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Young Women, Power, Intimate Relationships and Wellbeing

The circumstances that enable young women's resistant subjective desires:
"A Pash and a Dash"

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Abstract

This research explored gendered power, young women and resistance. I examined Cromby's (2006) social constructionist theory of 'embodied knowing', Davies and colleagues' (2001; 2002) theory of subjectivity and Braidotti's (2003) theory of material embodiment to explore the silences present in feminist poststructuralist theory in the area of young women, subjective desire and wellbeing. The primary aim was to identify resistant ways young women could be within and outside of heterosexual relationships that increases, not decreases, their wellbeing. I conducted discussions with 6 friendship groups of 16-18 year old women, and 13 interviews with a subset of these participants. Critical discourse analysis (Parker, 1999) was employed to identify 7 main discourses in the data, namely: security; developmental; balance; risk and pleasure; girlfriends are fun; female friends negotiating 'abject' other and being a nomad. I examined the intersection between the corporeal body, discourse and material resources to identify the circumstances that enabled resistance. Access to resistant forms of female subjectivity was also promoted through the use of mimesis and my intentional positive positioning of the participants within research conversations. Cromby's ideas of referential difference identified that participants desired the positive visibility of early heterosexual relationships but not the critical visibility of dominating and 'clingy' boyfriends. Cromby's (2006) theory of embodied knowing accessed 'feelings' and more corporeal sensations and identified that the ideology of 'might is right' is still operating in participants' lives and silences resistance to male dominance. All participants talked about experiences of empathy and pleasure within female friendships which enabled resistance to heterosexual discourses and promoted care for other females in private and public spaces. Braidotti's notions of women's pre-linguistic and linguistic drive 'to be' enables theorizing that resistant subjective desires are partially co-constituted through reiterative practices. Future research needs to explore: 1) how boys can be raised in the presence of a legitimate authoritative maternal presence in order to establish reiterative practices of an ethics of care for an equal different female others prior to being a boyfriend; 2) how girls can establish reiterative practices of desiring not to be constantly visible to others and to 'know' at an embodied location that not to be visible is not to be.

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Preface

The purpose of this thesis is twofold: firstly to start thinking, speaking, and writing ideas around gender and power as I try to make more sense of young women's experiences in heterosexual relationships and the negative impact these have on their wellbeing, and secondly to explore the possibilities for change that would improve young women's wellbeing. This purpose has emerged from my current clinical work with young women within a gynaecological outpatients setting but is also heavily influenced by my past locations as a nurse, refuge worker and my ancestors' historical political locations within New Zealand. Therefore prior to setting out my theoretical location, methodology and findings I would like to position myself within a very specific feminist standpoint that has been partially co-constituted through my past experiences.

The intention of this preface is to enable those reading my thesis to understand what drives this endeavour and why I have chosen to do this research with young women outside of my current health settings. For example my past experiences of working with young women in schools illustrates that they may have greater access to ways of being that enable wellbeing and may not have experienced the specific restraints operating within my clinical population, such as having sexual pain and uro-genital variation. I will expand on the dilemmas this clinical group presents for me and how they have influenced my research question shortly but first will give a brief overview of my historical background.

I entered the health discipline at 19 years of age with a very well established critical position within mainstream knowledge. In retrospect I associate this critical lens not only with my family's political history including their commitment to a labour ideology and involvement within women's suffrage. I was educated within the sociocultural movement of the 1960s and 1970s; this was the era of post Vatican II and the emergence of a social justice ideology within Catholic schools pedagogy and theological teachings. This social justice movement co-constituted my desire to be a 'good woman' in specific gender normative ways, such as being orientated to care for others in health and not so much in domestic contexts. This specific desire to 'care' operates simultaneously alongside my very early critical understanding of gendered power and my culture's tendency to overwork mature women.

Throughout this thesis one of the markers of wellbeing I utilize when talking about women is the experience of 'fun' and 'pleasure'. In contrast to my perception of my

mother as not having ‘fun’ because her daily life required constant caretaking within the home and community, my aunt worked in the armed forces as a nurse and travelled all over the world transporting service families from one location to another. Her pleasurable life-style was appealing to me, compared to what suburban New Zealand offered women. My thinking at the time was that if I led this travelling life-style I would not be trapped into my culture’s expectations of women to overwork within both paid and unpaid roles. In this way I was exposed to the extremes of being a ‘good woman’ and the extremes of being a ‘freer woman’. Therefore my initial understanding of wellbeing was having the freedom to live in different locations that did not require doing endless housework and looking after others in a domestic and community environment. I followed my aunty and entered an occupation that positioned me looking after others in a gendered health environment and where female nurses nurtured patients. This emphasis on the material workload of women, including the emotional workload of caring for another has continued throughout my clinical work with women and will be one of the lenses I bring to this research.

Another influence in how I understand gender came from my awareness as an adolescent of friends who were passionate girlfriends and who experienced the risks of the position such as emotional hurt when the relationship finished, and also pregnancy. In this way I became aware of the risks of being in romantic relationships with men, not only in terms of the potential for domestic burden but also in terms of distress.

I did go on to travel for several years and experienced long periods of freedom from taking care of others and instead was able to view other women’s gendered lives from the outside as a tourist. For me travel has always been about freedom from the gendered positions available to me within my own western culture’s expectation to nurture another, be it a child, partner, doctor or a patient and as a consequence provides a material space for me to experience wellbeing. Therefore one of my lenses operating within this thesis is examining the participant’s text for the very ‘real’ material spaces that enable the participant’s subjective desire for resistance.

The interrelationship of both academic and clinical and community experiences that have largely shaped my critical lens include the following: My general and maternity nursing training and practise in the 1970s formed my interest in how the physical body in specific locations, such as the delivery room, intersected with people’s experiences of wellbeing and physiological processes such as the neuroendocrine system. My experiences nursing aboriginal children and adults during both the late 1970s and 1980s in Western

Australia and New South Wales while majoring in social psychology was also influential and orientated me to cultural dominance, resource distribution and wellbeing. Throughout this research I will also be aware of how cultural factors intersect with gender practises and availability of material resources when exploring different forms of wellbeing.

Nursing has also enabled me as a psychologist and advocate to recognize and identify female resistance and strength. One of my earliest nursing experiences involved listening to mature women's talk about the trouble with men. I would hear amongst huge amounts of hilarity, stories of their husbands' deficits as lovers and their unrealistic expectation for heterosex and how they managed 'them'. These stories usually finished with the women reaffirming how much they loved their partner despite his deficits and because of their sense of their embodied connection that they had with the father of their children. This form of talk appears to be silent within academic literature and silences women's everyday experience of men as both pleasurable and problematic and their consequent access to a critical lens and resistance i.e. taking about women as legitimate and men as 'lacking'. Therefore my research will utilize a critical lens on men in a way that may enable resistance and for young women to be positioned with greater authority within heterosexual contexts.

My 14 years involvement in the Women's Refuge Movement in Auckland during the 1990s and 2000s have provided me with a feminist framework to understand how gendered power operated not only overtly through physical force but through loving pleasure and how these more corporeal experiences intersected with symbolic, cultural normative practices such as romantic love narratives. For example, a male partner's ability to initially establish loving intimacy and the ideas of romantic ideas such as not questioning someone you love and trust. Women's refuge not only expanded my feminist theoretical knowledge but strengthened my critical lens of the risks in our cultural normative practices that induce women to desire romantic love and intimacy in order to spend a life serving others' needs.

My current health work experience has involved working with women across pre-menstrual clinics, gynaecological oncology clinics and a female multidisciplinary clinic; working with young women with uro-genital and genetic differences that produce vaginal absence or shortening and other reproductive differences outside of a medically defined normal female form; and working with young women with sexual pain. From this work I have been able to identify several noticeable theoretical silences within feminist

poststructuralist writings and which restrain me in gaining a better meaning about young women's heterosexual desire for heterosex in the absence of physiological arousal and overt violence or coercion.

Unlike more recent feminist poststructuralist writings which discuss the silence of resistant female desire, extensive therapeutic discussions have highlighted that these young women do have access to knowing what they like and do not like sexually (Allen, 2002; 2003; Gavey, 1992). The young women I speak to are able to identify the differences in desire, preference and frequency between themselves and their partner and are more than able to negotiate differential preferences outside of their heterosexual relationship such as in the work place. The young women I work with do not say 'no' to their partner's desire for penetrative sex, "at least some of the time", because they fear that their boyfriends may leave them and they desire to be a girlfriend more than to avoid pain. These young women's stories contain the moral imperatives around heterosex identified by feminist theorists operating within our New Zealand culture that enable young men to leave girlfriends who are unable to have penetrative sex as a very reasonable outcome (Fisher, 2005). These stories do contain something very 'real' as well as established ways of talking about the rights and obligations of girlfriends. Young men do leave female partners who cannot, at least some of the time, meet their preferences for penetrative sex. In these clinical situations it is not that the couple cannot access alternative ways of being sexual outside of penetrative sex, but that they both believe the male partner's preference should be met some of the time. Young women talk about how distressing the loss of a loved boyfriend is and the pleasure they lose through his leaving. I hope to explore how young women talk about desiring to be or not to be girlfriends to boyfriends but will also explore what is 'real' in their lives.

I am also struggling with young women's ideas about not being 'proper' women because they experience being different from other women at corporeal sites of the body such as pain and uro-genital differences. This identification of not being 'proper' women within the narrow confines of heterosex clashes with my own 1970's context where to be 'proper' was to be outside of the confines of heterosex. Working with young women across such a great space has produced specific insights, such as my growing realisation when I talk to young women about not being a girlfriend they understand this as 'not being', not existing. To be a girlfriend is to be a woman for many within this clinical population. My speaking and speculation about what it would be like for this group of

young women to be outside of being a girlfriend produces a feeling of distress that neither they nor I can properly language. It is my intention to examine this form of subjective desire and what it is to be both outside and within heterosexual relationship in order to better understand this distress. In this way subjective desire is central to this research project. To do this, ethically and not distress my participants, I need young women who are not currently experiencing these markers of not being 'proper' i.e. corporeal difference or pain.

Another profound silence I notice in the literature is the absence of the corporeal body and how this intersects with symbolic resources to co-constitute subjective desire. For example, when you trace the pain pathway, young women identify that their pain response was established through differences in desire and preferences that were not negotiated within their heterosexual relationship. Rather than being visible and talked about, these differences were ignored and young women got into the habit of having penetrative sex in the absence of their own physiological arousal, which led to irritated vaginal tissue, burning sensations, pain and a vaginismus response (the tightening of the vaginal muscles to the threat of penetration).

This silence is also present in the resistant forms of pleasurable sexual activity experienced by transgendered women and young women with uro-genital variation. The women who I work with who have different anatomy and physiology may have different corporeal sites for sexual pleasure but these differences are rarely theoretically discussed i.e. such as the more widely dispersed erectile/clitoral tissue and the speed and form of physiological arousal this produces. How is it possible to theorize the body in a way that is better able to be heard within academic contexts with the potential to inform practices of resistance both clinically, educationally and theoretically? We need to know more about subjective desires and how these desires intersect with the body and we need to better understand how cumulative relatively stable understandings of gendered power intersect with the shifting corporeal body. For example, how is it possible for a young woman to experience subjective desire and enjoy heterosex in preference to any other form of being sexual but when in permanent heterosexual relationships which require established gender practices such as domestic and maternal responsibility it appears to diminish the frequency of her 'real' corporeal sexual arousal? Women in these situations talk about being tired, pressured and burdened and can view sexual intimacy as just another chore. Would utilizing theoretical frameworks that enable articulation of feelings and corporeal body

sensations enhance my ability to theorize female desire outside of my own commonsense understandings of maternal burden and decreasing space for female sexual arousal? These questions draw attention to how gendered power impacts on the physical body, and women's experiences of wellbeing and dis-ease.

In conclusion, working with young women with sexual pain and uro-genital variation has been a struggle with far fewer moments of disruption and resistance than I have experienced in other contexts. The 'representative' story I hear from young women is that to accept that they may never be able to experience the pleasure of being a girlfriend without the possibility of pain or penetrative sex is extremely distressing. These young women desire to be both a girlfriend and to experience sexual pleasure through penetrative sex in the absence of pain and a 'medically' defined correct vaginal length. Therefore I am interested how young women negotiate desire both within and outside heterosexual sexual functioning to identify pathways for resistance that incorporate pleasure and reduce risks. In this way how young women's gendered desire to be a girlfriend intersects with other desires, such as sexual desire, is the central focus of this research. Because sexual desire intersects with the desire to be or not be a girlfriend means that this thesis is far more than a study in female sexual desire. For example, one of the silences I have noticed within the representative stories of young women who are experiencing pain is their access to pleasure outside of being a girlfriend. Therefore I am interested in exploring how young women's access to pleasure outside of heterosexual relationships, such as with friends or family, intersects with the risks and pleasure of being a girlfriend and their access to resistant ways of being outside gender normative practices.

Following 13 years of working in a physical health setting with young women who are committed to being a girlfriend I classify this desire and the subsequent sexual and emotional pain (feelings of not being proper women) as a decrease wellbeing which is well worth exploring. I now have a passionate interest in the risks and pleasures of heterosexuality. Each central concept, such as gender, understandings of sex, resistance and wellbeing and how they intersect with specific gender practices and specific corporeal bodies is what I understand by 'embodied knowing' and subjective embodied desire and will be theoretically explored in this thesis. The research conducted in this thesis is with young female participants who have not experienced being positioned outside of being 'proper' woman due to corporeal experiences and anatomical structure and who may provide me with greater insight into pathways to resistance and wellbeing.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The research questions raised here have emerged in and through my experience within the specific context of primary health settings, psychology services and community organizations such as Women's Refuge. Within the first three introductory chapters I will relate my clinical experience and academic writing that frame the two main theoretical disciplines I draw on: realist social constructionism and feminism including both traditional and feminist poststructuralist theories of power. These two theories best fit my ontological and epistemological understanding of who we are as gendered subjects and what circumstances co-constitute our subjective desires and knowledge (Braidotti, 2003; Cromby, 2006; Davies, 1997; Parker, 2005). Chapter 1 will illustrate how I am positioned within health and academic settings and clarify what I mean by sex and gender normative practice utilizing Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. Chapter 1 will also examine social constructionism and my ontological and epistemological position and Chapter 2 will examine both poststructuralist and feminist understandings of subjective desire, resistance and gender normative practices. Chapter 3 will review feminist poststructuralist theory and how ideas about resistance frame my research questions; the silences I have identified within these theories through practice. I will utilize Davies, Dommer, Gannon, Laws, Rocco, & Taguchi (2001) and Davies, Flemmen, Gannon, Laws & Watson (2002) ideas of domination and lines of force to illustrate their potential for resistance. At the completion of chapter 3. I will have outlined the theory and practice behind my research question which is to explore the corporeal, symbolic and material resources that co-constitute young women's subjective desire to be or not be a girlfriend and to explore what enables and restrains young women's subjective desire to resist commonsense heterosexual practices. Chapter 4 will summarize my research interest in specific silences within current theoretical positions and how I understand wellbeing from a critical realist ontological and feminist position and will conclude with my research question. The debates within social constructionism at the turn of the century assisted me to clarify my ontological and epistemological position within feminism (Billig, 1999; Edley, 2001; Gergen, 2002; Nightingale & Cromby, 2002; Parker, 1998; Shotter & Lannamann, 2002; Stam, 2002). This is as a 'critical realist' within a feminist paradigm that sits across liberatory and poststructural feminism.

Throughout this thesis I will be reviewing academic literature, developing my arguments within social construction and feminist poststructuralist theories and collecting, analyzing and interpreting my data through the lens of my clinical work. This interrelationship between theory and practice enables me a reflexive position to understand the effects of theory on practice. In this way, the years of experience I have had working within community and health settings with girls, young women and more mature women can be understood as my primary reflexive lens. This primary lens will constitute how I read the theory necessary for this project and as will become apparent in my writing is never distinct from my thinking about prevention and resistance to gendered power. This orientation to the function and consequence of theory is compatible with Parker's critical discourse analysis methodology which will be discussed in chapter 5.

When I work alongside young women and I wonder how gendered power may be impacting on their wellbeing it is always in the presence of 'others'. To write about young women as a homogenous group is problematic; they merge and separate at different points within different discussions and contexts. I have been working in women's health for 32 years so it is impossible for me to talk about the operation of normative gender practices in young women's lives without accessing how to intervene with the potential risks in order to reduce the impact these practices have on women's gendered, differentiated and specific bodies. For example, when I work with a young woman who is prioritizing a boyfriend's desires and silencing her own preferences, such as spending time with female friends, I question if this is establishing gender normative practices such as the nurturance discourse that in different setting will produce di-eases such as pre-menstrual tension when she is older (Jackson, 1999; Ussher, Perz, & Mooney-Somers, 2008).

One of the most influential earlier feminist poststructuralist work I read prior to formulating my research questions was Hughes' (2002) discussion on how to work across the intersection. For the remainder of the introductory chapters I would like to explore how my academic readings and clinical work intersect to constitute my understandings of sex, gender, and wellbeing, as well as my ontological and epistemological position. It is these understandings that frame my research question through utilizing a critical realist position within social constructionism and feminist poststructuralism.

1.2 Conceptualizing sex and gender

I chose Butler's theory of gender performativity as representative of more discursive forms of feminist poststructuralist theory through my own 'marked' embodied response to this theory. This embodied response was situated within the context of my experiencing women's distress within health practice when they thought they were being viewed as 'performing' as 'opposed' to experiencing distressing symptoms such as pain, exaggerated premenstrual tension. To make sense of meanings of sex and gender and this embodied response I examine Butler's theory of reiterative normative practices and performativity and how they intersect with my clinical experiences. Gender is performed, rather than a 'static' entity of each sex, female-male, and for Butler, 'sex' operates as a gender performance that produces the materialization of 'sex'. Performance does not refer to a consciously 'choosing' subject, but to the discursive production of the subject within social power relations, particularly gender normative practices. In this way, "*those very regimes of discourse power cannot be conflated with voluntarism or individualism, much less with consumerism, and in no way presupposes a choosing subject*" (Butler, 1999, p. 242).

Gender normative practices are clearly visible in medical discourses that produce normal boundaries for experiences of menopause and premenstrual conditions. For example, in the absence of a clear organic aetiology women with whom I work experience their distressing symptoms within a dichotomy of either medical or postmodern disciplines of the cultural construction of female dis-ease. The emergence of cultural constructions of dis-ease has made women visible as cultural performers of their symptoms, effectively silencing the extreme physical and emotional distress they were experiencing (Ussher & Perz, 2006). In the absence of an organic aetiology and in the presence of the ineffectiveness of medical interventions women have become morally responsible for their own deficit, responsible for both producing and performing their symptoms.

In my experience, it was this movement that promotes a decline in help seeking despite continuing to experience distressing symptoms. How then is it possible to understand the materialization of the corporeal sexual body through reiterative normative performances?

Butler (1999) asks *how* the performance of reiterative normative practices produces the materialization of the body:

Is there a way to link the question of the materiality of the body to the performativity of gender? And how does the category of 'sex' figure within such a relationship?" and "sex is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time.... It is not a simple fact or static condition of a body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize 'sex' and achieve this materialization through a forcible reiteration of those norms (Butler, 1999, p. 235).

I interpret this to mean that sex is materialized as a construct through the forcible reiteration of normative practices, whereas 'sex' for me is more the form of the corporeal body and gender is the materialization of specific subjects through the co-constitution of particular bodies within specific cultural settings. My understanding has been forcibly formed through touch and care of corporeal bodies in the relative absence of language as a nurse, including working with specific women's bodies in such practices as catheterization, checking perineums following birth and surgery, and assisting women during birthing and my more recent experiences as a psychologist working in the area of sexual pain. In these instances the corporeal shape of the body as well as normative practices co-constitute my performance as a practitioner and enable me access to power in the form of providing effective health treatment.

By effective health treatment I mean successfully catheterizing a woman through knowing her structure in reference to the different male form. With a male subject I can clearly see the urethral opening and introduce the catheter into the bladder through sight. Whereas with women who require catheterization it is often not possible to identify the urethral opening, through sight, as our anterior vaginal wall is often a continuous smooth surface where the vaginal opening the vaginal walls and the urethral opening merge as one flowing form. With a female subject I frequently need to identify the urethral opening through touch, moving the catheter tip down the anterior of the perineum wall, through the introitus with enough pressure to slip into the first indentation in the anterior vaginal wall which is usually the urethra. This performance requires that I recognise (at least) two distinctive sexed subjects. While recognizing this more corporeal imagery that I access when speaking, hearing or reading about sex I simultaneously recognize that for most young women and men I speak to 'sex' forms images of heterosex. Therefore although I am continually working to shift this symbolic representation of 'sex' my corporeal representations co-exist and the meanings of 'sex' for me constitute tissue type, form, shape and purpose. By purpose I am talking about how the urethra allows the passage of

urine from the bladder to outside the body, and how the vagina walls can expand and allow the passage of the baby from the interior womb to the outside. Purpose in this context is different from gender practices such as specific ways of being sexual within heterosexual relationships that are socially constructed as 'normal'.

My understanding of 'sex' and therefore gender is similar to Lyons and Chamberlain (2006) where 'sex' is understood as a medically given name for the corporeal body, and that the term 'gender' is understood as a practice. Similar to my practical 'knowing' Lyons & Chamberlain (2006) describe gender identity as based on a specific body (form) which influences all aspects of life and in this way gendered bodies emerge from a social site that intersects with our 'corporeal/biological' bodies. Taking up a gender identity requires specific normative practices; if a subject identifies as a female and as heterosexual she may expect or be expected to be interested in specific normative practices such as penetrative vaginal sex.

Butler (1999) and other poststructuralist theories seek to make sense of how culture is continually inscribing the body's surface. However, rather than viewing culture alone as being able to shape the corporeal materiality of the body, and how the surface that forms these inscriptions is in a continual process of change, my recognition of female bodies can be understood as a resistance to cultural practices. Cultural inscriptions may co-constitute particular forms of body, i.e. thin female bodies through the repeated gender performance which are currently spoken of as healthy choices or dieting, vomiting and exercising but these reiterative normative practices also intersect with our anatomical interior body which is simultaneously acted upon and active in how it operates. Continuous rubbing of a penis on unaroused female genital tissue causes redness, swelling and soreness through which the body resists and protects itself through a vaginal muscle tension which eventually prevents a penis entering an unaroused vaginal cavity. Therefore gender practice may both shape and be disrupted by the force of a resistant corporeal body.

Therefore when I talk about 'sex' I access images of the corporeal body, which may include the interior surface of the labia and perineum, the smooth red of the interior of female vulva that is so different from the circumcised male body where the tissue closes over the interior of the penis, and is not so open/accessible to the interior as with the female body. Simultaneously when I talk about 'sex' I also refer to the movement from what is medically considered normal, such as a full length vagina, and what is medically classified as different and which I view as not discrete. For example in practice a vaginal

length is not a discrete category but varies with every women I work with. In this way I work across both positive medical definitions and their ideas of difference which brings the young women to my clinic and my clinical experiences of every women I have worked with being structurally different. Some women have partial absence (presence) of a vagina but in what form differs. 'Sex' in this understanding is a medically constructed term that signifies differences in body forms that have been socially constructed within the English language as male, female, transsexual, transgender, intersex and so on. Socially constructed language constitutes what we know about various body forms such as male, female and transgender and acts as a prescription for which specific gender practices are used by individuals in specific historical times and places.

1.2.1 Gender normative practices, corporeal pleasure and dissonance

Butler (1999) writes that the reiteration of normative practices, such as a biological male parodying a gendered female body, can create the space for resistance to heterosexuality and what it is to be male or female. My experience is that for the young women I work with, if there is no significant material consequence (such as loss of a desired relationship), they can well afford to simultaneously position themselves within normative gender practices discursively while obtaining corporeal pleasure through alternative sexual practices.

For example I work with young women who have been diagnosed with uro-genital variation. Mostly these individuals present and classify themselves as female while recognizing they have a different physical form from other young women. My position of viewing the term 'sex' as more of an anatomical form and a starting point of gendering rather than a normative practice (gender practice) operates within my work in particular ways to produce specific knowledges and practices. Some young women who have partial vaginal absence (presence) can use dilation to expand their vaginal tissues in order to participate in normative practices such as penetrative sex but many do not. Most of these young women are positioned within the heterosexual discourses of wanting to be able to have penetrative sex while also participating within resistant discourses/practices (Fisher, 2005).

These young women may access alternative sexual practices (not necessarily extensively articulated discourses) around sexual pleasure and if they have partners who are not particularly worried by the absence of penetrative sex they frequently do not go on

to physically construct larger vaginas. These women sit at the intersection of competing heterosexual discourses around being positioned as ‘proper’ woman and desiring penetrative sex while also being positioned within specific alternative sexual practices/embodied/corporeal experiences. They continue to position themselves as desiring ‘normal’ vaginas in order to be ‘proper’ girlfriends and fair to their boyfriends, but they never quite get around to using the dilators, while maintaining sexual (material) practices that provide them with sexual pleasure, which I view as a form of wellbeing. There is dissonance between what these young women speak of (one form of reiteration of normative practices) and what they physically do with their corporeal material bodies during sexual practice (a resistant reiteration of sexual practices). My understanding of this dissonance between commonsense heterosexual discourses and modern ideological ideas of fairness to others (male partners) and the presence of resistant ways of being sexual is a necessary addition, within my practice.

Just as intersecting competing discourses can create space for resistance, the intersection and possibly the dissonance between unspoken alternative embodied sexual pleasures and dominant heterosexual discourses may also create space for resistant practices that enhance young women’s wellbeing both inside of and outside of sexual pleasure. By sexual pleasure I am talking about how both the surface and interior of the body change with sexual stimulation, arousal and orgasm (Nevin, 2008). This research will be actively examining young women’s conversations for instances of dissonance between commonsense heterosexual discourses, alternative practices within heterosexual relationships and corporeality including embodied pleasure in order to explore possible sites of resistance.

