooling thus works to uphold the dominant groups and to make the language, culture and knowledge of subordinate groups invisible, politically suspect, or of lesser value. Classroom dynamics, by supporting and enlarging the dominant roles played by boys and by creating self-doubt in girls, can be seen to maintain patriarchal hegemony.

The literature in chapter four explored ways that human beings act to resist domination, the ways they attempt to assert their own understanding and validate their own experience, thus countering the effects of hegemony. Giroux, Anyon, Apple and Freire suggest that

hegemony is not a one-way process of domination, but a negotiated, contested process, full of contradictions, accommodation, and struggle. This theorizing was applied to classroom situations in Britain (Fuller, 1980; McRobbie, 1978; Willis, 1977; Wright, 1987) the United States (Anyon, 1984) and Australia (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett, 1985). (See Note One at chapter end.) Various ways of resisting domination were observed and interrogated, and questions were raised about the effectiveness of these strategies. These theorists agreed that individual resistances could be effective for increasing individually-felt power, or for improving an individual's self-concept or life situation. However, they agreed that individual contestation was insufficient to change the power relations of an inequitable system, and often times such accommodation or contestation only played into the hands of the ruling classes, effectively acting to keep the resisters in a subordinated position. What was needed, Anyon, Apple, Freire, and others suggested, was joint action, community struggle and an open interrogation of inequitable power relationships. Such politically and philosophically conscious struggle and resistance might begin to effect real far-reaching changes in schools and in the society that schools reflect.

### **Research Assumptions and Questions**

The question thus arises: What can this theory and research mean for the education of girls? Given the role classroom interactions have in the development of self-doubt in girls, and given that they can be understood as hegemonic agents, can the theorizing of critical education be used to illuminate this process and raise possibilities for change? The dynamics of classroom interactions are well-documented and their impact on girls is clear. What can be done to change this, to provide an educational setting for girls that maximizes their development, that develops in them an accurate sense of their abilities, that allows them to voice and thus to interrogate and further to develop their ideas, opinions, and visions? Does critical education theory or feminist education theory have ground where a pedagogy for freedom might take root? What considerations must go into the development of a curriculum model that might provide solutions for the problem of the creation of self-doubt in girls?

### **The Nature of any Possible Solution**

In the traditional liberal model of schooling predominant in Canadian public schools, problem solving and educational improvement tend to proceed along certain lines: the parameters of the problem are delimited, possible



solutions are put forward, teachers are educated along suitable lines to understand the problem and deliver the solutions. This approach may be appropriate for problems that deal with the overt visible curriculum, or physical or intellectual functioning, or other matters that are unquestioningly accepted as educational matters or teacher responsibility. The problem I have outlined in this thesis is not of that nature. The problem of the creation of self-doubt in girls is part of the deep structure of our society. It is one process whereby patriarchy is maintained, a way in which women are taught to be subordinate. Teachers, human beings embedded in our society, are part of the dynamic, and, as such, often cannot see how they participate in it. (Bowers, 1984) In many of the studies outlined in Chapter Two, teachers specifically told researchers they did not discriminate on the basis of gender, that they treated boys and girls the same, that they were heartily supportive of equal rights for women, that sexism was not a problem any more. Yet, the research showed their classrooms continued to be places where girls were marginalized by processes of interaction. In the Ricks and Pyke study (1973), teachers told researchers that changing society was not their (the teachers') responsibility, that children learned their appropriate sex-roles from society and that teachers should not take an active role in changing them.

Teaching academics - Freire's banking model of education - was the legitimate teacher's task. Questions of educational philosophy or politics are not often debated in schools, among educators. Teachers tend to be more interested in the practical daily strategies of overt curriculum and behaviour management than in "armchair philosophizing".

A number of studies have shown the ineffectiveness of a simple, overt curriculum approach to the problem of sexism deeply rooted in the hidden curriculum of education. Tabakin (1983) assessed the impact of the "Subtracting Bias and Multiplying Options" program which aimed to improve girls' attitude and achievement in mathematics, and found that the initial wide scope of goals and feminist intent was lost in the delivery of the program. It essentially became a program of career counselling, while the issues of power, attitude, and systemic bias were ignored. Tabakin concludes that sexism cannot be adequately addressed within the patriarchal structure of schools unless curriculum addresses form and process, as well as content. A feminist approach to education would require a fundamental restructuring of the formal patriarchal system of schooling, teaching, and curriculum development.

Kelly (1985) participated in a "Girls Into Science and Technology" project and found that little changed as a result of her development plans and activities because teachers remained unwilling to see the part they played in the problems or the solutions. She notes in particular that:

1. Teachers did not see girls' under-representation in science as a problem, so many were not committed to the carrying out of solutions.
2. Teachers did not re-examine their own values as part of the project, and so the messages of the hidden curriculum continued unchanged.
3. Teachers did not feel that they stereotyped. It was an uncomfortable message to hear that they had been disadvantaging half their pupils all their professional lives, so they denied this reality.

Kelly concluded that a surface, non-personal approach is not effective in dealing with a problem where teachers' own assumptions are part of the problem and, therefore, challenging these is essential to change. On the other hand Millman (1987), describing a number of anti-sexist programs in Britain, suggested that when teachers play a full and active part in

researching and solving problems and when they are committed to change, then results will be seen.

Giroux (1984) and Apple (1984) both discuss how teachers must examine their own values, attitudes, assumptions, and daily lived activities in order to understand their part in an oppressive system and to see their ways of resisting.

"But just as significant are the routine grounds of our daily decisions, in our homes, stores, offices, and factories. To speak somewhat technically, dominant relations are ongoingly reconstituted by the actions we take and the decisions we make in our own local and small areas of life. Rather than an economy being out there, it is right here. We rebuild it routinely in our social interaction. Rather than ideological domination and the relations of cultural capital being something we have imposed on us from above, we reintegrate them within our everyday discourse merely by following our common sense needs and desires as we go about making a

living, finding entertainment and sustenance, and so on."