Throughout writing the previous section I have made an assumption that both normative gender practices including discourses partially co-constitute subjective embodied desire. This is consistent with both Cromby’s theory of embodied subjectivity and Braidotti’s material embodiment (Chapter 3). In order to understand the relationship between gender normative practices, embodiment and subjective desire to be within or outside of heterosexuality I will examine social construction theories of how ontology and epistemology that incorporate a sense of meaning more than discursive knowing co-constitute embodied knowing and embodied subjective desire. This relationship will be clarified by examining the debate between more discursive explanations of embodiment and Cromby’s (2006) and Parker’s (1999) ideas of critical realism.

1.3 Social constructionism: The desiring subject as co-constituted through discursive and non-discursive sites

Introduction

Social constructionism is built on the epistemological assumptions that knowledge is continually being constituted as we speak and that no two speaking acts will produce an exact replication of previous knowledge (Shotter, 1993; Stam, 2001). Within this academic tradition there are many theoretical positions on how knowledge is produced within specific social contexts through social power relations and whether knowledge is produced through either discursive resources alone (relativist position) or both discursive and non-discursive resources (critical realist position). Within this section I utilize Edley's (2001) idea of epistemic knowing and Cromby's (2004) ideas of referentiality and embodied knowing to clarify what I mean by a 'critical realist' position and what embodied knowing and subjective desire refer to in this research. Edley's (2001) theorizing and rationale for his own realist position provided the space for me to recognize how differently I co-constituted knowledge within my women's health practice. In contrast to his theorizing I was able to trace how I work with women at intersecting corporeal, material and symbolic sites. During my reading within the more relativist understanding of social constructionism such as Potters and Edwards' (1999) debate with Parker (1999), I kept accessing memories of my work assisting women with breastfeeding. For example with breastfeeding, you 'know' a baby is attached effectively more through a physical bodily sensation than a verbal description of what is symbolically known as milk let-down. As a nurse I needed a verbal description to assist a woman who is having difficulty getting her baby to attach to the nipple in a way that promotes milk let-down and release. This requires the baby's mouth to cover the aureole more than the nipple in order for the milk ducts to be pressurised by the baby's mouth and release breast milk. When assisting a woman to breastfeed I never language the corporeal sensation of attachment but talk about whether the woman can sense the difference between a baby being attached well or not. They usually answer in the affirmative, but do not describe the sense or experience; they keep this form of embodied knowing for the next feed, take it on to the next baby, and probably on until they discontinue breast feeding. I understand this very specific form of embodied knowing is known largely outside of articulation. I could have encouraged women to language the embodied component of this form of knowing, but to what purpose, especially since women's embodied response to different situations is so varied

and unique, so what would be the purpose of trying to identify a particular sense for one particular woman (Cromby, 2004; 2006)?

This clinical story illustrates Cromby's (2004) ideas that the time has come for researchers to identify their own embodied knowing and it was the above form of embodied knowing that has enabled me to identify the specifics of my critical realist position. For example, the theories I have chosen to assist in formulating my research question in the area of young women's subjective desire all encompass the corporeal body in the co-constitution of knowledge. Here my embodied knowing intersects with my location in specific moral ideologies as outlined earlier. In this situation being specific is about how my past work with women's corporeal bodies partially constitutes my epistemology position without the intention of silencing either the material or symbolic aspects of knowing. For example, women who I helped to breastfeed may have had greater difficulty with breast feeding if I was not in that location as a nurse and did not provide verbal information that enabled them to identify a difference in physical sensation that then partially co-constitutes their ongoing knowledge about breastfeeding.

Parker (1999) argues that all academic theory intersects and functions to produce specific consequences. This is illustrated within the area of sexual therapy where for many years women who have presented with vaginismus have been understood within psychiatric and psychology models of individual deficit rather than within gendered power relations (Fisher, 2005). Without a 'realist' approach to research we silence the 'real' material outcomes within academic theory. For example, I understand sexual pain as a real material outcome of gendered power relationships operating through the psychiatric and psychology disciplines as well as a corporeal response of the body to penetrative sex in the absence of female sexual desire and physiological arousal.

Parker also writes that because theory impacts on real lives all research should have a clear moral position. I am conducting this research with a clear moral purpose that is both situated within my liberatory practice and wanting better outcomes for the young women I work with, as well as my having a more legitimate voice within feminist academia. This moral endeavour is congruent with my cultural, political location and how I negotiate my care of another as well as care for self. I argue that without further theorizing in areas such as breast-feeding and working with women with sexual pain we restrain our practice of resisting gender power relations. Academic theory does partially co-constitute what is 'known' and available to young women in the community and we do

need to be facilitating resistant ideas that they can utilize to resist heterosexual gender practices that are making them unwell (Parker, 1999). For these reasons I will utilize Nightingale and Cromby's (2002) critical realist theory of referentiality and Cromby's theory of embodied knowing to explore the relationship between our non-discursive experiences (resources) and how these resources intersect with normative gender practices such as being a girlfriend and subjective desire. But how do I talk about non-discursive resources, such as corporeality and materiality in terms of co-constituting the desiring subject without creating a discursive-non-discursive binary? The following sections will address how I position myself as a critical realist within an ontological and epistemological understanding that the co-constitution of knowledge occurs between and within subjects' discursive and non-discursive experiences.

1.3.1 Social constructionism and how knowledge is constructed between subjects

Gergen writes that knowledge can never be separate from the knower; knowledge is constituted between people within conversations within specific cultural sites (Gergen, 1973; 1985; 2002). Gergen argues that if psychologists continue to take the modern philosophy's epistemological stance of the knower (expert) being independent of what is known, cultures will be restrained from changes and rely on explanations of individual deficits for distress and conflict rather than advocating social justice. This research will be conducted within conversations with young women where I will be aware of being positioned as an enquirer and where knowledge will be produced within conversations between an older woman and young women; constituted in social relations

What we know (epistemology) and who we are (ontology) are never fixed but unstable and always being negotiated through our interaction within specific contexts between people. This ontological and epistemological position holds that subjects are largely constituted on a moment to moment basis between subjects. My clinical experience also informs me that what we know is also constituted through our own subjective experience of difference within our 'feeling' states, our corporeal body, and the material resources within our specific contexts as well as our access to cumulative unstable experiences of knowing.

Edley (2001) produced a clear distinction between realist and relativist positions within the social psychological debate on ontology and epistemology. He defines his position as 'ontologically mute', which I understand as a relativist position where

knowledge and therefore power operates through discursive resources. Edley (2001) explains that the division between realism and relativism is a matter of misinterpretation, and that the critics are mistaken when they assume that social constructionists state that 'there is nothing outside of the text'. He believed these critics were making an ontological statement, when it was intended to be an epistemological pronouncement. As talking entities we do not know what exists outside of the texts. Some social constructionists do not deny the existence of an extra-discursive realm. While there are arguments within social constructionism that exclude the possibility of an extra-discursive, Edley argues this is something realist put upon them. He argues that what is more important to acknowledge is how social constructionist theory has helped us understand that there are no clear lines between words and the world or between the material and the symbolic. Edley demonstrated how the material and the symbolic are inextricably bound in the notion that an object has a material presence and also a symbolic meaning in terms of power, status and preference.

Thus, Edley's views on who we are and what we know can only be identified through how we know this, a movement away from an ontological/epistemic division. Ontology, who we are, is more than text, and may be largely unknown. He recommended that we do not take the ontological approach - we speak we are - but rather we know because we speak. According to Edley, what we are exists beyond discursive resources, but what we know comes from language (epistemic). Edley, along with other strong social constructionists argue how we are constituted as desiring subjects at any one time is through discursive resources (Edley, 2001; Potter, Edwards & Ashmore, 1999; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). Who we are is a cumulative result of multiple inter-related, contradictory discourses and it is the space that these contradictory discourses create that allows for resistance, subjectivity and embodiment. Although we are able to experience ourselves as having free choice and a stable identity, our choices are always constrained or enabled by the discursive resources available and our positions within them. My interpretation of the anti-realist and realist debate centres on the idea of whether the existence of extra-discursive resources is able to be known through non-discursive means.

As I can never imagine myself or the women I work with being complete, fixed, and actualized into a singular stable form of being a subject, I am not so concerned about a position of being ontologically mute. Rather my epistemological position encompasses more than language/text. For the purposes of this research I do need the participants to

identify what is previously unarticulated but known more through their corporeal, material bodies. This does not mean that outside of my research context I do not work with 'knowledge' that sits outside of text. What is known through reference to the body or an internal culturally articulated 'feeling' state is what I refer to as embodied knowing and does not necessarily silence language knowing. For this research project, I view 'knowing' and how knowing what we want/desire as women is co-constituted, as a central component of power.

1.3.2 Cromby's ideas of embodied knowing and preferentiality

Nightingale and Cromby (2002) also question strong social constructionists' assumptions that there is nothing outside of the text:

strong constructionists acknowledge that the material existence of phenomena independently of language, then, unless materiality were wholly uniform (in which case the markings we call text would be imperceptible), they must have differential properties. And if objects have different properties, it is untenable that the language we use to socially construct our world and activity does not - on occasion, and however, partially, tangentially or implicitly-reference these differences (2002, p. 703).

These forms of embodied knowing through referentiality (although never the same for any two women) may produce a form of knowing that can assist them to identify what fits comfortably with their wellbeing and what does not. I understand that young women have ways of experiencing their corporeal bodies both within and outside of normative gender practices. This research will explore these and I will be orientated to explore these simultaneously stable and unstable subjective experiences. Therefore I need to better articulate the differences within young women's embodied responses to other normative gender practices within intimate relationships.

Cromby (2004) argues that if we silence this very physical embodied aspect of the corporeal body we run the risk of taking on the notion of the autonomous human actor freely and rationally choosing between discourse and subject position. It is the embodied subjectivity that provides the motivation for resistance and the capacity for agency to access particular subject positions.

Cromby writes that the risk of acknowledging the embodied is the potential for slipping back into the biological imperatives. I would argue that at entry level, amongst health workers, the certainty of biological imperatives and experimental data as 'facts' that can be generalized across time and place is long gone. At present the rapid change and turnover of knowledges produced through biomedical technology has us all aware of the next wave of information that can assist health care provider guidelines (Shildrick, 2006). Socially derived Cartesian concepts may form the basis of experimental rules but their ideas of universal certainties are no longer part of how health workers interpret health research. Given how rapidly knowledge is changing within both formally positivist and postmodern paradigms and how we are constantly drawing from both at practice level, it is probably time to refocus on the 'body' and explore the possibilities of 'embodied knowing' for concepts of power.

Cromby's (2004) writing in this area is extremely timely. He states:

[d]own playing the embodied materiality of human existence makes constructionism unconvincing, implying that our worlds, or at least all that is humanly important in them, consists of nothing other than discourse and its effects...It requires an untenable 'uniform plasticity' of the body, where all aspects of all bodies are assumed to be equally amenable to discursive construction. Moreover, emphasizing the discursive-social at the expense of the embodied-material conceals, rather than addresses, Cartesian dualism (p. 799).

I would add that this form of 'uniform plasticity' conceals how gender normative practices are damaging women in multiple ways that are changing their physical bodies irreversibly (Mellner & Kranz & Lundberg, 2005). Social constructionism, from an 'ontologically mute' position enables the silencing of female bodily limits which over time produce changes to our physiological selves and which I experience, in practice, as increasing the likelihood of life threatening conditions.

Bodies of young women are not infinitely plastic (Cromby, 2004). Individual bodies are co-constituted through both our cultural and our individual physiological being and have preferences that cannot be fully explained through the cultural/language power triad. The body adds its constitutive force to how young women subjectively desire to become within and outside of heterosexuality and this constitutive force may also be a site for agency and resistance. The body is both plastic and not plastic in that it changes with

the social context within certain historical epics but at other times is not completely plastic, such as the presence of heterosexual pain in the presence of a subjective 'desire' for great, spontaneous pleasurable intercourse.

As illustrated by Cromby (see quote above) ignoring subjectivity outside of discursive resources within constructionist psychology reifies 'the social', and takes away what is recognizably human :*"It is as though talking about an orgasm were equivalent to experiencing one, reading about drug experiences the same as having them"* (Cromby, 2004, p.799). Experience is more than just talking and writing about specific embodied events and we should not ignore these forms of 'embodied subjectivity', in an attempt not to infer a "troublesome inner" (Cromby, 2004, p.800). Further, Cromby (2004) writes that if you move away from "an exclusively relativist endeavour", 'critical realist social constructionism' is more than capable of addressing and exploring any synthesis of constructionism and neuroscience (p. 801). By incorporating ideas drawn from Damasio (1994; 1999) into his theory of embodied knowing, Cromby enables me to talk of molecules and molecular clusters such as neurotransmitters and hormones and their powers to regulate, mediate and enable activities such as sleep and cognitive function (but also their plasticity and ability to be modified through the context they are exposed to).

One of the silences that I have noticed in both the academic literature and my practice is this frequently unspoken knowledge of the potential of a larger male person to hurt a smaller female person. This knowledge while present within young women's response to desiring to saying 'no' but being restrained, when traced within conversations with me, is often known about at a more embodied than discursive physiological location. For example young women may talk about having a tight gut or a slightly raised pulse rate. Damasio's (1999) ideas about how we can 'know' risk at a more or less non-discursive site comes from examining the effects of specific brain injury on the pre-cortex and frontal lobes. Damasio writes that our old brain structures may recognize 'risk' at a physiological neuroendocrine site, namely fear and flight response, but that this form of functioning also intersects with our newer evolutionary cultural brain (cerebral frontal cortex) to produce certain outcomes (Cromby, 2004). Damasio is very clear that 'risk' may incorporate both fear of immediate physical harm, such as a lion eating us, and culturally constructed 'risk' that may produce less immediate but never the less 'real' material consequences such as loss of our reputation and ability to earn enough money to live on. We may know something at a non-discursive level but not have had access to articulating this 'knowing'.

In my experience this positions many young women to know that they are worried and reluctant in specific situations to state a preference, or to say 'no', and they experience a sensation of 'dread' at a corporeal site, in the absence of discourses around the commonality of heterosexual violence. Therefore I intend to explore the intersection and possible dissonance between the corporeal body and commonsense heterosexual discourses within this project if the spaces for this form of conversation emerge.

Social constructionist theory from a critical realist position has allowed me to identify what discursive and extra-discursive resources I bring to these conversations. When I talk about extra-discursive resources I am referring to 'embodied knowing'. For example, when I began this project I understood my own 'embodied knowing' as that knowledge such as breast feeding that enabled me, as a nurse, specific reiterative normative practices that were not solely dependent on articulation. I 'knew' without the necessity of words. I also use the word embodied when talking about young women's response to or sense of specific gender practices that are similar to my idea of 'embodied knowing'. I often access the previously non-articulated embodied response to specific gender practices when talking to young women in physical settings by asking about what they may 'sense' and will probably use this phrase within the research process for similar purposes. In this context 'sense' does not refer to biological intuition but cumulative and unstable previously unspoken 'knowledge' gained through being in the world in specific ways in a specific historical 'era'. In a way embodied is like 'knowing' more through the body than language, whereas I am using the terms embodiment and subjective embodiment to refer to a subject's 'being' at any one moment in time as a consequence of the intersection of the physical, symbolic and material resources in our everyday lives (Braidotti, 2003; Cromby, 2004) How does this position me to answer the opening question of this section namely how do we speak of non-discursive resources that co-constitute knowledge: For me the answer is to better understand and articulate ideas of embodied knowing as the fluid process of having access to ways of being a woman in specific contexts through the intersection of language, corporeal and material sites. Embodied knowing does not exclude symbolic knowing but frequently intersects with what we 'know' and practice within our gendered world and can be known outside of text.

When asked, many young women can identify when they first started to dislike being touched sexually and can start to articulate what it is about certain touches that they do not like. They can also begin to articulate their initial embodied response when they

have to think about themselves and the pain they experience. The embodied responses vary within different contexts within the relationship, but sexual touch or even the possibility of sexual touch initiates "heavy sensation, in my gut, around my heart". Some young women use their hands and physical bodies to describe to me their embodied response to touch that could lead to penetrative sex. These embodied, less articulated responses are associated with subject positions of being a problem, unfair, abnormal, a 'head' case because they are unable to have or indeed dread penetrative sex. In this context these young women know 'desire' through their embodied sense of loss and real difference, before and after the pain. What these women desire is to keep their boyfriend, to be able to have great lusty spontaneous sex again as well as experiencing a sense of loss i.e. they miss being able to have an orgasm with penetrative sex. This process of identifying a woman's embodied and language knowing presents the spaces and gaps necessary to access resistant discourses. For example, 'knowledge' of sexual pleasure is transformed from dominant symbolic ideas such as penetrative sex is 'proper sex' through tracing embodied, co-corporeal pleasure and accessing resistant co-constituted subjective desire for pleasurable sexuality through both touch as well as a subjective desire for penetrative pleasure in the absence of pain.

Therefore anti-realists' arguments for epistemic knowing do not translate into effective practice working with young women within the physical health settings because they ignore large parts of women's daily doing. Through privileging language knowing over more embodied knowing another binary is created that silences aspects of women's knowing and hence power.

For this research, during both the research conversations and theoretical analysis, I may need access to ways of talking about our physiological bodies and the way our neuroendocrine system intersects with our cultural and material locations. Ussher's (1997; 2008) theory speaks of sitting across the body-discursive divide but Damasio's theory on the intersection of our cellular and cultural body enables a return to talking about 'feelings' as well as corporeality. Damasio and the cellular body co-constitutes and is constituted through subjective desire

For me, part of 'knowing' and negotiating resistant ways of being with young women in health settings requires accessing discourses of specific individual bodies and their experiences and an understanding of unstable physiological processes that partially co-constitute embodied knowing. Within practice I trace the intersection between

subjective physiological experiences, such as an increased heart rate and symbolically constructed ‘feelings’ such as dread and fear within specific gendered locations. The function of working within and across binary constructions of the body and the mind is that it enables young women greater understanding about how gendered social power operates. For example, women driving to the hospital for an appointment to ‘cure’ their sexual pain report having a heavy sense of dread, feeling awful, which I then trace to their location of not being ‘proper’ women. This means that within the first session we can be negotiating the many possibilities for being a woman that enables resistant alternative positions and feelings of relief such as a heavy weight being lifted off their shoulders. This form of movement between and within binary understandings enables each subjective embodied moment to be analysed in a way that assists women make sense of their specific experiences but has no need to be stable. However, as Damasio (1999) emphasized, our ‘feelings’ are co-constituted through the intersection of our neurological cellular body within symbolically saturated cultural contexts while the body simultaneously attempts to maintain homeostasis. This requires a way for me to speak of neuroendocrine functioning such as that involving reproductive and sexual hormones operating within an unstable cellular body and within specific gendered cultural contexts. For example, in my understanding the contraceptive pill does shift hormonal functioning, prevents pregnancy and (for some) changes experiences or frequency of sexual desire. Cromby’s (2004) theory of embodied knowing which incorporates Damasio’s ideas of cellular functioning enables me to speak across this cellular-cultural divide.

Within this form of critical realism I see the intersection between the discursive and the physical body and its co-constitution as always present and as never stable or complete. For example, I would find it very hard to talk about a pregnant woman’s neuroendocrine system ever existing separately from that of her foetus. How do the hormones that accompany a woman’s subjective experiences within a gendered world such as fear, pleasure or pain impact on the foetus’s neuroendocrine system? How does this intersection constitute the newborn baby as ‘a subject’ and her responses within the world? How would future experiences intersect with that baby’s constitution as a subject?

I assume that my knowing is partially constituted through specific situations which access past experiences/knowing in similar settings and is therefore experienced and assimilated rapidly and partially responded to prior to articulation. I have always acted on my own embodied responses and assumed that they have emerged from the social

requirements of the present situation which access knowledge from previous lived experiences in order to guide me to act in the here and now. I have also assumed that both my embodied and language knowing at any one time can never be exactly replicated but also act in a cumulative manner in the form of embodied knowledge from other lived experiences. An example is how, as a nurse, I learnt to respond rapidly to post-operative haemorrhaging. At one level I learnt the classic text book signs for potential haemorrhaging, at another non-discursive level my 'gut' responded to certain very soft cues prior to the classic haemorrhaging clues. A post operative haemorrhage will give a nurse a small 'scare': our neuroendocrine system responds with increased alertness, raised pulse and so on that enables us to act more urgently. I was not born with this form of embodied knowledge about haemorrhaging, but I constructed this within a particular time and place through the intersection of both language and embodied knowing, where neither is able to be completely separate from the other.

In conclusion, embodied knowing can exist outside of the 'text'. Furthermore not only does embodied knowing exist outside of the text, what we know as 'real' at any one moment is enabled through a process of differential referentiality in specific contexts. What is 'real' at this moment does not have to be real forever. What I want to know is what is 'real' in this time and place for young women and their desire to be or not be girlfriends. Utilizing this idea of referentiality in terms of the discursive-corporeal divide, where embodied knowing partially co-constitutes subjective desire is only part of how power operates and how subjective desire is constituted. What I also need to understand is how discursive resources partially co-constitute desire.

Chapter 2

Feminism and poststructuralism

Introduction

As discussed in the preface prior to working in Women's Refuge I understood the operation of gendered power from my childhood and nursing locations. While this gender understanding was utilized within my clinical and academic contexts it was also largely implicit and for much of the time intentionally silent. Social psychology provided me with an understanding of a subject acting reasonably for specific social locations (Tajfel, 1986; Turner, 1984). Friere's (1979) liberatory pedagogy provided me with a framework of how to work alongside of women and to not occupy an 'expert' position as it would restrain rather than enable women's refuge residents to free themselves from oppressive male regimes enforced through violence. Bonnie Mann's (1987) radical feminist theory of gender oppression provided a means for me to incorporate gender into my understanding about how traditional individual psychological theory functioned to support phallogocentric forms of social power. However, it wasn't able to explain women's embodied subjective desire for love and more embodied feelings of responsibility for assisting their violent partners to change. To work effectively within these tensions between love, hate of violence and women's sense of responsibility for the men who hurt them, I needed to work more effectively with women to legitimize their desire for intimacy as well as enabling resistance to taking responsibility and returning to violent partners. This is a similar process to legitimizing young women's desire for pleasure while identifying the risks of being a girlfriend embedded in commonsense gender practices. These experiences have enabled me to understand resistance as a subjective desire not to lose the corporeal pleasure and legitimacy of heterosexual relationships. This desire is present alongside women's contradictory desire not to experience the risks of heterosexuality such as violence and pain. My health and refuge work has illustrated that rarely does heterosexual risk operate in the absence of pleasure and heterosexual legitimacy. Therefore prior to examining how foundation poststructuralist theories constitute resistance, I examine the more recent feminist poststructuralist research that has enabled my practice in a physical health setting (Lather, 1991; Weedon, 1991; Weiler, 1991).

2.1 The risk and pleasure of heterosexuality

Feminist poststructuralist research suggests that the status of girlfriend is one of the few sites that allow young women pleasure in the form of high status within their own peer group as well as access to parties and transport (Warr, 2001). Stewart (1999) examines how young women's participation in unprotected penetrative sex is supported and surrounded by material outcome. She found that young women who go against their peer group's ideas of 'love' by having protected intercourse lose peer group status and further that the male peer groups set the criteria for how to be a 'girlfriend' and recruited high status girls to ensure their sexual preferences were met by their girlfriends. For Stewart's participants, losing peer group status and their reputation as a 'girlfriend' involved the loss of female friendship benefits, such as invitations to parties, and the subsequent access to pleasure and fun.

This is similar to Schippers (2007) research in the area of female hierarchies and femininities that support heterosexuality and male preferences through the operation of hegemonic femininity supporting heterosexual desire as normal and maintaining male domination and female submission. In this situation hegemonic refers to culturally dominant ways of being that support the operation of patriarchal power in specific ways within both female friendships and heterosexual relationships (Schippers, 2007). Within female friendship groups more dominant young women will enforce specific gender practices that fit with their specific culture's hegemonic practices of masculinity (Schippers, 2007). Dominant refers to young women who have higher status positions within their friendship groups and who are able to enforce negative consequences for peers who resist their female group's preferred ways of being female. For example Jackson's (1999) research discusses how romantic love discourses support male privilege including the use of violence in heterosexual relationships. Jackson identified a nurturance discourse where young women prioritized young men's desires before their own. In this way a symbolic resource such as a romantic love intersects with social power within friendship groups and has women desiring to be sexually active in specific ways that function to support male dominance, such as female orientation to male needs rather than orientation to accessing pleasure elsewhere.

I question whether part of what co-constitutes young women's desire for pleasure, which they can easily access within normative gender practices of early romantic love relationships, is about not having their mother's burdened lifestyles. Young women may

experience their mother's lives as not being pleasurable due to over-work in paid and non-paid work. I also wonder whether they experience their mothers as having very little legitimacy or access to fun and pleasure. Clinical practice illustrates that some young women do understand their mother's lives as being eclipsed by other people's needs and supports the idea that symbolic resources intersect with material resources and the reality of domestic and paid female labour. If this idea of young women desiring pleasure and fun in relationships is pertinent to our present western cultures then it may produce an interesting contradiction where young women may be both orientated to others' needs (boyfriends) but rejecting of their mother's life-style which they view as being too focused on other people's needs and desires. Is the induction to care for others within a wider social context as mature women partially constituted through their care for a boyfriend in early romantic relationships? This idea that women are more focused on relationships and others' needs, rather than their own, may be played out differently across different contexts. Warr's (2001) work supports earlier feminist poststructuralist literature that identified young women occupying simultaneous, contradictory subject positions that incorporate both pleasure and pain (Moore & Rosenthal, 1998; Sobo, 1998; Walkerdine, 1990). Warr (2001) suggests that rather than disrupting young women's desire for intimate relationships, the feminist research agenda should be to sabotage what an intimate relationship is; a movement away from the individual responsibility toward challenging social power. This resonates with my experiences through Women's Refuge where it was demonstrated that to sabotage what is currently understood as an intimate relationship assist women leave a violent relationship without losing the possibility of safe equitable heterosexual intimacy in the future (Fisher, 1991). Young and mature women I talk to who are in relationships that provide pleasure and safety, appear to experience wellbeing.