(Apple, 1984, p. 92)

Simon (1983) and Bricker-Jenkins and Hooyman (1987) discuss how teachers must interrogate the hidden curriculum in the schools and in themselves in order to develop a radical, critical pedagogy.

".....to teach from a feminist perspective requires infusion of the perspective throughout the curriculum as well as a commitment to challenge deeply held assumptions about the appropriateness of 'traditional' knowledge, its' sources, and its' methods of discovery and presentation."

(Bricker-Jenkins & Hooyman, 1987 p. 41)

### **The Primary Conditions for my Proposed Model**

It seems essential, then, that a curriculum model that seeks to intervene in the deep processes by which girls are taught self-doubt and, thus, subordination would have to work with people to address with them the issues of denial, the invisibility of oppression, and the role each person plays in the reproduction or resistance of oppression. It would have to

create on a deep personal level an understanding of oppression, so that each person knows it from the inside, sees its effect in her/his life, and becomes committed to liberation - both personal and political liberation.

It seems essential, as well, that a curriculum model that seeks to intervene in the processes by which girls learn self-doubt and subordination work to develop this understanding of oppression in teachers. Because all classroom innovation must proceed through the filter of the teacher, and because the teacher is central to many aspects of classroom interaction patterns, and because the teacher has a great deal of power over the curriculum (both overt and hidden) the curriculum model that I am presenting here is essentially a development model for teachers.

The model draws upon my experience as a teacher, upon my experiences as a woman living in a patriarchal society, and upon my concerns and purposes as a school administrator. It draws upon my own experience of oppression, my growing understanding of the role I play in that oppression, and a deepening insight into the psychological, physical and spiritual dynamics of oppression. The model works with the staff of a school, in both individual and group activities. Individual insight and commitment must be achieved,

because it is through individual teachers that a curriculum is developed in a classroom but the strength of a group is needed to sustain the work of changing a deeply rooted system. The individual functions within a social structure of norms, values, and assumptions. Change will occur most deeply when the individual feels part of a larger whole, part of a larger aim which, at the same time, depends upon each individual's effort.

### **Summary**

The model presented in the upcoming chapter seeks to address a problem identified in the research findings of many. (Vice Chapter two, vide model MI in Appendix.) Classroom interaction processes marginalize girls, undervalue their achievements, and create within them self-doubt. These processes have been analyzed in Chapter three, and can be seen as agents of hegemony, maintaining a patriarchal society by subordinating women. Hegemony, however, can be viewed as a contested, negotiated process (see Chapter Four) and, therefore, open to change, albeit in the face of a powerful status quo inveighing against it. A curriculum model that seeks to bring about change in an oppressive system must work with the everyday lived realities of people's lives. Change can not be sought "out there" in society before being sought within personal lives, since society is simply

the sum of all our personal lives. The following model is thus founded on research, informed by theory, and intent upon the examination, illumination, and development of individual lives and the society in which they are embedded.

### End note

1. The bulk of the research on gender and schooling has been done in Britain and the United States. Some work has been done in Australia, notably that by Connell, Ashenden, Kessler, and Dowsett, and in Canada (Ricks and Pyke, 1973). Most of the Canadian work on gender and schooling has examined the **effects** of a patriarchal schooling, especially on career choice, life plans, and conformity to traditional sex-roles. (See work by Roger Simon, Jane Gaskell, Dorothy Smith, among others.) There is very little Canadian research on the actual activities and processes operating in the classroom on a daily basis, operating to engender subordination in girls and women. Nevertheless, I take such research from Britain and the United States to be applicable to the Canadian context, since we are all part of the "Western world", a capitalist, white-dominant, male-dominant society.



## **Chapter Six: A Proposed Model for Curriculum Intervention**

The curriculum model on which this plan is based is one of currere. (Vide Chapter One.) As a research and scholarly activity, its aim is the exploration, understanding, and expansion of personal experience and a personal search for meaning. Its goals are achieved by its processes; the ends are within the means. Understanding, insight, and meaning can never be a gift given by a leader, no matter how enlightened. They are achieved by individuals themselves proceeding through the sometimes painful struggle to become conscious. The journeying and the destination are a unity. In the following outline, description, and question-posing, it will become clear how the principles, processes, and goals of the model are re-statements of the same intent. They are like a hologram viewed from different standpoints - a whole which, as the viewer moves about it, reveals slightly different perspectives and shadings of color.

The model is founded upon four overlapping principles:

1. The importance of daily lived experiences and the learning that results from sharing these experiences.

2. Human emotions (fear, denial, safety, pride) are validated and valued.
3. A group approach is taken and a community of trust is built wherein people feel secure enough to begin to question long-held assumptions.
4. It is a participatory model with all members acting together to set direction and search for answers.

The model seeks outcomes which relate to an individual's understanding of oppression, resistance, privilege, and cooperation. It seeks to motivate that individual to examine the overt and covert, or hidden, curriculum of school, to find the evidence of oppression and to eliminate it. It seeks to develop a deep personal commitment to freedom within a context of responsibility - a commitment to equity, equality, and full development.

The model works through processes whereby teachers develop an understanding of the limiting impact a patriarchal society has had on their lives and the lives of others. Contributing to and encompassed within this large understanding of the patriarchy are several subsets, which add specific detail and take a specific focus:

- 1) understanding how the patriarchy is evidenced in schools
- 2) examining specific schools, curriculum and personal practice for

evidence of patriarchal limitation

- 3) making the connection between limitation/oppression in schooling and limitation/oppression in the larger society.

The principles upon which the model is founded imbue the activities and processes through which the teachers work. The intended outcomes are philosophically aligned with these principles.

The processes are experiences and understandings acquired as teachers work through activities which exemplify the founding principles. The intended outcomes are restatements of the processes fulfilled and experienced.

The model encompasses three approaches to, or perspectives of, a single precept: that one gains power of self-definition and self-development when one names and values one's own experience and sees how the wider society is reflected in/shaped by an individual life. In other words, that the personal is political.

**Principles on which the model is founded.**

**Pr1.** Personal experience and everyday lived realities are the beginning point of education, and a touchstone to which all other learning is brought. This model draws on others which recognize the centrality of personal experience: Freire's model of developing conscientizacao, or political consciousness; the feminist consciousness-raising model, wherein people discover that what had previously been defined as personal is, in reality, shared, based on power relations, and, therefore, political. This model interrogates the "taken-for-granted" world, the beliefs, assumptions, values, and behaviour by which a patriarchal hegemony is re-created daily. Drawing on C.A. Bowers' work, the model develops a communicative competence in participants, so that unexamined social authority becomes "relativized". In their questioning of previously-accepted tradition, participants create a "liminal space", a space in which the hold of old assumptions is loosened and new modes of belief and behaviour may be considered and practiced.

capital as meaningful before they can critically probe them. --- Students cannot learn about ideology simply by being taught how meanings get socially constructed in the media and other aspects of daily life. --- students also have to understand how they participate in ideology through their own experiences and needs. --- In short, an essential aspect of radical pedagogy centres around the need for students to interrogate critically their inner histories and experiences. It is crucial for them to be able to understand how their own experiences are reinforced, contradicted and suppressed as a result of the ideologies mediated in the material and intellectual practices that characterize daily classroom life."

(Giroux (1983) p. 22)

As they identify the effects of oppression in their own lives, people learn to see oppression that was previously invisible to them. Seeing the oppressive nature of our society and our schooling system is the first action people need to take, before they become committed to change.

**Pr2.** The model recognizes, values and affirms human emotions, human needs, and human psychology. . This is not solely a cognitive model. It will have to deal with the various expressions of denial, the human mechanism for accommodating uncomfortable or threatening realities. As Kelly (1985) discovered, teachers denied the uncomfortable proposition that they had been disadvantaging the female half of the student population all their professional lives. Therefore, in this process of self-examination, it must be safe for teachers to admit that we are all sexist, racist, classist, and homophobic because we are embedded in a society which is so. The model will have to create ways to build trust among the teachers, a trust that it is okay to be human beings, who make mistakes, have fears and insecurities, need affiliation and affirmation. Teachers must feel that it is safe to express feelings of frustration, anger, resentment, and doubt as they explore their experiences of being oppressed and silenced or ignored, of attempting to resist and finding no support, of feeling overwhelmed by the power of institutions, of feeling misunderstood or misrepresented as agents of the patriarchal status quo. Teachers must know, from the inside, what it is like to be valued for one's humanity. As the plan proceeds, participants must

continually ask: "How does this relate to my life? How am I feeling about this work? What do I need now, in order to feel safe, in order to proceed?"

**Pr3.** The model draws its strength from a group approach. As Apple,

Anyon, Giroux and others before them have suggested, collective analysis and action are required to effect any real change. Personal experiences, when shared, build an understanding of politics and inequitable power relationships. By comparing experiences, individuals form a group bond and intent. The model is thus dependent upon community-building, and the strength, energy, and commitment that a group can sustain. The model will have to create ways to build respect and regard between teachers, to build trust between people so that no one need fear devaluation, rejection, alienation, or retribution.

**Pr4.** This is a participatory research model, with an action research

intent. The Participatory Research Group outlines the three major components of such an approach (1981):

a) full community participation

- b) an educational process
- c) a means for taking action for development

Thus, I would see the whole school staff working in an egalitarian and collegial way in determining the direction and processes of the development project. (Vide Chapter End note I.) Teachers are the ones who must actively engage in the search for understanding and meaning. Consciousness cannot be forced upon unwilling subjects. So, although I outline here a method and strategies that I believe would be effective, the actual implementation might look quite different from this model, because teachers may agree that other approaches or activities are more appropriate. The role of the facilitator (or for myself, as principal) would be one of nurturing the process of questioning and critical reflection, challenging teachers in their thinking and observing, finding ways of building trust and community among people, encouraging teachers to find their own answers and their own power, and learning with teachers about critique, growth, and collective action.

The model has an action intent, so that as the processes of critique and reflection proceed, problems may be clarified and solutions may



arise which can then be implemented and evaluated in an ongoing way.

**Outcomes which the model seeks.**

Following are attitudes, understanding, and behaviour which I believe would create a more equitable educational experience for girls, one that would address the problem of the creation of self-doubt and subordination.

01. Teachers will have a theoretical understanding of oppression, of how our patriarchal society limits the development of consciousness of all human beings in some way, so that the powerful may continue to dominate and profit and that power exists on many levels in our society. Teachers will have developed a communicative competence in regard to the dominant culture (Vide Chapter 4, 9.78) and be able to distinguish and appreciate the cultural capital of oppressed groups. (Vide Chapter Three, p.56) Teachers will be familiar with the theories of social and cultural reproduction (Vide Chapter Three) and the social critique of feminism, and use these to analyze the "taken-for-granted" world of everyday experiences. Teachers will become familiar with the ideas of the sociology of knowledge. (Vide

Chapter Three, p.58) They will understand how reality is socially constructed, how knowledge is defined and created, how knowledge can be used to maintain the patriarchy or to empower human beings to create a more just, varied, and open society. These theoretical understandings will give teachers the tools with which to examine oppressive behaviours, structures, and ideas.

02. Teachers will have an understanding of privilege based on gender, race and class, and will be able to see this operating in their daily lives. They will also be able to identify acts of resistance, and appreciate the role of this dynamic. They will see how they themselves resist, accommodate, or cooperate with oppressive or hegemonic forces on a daily basis. Having this deep personal awareness of privilege and resistance, teachers will be able to use this knowledge to better understand their students' behaviours and lives, and to then develop this understanding in the students themselves. Teachers may begin to see acts of marginalization or resistance as places to begin teaching social critique. As Weiler (1988) describes in her discussion of feminist teachers, the daily behaviour of boys and girls and teachers can be made part of the

classroom discourse on equality and equity. When teachers are aware the role they personally play in recreating an oppressive hegemony, they can begin to choose different behaviours.