However, my clinical experience within health settings informs me that young women who have access to being passionately focused on an 'object' outside of heterosexuality appear to have more agency in leaving or changing intimate relationships that are over-burdening them with gender practices which are constraining their wellbeing. As a health worker my role is to assist young women identify and talk about their experiences of wellbeing in their heterosexual relationships as well as what they do not like and how this affects their wellbeing. Through this experience I understand that a sense of pleasure increases young women's experiences of wellbeing.

Can we, without inferring essentialist ideas, assume that women prefer and may seek pleasure in their lives and that this may have a positive impact on their sense of wellbeing, yet at the same time many of the current avenues for female fun are also highly risky (Lyons & Cromby, 2010)? Much of past feminist research has ignored the more embodied aspects of fun and pleasure and this forms part of the central enquiry for this thesis. Anecdotal clinical stories indicate that young women, if asked, do have access to discourses around pleasure and fun, but I am not so sure about their intersecting discourses of 'risk' in terms of wellbeing. What do young women experience as pleasurable within and outside of heterosexuality and what are the material and physical implications of this pleasure?

Positivist psychological and adolescent developmental literature appears to be saturated with 'risk' and 'resilience' studies which rely upon very narrow definitions of health embedded in discourses around healthy or non healthy developmental and individual family factors (Ferguson, 1997; Furman, 1998). Within mainstream educational curriculums there is very little discussion or teaching young women about sexual wellbeing and pleasure outside of the risk of STDs and the consequences of overt sexual assault (Ministry of Education, 2001; 2002).

The majority of past health research with young women has focused on aspects of 'risk' to young women from male partner violence and the relationship between teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases including cervical cancer (Collins, 2002; James, 2000). Feminist and postmodern research has explore how young women may not being able to say 'no' to unprotected penetrative sex because of the force of male entitlement and desire (Kitzinger, 1999). Other feminist research has explored the severe impact of physical (including sexual) violence on both young women's psyche and their physical bodies (Elvridge, 1997; Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; Stark & Flitcraft, 1996).

Feminist poststructuralist research questions social power relationships, such as how young women's corporeal bodies are constituted through discursive resources, and how women are positioned to participate in gender practices. For example, Gavey (1992) discusses how young women may experience penetrative vaginal sex in the absence of female desire and how this was enabled through the technologies of heterosex. However, Gavey was silent about the effects this form of unwanted sexual activity has on women's physical bodies. Jackson's (2005) analysis of agony aunt columns in young women's magazines suggested that discourses of heterosexual monogamy and romantic love work to

silence resistant narratives around sexual desire and pleasure. Allen (2002; 2003) has explored New Zealand young women's experiences of vaginal penetrative sex and challenges the assumption that young women in heterosexual relationships have difficulty achieving pleasure within commonsense heterosexual practices and from intercourse itself. Allen's (2002) research demonstrated that young women do have resistant discourses around alternative ways to be sexual but that they will often choose to go with a partner's preference for penetrative sex. Allen's research begins to talk about how young women are articulating more embodied aspects of sexuality that focus on pleasure. While this research provides some understanding of young women's experiences of subjective desire within the boundaries of sexual difference and preference, it is noticeable that discourses of romantic love rather than corporeal ideas of sexual pleasure were dominant. As a physical health worker I have found that discourses about desire that incorporate metaphors of romantic love in order to articulate sexual pleasure tend to silence discourses that incorporate the more corporeal aspects of sexual desire, arousal and pleasure (Fine & Addellston, 1996; Fisher, 2005; Tolman, 2005). To date school curricula has silenced female physiological sexual arousal and pleasure and young women have had more access to symbolic resources through romantic discourses to talk about pleasure. This in turn silences young women having access to discourses that enable them to make sense of experiences such as in the absence of physical sexual arousal, repeated penetrative sex will irritate the tissue around the introitus and the tissue within the vagina, and persistent irritation will lead to increased muscle tension (resting potential) and increased pain perception (Fisher, 2005). Without a discourse around the corporeal aspects of their bodies, young women are left with romantic love imagery to make sense of their embodied experiences of sexual pleasure and medical discourses of disease and/or personal psychopathology to explain sexual pain (Fisher, 2005).

Allen's (2002) research demonstrates that young women do have access to alternative ways of desiring and being sexual and do have the capacity for agency. But she found that young women, instead of accessing these alternative ways of experiencing sexual pleasure, may choose to gain pleasure from taking care of their boyfriends and participate in their sexual preference for penetrative sex. Allen talks about how this 'choice' of providing pleasure for a valued boyfriend is experienced as agency by young women. Allen's research makes sense in that if young women can achieve both corporeal and symbolic pleasure through both penetrative sex and taking care of their boyfriend's

preferences they may not necessarily need to act upon alternative sexual knowledge. Allen's findings make less sense where young women's subjective desire to pleasure a boyfriend produces a decrease in wellbeing. What is it about being a girlfriend that is more important than your one's sexual pleasure within our New Zealand context, and how does that matter to experiences of wellbeing?

Through my clinical practice, I understand that ideas about sexual difference and the need for negotiation within heterosexual relationships in the areas of sexual desire and pleasure are largely silent in many young women's heterosexual relationships. When I trace and identify alternative ways of experiencing sexual pleasure with young women, namely touch, these young women access the possibility that there are differences in sexual pleasure. In this way, young women might come to understand that if their preferences are met their boyfriends do not necessarily experience the same degree of pleasure as they do with penetrative sex. There are 'real' corporeal differences and sometimes meeting one partner's preferences disadvantages the other partner. These experiences suggest we not only need a theory of how pleasure is constituted discursively but also corporeally to enable an ethical way that sexual partners can negotiate ways of being that do not exclusively decrease one partner's wellbeing. How might we open spaces of resistance and desire that enable young women to subjectively desire to be a girlfriend in ways that increases their wellbeing?

2.2 Resistance: praxis and subjective desire within a discursive and liberatory framework

Weedon's (1991) over-view (interpretation) of feminist poststructuralism credits structuralism and Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of 'the sign' as the platform from which poststructuralism emerged. The 'sign' (sound or written image) is fundamental to all poststructuralist theory but this theory does not view the 'sign' and 'signifier' (meaning) as fixed pre-givens of the underlying structure of language. In this way, 'signs' and their 'signifiers' are not only arbitrary but also unstable, fluid and constantly being re-constituted within specific contexts. For example, the named category 'woman' signifies different meanings across time and place. This concept is particularly pertinent for me when talking to young women about the various meanings (symbolic/metaphoric) given to the sign 'girlfriend' and how they intersect with the specific material and embodied desires of particular young women. For example, I may be talking about being 'a girlfriend' as one possible way of being a young woman, where the young woman I am in conversation

with might assume that to be a young woman is to be a girlfriend. For these young women, within their talk with me, there appears very little resistant space between being a woman and being a girlfriend and that for them they are one and the same subject. My understanding of feminist poststructuralist understandings of subjectivity while formulating this project is that I was able to articulate the tension and distress I was sensing within my conversations with young women. When talking to these young women who are experiencing sexual pain, I sensed that not to be a girlfriend is not to be and is therefore not to be visible. Here not to be visible decreases wellbeing and increases embodied distress. Therefore this project draws on a feminist poststructuralist framework, where knowledge is understood as constituted through “language, subjectivity, and social processes” (Weedon, 1991, p. 41) with the aim of identifying the spaces available within our discursive resources for ways of being that may enhance young women’s wellbeing. A research goal is to examine young women’s experiences of being outside of heterosexual visibility.

Feminist poststructural understandings of the relationship between power/language/knowledge have emerged partially from Foucault’s theory of power and include the following key ideas: Firstly, discourse is a site where the processes of social knowledge and practices and individual subjectivity are constituted (Weedon, 1991). Secondly, the rejection of the humanist idea that subjectivity is innate, but produced through multiple discursive practices. There are no fixed meanings, or a central ‘self’ but ‘our selves’ are constantly changing within a social context which produces competing discourses and subsequent subjectivities. Thirdly, differing social contexts and different material practices produce differing forms of knowledge/language (as well as embodied experiences such as pleasure, pain) and create unstable competing subjectivities and allow the space for resistance. Fourthly, these competing subjectivities are associated with competing material social practices: for example my position as clinical psychologist positions me with more legitimacy than a patient within a medical setting. One position holds more legitimacy than the other, and allows more access to authority, and more compliance from others, than the other. And finally, discourse is a site of social power where legitimacy is contested and where different subject positions and the associated material conditions that constitute individuals as embodied subjects with specific forms of consciousness, motivation and desires are available (Weedon, 1991).

Contradictions within the same discursive moment that occurs in clinical relationships is an example of a particular relationship between power/language/knowledge within a clinical setting. For example young women may inform me that a huge weight has been lifted off their shoulders through our conversation, but at the same time feel wary of any talk around what are the ‘benefits’ and ‘costs’ of being a girlfriend. In these conversations I have a sense I am treading/negotiating a fine line, both resisting (identifying alternative spaces) and agreeing with young women around the social pleasure of having a heterosexual relationship. I understand this as wariness to questioning the dominance of normative gender discourse. In this sense, my experience of talking to young women about desiring or not desiring being a girlfriend is best described, metaphorically, as walking a tight rope: it takes very little movement on my part, of both resisting and normalizing the good ‘commonsense’ of being a ‘girlfriend’, for me to fall off. An effect of falling can position me as illegitimate; not understanding the obvious (desiring to be in a heterosexual relationship), and has the potential to silence spaces outside dominant discourse of being a girlfriend.

Lather (1991) also emphasises how important the critical intellectual’s role has been in moving from being interested in the end product ‘knowledge’ towards supporting a self-reflexive process that increases awareness of how cultural practices produce knowledge that has the potential to oppress women, toward a liberatory pedagogy (Friere, 1979); a shift in power that has the potential to “*take away the barriers that prevent people from speaking for themselves*” (Lather, 1991; p. ix). In this sense, reflexivity is a process that can “*enable us to look closely at our own practice in terms of how we contribute to dominance in spite of our liberatory intentions*” (Lather, 1991, p. ix) in the production of knowledge.

I take up a liberatory approach to this work to reflect my desire for social transformation for young women’s knowledge and gender practices. Weiler (1991) argues that the process of material oppression is always changing; that most women have good sense and act on it; that women have subjective experiences of being both subjects and agents; and women’s consciousness (critical awareness) of the processes of oppression provides them with a sense of injustice and ‘deservedness’ of a better life.

Weiler (1991) is able to articulate the tension between the collective action toward the liberation of women and the shifting forms of oppression between and within each subject. Rather than promoting one definitive feminist theory and praxis, ‘a correct way of

doing feminism on the ground floor', it places the onus on researchers and health workers to make sense of the specificity of women's experience in order to understand what particular circumstances have the potential to restrain and enable an individual woman's capacity to resist commonsense practices. Understanding points of struggle for Weiler (1991) is

if all people's identities are recognized in their full historical and social complexity as subject positions that are in process, based on knowledges that are partial and that reflect deep and conflicting differences (p. 470)

Feminist poststructuralist understandings of the shifting nature of knowledge and power allow me to explore the hegemonic discourses within this research that enable commonsense practices, identifying the contradictions and examining them for the potential for resistance. I will explicitly examine the spaces (contradictions) within young women's heterosexual discourses that have the potential to enable resistance to commonsense gender practices. I will also explore the commonsense discourses around resistance which in my cultural contexts do produce reasonably well known critical ideas about our gendered world. These resistant commonsense discourses also frequently intersect with commonsense western liberal ideas of the subject, such as a woman speaking about her 'individual' right to pleasure that is in conflict with her male partner's specific heterosexual rights and needs.

Lather (1991) has discussed resistance in terms of her experiences with students within a women's studies curriculum and their response to feminist theory, where resistance is talked about in terms of the discomfort experienced by students in relation to alternative ways of being in and understanding their world. A student participating within Lather's feminist research process identifies 'resistance' as an embodied subjective experience: "a word for the fear, dislike, hesitance most people have about turning their entire lives upside down and watching everything they have ever learned disintegrate into lies..." (Lather, 1991, p. 76). This form of resistance by students to ideas and values that substantially shift their world views of themselves includes an idea that resistance is about the students' subjective embodied responses to feminist discourses (Jones & Marshall, Morris, 1991; Weiler, 1991). Lather (1991) draws on Irigaray's political action to 'overburden' dominant discourses to the point where ambiguities become visible and

create possibilities for alternative knowledges that enable resistance to phallogentric knowledges, and allow women to access alternative ways of being.

What is very familiar to me through my work with young women is the way Lather (1991) and Jones (1991) address how resistance for the female subject is enabled through access to alternative ways of being, but not desiring these alternative positions. The tension between these competing forms of resistance can be a potential site for disruption and praxis, such as the discourses generated within my own work on 'fairness' and the disadvantages and advantages of 'caretaking ourselves as well as others' (Fisher, 2005). Another example of how our understanding of resistance is also about specific historical epics is that during my early adulthood and within my female friendships, our attachment to particular young men was kept relatively silent, as it was not really ideologically 'correct', and our female friendships were reasonably visible. In contrast young women today appear swamped with discourses around being a 'proper' girlfriend and their female friendships may have become a disciplinary process that enhances the heterosexual gender normative practices of being a girlfriend.

Being a woman in relation to other women (different from men) is a very familiar position for me, where differences between us do not exclude us from the experience of being women. My own sense of me as a woman amongst other women is not stable but constantly shifts with each conversation, each encounter with other women. What will be present in this research is the different forms of resistance both the participants and I bring to the conversation. What I am interested in is how young women's resistance and compliance to normative gender practices intersects with my location as an older women and specific forms of 'knowing' resistance. For example, I have experienced both young women in clinical settings and women in refuge resisting ideas about living outside of the pleasure of heterosexuality. In the past this form of subjective desire has intersected with my resistance to commonsense heterosexual practices that decrease women's wellbeing. The examples of resistance discussed within this chapter have emerged from different historical locations and disciplines, for example my resistance to heterosexual relationships has emerged from 1970s and liberal traditional ideas of feminism and working with the health impacts of dominant relationships. In comparison young women within clinical practice resist not being a girlfriend because that is what they experience as 'normal' and the 'proper' way of being. The force I experience as young women's subjective desire to be 'normal' fits with Foucault's ideas of disciplinary power. I will next examine ideas of

disciplinary power to better understand the circumstances that co-constitute young women's resistant subjective desires to within and outside of heterosexuality in ways that restrain or that enhances wellbeing.

2.3 Disciplinary power

Foucault described knowledge, and the power that flows through disciplines (discursive fields) and their associated discourses, and how subjects are positioned within these discourses as 'disciplinary power'. Within any one discursive field there will be some discourses that are more dominant than others. People who access these dominant discourses will hold subject positions that are more legitimate and have more authority than those positioned within less dominant or silent discourses (Foucault, 1972). When I read interpretations of Foucault that discuss legitimate and less legitimate positions I understand that legitimacy refers to a morally/ethically acceptable position within more dominant discourses which have greater access to material resources.¹ One example is Jackson's nurturance discourse within teenage dating contexts (Jackson, 1999). This form of dominant discourse provides young men with all sorts of 'goodies' in the form of having their sexual preferences met and their girlfriend's exclusive attention and labour. In return young women get a higher status within their friendship groups and material rewards (Stewart, 1999). This highlights how a theory of power is both productive and restrictive. Similarly, young women are restrained from meeting their own needs while simultaneously gaining access to the specific pleasures of being a girlfriend (Warr, 2001).

Foucault talked about 'an ontology of the present' and rejected the idea that we could experience ourselves as being separate from our linguistic resources of the present moment and location. He examined the great texts such as psychiatry and psychology within specific historical circumstances in order to identify what specific knowledge was constituted to form specific disciplines. He then examined what these disciplines produced in terms of very concise (but not stable) knowledge of what it is to be a well adjusted, normal subject within our western world.

2.3.1 Panoptican effect: Technologies of self

This form of central surveillance was called the panoptical effect, where people become subjects; a process where young women take up specific ways of being a girlfriend

¹ Discussion around legitimacy and positioning theory, an expansion of Foucault's theory on power and social psychology's ideas around roles will be addressed in Chapter 3 (Davies & Harré, 1990).

rather than other ways of being, through social regulation and observation. This social gaze then becomes internalized in that the subject (young woman) monitors her/his own behaviour in a way that becomes almost invisible and automatic. This form of 'disciplinary' power is never separate from material consequences in that it produces outcomes such as young women wanting to be 'proper' through heterosexual gender practices and excludes more corporeal, non-penetrative pleasure such as touch.

Foucault named this process of disciplinary power where a subject takes on specific ways of being as opposed to other ways of being, 'technologies of self'. The image of the panopticon is a powerful image that enables an understanding of how our compliance in social power relations maybe pleasurable but is also difficult to escape. For example, Stewart's (1999) research and discussion regarding how if young women resist the disciplinary practices of female friends that supports the patriarchal status-quo they can lose access to parties, jobs as well as their own female friends. Feminists using a Foucauldian perspective have explored what specific 'technologies of self' operate within young women's gendered world (Gavey, 1992; 2001; McPhillips & Braun). Gavey (1992) explores how dominant discourses of heterosexuality have women participating in penetrative sex in the relative absence of resistant discourses. Disciplinary power flows through dominant knowledges via discourses and has women positioned by 'self' and 'others' to participate in normative sexual practices.

Foucault's theory of disciplinary power has facilitated feminist theorists to talk about the more covert forms of gendered oppression that exist in women's everyday lives and frequently operate at an almost invisible level (Gavey, 1992). Bartky (1988) uses 'disciplinary power' to make sense of how femininity is produced through heterosexuality; the process of women internalizing the 'panoptical male connoisseur', the patriarchal 'other' where they are constantly assessing themselves against the preferences of men and male dominated institutions.

In the regime of institutionalized heterosexuality, woman must make herself "object and prey" for the man: it is for him that these eyes are limpid pools, this cheek baby-smooth. In contemporary patriarchal culture, a panoptical male connoisseur resides within the consciousness of most women: they stand perpetually before his gaze and under his judgement. Woman lives her body as seen by another, by an anonymous patriarchal Other (Bartky, 1988, p. 72).

Bartky described some of the broad categories in which women are disciplining themselves (technologies of self) within our western context and which include body shape, dieting, movement and posture. O'Grady (2005) writes how this form of self-surveillance has young women constantly policing themselves and positioning themselves very critically in relation to boyfriends. For example always questioning their right to certain opinions and needs and doubting their ability to do the right thing in the context of being a girlfriend.

McNay (1992) writes that the changes in Foucault's thinking evident in his later publications about sovereign and disciplinary power were a result of feminists' criticism of his earlier work and their concern that his disciplinary theory produced docile bodies. My understanding is that Foucault's earlier work, although theorizing that power is both productive and restrictive explains very well how our female bodies have become disciplined through social power processes but does not provide enough theorizing around resistance. McNay (1992) wrote that Foucault addressed this feminist criticism of docile bodies by shifting his emphasis from mapping the constitution and transformations of knowledge towards the subject that does not involve a return to 'crude material realism' (Foucault, 1978). Instead "Foucault comes to refute the autonomy of discourse, and non-discursive practices are understood as the elements which truly sustain and surround discursive ones" (McNay, 1992, p. 27). This idea that non-discursive practices surround linguistic ones is very compatible with my idea that disciplinary practice requires the material world to reinforce and support our own and others' disciplinary gaze (technologies of self and others). Female bodies are not docile in the absence of material consequences such as a young woman losing a boyfriend because she does not desire to participate in penetrative sex, or a young woman losing friends or employment because she is not thin or hairless enough to be 'normal'.

Feminist research also identifies how resistance is accessed through discursive resources. McPhillips, Braun and Gavey (2001) explore how the intersection between simultaneous contradictory discourses creates the space for resistance in the area of heterosex. But while disciplinary power explains the operation of covert social power within the co-constitution of the subject in particular ways it does not reflect, outside of my current clinic with young women, the strength and force of female resistance I have experienced in other contexts such as refuge and women's oncology clinics. Foucault's later writing, in the area of sexuality and the constitution of the subject does start to talk

about a self-reflecting subject who examines her own cultural disciplinary processes, moral ideologies, and develops an ethics of care for self through a reflective resistant process (Foucault, 1978).

2.3.2 The intersection between sovereign and disciplinary power

Foucault's movement from 'docile' bodies within grand discourses, towards subjects that were governed in their daily lives at the level of the body, how they lived, died, gave birth, practised sex and remained healthy, was incorporated in his ideas of 'disciplinary power' and placed more emphasis on where there was a dominant discourse, there was resistance. This is where Foucault's theory becomes more difficult to interpret and ties in with the distinctions he periodically made between sovereign power (judicial) and disciplinary power. In his earlier writing Foucault talked about sovereign power as becoming transformed into 'disciplinary' power during the 17th century:

this juridical form must be referred to a historical type of society in which power was exercised mainly as a means of deduction (prelevement) a subtraction mechanism, a right to appropriate a portion of the wealth, a tax of products, goods and services, labor, and blood, levied on the subjects. Power in this instance was essentially a right of seizure: of things times, bodies, and ultimately life itself it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it....Since the classical age, the West has undergone a very profound transformation of these mechanisms of power. "Deduction" has tended to be no longer the major form of power but merely one element among others, working to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it: a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them (Foucault, 1984, p. 259).

I understand that deduction as practiced by sovereign power still intersects with disciplinary power even when young women have not been directly exposed to overt male violence. From the multiple stories I hear from women within refuge and clinical settings, resistance always has the potential for retaliation either in the form of female hierarchies or in the form of male violence in a country that still legitimizes male violence through inadequate protection of smaller people from larger (usually male) people (Bureta, 2008).

Foucault (1984) then went on to outline how sovereign power transformed into disciplinary power.

We have the production of an important phenomenon, the emergence, or rather the invention, of a new mechanism of power possessed of highly specific procedural techniques, completely novel instruments, quite different apparatus, and which also, I believe, absolutely incompatible with the relations of sovereignty. This new mechanism of power is more dependent upon bodies and what they do than upon the Earth and its products. It is a mechanism of power which permits time and labor, rather than wealth and commodities, to be extracted from bodies. It is a type of power which is constantly exercised by means of surveillance rather than in a discontinuous manner by means of a system of levies or obligations distributed over time.This new type of power, which can no longer be formulated in terms of sovereignty, is, I believe, one of the great inventions of bourgeois society. It has been a fundamental instrument in the constitution of industrial capitalism and of the type of society that is its accompaniment. This nonsovereign power, which lies outside the form of sovereignty, is disciplinary power...(p. 43).

Foucault advocated that a disciplinary power relationship could only exist between subjects who were able to resist, 'acting on the actions of a subject' (Rabinow, 1984). Disciplinary power works on the body by achieving compliance through indirect coercion, namely our social world's tendency to construct some gender practices such as heterosex as central to the constitution of the female subject. Foucault believed that this form of constituting the subject can be resisted. Heterosex, which is enforced through direct action on a body that is unable to resist (that is passive), is not a power relationship. Foucault talked about violence as being at the opposite end of the pole from passivity. Therefore, if a man has the physical power to kill or seriously hurt a woman and she does not have the physical means to stop this, this is a relationship of dominance, not power. The woman in this situation is not a subject as she is not capable of protecting herself from physical harm, and she cannot resist. Feminist theorists talk about how Foucault appears to be talking about a disembodied individual subject who is produced through access to linguistic resources, produced by groups of people and societies rather than interaction with embodied others (Bartky, 1988; McNay, 1992). McNay (1992) prefers Habermas's (1994) theory of power because unlike Foucault, who focused on how the individual subject was

constituted through linguistic resources, he viewed the subject as being constituted in relation to 'other' people. This is an extremely important point for me within this research as I have always worked within a framework of being in relation to young women. Observation of my clinical practice by others highlights that my form of therapeutic intervention involves a constant process of negotiation around meanings. This feminist research project, where I am trying to constitute resistant knowledge that will benefit women's health, requires this form of joint negotiation.

Another aspect of Foucault's distinction between sovereign (domination) and disciplinary power that does not fit with how I usually conduct conversations with young women is that I would rarely conceptualize a young woman as an individual in situations of domination. This position has been constituted through my work with older women within Women's Refuge as well as the younger women in hospital settings, and may change. Pākehā young women in hospital settings tend to position themselves as 'girlfriends' in relation to boyfriends or other 'girlfriends' and not as young women in more individual positions such as in career decisions (Davies, 1997; Fisher, 2005).

The women I work with who have experienced male partner violence usually describe how they go into a passive mode around their partner in order to reduce the violence directed at them and/or their children. These women are usually in the role of protector/mother as much as protector of self when being physically abused by their partner (in extreme and very rare cases women may be unable to think/act with any degree of coherence). To be passive is a subject position and does reduce the violence, and is usually a state when women are actually highly alert and aware of what is happening (Fisher, 1991). Passivity is an act of resistance, a heightening of chances of survival. Therefore I understand women's stories about their way of being in relationships where there is male violence and as illustrating embodied active desiring female subjectivity.

This is one of the rare occasions that Foucault utilised binary language without further exploration about why, as in the use of passive/violent; direct/indirect; sovereign (judicial)/disciplinary. Within one set of readings he talked about how sovereign power is incompatible with disciplinary power in that one fosters and shapes life (disciplinary) and the other allows or takes life away (sovereign). On the other hand Foucault acknowledged that sovereign power has continued in the codes that rule our judicial and international systems, and it provides legal codes based on the notion of 'right'. Foucault recommended that if you want to disrupt disciplinary power, examining the judicial forms of power such

as legal legislation and the judiciary system is not productive but instead you have to examine disciplinary power. One of the points of intersection that is the focus of this research is how do disciplinary and sovereign power intersect at the site of the female body in terms of wellbeing?