**03.** Teachers will examine their own teaching practices, to free them of bias and limiting assumptions. They will understand the importance of gender-sensitive language, and their verbal interactions (praise, criticism, instruction, questioning, affiliation) will be subject to self-critique, interrogated for evidence of sexism or the weight of an oppressive hegemony. Unconscious assumptions and expectations regarding genderized behaviour and achievement will be examined, understood, and monitored in daily classroom practice. (Vide Chapter two.) Teachers will seek out material and human resources that will provide positive images of the strength, ability, contributions, and variety of women. Thus, in very concrete ways the confidence of girls in the ability of women and themselves will be fostered.

**04.** The personal experience and analysis of oppression that teachers develop through this plan will inform and guide all their work with students. Teachers will conduct explicit discussions and activities

with students that reveal and examine oppression and power operating in our society and in each classroom. The processes of interaction, marginalization, sexualization, and resistance will be part of the text and discourse in each classroom.

Teachers will teach students about the social construction of reality, and provide concrete ways for students to participate in the creation of knowledge. They will come to develop a wider understanding of what constitutes knowledge, come to ask whose interests are being served by various conceptions of knowledge, and come to understand how knowledge is power, how it can be used to silence or liberate people. This understanding in particular will be used to demonstrate how the patriarchy has maintained women in a subordinated role.

05. Teachers will have a deep personal commitment to equality, equity, and the development of human potential. Such commitment would be evident in their daily classroom practice, in their language, in the respect they communicate for colleagues, students, and self. A deeply-felt commitment would translate into action with other groups working for social change. Both Apple (1984) and Giroux

(1984) discuss the positive benefits, indeed, the necessity of teachers allying themselves with other community groups to work on issues and problems that inevitably impact on the school, since it is the society in microcosm. Freire talks about a "praxis" of struggle, about the empty verbalism of a theory not tied to action for change. Teachers, working with other community groups, would develop a basis of personal experience on which to take seriously the cultural capital and concrete struggles of various groups. So teachers might become involved with parent groups, with groups concerned with domestic violence, immigrant women's concerns, political action groups for women, and so on. Thus, teachers would broaden and deepen their understanding of oppression and silencing and have a richer base for their teaching and living.

**Processes through which teachers may come to develop an understanding of the creation of self-doubt and subordination in girls and a commitment to its challenge and diminution.**

The following processes, which are described sequentially, and which might, in implementation, proceed in a linear fashion, are really interactive, each developing and extending the others. This is because they

are really various aspects of a whole, as depicted by the model M2. (Vide Appendix.) This development plan could proceed successfully only if a relatively high level of trust had developed within the school staff, and there had been previous positive experiences with group processes (problem-solving, goal-setting, program evaluations, etc.). What follows is an outline of the proposed processes, with subheadings to provide detail and examples. It is my intent here to provide the framework for a development plan. I can not hope in the limited forum of this thesis, to provide an thoroughly explicated and detailed plan.

P1. Developing a personal understanding of the patriarchy and its impact on our lives. (This personal understanding and recognition of injustice and limitation is important, in order that compassion and commitment may be engendered. As many stories of "silencing as possible need to be heard, so that every teacher can identify such an experience in her/his own life.

A. Examination of the sociology of knowledge. (Vide Chapter three, pp57-60) Whose knowledge and experience is acknowledged and legitimated? What is silenced, dismissed, or devalued?

A1. Hear the stories of women from the past whose contributions and achievements have been ignored:

eg: Aphra Behn

Eleanor McClintock

The Icelandic women's work for suffrage in Manitoba

A2.Hear the stories of present-day women whose work, experience, or contribution is less valued, less acclaimed, less remunerated than that of men:

eg: a day-care worker  
 a woman from the visual arts  
 a woman from the Pay Equity Bureau  
 a "housewife" who can talk about the invisibility  
 her work

A3.Hear the experience of other subordinated, silenced ones (wherever possible, these should be teachers telling their own stories, but films and written material might be used as a secondary source).

As examples:

native people  
 battered women  
 incest survivors  
 lesbian and gay teachers  
 members of alcoholic families

A4.Think, write, and talk about one's own experience of silencing and subordination. Using a journalling technique, autobiography, peer counselling, and other tools for self-discovery, teachers begin to "name their own Word", to identify oppression and limitation in their own lives.

This is crucial to the rest of the plan. Sufficient time, reflection, and energy must be invested with this stage. Permission to speak one's own word must be felt and taken. It is upon the understanding and insight created here that commitment to change is founded.

B. Interrogation of the taken-for-granted world: a discussion of everyday life and activities, to see how we and others perpetuate or cooperate in oppression and silencing (our own or others). This activity builds a "communicative competence" (Bowers, 1984), an understanding of how we are all socialized to certain assumptions.

B1.Examine the work of Dale Spender and her attempts to change classroom interaction. (Spender, 1982)

B2.Consider Freire's concept of "the fear of freedom" and the psychology of domination. (Freire, 1972)

B3.Discuss the potential harm in the "paternalistic benefactor" role, through examination of issues in international development aid, native self-government, male "paternalism" towards women.

B4.Look at our use of language and how it shapes/reflects our thinking and view of the world. Refer to C.A. Bowers' notion that language = socialization = education.

B5.Examine gender, race, class, age, and heterosexist privilege as it operates in our society through such activities as

- 1) discuss the theme of "Take Back the Night" - how male violence and the fear of it imprisons women
- 2) view and discuss the film "Torch Song Trilogy"- how heterosexist privilege twists human lives and emotions
- 3) hear from natives and recipients of social assistance about the difficulties of obtaining housing, to understand how class privilege is taken for granted.

C. Deal with denial, how and why it operates, where it is expressed in our daily lives. This is needed in order to examine teachers' denial of sexism and the role they play in the teaching of subordination.

C1. What is denial?

- a. Denial may be a suppression of fear, a reaction to a threat to one's safety/security.



- b. Denial may be a response to a threatened loss of privilege.
- c. Denial may be related to identity, to denying one's own position in a particular devalued group.
- d. Denial may be related to the identification of problems one feels incapable of addressing.