Foucault, through limiting his view of power as disciplining and producing specific female bodies through the indirect and direct action (sovereign power) upon bodies, silences the force of women's bodies and their maternal role in keeping bodies alive in very overt ways, such as feeding dependent children. In contrast, I do not agree that normalisation practices constituted through disciplinary power have more power to disrupt sovereign power rather than vice versa. Different contexts privilege different forms of how sovereign, disciplinary and corporeal power intersect and produce specific material consequences. As Parker (1999) points out, while we are tracing how disciplinary practices impact on western female bodies other women and their children do not have the basics of safety, housing, and freedom from being victims of war crimes such as rape. Furthermore the differences between gender normative practices that have women working 80 hour weeks in both paid and non paid positions and overt sovereign domination such as slavery are very complex and I do not believe it is possible to make clear distinctions between sovereign and disciplinary power as ever operating in our western context independently.

That disciplinary power does, at times, support and surround judicial/sovereign power through the use of 'sciences' and 'truths' produced by the major disciplines, is relatively unproblematic. However, by emphasising the greater role of disciplinary power Foucault is silencing the operation of power that acts directly on women's bodies through male partner violence (Dobash & Dobash, 1998). There is a huge epidemiological and health prevention research body that documents the corporeal changes inflicted on women's bodies through violent male partners (Elvridge, 1997; Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; Stark & Flitcraft, 1996).

Furthermore one of Foucault's most significant silences, similar to the individual psychological disciplines, is in the area of women and the domestic arena. For example how women, through their connection to childbirth and the subsequent loss of income and the inability to access physical protection within the home, are frequently exposed to male partner violence (Rose, 2004). This idea of how the day to day domestic tasks of women form lines of force that dominate women's lives will be discussed shortly when we look at

Davies' ideas of how lines of force can dominate women as subjects (Davies et al., 2001; Davies, Flemmen, Gannon, Laws & Watson, 2002) My Women's Refuge experience illustrates that in the domestic sphere what a woman resists doing, as constituted through disciplinary power, can be enforced through power over, in the form of physical violence (Fisher, 1991).

To view women as non subjects and as passive, may produce similar subject positions of 'victimhood' that work to silence women's agency in surviving horrific circumstances (Burman, 1996). To view women as active subjects as well as acted upon means understanding that male violence sometimes kills an active subject who is also a victim. Working in Women's Refuge with women who have survived years of physical violence quickly demonstrates how little tolerance they have for a 'passive' victim position once they and their children are physically safe. A situational position of passivity reflects more a position of survival, than a non subject position. These experiences and conversations with women have me acting as if we are more 'active' than 'passive' within heterosexual relationships. Furthermore I have talked to many women who are not currently being physically assaulted by a male partner but they carry a fear of male violence, sometimes through one specific incident early on in their heterosexual relationship. Gender oppression enforced through physical violence is a primary power relationship in many women's lives and is both supported by and supports disciplinary power. Therefore I will explore how disciplinary power operates through individual and friendship conversations for how commonsense heterosexual discourses partially co-constitute the 'normal' subject. Within individual interviews I will explore young women's ideas of themselves in terms of self-surveillance. However, while recognizing how the panoptical male gaze operates, this research will also have a greater emphasis on exploring moments of resistance in conversation with active subjects. In order to better understand resistance I will be exploring the intersection between disciplinary and sovereign power where sovereign power operates within specific material locations with specific material outcomes. As discussed in relation to a critical realist position and 'embodied knowing' this research is interested in the nexus between disciplinary power and subjective corporeal embodied experiences. What seem important to that relationship are the multiple intersecting lines of force that intersect to partially co-constitute subjectivity (Davies, Dormer & Gannon et. al., 2001; Davies, Flemmen & Gannon et. al., 2002).

Chapter 3

The intersecting multiple lines of force that co-constitute female subjective desire

Introduction

Davies and her colleagues (2002) questioned Foucault's distinctions between the operation of power that is not an entity, but a process and his ideas of force, domination and violence. They described Foucault's ideas around power as allowing for a state of domination, where the flow of power is not mobile, but restrained and blocked. Foucault wrote about fields of power being blocked by very large discursive fields within economic, political, or military systems. For Davies and her colleagues (2002) Foucault's analysis did not incorporate the form of domination present within women's daily lives from multiple lines of power from multiple sites. She writes:

when Foucault defines all acts of power to involve the possibility of resistance and freedom, and he takes the opposite, a state of domination, to arise from 'economic, political, or military means', he has not fully taken on board the extent to which the repeated, minute accretions of everyday practices can generate sedimentations of lines of force that may also be understood as a state of domination (Davies, Flemmen & Gannon & et., al, 2002, p. 31).

Understanding some of the lines of force that I have experienced operating in women's lives and that may co-constitute desire depend on notions of the discursive positioning of subjects in ways that both enable and restrain agency and resistance. This chapter will outline the lines of force that I have experienced as relevant and some of which have been relatively silent within feminist poststructuralist theory. Within section (3.1) I will discuss Davies and Harré's (1990) theory of the discursive production of the self to examine how power operates through legitimate and illegitimate positioning within conversations between subjects. In section (3.2) I provide a rationale for my utilizing the idea of an active subject, 'I', without inferring a stable subject and will discuss how this may co-constitute resistant subjective desires within a critical realist feminist poststructuralist theoretical position. Section (3.3) will examine Davies et al.'s (2001); ideas about the co-constitution of a subjective desire to be good through multiple lines of

force and within the context of young girls as daughters and schoolgirls and young women as girlfriends. In section (3.4) I will outline how ‘commonsense’ cumulative knowledge about ‘the trouble with men’ may partially be silenced within our health and academic disciplines and the potential this silence may have for resistance (Morgan & Coombes, 2001). Within section (3.5) I discuss how Davies and her colleagues’ (2002) autobiographic narratives assist me articulate my experience of an ‘abject other’ when working with women as a health worker. Finally in section (3.6) I will explore theorists Braidotti, Irigaray and Grosz and understanding of sexual difference theory and ideas of alterity, mimesis and how being a nomad may enable spaces for young women to desire resistant ways of being that are more than libidinal desire. Within sections (3.6) I also acknowledge the influence of Braidotti’s theory of material embodiment and how I also view embodied subjectivity as the site where corporeal, symbolic and material resources intersect and hence best frames my research question (Braidotti, 2003; Grosz, 1989a; Irigaray, 1985; 1999). Within section (3.7) I summarize chapter 3.

3.1 The discursive production of selves

Positioning theory enables me to understand how power operates through language in the absence of overt violence but in the presence of specific consequences. Davies and Harré’s (1990) theory on the discursive production of selves enables me to partially understand the distress young women experienced when talking with them about their dominant desire to be girlfriends as only one of many possible legitimate positions. Alternative positioning to these young women was ‘not to be proper’ and as a consequence was not to be legitimated and to be ‘abject other’.

Davies and Harré (1990) write about how speech acts performed within conversations form current meaning, understandings and knowledge of a particular phenomenon as well as produce subject positions of each participant. According to Davies and Harré (1990), we can be positioned simultaneously within multiple, contradictory positions that occur through a series of processes, including learning the categories that exclude or include some people, but not others, such as woman, man, mother, daughter, and participating in discursive practices that elaborate these positions. They qualify the idea of subject position by making a distinction between ‘a person’ as an individual agent and a ‘subject’ where subject is understood as a series of subject positions called into place momentarily within the context the subject is present in. People within these positions are

speaking from their history within particular contexts. How a specific conversation is interpreted in terms of subject positions differs between people and situations (Davies & Harré, 1990). I may interpret myself as talking with a young woman who is a 'girlfriend' while the subject I am talking to interprets her position as a 'proper woman' and her position as being a girlfriend may be virtually invisible to her. This subject position may become more visible to a young woman when in conversation with other women who have access to legitimate positions as women outside of being a girlfriend.

Davies and Harré (1990) were able to locate how power operates not just at the cultural level but also at the subject level through positioning within discourses and thus they bridge the individual-society understanding of power without fixing or essentializing the theory. For feminism this means that such concepts as patriarchal power can be understood as not necessarily monolithic; they can be challenged through providing alternative discourses and subject positions for women. This is not to ignore the material consequences of challenging the status quo; once an alternative position is taken up there are often unpredicted, unwanted consequences (Davies, et al., 2002).

3.2 Davies and Jones debate and competing understandings of agency

My clinical experience demonstrates greater access to resistant ways of being a subject when I take a more 'active than acted upon' position in my conversations with women. I am partially motivated to do this research because I want to explore how 'active' subjects may be acted upon without being positioned illegitimately within heterosexual discourses, i.e. being 'abject other'. To avoid positioning young women in this way when accessing heterosexual discourse I will occupy a position of talking to an active subject, while also acknowledging that women are simultaneously acted upon, in order to better access resistance.

Alison Jones' (1997) engagement with Bronwyn Davies' understanding of agency, clarifies my own thinking around the choosing subject (humanist subject) and what is meant by my use of 'I'. Alison Jones (1997) writes that the young women she teaches often take the position of a humanist chooser, who interprets the poststructuralist subject as having access to a multitude of competing and contradictory discourses and subject positions and will choose some but not other positions depending on what is available in the specific historical context. In response Davies (1997) writes that we do not need the concept of a pre-discursive (humanist-biologically determined) subject in order to write as

an active choosing subject. When we use our culture's available grammar such as pronouns which infer binary oppositions, such as woman/man and the first person tense such as 'I', this does not necessarily infer we are either active or passive.

What Jones draws our attention to is that in attempting to reconceptualise the subject as process, we are limited by the images and metaphors we can find to create the new ideas. Pronoun grammar is a good example of this. We cannot yet see how to do without it. We see the power of gendered pronouns, for example, to reconstitute the male/female binary every time we speak. We are frustrated to observe pronoun grammar re-creating the binary in the very language we use in our attempts to move beyond gender (Davies, 1989). Similarly, 'I', which signals 'identity', almost inevitably appears in the very same sentences we use to attempt to undo the idea of identity.....the text/discourse relentlessly writes us as existing, even when our intention is to enable the reader to disattend the active subject/writer to attend to the constitutive force of discourse (Davies, 1997, p. 275).

My approach to how I write and speak about this project is that, similar to Davies, I am still using the 'I' and am (for the present) writing as some other feminist poststructuralists within these commonsense discursive resources and practices. I am aware of and acknowledge those other feminist theorists who do attempt (far more successfully than I can at the moment) to speak outside of these binary frameworks (Irigaray, 1997). However, similar to Braidotti's theory around materialist embodiment, my geographic and employment location frequently has me positioned in a way that requires me to speak as an active agent about other women who are also active choosing agents, in order to avoid unwanted 'real' material consequences. For example I represent women and their resistant subjective desires as being active choosing subjects when negotiating and transforming a consultant's understanding around why they desire dilation following radiation. Many women want to maintain their vaginal size for pain free examinations post treatment; they do not want their desire not to have penetrative sex as a marker of poor health adjustment.

It is important (although not within my control) that I am read by others as working within the tensions of speaking as an active 'I' while utilizing a feminist poststructuralist critique of how 'I' and the young women I am talking to are simultaneously constituted by and constitutive of our (but not solely) discursive 'selves'. Davies (1997) suggests that

Jones' (1997) interpretation of her students' use of grammatical language that constitutes an active subject does not necessarily position the reader to interpret this 'I' or 'young woman' as a stable, coherent, universal self. The important point, for Davies, is that the students reflect on how the discursive resources available shape their current selves and how knowledge of feminist poststructuralist writings opens up exciting opportunities for other possible selves. The 'I' utilized in my text is not a universal, stable self, but an 'I' that exists at this moment and within this specific discourse/text and context. Simultaneously and in contradiction to a specific self at any one moment I also carry an understanding about my essential self that is stable. Using the concept of referentiality I recognize myself as different from others and this distinct form of 'I' has a sense of being reasonably stable.

For the past 20 years while listening to the language of feminist poststructuralism I was disturbed by the 'correctness' of the form that it seemed to take, and I often found my work experiences did not fit or could not be spoken about legitimately within this framework. As recently as the turn of this century, if I did speak into discussions about circumstances that co-constituted subjective desire as incorporating a corporeal body I ran the risk of being positioned as a humanist and 'realist'. I experienced this binary between humanist/poststructuralist (Hughes, 2002) as far too confining, particularly when we have to speak within our feminist practice (praxis) in order to achieve a particular outcome on a specific occasion. Ussher (1997) similarly argues that researchers are multiply positioned, between, within and across theoretical binaries. In practice, remaining on the postmodern side of this humanist/postmodern binary and not speaking in the first person restrains me from liberatory action. When speaking in an advocacy position for women's health and women's refuge I need to use the first person in order for listeners to understand my liberatory message. Sometimes I get away with one qualification, such as "in these situations this recommendation does not apply", but not multiple contradictory qualifications. I frequently have to intentionally silence a 'simultaneous contradictory voice' and I am very aware that I am doing so in these situations. In any one situation I may have a multitude of differences I would like to speak about but cannot in order to keep the flow and focus on a specific outcome for a specific group of women.

Sometimes where I have had a lot of thought and practice around particular dilemmas, and depending on the audience, I can address the humanist/poststructuralist binary. For example some years ago I was quite practised at addressing how women who

have experienced male partner violence talk about simultaneously both loving and hating their partners, while having a strong sense of their competence as women compared to the violent partners but a less strong sense of themselves as successful women compared to women who have not experienced partner violence (Fisher, 1991).

Davies (1997) discusses the discomfort of using an active, not passive, agent within a feminist poststructuralist text. The ‘correct’ position for a feminist poststructuralist is not to slip into a ‘humanist’ view of knowledge and self by inferring a stable self with the use of ‘I’. Davies contemplates how this need for ‘correctness’ ignores the constitutive force of the subject, and focuses more on the constitution of the subject through discursive resources. She argues that in reading an active ‘I’ as ‘incorrect’ we may, as feminists, be promoting women as passive, when feminist intent has always been to promote an active reflexive standpoint. As highlighted in previous paragraphs, there are times when I am more actively taking up a position in rather than being positioned by hegemonic discourses. I also recognize when I am forcibly positioned by others in order to silence (delegitimize) my feminist position, such as being categorized as a radical feminist. In contradiction to how I am experiencing the oppressiveness of being categorized as a ‘radical feminist’, those doing the positioning constitute me as extremely active, and influential towards vulnerable women. I am also aware that I am frequently positioned as a woman outside my own and others’ immediate awareness. As Davies (1997) points out, part of the feminist poststructuralist reflexive process is to make more visible when and by which processes we are both constituted and ‘constitutive’. My research position is consistent with Davies in as much as I view women as experiencing resistance to subjectification through both silence and practice and where resistance is enabled through their embodied subjective experiences of pleasure and risk.

3.3 Davies and the process of subjective desire through discursive resources and subjectification

Davies and her colleagues (2001) begin to talk about corporeal embodiment when they discuss the subjectification of young women through positive regard from men in their life and how this may co-constitute young women’s desire to be good women in particular ways. These researchers provide narratives of being young girls, desiring to be positively visible through achieving what is wanted of them by legitimate others such as their fathers and teachers. These remembered narratives produced familiar embodied experiences such as the sensation of a full bladder. Davies and her colleagues (2002) also

explored how witnessing the consequence of male violence on another woman may co-constitute discourses around how to be a good woman within more explicit heterosexual frameworks. To be a good girlfriend was identified as protection against the risk of male violence. The stories these women tell are very powerful remembered embodied experiences in terms of how young women may co-constitute the desire to be good through witnessing what happens to other young women who are positioned illegitimately.

This academic work of Davies and her colleagues enables me to understand the tenacity and strength of young women's desires to be good and appropriate subjects, and to identify the embodied experience that can accompany subjugation and mastery, such as anger. The narratives reflect how young women were able to be successful schoolgirls, girlfriends, and lovers, but they also emphasized that their achievement of being the 'proper/good' woman was always very tenuous. For me, the embodiment of anger and what it represents in terms of the women's silent but possibly resistant desires is interesting. It is the absence of anger within the representative stories of young women presenting with sexual pain but in the presence of dissonance between discursive subjective desires and a resisting corporeal body that initiated this research. In these contexts the desire to be proper women is tenuous through the corporeal body rather than a discursively recognized feeling such as anger. For example, women do not necessarily stop having penetrative sex in the presence of pain until the muscles contract permanently and the penis can no longer enter the vagina because of this tense muscle wall. Before I examine more thoroughly how resistance may be accessed through dissonance between the discursive and corporeal body I would like to examine Morgan & Coombes (2001) ideas of how silence can operate within discourse and Davies' ideas of the 'abject other' and woman being in relation to each other. The meaning of silence and historical knowledge around the processes of gendered power.

Reading feminist poststructuralist theory during the 1990s highlighted another specific silence in academic literature, namely how can I speak about knowledge as fluid and unstable while simultaneously experiencing what we know in specific areas as cumulative, where cumulative refers to what is known across both the discursive and more corporeal sites, such as the gut. Morgan and Coombes (2001) address the silence about the intersection between cumulative and unstable knowledges through utilizing Davies & Harré (1990) speech act theory, an immanentist approach, and Derrida's ideas on iteration. An immanentist approach, similar to a social constructionist relativist approach,

assumes that the process of positioning does not transcend “the particular occasions within which subjects are positioned” and restrains historical normative practices and knowledges (Morgan & Coombes, 2001, p. 336). For feminist theorists this silences women’s knowledge about established patriarchal practices and runs the risk of research texts not being read through a pre-existing lens of gendered power. In contrast Derrida’s idea about iteration enables a speech act to refer to talk that has been used before and can have commonsense meaning within specific discursive fields (Morgan & Coombes, 2001). In their autobiographical analysis, using these two theoretical positions enables knowledge to be co-constituted through unstable and cumulative subjective experiences in any one specific speech act. From my own subjective experiences, my historical knowledge may be present within each speech act and may be experienced in a more embodied than discursive form. Women do not have to specifically articulate their past embodied experiences of occupying positions within less legitimate discourses than those utilized by men in order for this knowledge to be accessed in current ongoing social contexts. An example of a form of power process through language would be when I enter a conversation with a male psychiatrist within hospital settings. When I am in these contexts, I am aware at discursive/embodied sites that the psychiatrist’s opinions and how he uses language when talking about a particular clinical situation will hold more legitimacy than mine for hospital managers who are making decisions about resource distribution and clinical needs. I enter this conversation automatically (without a huge amount of intentional thought) as expecting to occupy a less legitimate position (and having less access to discursive resources) through 15 years of attempting discursively (unsuccessfully) to resist this unwanted position. This historical positioning functions to silence my gender specific opinions around gendered power and mental health in favour of a professionally higher status man. This silencing has a historical context for the women I work with as well. Frequently in this situation I will want to emphasize the impact a history of men’s violence has had on women’s current health status, such as maintenance and escalation of pelvic pain, whereas the psychiatrist will want to categorize according to DSM IV and prescribe the appropriate medication (and do one follow-up), which is more cost effective than ongoing work with a clinical psychologist.

Morgan and Coombes suggest that by utilizing both speech act theory and iteration it is possible to trace the historical and culturally specific meanings within one particular speech occasion. The idea of iteration enables me to account for an individual’s ability to

accumulate some forms of knowledge within the specific context of being a 'proper' woman. Accumulating knowledge around how to be a woman at both language and embodied sites does not necessarily infer stable forms of knowledge. Discursive resources consist of speech acts that require certain competencies and rules, and historically known codes (Morgan & Coombes, 2001). This means that discourses used in specific settings are drawing on historical discursive resources that enable and restrain certain subject positions. This is similar to Parker's (1999) position within the relativist-realist debate and the emphasis he places as a 'critical realist' on acknowledging historical, habitual positions of power in any specific context. The young women I have conversed with over the past ten years who occupy positions of being 'girlfriends' talk in a way that assumes more legitimate knowledge than mine and that of other young women positioned outside of heterosexual relationships. Women who have 'men' have greater access to authoritative positions. In my everyday and clinical experience this authoritative position occurs across many groups of women I work with and operates through commonsense discourses, while the same women will also simultaneously access resistant commonsense discourses such as the difficulty of living with 'men'. However, women may also be silenced through not having access to a critical discourse within some heterosexual relationships, which I understand as not having a legitimate position to evaluate and talk about what needs changing to fit with their gendered preferences. Consistent with feminist poststructuralist critiques of phallogocentric knowledge and women being positioned as the devalued other, 'boyfriends' frequently talk in a way that positions them as having more legitimate knowledge about heterosexual activity than 'girlfriends/women (Ussher, 1997). This is demonstrated within my clinical practice where a male partner may occupy a position within an intimate relationship that enables a critical gaze on his girlfriend's ability to be a 'proper' sexual partner, and subsequently has him 'supporting her' to come and see me in order for her to understand 'her problem' better and cure 'her sexual problem'. Young men's discourse around the category of 'vaginismus' and sexual pain has an established history within western medical/psychiatric disciplines and the associated commonsense discourses that locate the 'problem' within the intrapsychic mind of female patients (Braun & Kitzinger, 2001). In contrast the girlfriends I work with have seldom accessed discourses or occupied more 'critically-reflective positions' about a boyfriend's ability as a lover (Fisher, 2005). Breaching this silence (girlfriends talking about their boyfriends' abilities) by asking questions around what boyfriends do or do not do well as lovers, and what they like and dislike more generally about being with a boyfriend may produce

resistant discourses and spaces for alternative positioning for young women during clinical conversations. This research will explore this form of silence and possibilities for articulating resistant iteration practices that enable young women's 'critical gaze' on young men outside the clinical arena.

I understood these young women would be vigilant and intentionally silent around a legitimately positioned supportive boyfriend they desired to keep and please or were scared of losing within clinical settings. In these contexts women are not safe to talk about what they desire, their resistant desires are present but silent. How can this operation of intentional silence be better understood for women in marginal or less legitimate gendered positions?

Morgan and Coombes were particularly interested in how by utilizing iteration, silence is no longer only an intention of the subject within a specific speech act, but can be constituted through social power in the form of marginalized positions. This form of theoretical discussion enabled me to access my difficulty in talking and writing about what I am still interpreting as 'cumulative' knowledge in the area of gendered social power processes. Repeated questions throughout reading feminist poststructuralist theory for me have been: "How do I talk about entering a conversation with a younger woman where I position myself as 'knowing' in the area of gendered power while still at the same time being positioned as 'knowing' that this form of gendered knowing is an open not closed field and is going to shift and change according to each new situation and young woman?"; and "how do I talk about my own and other women's cumulative/unstable subjective experience of silence in a way that reflects the multiple contradictory nature of silence across different contexts?" Throughout this research I will be aware of the possibilities of silence. Silence may be understood to function simultaneously as resistance and oppression I am interested in identifying silenced resistant discourses within the participants' conversations about their desires to be or not be a girlfriend.

3.5 'Abject other' and dissonance

An aspect of silence I would like to explore within this project is associated with women's subjective embodied states that I understand as 'feelings' for each other when positioned as 'abject other' in heterosexual contexts (Cromby, 2004). Utilizing a lens developed within Women's Refuge and in my clinical practice I began exploring young women's stories for the silence around their resistance/anger to gendered ways of being.

In contrast to women in refuge young women in practice talked about previously silent 'feelings' of distress and shame around not being 'proper, real girlfriends' and how they usually kept silent about their inability to have penetrative sex and their unhappiness around other female friends because of this shame. This silence had young women occupying positions of being separate from, and less worthwhile than, other women. I initially interpreted this silence as young women not having access to resistant discourses that positioned them more legitimately. However, they had access to conversations with me, a breaking of their silence around their shame and distress and access to alternative discourses, but still had a strong embodied desire to remain girlfriends. This embodied desire was extremely difficult for young women to articulate. My sense is that many of the young women I work with are positioned as invisible to themselves, and others, if they do not occupy a position in relation to men, a boyfriend. In other words not being a girlfriend silences their existence, silences their being at all; it is unthinkable and unspeakable. I understand this form of embodied distress as being positioned as 'abject other'.

Davies' and her colleagues (2002) accessed embodied memories of gang rape when discussing the subjectification of women to be 'good'. In this context these authors identified how subjectification was co-constituted through heterosexual discourse of female responsibility and not being a 'proper' girlfriend that provided them with a form of being different to the female victim. Not being 'proper' within heterosexual discourses co-constitutes a moral understanding of why some but not other young women are raped. The function of young women's discourses around being a 'protected' girlfriend and the subsequent illegitimate positioning of the other young women being gang raped is to provide them with a sense of difference and greater safety compared to the young woman who was raped.

What I desired while reading these autobiographical memories was access to these women's embodied memories of themselves in relation to another woman who was in pain, outside of a phallogentric framework. For example the constant question I asked throughout the reading of these autobiographies was "what was it like for those young women to have to leave another woman behind in that situation?". This question positions young women as having access to being a woman in relation to other woman (a reasonably silent position), as well as simultaneous access to the heterosexual discourse that positions other women as illegitimate subjects. While reading this text I was also positioned as a health worker who recognizes that women are frequently not positioned with sufficient

social legitimacy and cannot 'save' other women in dangerous situations (without unacceptable consequences). This is very similar to Davies' et al., (2002) proposal that domination results from the force of multiple lines of power, with women still being positioned as subjects, but where to resist overtly would bring unacceptable consequences.

In practice women are often positioned simultaneously within heterosexual discourses and subjective embodied states of anguish for other women. These situations produce a dissonance between discursive and more embodied sites such as experiences of anguish in the co-constitution of what women may subjectively desire for themselves and others. I am more than aware of the ethical concerns for all the women concerned in Davies et al., (2002) research and why they would not have written about this form of embodied memory and dissonance. Too often, the question of how we emotionally felt about witnessing another woman's or child's experience of male violence can reproduce women in the same old place, 'morally responsible' for the act of violence itself (Elizabeth, 2004). In a culture with egalitarian discourses and the silencing of sexual difference, women are often expected to physically 'save' other women and children from dangerous situations. Furthermore, written explorations of women's embodied experiences of male violence can be interpreted and experienced by others in a way that is counter to feminist ethics.

This research will explore women's embodied responses to other women in difficult situations. For example, working as an advocate in Women's Refuge I experienced women residents shifting their understandings of their mother's lives and experiences of male violence. Usually these residents, through their own experiences and increasing access to understandings about gendered power transformed their anger towards a mother about their childhood experiences of violence, to empathy (Fisher, 1991). Re-establishing contact with a mother often assisted women resist gender normative practices to care for male partner's who used violence and to leave these relationships. Leaving men who used violence against them subsequently enhanced their future wellbeing. Therefore tracing the dissonance between embodied 'as if' feelings towards other women in the presence of the more available commonsense heterosexual discourse, as with the dissonance between corporeal pleasure and discursive resources, has the potential for resistance and alternative ways of being that may improve wellbeing (Damasio, 1999).

3.6. Sexual difference theory, alterity and an ethics of care, and the possibilities of being a nomad

Introduction

Within section (3.6.1) I will explore Braidotti's ideas of being nomad and Irigaray's ideas of sexual difference (Braidotti, 2003; Irigaray, 1985; 1999). As part of sexual difference theory Irigaray conceptualizes a radical form of heterosexism that embraces a negotiation of differences between equal subjects (Irigaray, 1985). She utilizes the theory of alterity in order to conceptualize an alternative ethics of care between equal and different subjects (Grosz, 1989). I will discuss this theory of alterity as well as ideas of maternal morphology and the paternal consumption of women's social space within our current phallogentric cultures (Braidotti, 2003; Grosz, 1989; Irigaray, 1985, 1999). Braidotti discusses how sexual difference theory focuses on the difference within subjects rather than post modern theories of exploring differences between subjects which she believes enables lethal exclusions (Braidotti, 1994; 1998; 2003). The co-constitution of desiring subjects occurs through the intersection of individual differences within subject's corporeal, symbolic, material sites. This is compatible with how I experience subjective embodiment within practice with other women and Cromby's ideas of embodied knowing. More importantly, for me, is Braidotti's emphasis on desire that is more than libidinal. She theorizes that this form of desire emerges from women's contradictory experiences of accessing pleasure within phallogentric ways of being and their desire for the freedom to be otherwise. Both Braidotti and Irigaray acknowledge that desire is more than discursive consciousness (Braidotti, 1998; 2003; Irigaray, 1985; 1999). In this way they acknowledge the bodily roots of pleasure, which is compatible with my research aim to identify resistant bodily pleasures within the intersection of symbolic, materiality and corporality processes. Finally Braidotti speaks about the referential difference between men and women and within subjects at the site of social power such as ethnicity, geographical location, socio-economic location and this is very compatible with how I work with gendered power, economics and wellbeing (Braidotti, 2003).

Within section (3.6.2) I discuss the silences operating within sexual difference theory that may restrain this alternative ethics of care and which will refine my research orientation. I will explore what circumstances enable an alternative ethics of care and alternative ways of being through taking Braidotti's ideas of being a nomad and Irigaray's

ideas of mimesis. Both ideas of being a nomad (metaphorically and geographically) and mimesis may be useful strategies to explore within this research process.

3.6.1 Irigaray's sexual difference theory, phallogentric and alterity

My understanding of Irigaray's theory of sexual difference is that young women are brought into being orientated to others' (male) desires, 'other of the same', while young men are brought into being as orientated to their own phallogentric desires and entitlements. Theoretically this provides a framework for understanding young women's subjective desires being partially co-constituted around males' phallogentric desires. The psychoanalytical framework outlines the following pathway towards subjective desire as normal. The phallus represents the key metaphorical signifier of the law of man and the father, and as such is an object of desire and a signifier for absence. When a child identifies as either male or not male, this becoming represents the exchange of immediate pleasures for a place as a speaking being. "It is thus the 'signifier of signifiers', the emblem of the law of language itself, the term which guides the child to its place as 'I' within the symbolic order" (Grosz, 1989, p. xxi). Thus female children are brought into being as having an absence, a loss in the process of becoming a 'proper' subject and a speaker position that is orientated to others.

Irigaray's theory of sexual difference resisted this form of female subjectivity and theorized the force of women's desire to be outside of phallogentric centres may occur through tracing our corporeal embodied subjective experiences:

Sexual difference theory is not only a reactive or critical kind of thought, but is also an affirmative one, in that it expresses women's ontological desire, women's structural need to posit themselves as female subjects, that is to say, not as disembodied entities but rather as corporeal and consequently sexed beings. Read through the lenses of the 'politics of location', the redefinition of the female feminist subject starts with the revaluation of the bodily roots of subjectivity, rejecting any universal, neutral and consequently gender-free understanding of human embodiment (Braidotti, 2003, p. 44).

A re-evaluation of the bodily roots of subjectivity requires an analysis of alterity, how young women come into being in relationship to others' needs prior to their own bodily, spiritual and material requirements Irigaray's ideas around 'the ethics of alterity'

allow me to understand young women's desire for heterosex in terms of it being part of an ethical responsibility incorporated within the position of being a girlfriend (other of the same) and in the presence and absence (silence) of alternative knowledge of an exchange system that incorporates her embodied sexual pleasure (other of the other). Alterity refers to “a notion of the other outside the binary opposition between self and other, an independent and autonomous other with its own qualities and attributes...The other is outside of, unpredictably by, and ontologically prior to the subject” (Grosz, 1989, p. xiv). Irigaray was interested in how ethics frame the relationship of ‘other’ (Grosz, 1989). The ‘other’ is different and yet ethics have been formulated on one model of subjectivity, a male, and a presumption of singularity and primacy of the male subject. Ethics do not spring from the individual, but what can be known between the subject and other, where this relationship consists of both responsibility and ethics (Grosz, 1989).

Grosz (1989) writes that within western philosophical texts “Ethics has only represented the subject's encounter with his own reflection and not with an autonomous, indeed, primary other. An ethics of sexual difference would have to rethink the encounter between the self-same subject and an irreducibly sexually different other, an exchange between two beings that must be presumed to be different” (p. 146.) Irigaray assumes that being in a more equal relationship will make for more passionate loving relationships (Grosz, 1989). I would go further and articulate that relationships of wonder and passion between intimate partners, that respect differences and are not largely tied to phallogocentric ways of being, have the potential to enhance wellbeing.

My experience with men who have an ethics of care for a valued differentiated female partner with cancer demonstrates that within my everyday clinical work I understand Irigaray’s ideas in a very ‘pragmatic’ way while realizing that even a ‘pragmatic’ interpretation is understood through metaphors, namely the socially constructed languages of emotional/physical needs.

Irigaray’s ideas for creating a space for women to be other than the same, other or complement to man assists me articulate a question arising from sexual difference theory that I struggle with every day in my practice with young women. Part of what I am hearing is young women's subject position of being a 'fair' girlfriend within heterosexual exchanges that are based on male preference and moral order. Young women in heterosexual relationships are involved in a sexual exchange that is based on phallogocentric knowledge around sexual functioning, according to which in order to act ‘ethically,’ they

are required to provide 'sex' in a form that may sit outside of their own bodily preferences and/or in the absence of their own sexual desire (Braun et al., 2003). This discourse is very similar to the western ideas of exchange and capitalism. In these contexts I understand that their sexual differences may be 'known' but that their pre-linguistic desire to be in relation to a man (phallogentric orientation) and the current material support within heterosexual and capitalist discourses for this co-constitutes their subjective desire to be a girlfriend.

Both Braidotti and Irigaray call for a radical version of heterosexism which reduces the dissymmetrical power relations between men and women (without ignoring other social sites of power such as ethnicity, socio-economic status and so on) that enable women to become in ways that are less oppressive. One way women can achieve this is to move from the margins of being 'the other of same' towards being 'other of the other'. By 'other of the other' I mean not only in relation to men but also to women. Where being 'other to other' simultaneously recognizes differences in corporeal, symbolic and material preferences and where one preference is not exclusively met by one female partner in the presence of silencing their own pleasure. When I first read Irigaray's phase 'other of the same' I assumed this phase referred to women's relationship with each other where they simultaneously positioned as the same (bodily roots as known as female) but with different preferences and desires. In this research I will refer to Irigaray's ideas of a radical form of heterosexism as an ideal aim of being 'other of the other' but refer to women being in relationship to each other as 'other of the same' and as understood above where they are more than a reflection, are complementary to each other but are also actively negotiating differences between equal caring subjects. For example, a therapeutic relationship where there is an acknowledgment between female therapist and female client as being the same (bodily roots) and unstable differences which are negotiated, and produces 'real' outcomes such as enabling female corporeal desire and reducing sexual pain.

As a health worker the greatest difficulty has been identifying the potential points of exit available to young women from being 'other than the same' in relation to male partner's that both provides pleasure and avoids the material consequences of 'desiring' outside of the phallogentric norm such as being forcibly positioned as 'abject other' and the accompanying risks. These material 'real' risks are addressed in Braidotti's ideas of being nomadic and will be discussed shortly.

3.6.2 Paternal consumption and restraints to living passionately outside of heterosexuality

A consequence of women being brought into being orientated to male needs in a phallogentric culture is the paternal consumption of available space needed for alternative ways of being. Within these paternal contexts maternal work is invisible and male desires, needs and consumption, although resting on invisible female labour, are visible and valued. In this way I am able to understand the stories of both young and mature women in the context of having the material, symbolic and physical space to live meaningfully outside of care for others. For example, the young women I work with dare not turn off their phones in case their boyfriend texts and they are required to re-orientate towards them rather than explore ideas around their other desires and pleasures. Their daily subjective experiences and discourses are almost totally orientated to others' (boyfriends) needs and their social space is diminished. This is currently a very strong line of force in most young women's lives as girlfriends.

What Irigaray advocates is for women to overcome binary thinking by sitting across opposites. For example women can be both maternal and other; one does not need to be exclusive of the other. However I understand this phallogentric power is supported and made powerful through the 'real' consequences of resisting. An example would be the consequences of not feeding a hungry child or not helping an elderly woman to the toilet. In order to resist this maternal ethic to care for others women require men to develop a greater ethic of care for others at the site of these very specific material daily occurrences. Therefore this research will explore both the symbolic resources young women access that orientates them to the care of others as well as the possible material consequences of resistance.

Maternal morphology and alternative ways of being

Irigaray theorizes that women need to reclaim the memory of touch between mother and daughter and for women to explore a "radically different morphology" (Braidotti, 2003, p. 47; Grosz, 1989). However, I am resistant to the idea that we as women do not hold and access as adults a memory/knowledge of our past physical contact with friends, mothers, sisters and other family members. This knowledge may not be defined and clearly articulated discourses but as I write about female to female touch I have vivid embodied memories around touch and the physicality of working and playing in a way that involved the corporeal bodies of both my female friends and family. I still recognize at

embodied sites that include the symbolic discursive (when thought about), the smell and touch of my own children in comparison to other adults and children; but I have not extensively explored this form of embodied knowing in practice.

However clinical practice demonstrates that maternal morphology as a prerequisite for male and female sexual relationships does not necessarily enable women to resist the phallogentric hold and does not necessarily provide resistant ways of being. This may be silenced discursively but is not necessarily silenced within embodied knowing. Grosz's (1989) idea of reclaiming the knowledge of female to female touch through embodied past memories needs to incorporate the very powerful 'lines of force' constituting young women's subjectification and embodied desires for heterosex in this specific western post-modern era (Allen, 2003; Davies et al., 2001; Davies et al, 2002). This form of subjectification, becoming 'a girlfriend', intersects with young men's way of being and their apparent inability to access non-phallic ways of touching. Within clinical practice many men who present with female partners suffering from sexual pain are unable to identify through touch, smell, surface contact, emotional responses and sight what their partners' bodies are experiencing in terms of sexual arousal, pleasure and pain. Furthermore, some men do not have access to material or physical ways of accessing intimate touch outside of penetration. Men also need to exit the phallogentric way of becoming a 'man' (Grosz, 1989b). Taking a position that young women have access to corporeal pleasure and subsequent resistant desires through female relationships I will explore, where possible, what circumstances enable and restrain pleasure within and outside of heterosexuality.

Being a nomad and having access to mimesis

Braidotti's writing and interpretation of the material and metaphorical location of being a nomad reflects my experiences of exiting phallogentric ways of being both through travel and within spaces free of my maternal work load. Braidotti (2003) captures the importance of materiality so well when she talks about mature women students' metaphorical and 'real' location as enabling being a nomad and where being a nomad is understood as exiting phallogentric ways of being. This intersection between the 'metaphorical' and the 'real' while acknowledging our bodily differentiated 'roots' enables me to articulate the sense of agency and resistance I experience when working outside of phallogentric contexts and within alternative spaces. What I take out of this theory are the

possibilities of being nomadic in both metaphorical and 'real' geographical locations for exiting the phallogentric centre and accessing resistant ways of being on the outside.

Within her theorizing about enabling subjects to be nomadic Braidotti argues that both the majority (male) and the minorities (female) need to go through an initial process of being female, of being a minority, but argues that this is not an asymmetrical process for the sexes, but these are different dissymmetrical processes. Men as the majority sit at a dead centre where dualist categories define social power and function at the expense of lethal exclusions. Men in order to become different subjects, need to move to the more free flowing, unstable peripheries and experiment with different ways of being. Women on the other hand are already minorities and need to become subjects, prior to multiple border crossings. So within this theory women are positioned as not having an experience of being a subject separate from being 'other of the same' in relation to a man, whereas I have experienced women as having moments of being subjects but remaining silent about these moments of being 'other of the other'. I also think these two processes can happen simultaneously: I can both be female (a subject) and move across multiple ways of being depending on the setting and what I and others desire me to be.

The need to become subjects, separate from a phallogentric norm, leads to identity politics where women clearly distinguish themselves as different from men and phallogentric ways of being. Consistent with Braidotti's theory of material embodiment, within clinical practice, I sit alongside different women with different socio-historical knowledge across different ways of being outside of the phallogentric centre. Although I recognize and relate to the other as the 'same', another woman, I do not desire 'to be' the same, since as women we experience different subjective desires, but are simultaneously female, the same. I understand women as being embedded in many potential alternative ways of becoming and have access to either a potential knowledge of or embodied memories of pleasure, a context that materially supports them to become in a particular way.

Irigaray gives the impression of grand radicalized changes, whereas within the therapeutic context (with young women) the exits always happen simultaneously with and around other phallogentric practices. The movement, although radical, is rarely all encompassing, so a young woman who decides not to change her anatomical status and create a vagina and who has access to sexual pleasure outside of the heterosexual norms,

still returns to the workplace where she will be part of discussions around someone's wedding or troublesome boyfriend.

Ideas around the 'phallogentric' way of being as a 'dead centre' tends to silence that this location provides embodied pleasure for many men and for some women some of the time and in order to exit they require alternative forms of pleasure. What have not been adequately explored within the current feminist poststructuralist literature are the resistant sites of embodied pleasure that are available for men outside the centre. Being cared for by others enables pleasure and within patriarchal heterosexual relationships that occur, often exclusively, at the expense of the woman doing the caring. What I will explore within this research is the possibility of heterosexual and female friendship relationships that successfully negotiate this either/or binary process. Past experiences of some female friendships illustrate that mutual caring within more or less symmetrical power relationships may be possible and where who is cared for and when is fluid and not stable. I experience this complementary care for another differentiated and similar 'other' as a 'nomadic' process where woman may exit a phallogentric centre to be on the more fluid (often enjoyable) peripheries with other woman (other of the same). A nomadic space in relation to other women is a really exciting pleasurable location and it is this location that I will attempt to create within this research. The two strategies that may enable me to create a location of pleasure outside of heterosexual contexts include my ideas of an 'active I' and mimesis. Both strategies have been discussed in relation to Butler (1999) and Davies (1997).

In my experience leaving a phallogentric centre and travelling alongside other women to the peripheries is enabled by access to a resistant subjective centre, an 'active I'. Clinical practice provides me with experience that women in relation to other women outside of heterosexual contexts have an embodied subjective experience of 'knowing' themselves as both the same and differentiated. A sense of being differentiated, outside of competing positivist ideologies and scarce material resources, enables an 'active I' and silences lethal exclusions when in relation to other women. Therefore I will position young women as experts (knowing subjects) within self selected safe friendship groups in order to produce a space that enables nomadic travel from a secure centre and accesses resistant ways of being. Safety in this context refers to not being judged by friends and being positioned as 'abject other' for holding different competing subjective experiences to others in the discussion. In this context I will explore how young women experience being

cared for and caring for others in both heterosexual and female friendships contexts to explore the possibility of a mutual ethics of care where one partner is not frequently sacrificing pleasure in order to meet the other's preferred pleasure.

Braidotti (2003, p. 45) writes:

The quest for a point of exit from phallogocentric definitions of Woman requires a strategy of working-through the images and representations that the (masculine) knowing subject has created of Woman as Other. Irigaray renders this through the strategy of 'mimesis.'" ...A feminist who wishes to repossess and re-invest images and representations of Woman is really dealing with fragments and figments of the phallogocentric imaginary. Irigaray argues that this imaginary needs to be repossessed by women precisely because it is loaded with phallogocentric assumptions that reduce Woman to unrepresentability. Repetitions render difference...

I agree with Braidotti that greater access is needed to alternative possibilities whether these possibilities be known through a very symbolic form of resistant 'virtual' femininity or experienced through more embodied corporeal knowing (Braidotti, 2003, p .46). Therefore I will utilize mimesis across both symbolic and more corporeal embodied sites and where mimesis is understood as a repeated exaggeration of commonsense resistant gender practices and 'proper' ways of being a woman and man in a heterosexual context. The strategy of mimesis is well documented within feminist poststructuralist literature as enabling resistance through repeated exaggeration of normative gender practices but is not usually present in past research on the risks and pleasures of sexuality. I will utilize this cautiously and in spaces that allow me to expand the participants' own humor in the area of 'the trouble with men' and being a girlfriend. This caution comes from working with young women in pain who sometimes experience mimesis as judgmental.

I will utilize Braidotti's nomadic location when conducting research conversations and analysing the research data. My questioning will focus on how women experience to be otherwise, such as what it is like to be a female friend. I will achieve this through both a nomadic location within group discussions and where the participants will be providing me with knowledge on 'other' women and when they are simultaneously immersed in and

outside of alternative locations such as what is it like to witness a friend in heterosexual trouble.

3.7 Summary: The lines of power I will attend to during my research conversations and analysis

This chapter has explored the lines of power that have been silenced within some feminist poststructuralist academic understandings of how power operates, through co-constituted knowledge and subjective desires in young women's lives within and outside heterosexual gender practices. Davies and Harré (1990) enabled me to understand how gendered power operates through positioning within language between subjects. One of my analytical tools will be to explore how young women are positioned both within and outside of heterosexual contexts within individual and friendship group discussions. I will be interested in specific instances of young women occupying legitimate positions when accessing resistant commonsense ways of being within and outside of being a girlfriend. I will utilize Davies' theoretical idea of a simultaneous active and acted upon subject but will position myself in conversation with active subjects in order to access resistant ways of being. I will use my clinical 'sense' and questioning to access young women's embodied experiences of an 'abject other' when in relation to other women in order to identify moments of dissonance between commonsense heterosexual discourses that position women in heterosexual relationships responsible for their own distress and their feelings of empathy or connection to other women caught in heterosexual dilemmas. In my research conversations I will explore what it is to be a 'good,' 'proper' woman both within and outside of heterosexual contexts. I will explore the consequences of being what is or is not a 'proper' woman including how these positions intersect with experiences of wellbeing and pleasure, as well as distress and decreases in wellbeing. I will utilize Braidotti's ideas of being nomadic and a 'subject' that may travel to and from the peripheries outside of a 'dead' phallogocentric centre through using the strategies of 'an active I' and mimesis in order to explore resistant ways of being a woman, material embodiment and the possibilities for exiting phallogocentric ways of being.

Chapter 4

The current research

This current research aims to explore how young women's subjective desire is constituted through several specific theoretical lenses. The three main theoretical frameworks utilized to understand subjective desire prior to collecting data are social constructionism, poststructuralism and feminism. These theoretical lenses mean I will explore the contradictory simultaneous intersecting commonsense discourses within and outside of commonsense heterosexual discourses in order to identify the spaces for resistant ways of being desiring subjects. However the main research focus is to explore the lines of force that intersect to co-constitute embodied 'knowing' in order to access previously silent ways of resisting commonsense heterosexual ways of being. Therefore much of this research process will be examining the intersection between the corporeal, symbolic (discourses/discursive resources) and the material sites through talking to young women about what they like and do not like about being outside of and within heterosexual relationships. An example of a question I use to examine the intersection between these three sites is: "How do you know that you like, do not like being a girlfriend... where does this sit,what are you sensing, experiencing,what's happening with your body?"

Part of my focus on the force and potential of the corporeal and 'as if' embodied aspects of knowing that has the potential for resistance will include attending to moments of mimesis, repetitive exaggerated commonsense heterosexual practices and the accompanying potentially contradictory corporeal subjective experiences. For example, young women desiring to be a girlfriend but experiencing more fun with female friends. I will also examine young women's experience of dissonance between heterosexual practices, corporeal pleasure and wellbeing. The more corporeal, less discursive experiences of knowing pleasure and pain are enabled through my position as a critical realist and Nightingale's and Cromby's (2002) ideas of referentiality, Braidotti's (2003) and Irigaray's (1985) ideas of sexual difference and Damasio's (1994; 1999) ideas of how our neurophysiologic bodies intersect to partially co-constitute knowing and subjective desire. I will ask young women about their 'real' differences between pleasure, discomfort, pain and burden. I will identify these 'real' differences by examining the intersection between subjective desires such as being a girlfriend and embodied discomfort

produced through these forms of being with the purpose of enabling a space for resistant subjective desires. Therefore the aim of this research is to facilitate these commonsense resistant ways of speaking through questions that explore what they like and do not like, not only as girlfriends but also outside of heterosexual contexts. In this way I will trace their more corporeal and embodied experiences of pleasure and discomfort, their feelings and senses, and their subjective experiences of the physical states associated with what young women experience as liking and not liking.

Within this research project I will be exploring young women's discourses of self surveillance in terms of what circumstances produce specific discourses that enable this form of disciplinary power within female friendship groups. The study aims to explore young women's talk about the specific material consequences of being and not being a girlfriend both within their friendship groups and outside of these groups. The research aims to analyse the texts and identify which discourses intersect with each other to produce the necessary spaces and contradictions to enable resistant ideas of self-surveillance that have the potential to increase young women's wellbeing. The research will be exploring the circumstances that allow for resistant/alternative forms of disciplinary power involving 'ideas of self' and other women that improve young women's wellbeing.

This research project will also explore how young women are positioned within simultaneously contradictory commonsense and resistant discourses in female friendships. For example do 'girlfriends' hold more legitimacy in discussion groups and do they also simultaneously access resistant discourses with the trouble with men? How are young women positioned within commonsense discourses outside heterosexuality? What does this form of positioning enable in terms of wellbeing?

It is becoming increasingly visible to me that both young and more mature women have access to discourses and gender practices that prioritize their male partner's needs before their own to the detriment of their own wellbeing. However the material, corporeal and symbolic circumstances that produce this cultural knowledge and enable 'heterosex' are very different for younger and more mature women. As already discussed women recovering from cancer frequently develop an ethics of care for themselves and other younger women. In contrast the young women I work with do not appear to access or utilize knowledge around their relationship with other women, including their mothers, when discussing their desire to be a girlfriend, despite the pain experienced with penetrative sex. Most young women who I talk to have not talked to their mothers or

girlfriends about their sexual pain because they experience this as a sign they are not proper women. I believe the force of their subjective desire to be 'girlfriends' and their distress as being positioned outside normality has very effectively silenced my own established practices of exploring women's relationships with other women when looking at their access to material resources (access to intimacy and support outside of heterosexual relationships) within their day to day lives. This research is an act of resistance to this forceful heterosexual silence. Resistance is a central theoretical concept in this research and my contradictory simultaneous position as an older women, a gendered researcher interested in young women's wellbeing, a mother who has a daughter and a recipient of young women's 'expert' knowledge of themselves and their intimate relationships will produce very specific spaces for resistance. The young women participants will also be occupying competing subject positions which will produce specific disruptions and spaces for resistance, such as being positioned as both experts in terms of their local knowledge and non experts in terms of their youth and occupational status and being positioned as female friends to female and male friends and at times as girlfriends to boyfriends. This research is designed to explore the spaces between simultaneously contradictory forms of positioning within and between subjects, myself and the participants, and will produce specific forms of resistance.

One of the lines of force that this research will explore is an active "I", and when participants are positioned as female friends, an active 'we'. These forms of agency facilitated by the research may enable specific legitimate positions within commonsense discourses that are reasonably silent within academic literature. My research aim is to position the participants as 'active' more than 'acted upon' and explore the consequences they experience when exploring alternative ways of being, such as talking as active agents with specific alternative desires and wants (Davies, 1997). Therefore this research will explore the consequences for young women who occupy an active 'I' within resistant positions both within female friendship discussions and in individual interviews in order to identify alternative subjective desires.

My research analysis will also examine young women's conversation for the presence and absence of an 'abject other'. If I am able to identify the dilemmas experienced by young women when their female friends are in heterosexual trouble I can then explore their embodied feelings about these situations. My understanding will be that

embodied 'feelings' or senses are understood within a critical realist not psychoanalytic framework as discussed in Chapter 2.

My research orientation and questioning incorporates Irigaray's and Braidotti's ideas of women and their orientation to an 'other of the same' where the same is a normal man and where they hold less legitimacy within these relationships because of their difference from the normal. I will be looking for where heterosexual ethical discourses intersect and produce resistant discourses and ethical orientation to self and female others (other of the same) as different from men (other of the other). One of the silences I have identified within the stories of young women with sexual pain is an orientation to female friends. I understand this silence is about their all consuming need to 'cure' their pain problem and return to being 'proper women'. I do not assume that an ethics of care in relationship to a female other is absent rather that it is currently being smothered by a phallogocentric ethical orientation. Therefore I will be deliberately exploring young women's subjective experiences of pleasure and desire in relationship to female friends as well as their subjective desire to be a girlfriend. I will resist the positivist developmental ideological force that prioritizes young women being in relation to boyfriends by conducting my research amongst female friends and intentionally exploring young women in relationship to female friends.