Resource persons can be drawn from the women's movement, from Alcoholics Anonymous, from Clinic Health Centre, from any group of people who have dealt with their own denial of reality.

C2. Teachers will have to deal with their own feelings of denial, of feeling that they do not participate in disadvantaging their students, that they are not sexist, racist, etc.

This is another crucial aspect of the plan. Teachers must come to accept their role in the problem of subordination, must understand their denial of it, and become willing to address it. Sufficient time, energy, and permission must be invested at this stage. Teachers must understand why the denial exists, must feel psychologically secure enough to admit to its existence and committed enough to begin to change.

D. What is the way out of oppression? How do we contest hegemony? How do we withdraw our consent for cooperation with domination and subordination?

D1. Hear from the people mentioned in PIA, how they came to acknowledge their oppression and begin to struggle against it. In this section, it is important to address such issues as:

- a) the importance of a support group
- b) self-image and self-esteem

- c) risk-taking, personal power, our view of conflict and confrontation.

D2. Identify ways we cooperate with or perpetuate oppression in our daily lives, and how we might begin to withdraw that consent or cooperation.

D3. What has been silenced or devalued by the patriarchy and how can it be reclaimed, revalued, and integrated into our lives?

- a. Examine the "neutral, objective, value-free" view of knowledge: (Vide Chapter 3, p 55-65)
  - how it portrays reality and maintains the powerful
  - how it limits us
  - how schools cooperate with it via the myth of meritocracy.
- b. Consider what has been denied and denigrated, via such activities as:
  - i) read and discuss Judy Chicago's works The Dinner Party (1978) and The Birth Project. (1985)
  - ii) read and discuss Carol Gilligan's work In a Different Voice (1982) and her concept of "an ethic of care", and compare it to the patriarchal valuing of individual rights and "rugged individualism".
  - iii) read and discuss Dale Spender's work Men's Studies Modified (1981) to evaluate how a feminist perspective and women's studies is impacting the traditional disciplines.
  - iv) consider the view of the earth and the spirituality of the native people; how their heritage has been devalued and destroyed, and how it can contribute to our depth and quality of life.

- v) read and discuss Ivan Illich's Shadow Work (1981), and identify the shadow work in one's personal life.

**P2. Becoming familiar with the research on gender and schooling.**

- A. Gain an overview of the processes by which self-doubt is created.
  - A1. Use model M1 as a summary and overview
  - A2. Analyze these interaction patterns as agents by which patriarchal domination is perpetuated/created
  - A3. Use critical education concepts of agency and structure to examine the dialectic at work, the notion of a "negotiated reality"
  - A4. Refer to teachers' denial of bias, the invisibility of oppression
- B. Engage in a detailed study of the major pieces of research outlined in this thesis.
  - B1. Through a process of shared reading, reporting and discussion, teachers will explore the research, using such questions as:
    - a) what are the "surface" findings?"
    - b) what questions arise?
    - c) what hegemonic forces are seen in this study?
    - d) what are the implications?
  - B2. Consider the responsibility of teachers in developing full potential, in creating classrooms where attitudes and stereotypes are challenged so that achievement can be maximized and recognized. What is the role of teachers in creating social change?
  - B3. Examine the importance of verbal interaction in learning, and the role of communicative competence in power to influence our society.

- a) consider learning theory and verbalization
  - b) consider the role of language in thought
  - c) look at the various levels of question-posing, intellectual challenge and gendered expectation
  - d) look at the gendered nature of teachers' praise and criticism, and its' role in self-image creation
  - e) consider C. A. Bowers' thinking (1984) on communicative competence, relativization, liminal space, and the power to re-define authority and society.

**P3. Creating support and challenge to examine classroom practice and school organization for processes which create self-doubt and to search out alternatives.**

By this stage of the plan, teachers' knowledge, analysis, and commitment should be a level to allow them to take full advantage of materials and procedures developed by other groups (eg. Manitoba Education. Women's studies programs) to address the problem of gender-equity. Other approaches to education (eg: confluent education) will also be open to consideration now, for what they can provide to address the problems of subordination.

By this stage of the plan, teachers should be much involved in setting direction and planning activities for further development. Therefore, what I offer below as possibilities are necessarily tentative.

- A. The creation of small groups of teachers (grade groups, friendship groups, etc.) to work collectively on such activities as:
  - 1) monitoring language use and classroom interactions
  - 2) doing observations in one another's classrooms
  - 3) developing and sharing resources.
- B. The consideration of ways to address the problem of the creation of self-doubt:
  - eg: 1) resources that create a positive image of women's abilities and contributions

- 2) ways to deal with resistance from boys in class (see Weiler (1988) and Battersea County Women's Group (1985))
- 3) ways to make the classroom discourse an open and debated process (see Weiler, 1988)
- 4) what are the pros and cons of girls' only classes, or girls' only groupings some of the time? Should the school try some single sex groupings?
- 5) how to include the voices of silenced groups in the classroom
- 6) how to expand one's teaching repertoire to include other than cognitive, linear, and competitive modes.
- 7) how and where to incorporate the research findings discussed in P2B1.

**P4. Taking the understanding of oppression and commitment to change into the wider society.**

Because of the variability of individual interests, connections, and time commitments the following possible avenues for activity are tentative at best.

- A. Work might be undertaken with groups of parents, discussing with them the work of the school in regard to gender equity, the role research has found mothers to play in the self-esteem of girls, the ways parents might cooperate in building self-confidence in girls.
- B. Teachers might undertake presentations to the School Board, the Faculty of Education, or Manitoba Education regarding the kinds of work the school is doing to provide gender-fair education.
- C. Teachers might involve their classes in community work, such as civic elections, the peace movement, or other arenas in which issues of power and oppression are enacted.
- D. Individual teachers may begin to work with community groups on issues of personal concern.