I will explore whether the young women I talk to outside clinical settings have access to non-phallic ways of touching such as the touch between female friends. I will also explore how young women's potential to exit phallic ways of being intimate within an intimate relationship intersects with their male partner's way of being and touching as a boyfriend. To achieve this I will access young women's critical lens within resistant discourses that speak and access commonsense discourses about the trouble with men in exclusive female contexts. For example, what do young women think restrains young men from accessing alternative ways of being intimate? How good were specific young men as lovers? When and how do young women experience the male other as being able to be a boyfriend with an ethics of care for them as girlfriends? Within clinical settings young women's stories include their embodied experiences of touch outside of overtly sexual touch. However this form of touch stops once penetrative sex has begun within heterosexual relationships. Many young women I work with talk about how they have stopped non-sexual touch within their established heterosexual relationships because it is often interpreted by their male partners as showing their willingness to complete this form

of intimacy with painful penetrative sex. My clinical experience indicates that part of understanding of sexual difference theory is about how young boys and men need to reconnect to the female rather than assume young women do not have access to the corporeal 'maternal' other (Braidotti, 2003). Young women's access to the 'maternal other' is frequently restrained through the material need to prioritize a male partner's needs in order to avoid undesirable consequences.

A central process for many mature women I work with is the exploration of sexual differences in terms of preferred sexual and non-sexual touch, forms of desire and differences within and between women, between and within individual men and between men and women. For the last ten years exploring sexual differences has been a predominant narrative within my clinical work and has, of all the strategies I have utilized, more successfully constituted alternative ways of being for both mature women and men. Therefore I will continue to explore this form of discourse within my conversations with young women outside of the clinical context and within this project. Talking more explicitly about sexual differences and tracing young women's more embodied experiences of sexual pleasure and pain, if appropriate, would more likely occur with individuals rather than within a friendship group.

In order to access participants' experience of occupying critical positions and the subsequent access to resistant subjective desires I will be looking for moments of exaggeration of tone and humour, within the research conversations. However in the research conversations the degree of exaggeration I utilize will be less than what I would normally utilize in clinical practice with more mature women. I am aware that when working with younger women in a health setting they can interpret my humour and exaggeration as positioning them as less agentic. If I do exaggerate, it will be with a great deal of care and awareness of how each group responds to this form of critical positioning.

Another line of force which I will explore is the diverse ways western young women's material, corporeal, symbolic, embodied subjective bodies experience pleasure that simultaneously exposes them to limiting their potential to be a differentiated, worthwhile 'other'. While I admire these young women's tenacity at holding on to their access to these forms of embodied pleasure I am also deeply 'worried' about the less pleasurable outcomes from desiring this form of being. I worry about their seeming reluctance to maintain close intimate relationships with each other outside of heterosexuality, rather than carefully negotiated liaisons with other young women who

have strong subjective desires to be girlfriends. Therefore my initial research questions will be: “What is it that has young women wanting or not wanting to be girlfriends? What about being female friends? How did it come about that you didn’t want to be a girlfriend?”

As a mature woman with simultaneous similar and contradictory gender experiences I am very aware of my ‘outsider’ nomadic position when I talk to young women. Morgan and Coombes (2001) are able to articulate how the maternal woman is silenced and positioned as illegitimate within families and I am very aware I may occupy this position (at times) within my conversations with some young women. However I will utilize this nomadic position to access spaces for resistance within conversations.

In conclusion the purpose of this research conversation is that it will intersect across different generational subjective desires that enable us to talk to each other as other women (other of the same) in a way that positions us and gives us access to a critical stance (outsider/nomad) on heterosexuality (other of the other) and as a consequence co-constitutes alternative ways of being. The research conversation will focus on young women’s specific embodied experiences (i.e. pleasure/pain/anguish) of being, or not being a girlfriend, in a way that is able to trace the material, physical and symbolic aspects of desire and resistance. Prior to stating my research question I will summarize how I understand wellbeing.

4.1 A critical realist view of wellbeing

Throughout this process of writing the introductory chapters I have been resistant to defining wellbeing. My embodied response was: “How can I define wellbeing outside of specific contexts as every workplace has shifted my understandings of what this means”? However, an ‘critical realist’ position incorporates that we come to every research project (conversations between subjects), usually with good intentions based on pre-existing meanings of what is and then precede to negotiate new knowledge within unstable ideologies (Billig; 1988; Gergen, 1985; Parker, 1999). This fits with Morgan and Coombes (2001) theorizing about how cumulative historical gendered knowledge intersects with the fluid ongoing co-constitution of knowledge. Therefore I have traced the forms of wellbeing I have encountered, to date, within my practice, and prior to these ideas transforming within the research process.

Consistent with a critical realist position my understanding of wellbeing is; an embodied subjective experience that is co-constituted through the intersection of symbolic,

corporeal and material resources. Corporeality refers to Damasio's idea of physiological homeostasis and referential difference providing subjects with a sense of change in their physical states which they understand and speak about through symbolic resources such as happiness, tiredness joy, sadness, wellness, not so well (Cromby, 2006; Damasio, 1999). To date all the women I have worked with in both community and physical health settings have had access to 'knowing' whether they are feeling well, unwell, happy, not so happy, and sad. Whereas women who are not going through health concerns, and do not present in my clinic, may feel neither particularly well nor unwell at any one point of time. Damasio talks about this subjective experience as not very noticeable unless the person is asked about their state of health. My clinical work is defined through working with women who have exaggerated and overt process of distress and happiness.

Positivist psychological paradigms tend to understand young women's wellbeing through the language of resilience and risk but my review of this literature highlights how meanings of resilience are very much dependent on cultural and gender specificity (Bennett, 2001; Brown, 2008; Haworth & Hart, 2007; Kumpfer, 1999; Pianta & Walsh, 1998). Instead I will explore young women's specific signs of wellbeing through tracing what they understand as increasing or restraining their subjective experiences of wellbeing at discursive and non-discursive sites. As stated what is or is not wellbeing as understood through my clinical practice may not be meaningful for young women outside of primary health settings. But my prevention lens will have me screening for specific material resources across cultural and gender contexts that have been associated with wellbeing.

The material markers I have identified across cultural contexts that signify to me they may have an impact on wellbeing are not dissimilar to those produced within sociological and economic theories. These theories include ideas of cultural movement and change within what is considered well or not well at any one point in time (Billson & Fluehr-Lobban, 2005). For example, Dittmar (2008) discusses how wellbeing is currently defined in some western contexts through consumer discourses such as what you have, whether it is a specific job, car, high status partner, or clothes. In other words what you consume is what you are and how well you are judged to be. In contrast Billson and Fluehr-Lobban (2005) define wellbeing through a local and global lens and propose that the markers for female wellbeing can be evaluated through looking at specific populations in terms of maternal mortality, female control over fertility (I would add incidence of STDs), incidence of physical and sexual abuse and level of income and workload. From

this assessment New Zealand young women may be considered unwell, in that they have a significant incidence of male partner violence, teenage pregnancy and high levels of STDs (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004).

Reading these forms of theoretical paradigms has enabled me to recognize that while I always screen for each young woman's specific understanding of what it is to be well, I also simultaneously screen for physical and sexual safety, economic viability and gender burden in the form of prioritizing others' needs before their own (Dobash & Dobash, 1998; Elvridge, 1997; Fanslow, 1993; Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; Fisher, 1991; Jackson, 1999).

During this research I will use these material markers as well as individual subjective experiences of wellbeing. I will be exploring whether young women have access to pleasure within or outside of heterosexual practices in the relative absence of risk and as a definition of wellbeing. My clinical experience and understanding of the physiological response of the corporeal body to pleasure demonstrates this is also frequently a marker for symbolically understood states of happiness and wellbeing. Finally as I associate resistance with wellbeing part of my understanding of this term is associated with young women having the material, physical and discursive space to access a critical lens that enables resistance to gender specific practices that decrease wellbeing while simultaneously accessing alternative ways of being that increase wellbeing. Being positioned as a 'critical realist' within a feminist framework means there is no theoretical rationale to distinguish between or identify alternative ways of being separately from wellbeing. Part of the aim of this research is to access pleasurable alternative ways of being, outside of phallogocentric/positivist ideas of wellbeing and which do not silence some women having experiences of wellbeing within heterosexual contexts.

Concluding comments and research question

These introductory chapters have highlighted my feelings that I am involved in one of the most powerfully quiet wars of my thirty-two years as a health worker. I am experiencing the young women I work with as being restrained from experiencing wellness and joy, in the absence of risk, through multiple lines of force within heterosexuality.

That power operates through discursive resources to partially constitute young women's subjective desire has been widely discussed in feminist poststructuralist and social constructionist academic publications. However, the movement from radical liberal

feminism to feminist post-structuralism has been too abrupt to be useful for clinical practice with young women in specific settings. In order for feminist post-structuralism to be more useful in practice I need to examine more thoroughly the silences these approaches to knowledge production have enabled.

Subjective desire, from these introductory chapters, is co-constituted between subjects in specific cultural and gendered contexts. The main aim of this research is to identify the lines of power operating in young women lives that have the potential to enable resistance. Therefore I will explore young women's texts for moments of disruption between intersecting lines of force that produce resistance and alternative ways of being that locates a desiring female 'agentic I' outside of heterosexual normative gender practices and produces wellbeing. Therefore, the key research questions for this project are:

What are the symbolic, corporeal and material (including location) intersecting lines of force that co-constitute the participants resistant ways of being within and outside of heterosexual relationships?

How does the intersection of symbolic, corporeal and material resources co-constituting resistant subjective operate to increase the participants wellbeing?

Chapter 5

Methodology

Introduction

This research project will utilize a feminist standpoint as well as Parker's (1990: 1992) critical discourse analysis, both of which incorporate the idea of reflexivity (Harding, 1991). Both theoretical lenses will be utilized to collect and analyse research data and are compatible with the specific theories outlined within the introductory chapters.

Section 5.1 will examine the feminist research guidelines of how reflexivity and specificity informs the research process. Section 5.2 will outline the research design. Section 5.3 describes the procedures I used to recruit the participants, gather, transcribe and analyse the data, as well as the summary sent to both the schools and participants. Section 5.4 addresses the specific ethical considerations I needed for this project and Section 5.5 examines my analytical procedure (Parker, 1990; 1992).

5.1 Feminist research and reflexivity

The relationship between the researcher and the participants is about the operation of power and the production of specific knowledges which will produce certain outcomes for them and my health practices (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). The purpose of the introductory chapters is to provide the necessary information on my location and theoretical lenses in order for the reader to understand how I co-constitute research knowledge and to open spaces for dialogue about the usefulness and credibility of this socially constructed knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 1998).

Most feminist research, whether from an emancipatory or poststructural theoretical position, requires a critical process that includes reflexivity and specificity (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002) through questions that include the social power relations, such as who is the researcher, what is their background, what is the specific context to be researched in order to achieve strong objectivity? Strong objectivity is not to be confused with the objectivity and validity claims of positivist research and the production of dominant knowledges. Strong objectivity refers to *"treating the researcher and the subjects of knowledge as embodied and visible, and also as socially heterogeneous"* (Ramazanoglu &

Holland, 2002, p. 51). Strong knowledge obtained through reflexivity will counter the risks of relativity and allows feminists to inform debates about which knowledge is a better representation of 'reality' for which specific context. Strong objectivity is associated with a commitment to liberatory knowledge and is compatible with this research process.

While agreeing with standpoint theorists that some knowledge is better for some women than other alternative knowledge, I do not use the concept of objectivity when talking about the production of knowledge through research (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). Utilizing a feminist poststructuralist framework I view the research processes as constituting specific knowledges produced within a particular social and cultural context.

Reflexivity is an evolving open ended practice and will continue to change as I write and think within the PhD framework. A reflexive approach to research is very much associated with specificity in order to produce specific meanings. For example, at times my writing will suggest that there is a clear distinction between and within entities such as material consequences and health and at other time specific forms of health are a material outcome. What I mean when talking about a phenomenon/entity such as a normative gender practice is only meaningfully explained within the context of this research. This idea of specific knowledges draws on several forms of feminist theory: emancipatory and social action which talks about individual and collective consciousness with particular groups of women; standpoint theory which talks about identifying situated knowledges that are resistant to dominant patriarchal knowledges; feminist poststructuralism which talks about simultaneous presence of similarities of difference where women can simultaneously hold similar and different contradictory positions within discourses and specific locations (Davies, 1997; Harding, 1991; Mann, 1987; Mies, 1983).

Finally for me it is important, as already discussed, that although I am 'other' when working with young women in terms of sexual experiences, age and position as the 'expert' health worker, I am also same in relation to men (Hollway, 1989). I work and live in a gendered world of being identified as a woman and I am positioned to comply with (with various levels of awareness), and at other times willingly participate in, some commonsense gender practices, while also desiring and being able to resist other gender practices (Hollway, 1989; Grosz, 1987). For example, I will constantly be adjusting the interview process according to what I am experiencing within my talk with young women.

5.2 Research design

The research design has been formulated around the central research aim which is to explore how young women's commonsense and resistant embodied subjective desires are constituted within particular cultural contexts. This is a qualitative project drawing on social constructionist epistemology and employed both friendship group discussions and individual interviews to generate the data.

5.2.1 Stage one: friendship group discussions

Both research and clinical practice demonstrate that exclusive female friendship groups will access more resistant discourses than groups consisting of male and female friends or girlfriends and boyfriends (Allen, 2003). Given the potential for some participants to have experienced some form of gendered violence I needed to reduce this restraint through excluding young men (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004). Because my health experience indicates that commonsense discourses are more available in safe female friendship groups, I screened all participants for safety within family, friendship, school and heterosexual relationships (refer Appendix D). This screening will ensure that the more overt processes of gendered power are eliminated so that my analysis can focus on more covert forms of power within and outside of heterosexuality. In order to ensure friendship group safety I recruited participants through an initial participant and then invited her to recruit a safe friendship group. In order to facilitate young women's orientation to both female friends and heterosexual relationships I designed the research around friendship group discussions. In this way the participants were positioned as friends who are emotionally invested in their female friends' wellbeing in heterosexual relationships. Through this form of questioning I had access to normally silent embodied experiences that informs how women feel about other women's distress in heterosexual relationships. This form of silence was discussed in chapter 3.

I also sought access to more commonsense heterosexual and resistant discourses around the trouble with boyfriends by using groups of friends rather than fellow students. Fellow students are more unknown to each other as participants and may have silenced commonsense discourses in order to maintain their reputation within the wider school context. I recruited six friendship groups as I wanted enough conversational data to ensure saturation of the culturally accessible discourses within this particular geographical, cultural and social economic context.

From these initial friendships discussions I selected 13 participants for individual interviews.

5.2.2. Stage Two: Individual interviews

The main purpose of the individual interviews was to explore resistant discourses about the participants' personal experience of being outside of being a girlfriend as well as exploring their own personal experiences of being a girlfriend. Therefore during the discussions and analysis of the texts I identified resistant discourses and embodied 'moments' of knowing and desiring to be. From these resistant discourses and embodied moments I selected the forms that I predicted having possibilities for increasing young women's wellbeing. I invited the individual participants who have created these resistant spaces for individual interviews. I selected 13 participants once again to ensure I had a saturation of the current discourses available in this particular context.

Individual interviews facilitated different knowledge because of the absence of female hierarchies and of participants' awareness of friends' ideas about what is right and wrong for them (Schippers, 2007). Any resistant discourses that I identified as 'risky' for a specific participant in a friendship group discussion I restrained and then explored further within an individual interview. I did not facilitate discussions on participants' experiences of sexual pleasure in friendship discussions, but if a young woman talked about enjoying or not enjoying sexual activity as a girlfriend I explored this in an individual interview. The individual interviews provided more privacy to explore more personal embodied moments of resistance both within and outside of overt sexuality. Women also tend not to discuss our more 'risky' embodied subjectivity in the presence of boyfriends and some other women. By risk, outside of contexts of overt violence, I mean young women's fears of being positioned as illegitimate, or 'abject other'. I rescreened for heterosexual, family and friendship safety prior to all individual interviews. The screening tool was the same across the groups and individual interviews. For these reasons my conversations with the research participants was at times more active during individual interviews directing the interviews towards participants' embodied experiences as well as female friends' understandings of other young women's embodied experiences of being girlfriends in discussion groups. Young women, consistent with Nightingale and Cromby's (2002) ideas of referentiality, talked about their more embodied experiences of being a girlfriend by using dichotomies to describe embodied difference, such as good and bad. I also used this form of language when talking and asking about more corporeal embodied experiences and

at times talked ‘as if’ the body was separate from the mind, not intimately connected and continually intersecting and evolving (Damasio, 1994). For example: “*I’m going to ask you some really body, body, body type questions, I know that our mind and body is not separate they’re integrated but*”.

Within the individual interview I asked questions about the young women themselves rather than friends such as “Tell me about your desire to be a girlfriend, not a girlfriend?” “What do you like about not being a girlfriend....a female friend....?”.

5.3 Procedure

5.3.1 Recruitment

There were three main stages to the recruitment of participants: recruitment of 2-3 co-educational and single sex schools; recruitment of six female friendship groups and then selection and recruitment of 12 participants for individual interviews. I used several different approaches to recruit three secondary schools. My first step was to ring the personal assistant of three secondary schools and asked for the appropriate person to send a letter inviting participation in this project and a recruitment pack containing:

The screening questionnaire (Appendix D)

The resources information sheet (Appendix E)

Information sheet (Appendix F)

Informed Consent form (Appendix Ki)

Confidentiality form (Appendix Kiii)

All personal assistants recommended that the letter and recruitment pack be sent to the school principals. Therefore the principals’ letter (Appendix C) invited the schools to participate in this research and stated that I would be recruiting Year 12 and Year 13 young women to take part in the study. Within this letter I outlined my health experience and the purpose of the study in terms of increasing young women’s wellbeing. I briefly explained the purpose of the screening for safety of the participants and the purpose of the resource sheet. This initial invitation was followed up two weeks later and I recruited one co-educational school which has worked with me on a previous project. I then rang another five other principals asking if they were interested and sent recruitment packs. Two other secondary schools agreed to participate, giving me 3 secondary schools. Each principal passed on the responsibility for recruitment to their senior school counsellor and then these counsellors chose one potential participant who I then contacted to discuss the research

project. These participants recruited 2-6 friends and the groups were formed. The time period for recruitment was one year. I recruited my first school very quickly and began the friendship group discussions and individual discussions. My second school was recruited while I was also still interviewing at my first school, but the third school was not recruited until 3 months following the first two. Each group decided on where they wanted the discussion conducted and the discussions and interviews were audiotaped. Of the three schools recruited, two were co-educational and one a single sex school and I recruited six friendship groups (3-6) participants in each. I sent an information sheet, resource sheet, and consent and confidentiality forms to the participants of the six discussion groups. I then telephoned all the participants and checked they had read the information sheet and understood the consent and confidentiality agreements. I screened each participant for family, friendship, school and heterosexual safety during an initial telephone conversation. During this call I also checked that they were comfortable discussing their research experiences with a parent and had support if needed following the discussion and individual interview. I discussed each participant's understanding of the cultural framework of the research and restraints and negotiated suitable times with school staff and participants. Each participant received information on services (resource sheet) they could use if they needed support following the discussion or individual interview (Appendix E). All friendship groups preferred that the discussions and individual interviews were conducted at school, usually in rooms provided by student health.

I recruited 13 participants for the interviews. One friendship group requested that they all had the opportunity of an individual interview and I agreed and this increased my original number of individual interviews by one. I did not use all of the interviews because although I had verbal permission to use all of them, only nine returned the release form, or emailed me permission to use their interviews. I suspect the time from beginning of the discussions until the last interview was over ten months and it was too long for the first participants interviewed to have maintained the interest and momentum enough to follow through with the written release forms for their individual interviews. The release forms were also requested just following their final National Zealand Education Authority (NEQA) exams and the first group were all fully involved in making decisions about university and obtaining work.

5.3.2 Participant demographics

All groups were culturally diverse with the exception of group 3. These friends were all of European descent including Pākehā recent British and South African immigrants. The cultures represented in this study included Pākehā , British and South African immigrants of European descent, Pacific Island, Indian, Fijian Indian, Korean and Chinese (Taiwanese and mainland China). The participants' ages ranged from 16-18 and they were from year 12 and 13. The socio-economic range of the schools which participated was between decile 5-10 and all participants had the choice of going to university when they completed their secondary schooling (Refer Table 1 and 2). When screened none of the participants disclosed experiencing significant safety risks in terms of family, friends or male partner violence. However, during one interview one participant disclosed the possibility of being hit by her father and one participant had witnessed her father's violence against her mother in the past. All participants felt emotionally comfortable discussing the research topic with friends and reported feeling supported by them. All participants reported achieving at a reasonable to high level academically.

Table 1 : Summary of participants recruited for the group discussion

Group	Pseudonyms	School	Age	Ethnicities
1	Rachel Riley Jane	Co-educational Year 13 Decile 10	17	Pakeha/Samoan Pākehā Pākehā
2	Bob Diamond Anonymous M	Co-educational Year 13 Decile 5-7	17	Samoan Fijian Indian Indian Fijian Indian
3	Mildred Betty Abby Claire Margy Lisa	Co-educational Year 12 Decile10	16-17	South African (English origin) English (Anglo- Saxon) Pākehā Pākehā
4	Angela Charlotte Sarah Celeste Megan	Single Sex Year 12 Decile 10	16-17	Chinese Korean Samoan/Pakeha Pākehā Chinese
5	Jemma Nina Georgie	Single Sex Year 13 Decile 10	17-18	Pākehā Chinese Pākehā
6	Boborange Isabella Mabel	Single Sex Year 12 Decile 10	16-17	Korean Pākehā Pākehā

Table 2: Summary of the participants demographics for individual interviews used for analysis

Participant sequence	Pseudonyms	School	Age	Ethnicities
1	Bob	Co-educational	17	Fijian Indian
2	Mildred	Co-educational	16	British (European)
3	Betty	Co-educational	16	British (European)
4	Claire	Co-educational	16	South African (English descent)
5	Maggi	Co-educational	17	Pākehā
6	Lisa	Co-educational	16	South African descent/ Pākehā
7	Jemma	Single Sex	17	Chinese New Zealander
8	Angela	Single Sex	16	Pākehā
9	Mabel	Single Sex	16	Pākehā

5.3.3 Friendship group procedure

The participants coordinated their availability amongst themselves and selected the time that suited them and me. They chose to have the discussions either before school, at lunch time or during a free period. All discussions were held on the school grounds. I provided refreshments and drinks and the interviews ranged from 45-60 minutes. Participants were given the option of audiotaping or videotaping (which was my preferred option). However, most Auckland young women have a degree of body vigilance and therefore all the participants up to group 4 chose audiotaping. At this point I stopped offering videotaping because of the difficulty of analyzing two different forms of data.

The interview schedule for the friendship group discussion was formulated from my research questions and organized around the theoretical paradigms utilized (Appendix, B). The participants were encouraged to discuss female friends' experiences of being within or outside of heterosexual relationships. My question schedule was meant as a guideline

only; I wanted to be able to explore further any ideas the participants raised that had potential for resistant commonsense discourses.

5.3.4 Individual interview schedule

During the group discussions I predicted I would be very aware of the resistant discourses that I thought would be useful for health work and the participants who accessed these were selected for individual interviews. Following the first two or three readings of the texts I became increasingly aware of contradictions within commonsense heterosexual discourses that co-constituted spaces for resistance and this awareness guided my selection of the participants for individual interviews. With Group 3 I did not follow my original procedure of selecting some group participants for individual interviews; rather I interviewed all six participants in this group. I got the impression that if I wanted any individual interviews from this group it was an all or nothing, and was not a negotiable decision. But given that past research has demonstrated patriarchal power operates through female hierarchies this context gave me the opportunity to see how this form of power was operating for these participants. I became very aware of a very strong female hierarchy working within this group during the discussion.

Once I had selected the participants with whom I wanted to conduct individual interviews I contacted them by telephone, obtained consent and sent them information packs containing the information sheet, resource sheet, and consent and confidentiality forms. I rescreened for safety either during the first telephone call or prior to the individual interview being conducted. All participants selected for individual interview were given a resource sheet with information on how to access support if they needed debriefing following the completion of the interview. All participants had access to their school counselling services. All participants had checked the friendship group transcript for accuracy and I had made the necessary corrections prior to the individual interview. I used the discussion group transcript and any points of interest within it to begin the discussion before moving on to talking about their own experiences of being or not being a girlfriend. The interview schedule was very similar to the group discussion but was orientated to their personal experiences. For example: 'Tell me about being a girlfriend, and tell me about being a friend,' "Tell me about not being a girlfriend?" (Refer Appendix G & H). The individual interviews were all conducted on school grounds, mostly during lunch time and lasted for 45-60 minutes.

5.3.5 Transcription

A standard, basic transcription notation for discursive analysis was used (Refer Appendix, J). I transcribed all group discussions and individual interviews except three due to time constraints. I obtained a transcription confidentiality agreement from two transcribers and they transcribed one group discussion and two individual interviews (Appendix K). I rechecked all three transcriptions and standardized these transcriptions with the discussions and interviews I transcribed. All audio-tapes and transcriptions were rechecked for accuracy several times. This rechecking process facilitated my initial analysis particularly in terms of the participants' enunciation, tone, exaggeration of particular phrases and words which frequently indicated strong emotion or satirical exaggeration.

5.3.6 Follow-up

All completed transcripts were sent back to the participants, checked for accuracy and then corrected. One participant wanted a paragraph changed to reflect her ideas more thoroughly. Participants were aware they could request that parts of or the entire transcript be eliminated, but none did. Nine participants signed off their individual interviews. The other participants agreed verbally on the phone to having their transcripts used but did not send the permission slip and I did not use their transcripts for the analysis. All the discussion group transcripts were checked by the participants for accuracy and used for the analysis.

All participants and schools were sent a summary of the research results (see Appendix, H). One participant was unable to be located and has not been sent a summary. I have asked her friends from her discussion group to ask her to forward me her contact details if she would like her copy of the summary. All participants have my contact details if they want further information about the research results.

5.4 Ethical considerations

My main ethical consideration in doing this research was relevance. By relevance I mean that if the participants were going to contribute time and effort to this project then at the very least it did not produce harm and at best had a high likelihood of improving my practice within health settings for other young women. I have already covered my ethical rationale for why I have chosen a 'critical realist' position for this research in Chapter 1

and believe that a return to individual subjects will produce useful insights for my own and other health workers' practice. My many years as a health worker and clinical psychologist mean that my research is grounded in feminist praxis and that I had the skills to moderate and change any research procedure that was likely to cause distress for the participants. My years within Women's Refuge have ensured that I have made 'safety' a priority in this research both in terms of their social reputation and in terms of physical safety from others as a consequence of their participation. My last ethical concern comes from a feminist poststructuralist theoretical position and my ideas that the wellbeing of mothers and daughters intersects rather than being individually determined. I wanted their mothers and where suitable their fathers to be informed, by their daughters, about this project. I did not want the mothers of these participants to feel powerless about what sort of 'knowledge' an expert 'researcher' was co-constituting and the subsequent impact this may have on her daughter's desires and wellbeing. I have worked with many mothers who have been extremely distressed when their daughters experience a decrease in wellbeing through medical treatment that they were not consulted about.

I checked that there was no significant overt bullying within the friendship group prior to conducting the research. I screened to see that the participants who had boyfriends were not experiencing male partner violence and were not worried about their boyfriends' response if they knew they were participating in this research. All participants reported having very good support systems if they needed them to debrief. Consistent with my clinical practice I checked each participant had access to ways of terminating their participation if they felt it was inappropriate for their cultural or personal belief system. This form of checking individuals' skills and agency to participate or not participate included identifying their more embodied responses to oppressive or uncomfortable research environments. All participants reported having strategies they could use to leave the research discussion and interviews without losing face in front of their friends. Contact during the process of returning transcriptions for checking for accuracy and organizing individual interviews indicated that the majority of the participants enjoyed the research process and I had more participants willing to do an individual interview than I required.

Throughout the research process I used my clinical skills and embodied knowing to stop the research process or limit discussion on specific topics that I predicted could put an individual or group at risk in terms of their reputation. Only one participant, Lisa, experienced a level of censorship and this was discussed in her follow-up interview where

she was more than able to access an agentic position when thinking about her friends' disciplinary responses.

Confidentiality was explained at the beginning and periodically during the research project. The participants chose a pseudonym at the beginning of the group discussion and understood that they would not discuss fellow participants' personal stories with other non participants. The participants understood how I was going to report their discussions, their right to change or eliminate what was transcribed and how the research information was to be kept at Massey University for five years.

My last ethical consideration was that the school counsellors who put such a lot of effort into organizing my access to these participants were given enough non specific information about the research process that they felt comfortable they had not exposed their students to a stressful or unethical situation. This was done through giving positive feedback to them about the usefulness and enjoyment of each discussion and interview without disclosing confidential information.

5.5 Analytical approach

Critical discourse analysis is reading and understanding research data through a 'critical realist' lens that incorporates identifying coherence within the meanings offered through the young women's talk; identifying what phenomena become objects through discourse; how subjects, while being objects, are known through discourse, and allow us a sense of being a particular self; and how reflexivity and identifying the contradictions within commonsense discourses assist in identifying emerging resistant discourse (Parker, 1990; 1992). Parker (1992), compatible with feminist theory, writes that the process of critical discourse analysis is not meant to be read as sequential and does not involve a formal analytic method but rests more on the researcher's intuition and interpretation of the material to be analysed. I organized the material to be analysed through the theoretical and clinical lenses outlined in the introductory chapters.

Parker (1992), utilizing a critical lens, defines discourse as "a system of statements which constructs an object" in order to be known and become real (p. 191). He takes a critical realist position in that he states that although phenomena are brought into reality and discursively known through becoming objects within discourse, this does not exclude the idea that phenomena can have a reality outside of discourse: "A discourse may refer to an independent reality outside of a discourse, but is given another reality within the

discourse” (Parker, 1992, p. 9). I expand this critical realist position in that what I need to do with my research is to explore how more embodied experiences (knowledge) and discourse co-constitute what young women ‘know’ about relationships (Cromby, 2004).

Associated with the idea that discourse brings objects into reality is the idea that a subject who speaks, writes, hears or reads discourse is an object and that discourse allows us the space to be particular selves or objects, such as “I’m not a boyfriend person” (Parker, 1992; 1990). Within the context of this research the young women and I (the researcher) were invited to take many, sometimes simultaneous contradictory subject positions within our talk about girlfriends. When analysing the discourses from this research I utilized Davies’ & Harré’s (1990) and Davies et al., (2002) positioning theory which looks at how we are simultaneously, as subject, both positioned and position ourselves as subjects within multiple contradictory discourses and how power operates through these speaking/listening positions in specific contexts. An example is that within discussions and interviews the young women were located and defined as subjects within simultaneously multiple, contradictory, positions such as girlfriends involved in sexual play, Christians, wiser than boyfriends, or disrespected by boyfriends. Of particular interest to me when analysing these texts was the material consequences of being positioned and taking specific positions within both commonsense and resistant discourses.

5.5.1 Critical discourses methodological process

Parker writes that an initial step in doing critical discourse analysis is recognizing the material that you are going to analyse, whether it be something you have seen, heard, read, or translated into text. My material consists of the 19 transcripts (texts) that I obtained from the six audio-taped friendship group discussions and 13 individual interviews. These transcribed texts were analysed through repeated readings in order to identify intersecting commonsense discourses and contradictions and emerging resistant discourses around being and not being a girlfriend. Parker (1990; 1992) also recommends that we trace emerging discourses through their historical context and that we identify how these discourses function for different subjects, institutions and subsequent ideologies.

Parker defines a discourse as a system of meanings made up of statements that can be grouped together and have coherence because they refer to the same topic and utilize cultural available understandings as to what constitutes a topic (Parker, 1992). An example is that my research question around “How does the desire to be a girlfriend come

about?" rests on the assumption that some young women in Auckland desire to be girlfriends and that being a girlfriend/boyfriend consists of a certain way of being. This could be going out with a person on a date either alone or as a pair within a friendship group, and by the age of 16-17 years it can include some sort of sexual intimacy (Furman, 1999). There is a similar historical understanding of desire in the context of heterosexual relationships in that this phenomenon usually refers to sexual desire within the girlfriend culture but which I have expanded within my questioning to include both sexual desire and the desire (want) to be a girlfriend (Fisher, 2005).

I examined the texts for repeated co-constituted cultural and embodied subjective understandings of what it is to be girlfriend, which I organized into categories in order to talk about how these particular discourses may potentially restrain and enable wellbeing. Parker views this as writing a story about how these young women experience their worlds through being or not being a girlfriend and this intersected with my specific questioning style and how I read the texts in terms of my theoretical and clinical perspectives. For example, within the texts I asked the participants specific questions on their idea of themselves as girlfriends to boyfriends, friends to other young women, and daughters to immigrant and Christian families as well as questions about ideas they had about themselves and wellbeing.

5.5.2 Identifying contradictions and resistant discourses through reflexivity: discourse reflecting on discourse

Consistent with both Parker's critical realist position and feminist poststructuralist theory is the idea that these more or less coherent historical understandings are not water tight (Parker, 1992). An important part of doing critical discourse analysis is utilizing reflexivity and identifying the spaces, or contradictions within discourses, in order to identify emerging resistant discourses. This reflecting on commonsense discourses through discourse is part of Parker's (1992) ideas on how both the researcher and the participants are involved with the process of reflexivity of critical discourse and how a researcher's attention to the participants' contradictory discourses can produce resistant/emerging discourses. I used this form of reflexivity to identify emerging, resistant discourses when analysing the texts from transcribed discussions. Finally Parker talks about how discourses emerge within a specific historical time, how discourses are always shifting and changing and how identifying these changes can subvert the current form of being a girlfriend, or proper young woman (Warr, 2001; Fisher, 2005). In tracing where

the discourses emerge from I utilized Davies' ideas around tracing the multiple lines of domination, by examining discursive practices, "ongoing repetitive citations of the known order", that may restrain young women's ways of being within relationships (Davies, et al., 2002, p. 1). There are several instances of poststructuralist feminist research on the heterosexual discourse utilized by young women within Auckland that I can draw on to trace where the heterosexual discourses have emerged from and how this research identifies emerging, resistant discourses (Allen, 2003; Darragh, 2004; Gavey, 1992; McPhillips & Braun, 2003).

For me this project is also about tracing the young women's own history of embodied knowing about being and not being a girlfriend and wellbeing. To do this I will be drawing on clinical practices of tracing more embodied knowing. As already discussed, in order to frame a question about more embodied knowing I talk about the 'body' as if it was distinguishable from the mind while simultaneously acknowledging it is not. To do this type of talk I am borrowing Irigaray's and Braidotti's ideas around how young women come into being in relation to the male other, which for me opens up the possibility of being otherwise, and Cromby's (2003) ideas of identifying alternative ways of being through embodied difference. There are two parts to my analysis in this area: 1) Analysing the texts for when young women identify experiencing embodied discomfort within their available heterosexual discursive and material practices and which in the introductory chapters I have identified as a dissonance between the available heterosexual discourses and more embodied, corporeal knowing; and 2) analysing the texts for when young women experience wellbeing both within and outside of being a girlfriend. Both these strategies for analysis may enable me to identify alternative ways of being that fit better with young women's wellbeing.

In summary I transcribed, then read and re read the texts provided by my taped conversations with young women many times in order to identify the coherent stories around being or not being a girlfriend. These coherent stories I have organized into the following discourses: The security, developmental and balance discourses (Chapter 5); the risk and pleasure discourse and being abject other in relationship to other women (Chapter 6), and the nomad discourse (Chapter 7). These discourses intersected with both commonsense heterosexual, commonsense resistant discourses and embodied knowing that provided spaces for resistance and alternative forms of subjective desiring and being female

Chapter 6

Results and discussion: “Desiring or not desiring to be a girlfriend”

6.1 Introduction

After repeated readings of the transcripts I organized the data into the following participant orientations: 1) In relationship to desiring or not desiring to be a girlfriend; 2) Largely in relationship to female friends both within heterosexual and outside heterosexual contexts; 3) Being positioned within resistant ways of being that provided pleasure; 4) Being nomads outside of the phallogocentric centre when in relationship to self and nomadic boyfriends. I then organized these four forms of orientation into seven discourses. In chapter 6, I discuss four discourses that focus on how the participants talked about young women and their desire to be or not be a girlfriend, namely 1) physical and emotional security in section 6.2; 2) developmental, in section 6.3; 3) balance and wellbeing, in section 6.4, and 4) risk and pleasure, in section 6.5.

In chapter 7 I outline a further three discourses. In two the participants were orientated to each other as female friends, and in the third participants were positioned as desiring subjects not only outside of heterosexual discourses but within alternative ways of being: 5) female friends, pleasure and resistance; 6) females friends, ‘abject other’ and resistance; and 7) the nomad discourse.

My theoretical lens required identifying specific forms of subjective desire emerging from the intersection of material, symbolic and embodied sites of knowing. Therefore although I organized the results into ‘discourses’, that is, (symbolic) representations of subjective desire, I also identified embodied moments of resistance and corporeal pleasure, including those about freedom and burden. I began conducting my individual interviews shortly after completing the first two group discussions which meant I was accessing specific commonsense resistant and heterosexual discourses early in the process and this influenced how I developed the following research conversations. Throughout the research process and analysis the group discussions and individual interviews intersected and therefore are considered together throughout the results. Resistant discourses identified within the discussions were expanded in the individual interviews, such as the nomad discourse.

In describing each discourse, I use one coherent story, and explore what it means in terms of more embodied (corporeal and feeling) and material knowing and subjective desire. I describe and justify why I have chosen these particular discourses based on the text provided by participants and my theoretical research questions. I identify contradictions within these commonsense discourses; I identify how the participants talk about their embodied subjectivity and how the intersection between embodied subjectivity, commonsense and resistant discourses can produce further resistance; and finally I begin to identify the implications for resistant and commonsense ways of being that co-constitute specific forms of subject desire and as a consequence specific forms of wellbeing.

Commonsense discourses refers to both heterosexual commonsense discourses, as well as the resistant commonsense discourses present within women's talk about men that position the male with less legitimacy and resist heterosexual ways of being. Here, commonsense discourses are ways of talking that I recognize instantly as repeatedly occurring within everyday talk within exclusively female contexts I have worked within health and community settings. I associate commonsense discourses with negative consequences such as loss of reputation if utilized in the presence of some academic contexts or men.

6.2 Physical and emotional security discourse

A frequent response from the participants to my initial questions of "How do you think this desire, want to be a girlfriend comes about?" and "What do like about having a boyfriend?" concerned security and came from several group discussions and individual interviews. Group 1 stated:

Riley: Um, um security in a way.

Rachel & Jane: Yeah, Yeah

(Lines: 187-188)

Group 5 and 6 did not extensively draw on this security discourse possibly because I changed my interviewing schedule for these two groups in order to see what other forms of discourses might emerge. For example I started out asking more general questions about their cultural origins, friendship and interests prior to asking more specifically about what they liked or did not like about being a girlfriend, or a female friend. Group 6 produced more ideas of a desiring self and Group 4 more ideas of an autonomous self compared to the four groups who more frequently co-constituted ideas that boyfriends

were desirable because they provided security. This security discourse was co-constituted in several ways, including ideas of physical security and safety, emotional security, and intimacy. Group 3's discussion and individual interviews provided the majority of ideas around physical security. The emotional security ideas were accessed across several discussion groups and interviews. I initially discuss Group 3's ideas around physical security, although aspects of their ideas of physical security intersect repeatedly with emotional security.

6.2.1 Physical security

Group 3 participants spoke of physical security in situations where they might be approached by a strange male:

Abby: It is a safety thing for me. I don't like. I've had a few where I've been like out at night time and I've had strange men come up to me and things like that when I was younger and it is, it is really scared me like. I feel a lot a lot safer to have a boy with, even if I'm in, if I'm in a group of girls I'd feel safer to have a boy with us.

Mildred and others: Yeah

Abby: I just like having someone there like I know security barrier wise.

Mildred: um, an? like yeah and when you're walking somewhere and with your with your boyfriend and holding his hand and something you just feel safer nothing's going to (come?) to you, nothing's going to happen to you because you're with him.

Abby: He'll, he'll, he'll look after you like protect if someone did come up to you and try to like you know

(Lines: 548-562)

Abby talks about how scared she was when strangers approached her on the street at night and a boyfriend being able to protect her against this risk. 'Scared' refers to a feeling state known to women within commonsense discourses around how strange men approaching them when they are on their own at night are dangerous. I did not explore this feeling of being scared because I assumed that '**strange**' indicates risk and that Abby experienced this as a 'real' threat to her physical safety as outlined in the next excerpt:

Prue: "how do you think this desire to have a boyfriend comes about?"

Lisa: Oh like image, the images on like on TV and stuff.

Abby: What no it is because of security

Claire: Yeah to like feel wanted kind of thing.

Abby: To have people back you up".

(Lines: 24-29)

Abby's rejection of the media as co-constituting a desire for a boyfriend in comparison to her 'real' experiences of male strangers at night may have been facilitated by our secondary schools' media studies within the English curriculum. These studies are

designed to provide young women with a critique of how the media shapes our desires. Abby's understanding suggests that media shaped desires are less real, compared to what she has experienced on the street, such as her sense of fear and subsequent physiological response as a young woman by herself at night in the presence of a strange male. Abby's emphasis is on the need for back up in the presence of risk, whereas Claire is emphasizing the caring, emotional aspect of security co-constituting a desire for a boyfriend.

Here strange men are seen as a 'real' threat and a known male body creates a security barrier and protects the physically weaker female through strength; there is also the more socially constructed idea of how male territories work to keep out strange and potentially dangerous men. It is not socially accepted for another male to cross the boundaries into another male's female territory. This draws on the traditional heterosexual idea that women belong to men and because they 'are less capable' than men need protection. It accesses a 'might is right' discourse similar to Butera's (2008) analysis of how power operates through height and masculinities and also fits with Irigaray's (1985) idea that women are both the same but different to 'the other of same', in that they are brought into being in relation to a normal male but do not have the same capabilities as men under this form of definition, they are 'less than' men.

Group 3 talked about how having a boyfriend or guy mate works in terms of male territories by protecting their girlfriend or female mate from unwanted male attention at dance parties:

Betty: and like having a boy with you I don't think lot of other boys would think of coming up to you because it's so obvious you are going out with.....(text cut)... therefore they wouldn't [even

Abby: [so you wouldn't put up with the other stuff=

Betty: = yeah, yeah, they wouldn't even think about trying to get your number because you've obviously got a boyfriend, so what's the point?.....(text cut)....

Mildred: yeah she was with her boyfriend and there was this guy [and

Abby: [Do you remember when that guy was dancing with me and I'm like =

Mildred: =yeah, and um we went there and there was just me, her, her boyfriend and his friend, he wasn't going out with me and this guy came on to me and I was like, they doing faces to them, "no I don't like it" and Betty,.... she was with her boyfriend so then I didn't know whether she was going to come and stop him...(text cut)... but his friend came out with and like started pushing him out of the way and stuff (and dance with me) so then he walked away and like "oh obviously they are going out" and the guy, B, the next guy that came on to me he was just like "oh sorry this is my sister can you go away.

(Competing voices)

Mildred: oh sorry and walked off () obviously thought brother and sister, ohhh my God I'm so sorry and just like walked off like straight away....(text cut).

(Lines: 564-620)

In this situation there was the possibility of physical fighting between males and the understanding that this young woman belonged to another male, either as a girlfriend or sister, was sufficient to stop an unknown male from coming on to her: The participants are explaining how territories work partially through the idea of male on male fighting. I understand “*came on to me*” is where a strange young man is crossing the physical boundaries and making Mildred uncomfortable because she did not have authority over how her body is being touched and produces a fear of further physical or sexual assault. In response to this interpretation I asked Betty a more explicit question:

Prue: Can I ask whereabouts do they usually start touching?

Betty: Oh well when you're dancing they usually stand behind you because the guy's obviously taller and they like hold you around here but they might start going down and you, it's kinda to me it's not really acceptable you can't go touching someone like that when you don't even know them, you don't know what their standards are or their morals.

(Lines: 512-517)

In later excerpts Betty talks about this behaviour as groping. This excerpt illustrates the idea of material size and being touched in a way that Betty found unacceptable. I will discuss the impact of physical size and how this may be a line of force that intersects with heterosexual discourses to partially dominate young women in some situations shortly (Bureta, 2008).

In questioning Group 3 further about how they are positioned in terms of authority to say ‘no’ to unwanted male attention at dance parties, they became more specific about who was a potentially dangerous male compared to a strange male on the street. The excerpt below illustrates how a known male can physically take a strange male on if they are approaching a female who does not want to be touched.

Mildred: Yeah because we were out there dancing again and she was at out there and we meet her Abby there and um dancing and stuff and this guy came on to me and she was just like, they, they, basically saying () this was not good

Claire? Lisa?: and came up with “oh sweetie can you get off my best friend please” and he was just like Woooooh and then just walked off () again.

Abby: It's just like the guy's either drunk or on pills or just like () and when you say 'no' they like fight back and that's when it's like that's when it's much like they have so much power over me sort of thing they could break do anything they wanted to us, if they wanted to “We all take self defense” (in a sing song voice)

All: {laughter} yeah

Prue: but there is a contradiction there isn't there, you take self defense lessons you know that you should have the right to say 'no' but in some situations you know it sounds like that physically they could attempt to hurt you.

Betty: I don't know, I think it's girls don't they, because you've got to be careful what you say to boys (because boys and their [anger])

?: [Boys get angry]

Betty: so if you say, if you turn around and say "Oh piss off arrh" to a guy, he will "why, why are you talking to me like that" and then (competing voices) scared and then "oh I'm really sorry yeah" and that's when I think they come (something out) and then they get scared kinda like they don't know what to do because they thought the guys might come angry, get angry at you for talking to you in what way whatever.

Prue: Yeah

Betty: I think that's why some girls prefer to have a guy there, so it's guy on guy, so guys... (text cut)...

Mildred: If a guy came up behind you then they back off straight away yeah and if it was a girl it would be WHY.

(Lines: 632-674)

Here Abby identifies a situation where she is able to say 'no' to a man at a dance party she is not attracted to and finds '*sleazy*', when she talks about "*sweetie can you get off my best friend*". This sense of agency, having the authority to say no, is not apparent in situations where the strange male approaching appears drugged or drunk. She experiences the man as far more physically powerful than her and does not consider the skills she has learnt at self-defence as adequate to defend herself against an out of control, unpredictable, intoxicated male. Abby's understanding of power in this situation is physical but it is also discursive because if the male was not drunk she would experience more agency in asking him to back off. A boyfriend is able to provide the physical power to give them at least a minimum chance of surviving a physical attack by a drugged, drunk and angry strange male at a dance party. The term "*minimum chance*" is drawing on the multiple media and commonsense understandings that drunk and drugged men are unsafe and irrational. This idea of intoxicated individuals being dangerous and having less control over their physical actions and decision is well entrenched within individual psychological theory including addiction theories (Adams, 1988).

Betty's talk demonstrates a sense of embodied fear connected to physical risk when stating "*then they get scared kinda*". Scared refers to a dangerous male getting angry and the likelihood of a young woman being at risk from a physically more powerful male and her need to silence her embodied feelings of frustration and anger at being approached and touched by someone whom she does not want touching her. This highlights gender normative practices where men are able to demonstrate anger through utilizing their

physical bodies, leading to women fearing violence. This enables men to get what they want, when they want it. Silencing a resistant voice in this context protects an at risk female body. In her individual interview Betty discusses how this form of silence around potentially dangerous men was partially constituted from talking to her father.

Prue: ...(text cut)...,what sort of sensation was that uneasiness, what's the first thing that happens when you're uneasy?

Betty: You get a bit like, yeah your heart kind of (lights) up a little bit, like you kinda think "what will I do?" Or something like that. Because you don't want to be, cause sometimes my Dad because I told my Dad and sometimes he's like if you tell a guy to get off you he can get like really angry at you and then start () "I didn't do anything" or whatever and they can get really aggressive...(text cut)....that's why I sometimes I'm a bit like, and then at other times Dad goes "oh they can "look I'm sorry" and walk off

Prue: Um

Betty: You never know what they've they drunk, drinking and stuff like that or they're on drugs or something

(Lines: 360-378)

Betty talks about knowing not to react to unwanted touch from unpredictable men and how her specific embodied distress is experienced at a physiological site which quickly becomes a self questioning "**what will I do**"? Betty takes it upon herself to avoid harm rather than expecting the out of control male to take responsibility for his actions.

In summary, the security discourse around physical safety includes young women's knowledge around the physical danger from either strange men at night on the streets, or men at dance parties who are drugged or drunk, unpredictable and dangerous. In these very 'real' situations a lot of the meaning around security is connected to men being physically more able to protect the less physically able female. Young women desire boyfriends for physical protection. This physical security discourse emerges from the intersection of the somatic body response to fear and specific heterosexual discourses. Betty's and Abby's responses to drunk and drugged men both carry an embodied response of fear and cultural ideas of men gaining legitimacy in heterosexual situations through psychological discourses on addiction and anger (Adams, 1988). Addiction models draw more on a medical model of the helpless addict, whereas ideas around anger and men's likelihood of using violence draw on well established cognitive-behavioural theories (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978; Ellis, 1976). Both young women's 'real' fear that they could be hurt and these specific commonsense heterosexual discourses co-constitute their desire to reduce the risk to themselves by silencing their own anger and frustration and carefully negotiating safety through having a known 'male' present. As

Abby stated, young women may be perfectly capable of saying ‘no’ but they do not have the physical or social legitimacy within heterosexual situations to do this without physical harm to their bodies. In this way young women in these conversations are both acted upon and active as subjects, and are experiencing the multiple lines of domination within their culture but as subject, not non subjects, as Foucault’s theory of disciplinary power suggests (Davies, 1999; Foucault, 1972).

Consistent with Braidotti’s (2003) ideas of material embodiment, the absence of legitimacy for young women to say ‘no’ is supported and enforced by the lack of material resources that would enable young women to have more access to saying ‘no’, such as young men suffering consequences when they ‘grope’ at dance parties. Material resources intersect with symbolic resources and embodied fear to silence female subjective desire not to be touched. Therefore, would young drunk or drugged men stop groping young women if they knew and had experienced material consequences for their bad behaviour such as being banned from dance parties? Without some form of material consequences the physical security discourse functions to support the gender status quo, namely men’s access to women’s bodies. A recurring theme throughout this research is that the relative silence within our social situations and the absence of subsequent consequences for young men who touch unwilling female bodies enables the possibility of ‘real’ physical violence. I view this form of silence and how it restrains appropriate consequences as demonstrating the operation of sovereign power as one of the lines of force enabling heterosexual gender practises that restrains young women’s agency. . This specific discourse suggests that some dance party organizers in Auckland support and condone young men’s access to unwilling female bodies and are cultural contexts of heterosexual risk. I now outline the more prominent and slightly more complex conversations around emotional security, intimacy, visibility and loneliness.

6.2.2 Emotional security

Participants’ talked about emotional security across several discussion groups and individual interviews. Group 1 outlined a desire for a boyfriend as occurring in the following way:

Riley: Umm (2) we’d be talking about someone else that has a boyfriend.