For example:  
 Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women  
 Educators for Peace

Giroux (1984) notes the need for radical educators to be involved with social movements, the need to create alternative public spheres (interest groups, political action groups) where "organic intellectuals" can be bred. Ways would have to be created to support this kind of involvement by teachers.

### Questions arising from the curriculum intervention model

#### A. Questions Crucial to the Intent of the Plan:

1. Will every teacher have, in their available background, experiences of silencing, oppression, or limitation on which to base this work?  
 The model is predicated on personal experience and the insight and commitment that can be accessed as that experience is explored and reflected upon. Can a person develop an analysis of oppression and a commitment to its diminution without this personal "touchstone"? Women teachers, gay and lesbian teachers, teachers of various ethnic and cultural minorities will all have had such experiences. They may need support and assistance in identifying these experiences - denial may be much of a dynamic - but the experiences will be there. Teachers raised in abusive, alcoholic, or poor families will have that experience. Will white heterosexual

males? Connell (1987) considered a question somewhat related to this:

What interests would bring white heterosexual males to work for a more gender-fair society, to support the cause of feminism? He identifies five such interests. (Vide Chapter End notes 2.) Would such interests serve as a "touchstone" in place of direct experience of oppression?

2. How can the key concern of gender bias and the creation of self-doubt in girls be maintained as a focus, when the model examines oppression in all its many expressions? I have, in other arenas, noted the tendency for issues of gender bias to become secondary to issues of race, class, or religious bias. It seems the issues of gender bias come so close to "home" that people feel uncomfortable with them and prefer to look at safer, more acceptable issues such as racism. The intent of the model is to explore all experiences of oppression and to use this understanding to address the processes by which girls learn subordination. How much will teachers resist looking at gender oppression?

3. How can this plan, which is founded on the exploration of personal experience, which intends to deal with fear and denial, with values and assumptions, be implemented with teachers who will be, at least initially, only professionally related? How can a climate of trust and community be created in a school, so that this personal exploration and understanding can proceed? Feminist consciousness-raising groups tend to be quite small, homogeneous groups where levels of trust can be developed in a shorter time. School staffs may be quite large and diverse populations. How can a community be built where people feel safe to speak what others may not want or be able to hear?

B. Questions Relating to the Structure of the Plan:

1. How will the plan need to be adjusted for different levels of schools (elementary, high school)? The processes and activities in section P1 can be used throughout the levels, but the activities in P2 and P3 deal more directly with teaching practice. How will the grade level of a school influence the approach taken? For



example, how much of an explicit discussion of interaction dynamics can be carried on in a primary classroom?

2. How long will it take to work through the first section of the plan, and then the subsequent sections? How much time will be needed to process personal experience and to feel safe enough to begin assessing personal assumptions and behaviours? Will a year be enough time to build a climate of trust and community sufficient to allow section P1 to be undertaken? The answer to this is highly dependent upon the individuals on staff, the history of the staff as a unit and the emotional tenor of the school.
3. How will teacher transfer affect the plan? Teachers do tend to move from school to school, for a variety of reasons. A staff membership gradually changes. The development plan is founded upon an exploration and analysis of personal experience. Once this aspect of the plan has been carried out and the staff have moved to section P2, how will incoming teachers be dealt with? How can they be included in the important group processes if they have not accomplished the understandings from P1? Obviously, a way must

be found for them to do the work of P1, without bringing the rest of the school to a standstill in the subsequent stages.

4. What kind of supports do teachers need in this kind of a development plan? Obviously, it requires time and energy. How can the other demands on teacher time and energy be minimized, diverted, or suspended while the bulk of this plan is being implemented? Many curriculum implementation schemes have gone awry because teachers did not have sufficient time or resources with which to do necessary development work. How can such resources be provided in the ongoing functioning of a school?

**End notes:**

1. I approach this curriculum model from a personal standpoint: In implementing this model, I would act as facilitator and coordinator of the plan. If someone other than I were to implement the model, it should not be assumed that the principal of the school would act as facilitator and coordinator. The full cooperation and commitment of the principal would be crucial to the success of the plan, but she/he wouldn't necessarily have to act as facilitator/coordinator. Someone else could act in that capacity.

What is essential to the success of the plan is the level of personal understanding of the facilitator/coordinator. Ideally, that person should have already worked through the processes outlined in the model, and have achieved an understanding of how our patriarchal society has impacted on her/his life, and have a deep commitment to the diminution of all expressions of oppression. The facilitator/coordinator needs to have a socio-political and feminist analysis of education and society in order to truly implement this model of curriculum change.

2. Ralph W. Connell in his recent book "Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics" (1987) considers the question of what motivates people to work for change. I quote him at length here for his questioning and observations coincide with and amplify mine:

"The catch is always with heterosexual men, whose collective interest - as the evidence through the book confirms - is broadly to maintain the existing system. What reasons for change have enough weight, against this entrenched interest, to detach heterosexual men from the defence of patriarchy? There are, in my experience, five.

- (1) Even the beneficiaries of an oppressive system can come to see its oppressiveness, especially the way it poisons areas of life they share.
- (2) Heterosexual men are often committed in important ways to women - their wives and lovers, mothers and sisters, daughters and nieces, co-workers - and may desire better lives for them. Especially they

may see the point of creating more civilized and peaceable sexual arrangements for their children, even at the cost of their own privileges.

- (3) Heterosexual men are not all the same or all united, and many do suffer some injury from the present system. The oppression of gays, for instance, has a back-wash damaging to effeminate or unassertive heterosexuals.
- (4) Change in gender relations is happening anyway, and on a large scale. A good many heterosexual men recognize that they cannot cling to the past and want some new directions.
- (5) Heterosexual men are not excluded from the basic human capacity to share experiences, feelings and hopes. This ability is often blunted, but the capacity for caring and identification is not necessarily killed. The question is what circumstances might call it out. Being a father often does; some political movements, notably the environmental and peace movements, seem to; sexual politics may do so to.

(p. viii)

## Chapter Seven: Summary and Conclusions

This thesis has examined the processes by which girls learn self-doubt. I found, by reading and analyzing the research, that as girls, we learn subordination and learn to doubt our own ability through interactions with others. Specifically, in classrooms, the various processes of interaction with teachers and other students school girls to subordination. This may not be the only way we learn to limit ourselves, but it is a significant one. In Chapter Two I described these processes in detail.

I examined studies from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, studies based on a positivistic paradigm, and ones that took a phenomenological approach. I looked at case studies and large-scale random testing results, synthesizing findings from a wide variety of research. In analyzing these research findings, I have drawn upon feminist theory, neo-Marxist theory, and theory from critical education to develop a theory of how girls learn self-doubt.

I learned that these processes reflect the values, thinking, and assumptions of the larger society. Indeed, they are part of that society; they do not

exist only in schools. As teachers, embedded in a patriarchal social context, we communicate to girls, in many overt and covert ways, societal values and assumptions regarding women, our abilities, our "place". Boys play a role in the marginalization of girls, and girls come to internalize and believe/defend society's view of them. In Chapter Three I discussed in detail the role societal structures and values play in the learning of subordination.

Critical education theory provided a significant validation of my schooling experience: that girls are not passive victims of these processes of subordination nor are teachers unquestioning perpetrators, but both are actively involved participants: resisting, accommodating, cooperating, denying, capitalizing. Human agency interacts with societal structures to create a negotiated reality. We are all actively involved, on a daily basis, in creating subordination, resistance, or self-definition. I deal with this theory in detail in Chapter Four.

The research I read suggested some reasons why gender issues are so intractable. Why does the mention of sexism raise the ire, resentment, and denial of teachers, and people in general? Why, after so much research

evidence, is change so slow in coming into public schools? Because these questions examine the heart of male-female relationships, because they interrogate power relationships, and because they illuminate gender privilege and gender-subordination, issues in which each of us is intimately involved and embedded, they stimulate human emotions: anger, fear, guilt, shame, defence, denial. Without examining these emotions, no program of anti-sexist education will succeed. (Vide Chapter Five, pp. 101-108.) No amount of information alone, regardless of its rigor or extent, will bring about change in the practices of schooling which teach subordination.

Significantly, this study takes the findings from social science research a step further. I have constructed a model for addressing the problems illuminated by the research. The model I have developed is based on feminist principles (vide Chapter One, p. 11-13), as well as on recommendations made by others working in the field of gender issues and education (vide Chapter Five, p. 101-107).

From the research and theory I presented here, it is clear that education and the interactional processes that teach girls subordination are

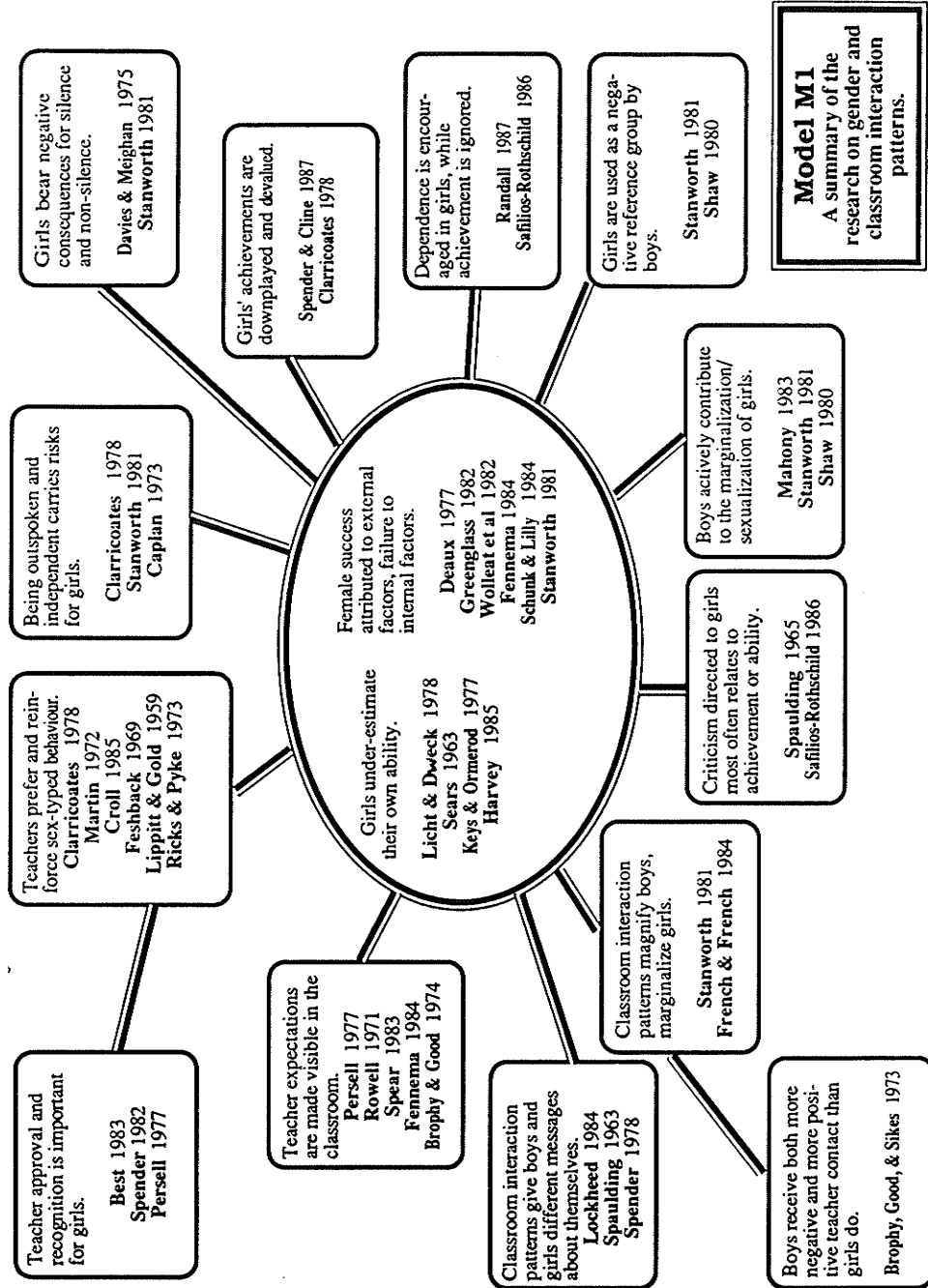
embedded in society. The intervention model that I propose is based on this reality. It is founded on the understanding that change is influenced and circumscribed by the social context. It is important, therefore, to create a context in a school which encourages and supports the examination of gender and other social issues on a personal level, which creates a community of trust, respect, and participation. Such a climate and group support is crucial to the implementation of the model I propose. As I outlined in Chapter Five, real change will only occur when gender issues are examined on a personal level. This is a process which takes time. Therefore, a short-term program which hopes to raise teachers' awareness of sexist classroom practice and engender change will find limited success. I was involved in that sort of teacher inservice programming for a time, and found it frustrating and ineffective. The research I did for this thesis has supported my life experience, which taught me that issues and problems of sexism in education are not effectively dealt with in large populations, in impersonal ways, in short-range short-term activities. There is little in this thesis that provides "quick-fix" answers, and nothing that supports such an approach. I find now that I am no longer prepared to be involved in that kind of undertaking. My research here helps me understand why it was ineffective. The work I have presented here also



shows how I am prepared to proceed, and with what considerations. It shows how effective anti-sexist programs might be structured.

The processes of classroom interaction which teach subordination are complex and multi-faceted. My intervention model is equally complex, using interaction as a process for examination, reflection and change. The very processes that teach subordination can also be used to teach interrogation of societal attitudes and self-definition. The consciousness and "wide-awakeness" of the human participants is the factor which determines whether these processes will be limiting or freeing in nature.

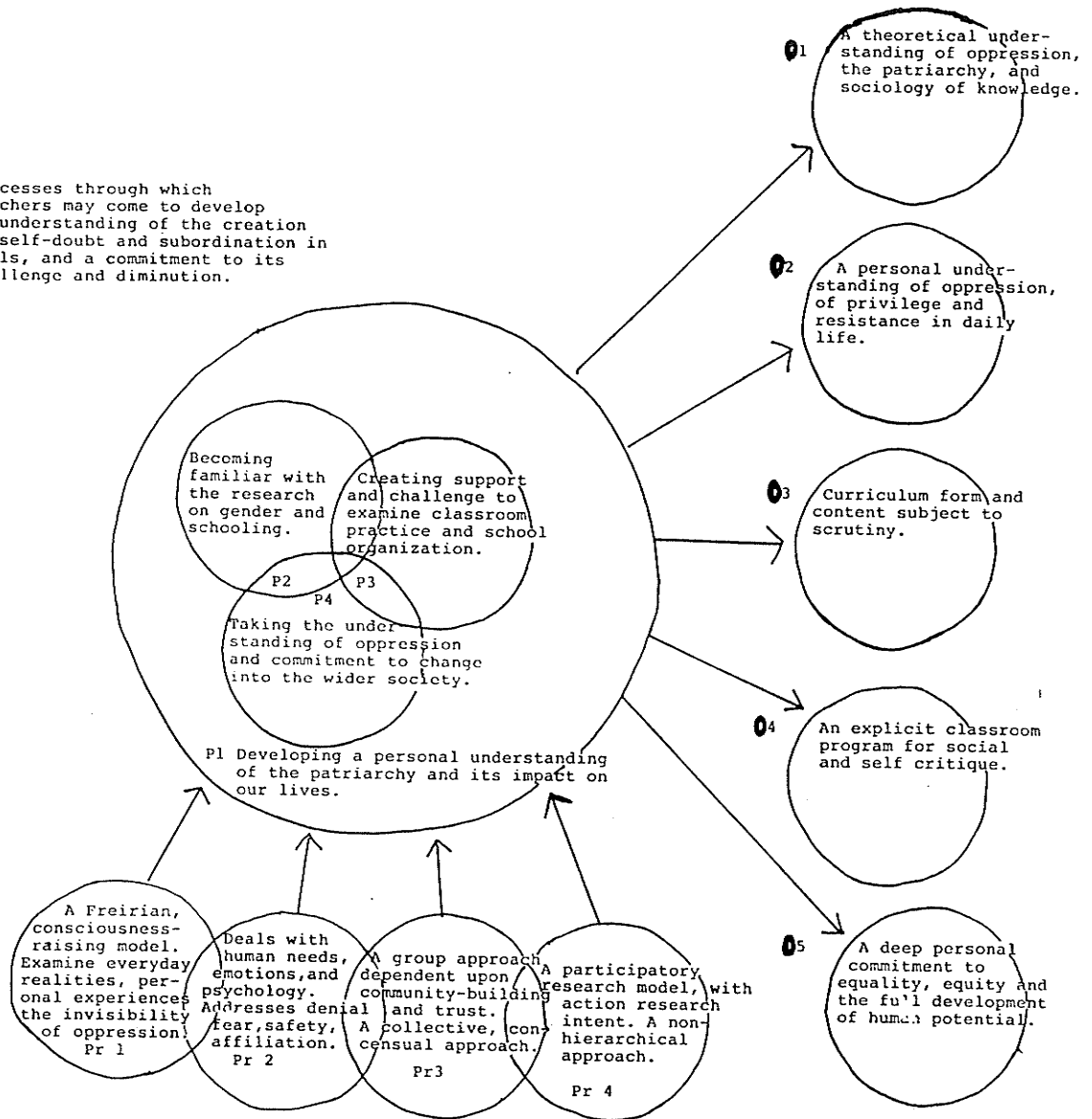
At the school level change can be encouraged and supported. Here personal relationships and ongoing work can provide the impetus, challenge, safety, and time needed for real change to take root.



APPENDIX A

Outcomes which the model seeks,

Processes through which teachers may come to develop an understanding of the creation of self-doubt and subordination in girls, and a commitment to its challenge and diminution.



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