RRJ Yeah, Yeah, Yeah

Riley: that’s so and so has this and oh yeah she has a really got a nice boyfriend and “oh man I want a boyfriend”, (light high voice).

{Laughter}

Prue: What does a boyfriend provide?

Riley: Um, um security in a way.

Two responses: Yeah, Yeah.

Rachel: Happiness

Jane: Yeah

Jane: Like Feel

Prue: Feel?

Jane: Feel that you have got, you've (2) (got) someone

Rachel: [yeah got someone.

Riley: [yeah got someone.

Prue: (2) (how, yeah) feel, ...(text cut)..?

Rachel/Riley?: like, You know like, someone close, yeah

Jane: someone that is always there I suppose.

Prue: And how does that make your day-to-day life different?

Jane: You revolve your life around it a lot. You are kind of always there always in (1) if they are not like in front of your mind they are always in the back of your mind sort of (1) wondering, there is always someone else that you are thinking of yeah and you know that they are always thinking of you (2) or even if it is just like wondering what they are doing.

Prue: um (2) If, if that's not there (2) how's that?

Jane: I think it's you just kind, just [get on with life.

(Lines: 176-229)

Here the participants are talking about being attached to another person in a way that provides them with security and a feeling of closeness and happiness (if it is a nice boyfriend). As girlfriends their life will involve thinking of their boyfriends every day and all day and vice versa. They are talking about the idea that two people are closely joined and are consistently visible to one other person in a mutually caring relationship which produces embodied subjective states of happiness or 'pleasure' rather than distress.

In her interview Betty (Group 3) talks about how young women want boyfriends because they provide emotional caring that includes physical affection and is different from what other friends provide in terms of affection. Betty talks about how emotional security works in unsafe contexts in a way that does not necessarily access ideas around greater physical strength:

Prue: ...How do you think it comes about that young women desire to be a girlfriend to a boy more than, than to a girlfriend? ...(text cut)..

Betty: Yeah it does because when you are a girl, like mates with a girl sometimes you want affection oh honestly all your girls give you hugs and stuff but you know don't really get the same sort of affection you get from a guy and also guys you want someone to care for you, your friends care for you but with a guy they show it more, they care for you.

Prue: How do they show it more?

Betty: Like care? Like they say to you like you are like out. Like I don't know like my ex boyfriend I was out, me and Mildred were out somewhere in the dark and there was this guy like we were really scared so we went home, we went back home () he was following, my boyfriend was like get inside, you know () if he comes around kinda thing where as care would be like "get in inside" (said in a really soft voice) you know so have more like, cared for more and stuff I don't know...(excerpt cut).. like having someone there as well like also, if something goes wrong with your plans you're got someone else

(Line: 192-217)

Betty also talks about being with one other person, an exclusive caring "***they care for you***". Several related ideas are repeated across the discussions and interviews: The emphasis on the ***you*** infers visibility in an exclusive relationship, and functions to co-constitute desire. This specific "***you***" incorporates the idea of difference compared to other relationships at an embodied level that is only partially articulated when Betty talks about the difference between girl and boyfriend hugs. Betty also talks about boyfriends being desirable because they are a back up not just for potentially dangerous situations, but also for emotional and social reasons, for example "***like having someone there as well like also, if something goes wrong with your plans you're got someone else***". The idea of difference around the participants' experience of touch with boyfriends compared to girlfriends is similar to Nightingale's and Cromby's (2002) ideas of referentiality and embodied subjectivity and forms of knowing that are more than and partially outside of discourse.

6.2.3 Security, difference and embodied subjective states of comfort and pleasure

Group 6 talked about the difference between having a boyfriend as compared to a female friend comfort you when I started asking questions around risk and wellbeing.

Mabel: Obviously they really needed something to satisfy them before they had the boyfriend because their life must have felt a bit empty and so they have become so dependent or not dependent but so reliant on him fulfilling their happiness that they can throw away their school

Boborange: I would say, that it to me, it comes down to having a best friend or a boyfriend. Like I wonder what like, to me the question would be like why would girls want to stick to boys more than sticking with a girl best friend and I think that boys react with girls in a more emotionally comforting way. Like they don't, like they kind of, it makes you feel less empty I think because they really see the positives of who you are and I think some girls like would mistake the positives for actually feeling like a good person who is loved, but it might just be like sexual energy or sexual attraction or just because she is popular, or just because she is in my social group.

Prue: Um

Boborange: But I would normally, I don't know if I had to choose between a girlfriend or a boyfriend, just like girlfriend as in best friend, um I won't say what I would choose but I think if I had the choice a boyfriend it would be because of the different emotional gap that we filled, like....Yeah um and boys are kind of like good listeners.

Isabella: I agree

Mabel: Um

Boborange: and they just, I guess they are socially quite fun to experiment with when you are in a girls' school

Isabella: Yeah

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: because you experiment with girls all the time and you kind of get similar reactions but if you experiment with boys they have really different and exotic reactions

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: so you just want to know more about him and so you really cling on to that person for your everything and they are such a different species to what you are used to that you find that you are lost with them you know

Isabella: Yeah

Boborange: and you mistake it for true love {laugh} but because they probably haven't dated enough guys to know if this is a normal boy or a really special person

(Line: 638-695)

This excerpt is a good representation of participants' ideas around emotional security, including boyfriends being able to '*satisfy*' young women who are '*feeling a bit empty*' and provide fulfilment and '*happiness*', comfort and positive regard, '*they really see the positives of who you are*', as well as ideas around what is and is not '*true love*', and the pleasure and interest of difference.

Boborange is talking about emotional security and difference through ideas of boys providing a different form of emotional security to the other groups. She believes that boys are more emotionally comforting than girlfriends in that they view you more positively and this makes you feel less empty. Feelings of emptiness, and a space or lack of something are similar to ideas around loneliness and will be discussed in the next section. Boborange's excerpt supports the idea that the subjective embodied experiences of pleasurable exclusive visibility may intersect with romantic love discourses and partially co-constitute the subjective desire to be a girlfriend. Pleasurable visibility combined with experiencing the exotic difference of boys as pleasurable, may have young women clinging to that boyfriend for everything. The silent risk, and what will be discussed more in the balance discourse, is that 'clinging' to a boyfriend and dropping other parts of your life often happens at the expense of a young woman's wellbeing. For example, embodied subjective experiences of loss and longing create a desire for a boyfriend that may over-

ride other important aspects of young women's wellbeing, such as achieving academically. In this excerpt young women are learning the more embodied pleasures enabled by our cultural discourses around romantic love (Jackson, 1999). This process of desiring a boyfriend in order to access pleasure through comfort, exotic difference, satisfaction, filling an emotional emptiness, and feeling loved is particularly risky if the boyfriend in question is 'bad'. Therefore what are the alternative sites for intimate pleasure outside of heterosexuality?

Boborange's talk demonstrates the different forms of emotional security discourse, but also her understanding of developmental learning around being a girlfriend that will be discussed in the next section: "***and you mistake it for true love {laugh} but because they probably haven't dated enough guys to know if this is a normal boy or a really special person***"

6.2.4 Intimacy in an exclusive heterosexual relationship

Group 5 also talks about being with a boyfriend in terms of difference, caring intimacy, visibility, exclusivity and feeling special:

Jemma: kind of something because when you have a boyfriend it's only you two, it's no one else, um you can't have a good relationship if it's two boyfriends but it just doesn't work {laughs} so it's something really special between two people

Prue: So is it about feeling special?

Georgie: Ah, I guess it's having someone there when you really need them, like even though your girlfriends are like that; it's just having another extra person (1) who's different from a girl and can offer you something different.

(Lines: 125-131)

Group 1 distinguished this difference in terms of frequency:

Prue: Is it something you sense in yourself, is it?

Riley: Yeah, it is like

Jane: someone that cares for you more than a friend....

Riley: [Yeah

Jane: [not that, [in a different way to a friend

Rachel: [in a different way

Riley: [yeah

Jane: [it's like...=

Prue: How is it different? =

Rachel/Riley?: =love

Jane: They care about you personally and everything about you, sort of. Whereas a friend cares about you].

Rachel: [but not in those=

Jane: =but not every single day, yeah.

(Lines: 279-303)

This excerpt clarifies the different form of caring as being based on constancy and frequency, “*every single day*”, as well as heterosexual caring being more personal and less conditional than that given by female friends. “*Everything about you*”, is tapping into ideas about heterosexual love being more unconditional than friendship, which is interesting because when the participants access discourses around female friendship they talk about how effortless being with female friends is compared to the effort that is required with boyfriends.

The language in these last two excerpts is similar to but not quite as extreme as Boborange’s idea that boys, compared to girls, are a different species. Boyfriends provide a different specialness and this form of specialness is unique to a heterosexual relationship and therefore not available in any other relationship, hence the loss when this form of specialness is no longer available. When I asked about being special Group 5 replied:

Georgie: Well it differs for every boyfriend because if you are thinking about what they can provide, it is like

Nina: That they complement you

Jemma: bring out the best in each other and if they are constantly there um and you are kind of bringing out the best in each other and strengthening each other and you become more secure in yourself and say if stuff is happening around you that isn’t so good you more secure I guess

(Lines: 152-159)

Jemma sees heterosexual intimacy as making you more secure through being with someone who brings out the best in you and makes you stronger. Despite my focus on the ‘concrete’, her response is about internal personality attributes and feelings of security. She talks about the difference within her, with and without a boyfriend, and evaluates herself as more secure, stronger when she does have a boyfriend and therefore becomes more visible to herself in a positive way. Maggi also discusses not having a boyfriend as negatively impacting on her self-confidence:

Maggi:But then you’re kind of, in a way you just want someone to be there that’s not a girl, more intimate relationship and plus you want him to look after you, just feel more protected when you’re with a boy and I don’t know it has a lot to do with, it has a big effect on my self-confidence with not being able to get a boyfriend or um like because all the other girls in the group () and they all, it doesn’t bother me that all the guys go for them but it’s just (1) yeah, I find it, it can have its good points and its bad points.

(Lines: 36-43)

Maggi also talks about heterosexual intimacy being more intimate than your relationship with girlfriends in that she wants someone to be there, reinforcing ideas of a continuous presence as well as the physical protection of having a boyfriend. Maggi is visible in terms of not having a boyfriend but in a less desired way such as not feeling good about herself. She attributes this embodied subjective state to her inability to get what her other friends have i.e. a boyfriend, and therefore she is seen by males as less desirable than her female friends. These ideas are drawing on western ideas regarding a 'proper' woman being known through heterosexual relationships and women without boyfriends as being less legitimate, that is, outsiders to what is considered normal.

Participants' talk on emotional security did not restrain other ideas on physical security. Both before and after this excerpt Maggi discusses being less likely to meet a boyfriend, not so much through a lack of her own personal desirability but through lack of opportunity, which was driven by her worry of physical assault. This came from what she saw at dances when she was younger, and meant she stayed at home rather than going out with friends (see Appendix I, excerpt 1).

The emotional and physical security constantly intersected and merged with ideas around the developmental process of heterosexual relationships and loneliness. For several pieces of text I had to make a decision about which discourse was best represented without fragmenting the text to the point where the reader could not make sense of the conversational context. The next section looks at how young women talk about loneliness and how loneliness also incorporates ideas of security, difference, love and specialness.

6.2.5 Loneliness

My previous experiences as a health worker inform me that fear of loss and loneliness is one of the more persistent processes restraining women I have worked with from leaving violent and emotionally punishing relationships. For two participants ideas about loneliness and longing were very present within their talk. This fits with the security discourse because for both of these participants talk of loneliness also included ideas about loss, specialness and difference. During the taped discussion and after the recorder was turned off Jemma talked about the times she experienced a 'longing' for a boyfriend despite recognizing she is far more confident and happier since leaving her ex-boyfriend. Jemma's excerpt around loneliness was the closest to what I experienced as 'desire' when young women in my clinical practice talked about their embodied subjective desire to

remain girlfriends. Here the word 'desire' represents an embodied experience that is best articulated through cultural ideas of loneliness, but is not a complete representation - Jemma also uses 'longing' to capture her experiences. She could not quite understand why she was experiencing this longing when logically she knew she was better off without this boyfriend i.e. "***Jemma: It's not a constant longing it's just in at certain times I find that when things are really rough and or I might, or maybe sometimes when I'm home alone and there's nothing to do except think and stuff and maybe things aren't going that well, that's when kinda get lonely.***"

Following the group discussion and before our individual interview Jemma texted me this quote "***We are more embarrassed to find ourselves alone after love than we were to be alone before love***" which I interpreted as meaning that the specific 'desire' not to be alone is experienced after having a boyfriend. Jemma talks about loneliness and desire in the following way:

Jemma: It's kind of weird like you can have really, really good um friends that are female but still feel lonely and it is just a total different relationship with males, like

Georgie: (yeah)...(text cut).....

Prue: but what is it about boyfriends and loneliness?

Georgie: Well for me I find like if I am not like with doing something with my girlfriends on the weekend I have always got Harry.....to hang out, like he is always there, so it's like I am never really lonely, not that, I don't, mean I like being alone I like in my alone time...(text cut)...Quite mean {laughter}

Prue: Um what do you mean quite mean?

Georgie: Well it sounds like, oh yeah, who is backup

Prue: is it different to that, back up?

Nina: I think it's sort of like an extra friend, like it's not

(Lines: 62-124)

Georgie talks about a boyfriend as back-up (security) to avoid loneliness. Group 5 carefully discuss how boyfriends are not only back-up but as a young woman you want to be with your boyfriend. Georgie is drawing on an egalitarian notion and her feelings of being mean, if she expected a boyfriend to meet her needs without any payback to him. This is similar to ideas around girlfriends needing to be 'fair' to their boyfriends and comes from the view that there are no significant differences between men and women and each should treat the other accordingly (Fisher, 2005). The want to be with your boyfriend is then picked up and talked about by Jemma and talked about in terms of "***you have that love for him.***" This quote is talking about a equitable, mutual form of love for your boyfriend and that this form of intimate love is about not just having your needs for

security met (avoiding being alone), but it is also about being available to support him when he needs it.

Jemma: like somehow sometimes you can still be lonely even though you have heaps of friends and if you don't have a boyfriend, do you get that Nina?

Nina: I reckon it's true.

Prue:(text cut)...., what sort of loneliness does having a boyfriend take away?

Jemma: kind of something because when you have a boyfriend it's only you two, it's no one else, um you can't have a good relationship if it's two boyfriends but it just doesn't work {laughs} so it's something really special between two people

(Lines: 117-127)

Here, Jemma talks about missing a special form of love when not in a heterosexual relationship and it is almost as though it is the exclusive connection between two people, “*that love*”, that is experienced as a loss, and is understood as loneliness. Boborange and Mabel talk about how young women may already have a sense of emptiness (a space that needs filling) as well as experiencing a form of potential emptiness if a valued heterosexual relationship is threatened. For a girlfriend a heterosexual relationship provides the exotic interest of being with a very different species, because boys are unique, as well as feeling good or special about yourself through positive regard (emotional comfort). The threat of losing this form of heterosexuality is similar to Jemma’s idea of loneliness, for example: “*Boborange: so you just want to know more about him and so you really cling on to that person for your everything and they are such a different species to what you are used to that you find that you are lost with them you know.*” (see excerpt Appendix I).

Bob was very articulate in this particular area where I sensed the requirements of an immigrant family meant young women did not always have the special relationship connectedness with a parent or grandmother they may have been previously experienced in their country of origin. During Bob’s interview the loneliness discourse was accessed through questioning around what Bob lost when her relationship with her boyfriend finished and what she understood as wellbeing.

Prue: [Tell me what are the things you left

Bob: [I lost a friend=

Prue: [yep, you lost a friend

Bob: (because we are talking about home) I had a lot of issues with my parents like the fact that they were never around

Prue: Um

Bob: Around and I was, I was an only kid with my sister, my sister but my brother, my sister was married by then

Prue: Um

Bob: and (there was just) my brother and he was out most of the time so just it was a bit lonely like it was like I spent time with his family so I guess that's what I miss the most like just being able to hang out with him, talk to him about my day and s

(Lines: 702-720)

In comparison to Jemma, Bob is talking about loneliness in a more general sense than missing the exclusive specialness of having a boyfriend, but there are elements of heterosexual intimacy in this form of loneliness. For example Bob talks as if she is experiencing being visible to one other person who will listen to her and be available to her more than others.

Prue: So you liked having, what was it about the friendship you liked?...(text cut)..

Bob: Well the fact that he was quiet {laughs} meant I could do a lot more talking and he was a good listener he listen, (and wasn't like talking into space) he would actually listen and ask questions and stuff and he was he was there if I had a fight with my Mum, if I had a fight with my sister, with my brother

(Lines: 735-746)

Bob experiences loneliness as an absence of being listened to in an active way. She knew by the way he responded that he heard her and that if she was distressed he would listen and comfort her. Within Bob's interview there is a coherent story on loneliness that is connected to her having a very close relationship to her grandmother and her mother in her country of origin that changed abruptly when they immigrated to New Zealand.

Bob: Um I'm grown up my () I grew up in (country of origin) and moved here when I was eight, um, growing up my Dad, my Dad worked and my Mum was a house, housewife and I spent a lot, a lot of (time) with my Mum and Grandma. especially my grandma

(Lines: 436-453)

Bob also talks about a boyfriend as a safety net to avoid being lonely more in terms of feeling lonely and sad with less family day-to-day contact, but she also is beginning to talk about how you can be lonely for a boyfriend even when you are with your family i.e. ***"It's the same even when you are like with your family it's just you'll call your boyfriend kinda thing it's just."*** (see excerpt 3 Appendix I).

In summary, loneliness seems to occur in two ways: when you are no longer experiencing that form of caring that makes you feel visible and special to one other person on a day-to-day, moment to moment basis and which may be spoken about as love in an exclusive heterosexual relationship; and when you are missing that close connection on a day-to-day basis with a caring member of your family, such as a mother, or grandmother.

These two ideas intersect and it is the participant's understanding of a boyfriend's ability to provide a different specific form of comfort, and the absence of this comfort (love) that can make a young woman feel lonely (empty) and desire a heterosexual relationship. Jemma and Bob both drew on ideas of loneliness in the presence of maternal loss. Jemma's mother had died a year before the individual interview and Bob identified that losing her Grandmother's day-to-day attention impacted on her subsequent feelings of loneliness, although these feelings were not exclusive to missing a constant maternal presence. They both accessed Irigaray's ideas that in order for young women to desire to access resistance, knowing and being in relation to a maternal other may offer an alternative way to access pleasure. In this way they are co-constituting commonsense and resistant ways of being a young women which incorporates ideas of boyfriends filling the space vacated through maternal loss.

Of concern is that during the period western culture defines as adolescence young women are encouraged to separate out from their mothers and form closer intimate ties with friends and boyfriends. These discussions demonstrate that participants' independence from their mothers was rarely complete, but the discourses available to most participants repeatedly drew on the adolescent norm of socializing with friends rather than family. This 'developmental discourse' employs a binary of being attached to parents or to others. There are far fewer discourses, compared to the heterosexual adolescent discourse, within the European contexts around how to maintain secure, constant attachment to parents as well as developing interdependence through friendships. I understand interdependence to refer to young women's access to be both simultaneously dependent and independent in their relationships with others, where the form of interdependence is negotiated between subjects. For example, a daughter may rely on her mother's physical comfort as well as exploring heterosexual intimacy with a male partner. Independence within traditional psychological literature is about gaining separation from parents by moving away from the family and towards own age friends and boyfriends. The opposite of independence is dependence which is viewed as a delay in developmental functioning (Furman, 1999). The function of this form of adolescent discourse in terms of security and intimacy for young women is to enable a movement towards heterosexual intimacy and away from maternal intimacy. This form of heterosexual process enables heterosexual desire and restrains a subjective desire to be in relation to another woman (Grosz, 1989).

The coherent story (discourse) around desiring to be a girlfriend is about being positively visible to one other who is there for you on a moment-by-moment basis which provides an embodied sense of pleasure and which I understand as wellbeing. Ideas of security, intimacy, specialness, difference and loneliness intersected with ideas around desiring to be a girlfriend as part of a developmental process that includes ideas around age and learning. In the discussions learning is viewed as continuous in each specific heterosexual relationship and may not be necessarily cumulative.

6.3 Developmental discourse

This research rests on the assumption that young women between the ages of 16-18 would be interested in the topic of girlfriends and boyfriends, more than much younger girls. This assumption is apparent in media, community and the wider western culture, where we see the preoccupation with adolescence and the dangers and naturalness of heterosexuality (Berk, 2000; Coates, 1999). Clinical practice informs me that young women differ at what age they become interested in having a boyfriend but it is nevertheless seen as the natural order of adolescence to become orientated to be interested in heterosexual activity. For example, as Maggi's (Group 3) parents assume:

Maggi: Oh like my parents, my Dad especially, both my parents get along with my sisters' boyfriends so well and like and they have so much to talk about and my Mum always like "I wonder when you're going to bring a boyfriend home" and stuff and I'm not afraid to bring a boyfriend home or whatever, it's not the parents that I worry about. I don't have one {laughs.

(Lines: 525-529)

Group 3 talked about movement through the developmental stages in terms of moving from their parents' protection to a boyfriend's protection within the security discourse:

Mildred: They want someone to care for you and love you but not be your parents Yeah and if you go out and you know like, with friends and stuff you still want someone to like

Abby: look after you

Mildred: to hold your hand look after you which is going to be your boyfriend

Abby: it's nice to have someone there that you know something goes wrong that they are going to look after you and it's going to be okay other than your parents (generally it's) your boyfriend

(Lines: 36-75)

In western culture the teenage years are about ceasing going out socially with your parents and family for fun and instead starting to go out with friends. These participants do not state that they are no longer going out with their parents; this understanding is taken for granted and is seen as a commonsense rite of passage for most children and parents. They talk about desiring non-parental protection when they are outside the home and that this is usually provided by a boyfriend.

Within this 'natural' developmental process the participants talked about two stages of being a girlfriend, the first stage being in pre-teenage and early teenage years when you have a boyfriend as part of being normal within your group of friends and the second in middle to late teenage years when you develop a relationship with a young man that is more about intimacy. Group 1 also talked about this movement between early and later adolescent heterosexual relationships (see excerpt 2 Appendix I).

Riley discussed the early stage of adolescence where having a boyfriend is more about needing them in terms of having something a good friend has: *“a bit of peer pressure in relationships if your best mate has a got a boyfriend you feel you need to get a boyfriend”*, rather than wanting a boyfriend for intimate pleasure. This is similar to a consumer ethic such as adolescents desiring specific consumer products such as nanos and clothes. It is about belonging to a valued group through possessing 'the boyfriend' and it does not matter what sort of boy it is, or liking a particular boy, so this is a bit different to specific branded consumer products. As Riley and Jane explain: *“when you were younger when everyone just went out with everyone like you did the rounds”* and *“I am sure I can relate to second Form going out with someone that I probably did not really like {laughter}”*. The function of a boyfriend is the 'marker' of belonging to a specific friendship group and if you do not have one and your friends do you feel *‘kinda stink’*. Here young women's subjective desire is about being with a particular group of friends and being normal through the product “the boyfriend”, it is not about desiring a desired person. As with a consumer discourse, what you have is what you are, a proper subject, a girlfriend and therefore be defined through female friendship and disciplinary subjective desires (Ditmar, 2008). There are embodied feelings of happiness implicit in how the participants talked about having a boyfriend at this young age but very little lines of force from the sexually corporeal powerful female body. This form of knowledge both resists and complies with heterosexuality in that desire for female friendships is more important than boyfriends, but this form of heterosexuality is preparing the way for future heterosexual

subjective desires. Within theories of masculinities and femininities this demonstrates how female hierarchies operate to maintain the status quo (Connell, 1999; Schippers, 2007).

Jane explains that the internalized pressure to have a boyfriend operates quite subtly within friendship groups where boyfriends are valued, and how it has a young woman wanting to be normal in comparison with her friends: *“I did not feel I had to but I kinda of did”*. Riley explained the subtle pressure to have a boyfriend as operating through talk: *Like someone saying (2) “Oh, have you got a boyfriend?” Oh (2) yeah and they say no and then you say like....I do (high light voice) {soft laughter}, and so you kind of feel [it’s stink*. Jane names this process of wanting a boyfriend as wanting to be normal. This group then goes on to talk about how if you do not have a boyfriend at this age, you do not talk about it in order not make it visible to your friends that you are not as normal as them. Maggi gave a similar explanation for why she was very quiet in the discussion group: *“Um not really, I’m normally quite a loud person, I just felt that I didn’t have a lot of things to say so like I haven’t had a boyfriend in a long time and I haven’t experienced that and all the other girls have so, () um (these guys are more experienced).”*

This disciplinary process may promote the desire to have a boyfriend in order to be normal and liked, which in turn highlights my assumption that being liked by your own friends is more pleasurable at an embodied level than not being liked. How can young women be in relation to female friends and positively visible and normal outside the context of heterosexuality?

These ideas of how having a boyfriend becomes a normal part of being within specific friendships was one of the clearest examples of Foucault’s ideas around power operating through talk (language/knowledge) in a way that encourages the normative value of heterosexuality to flourish. Being excluded and therefore not visible in your valued friendship group is a consequence of not being normal and is experienced as unpleasant or as in Maggi’s situation questioning your attractive, confident sense of self and this way decreasing your wellbeing.

Therefore this earlier form of heterosexuality provides embodied pleasures through being part of a group of friends who talk endlessly about boyfriends that is *fun* and *thrilling*, and may form part of young women’s embodied desire to stay within a particular set of friends and be normal as well as partially co-constituting a desire for a boyfriend. This idea of pleasure and embodied pleasure may be known at both discursive and non-

discursive (the material body) sites and part of this pleasure may have a consumer aspect where having a boyfriend produces a similar pleasure to buying a fashion product.

Group 5 took a more critical view of this normalization process and the necessity of being a girlfriend as these participants did not require being a girlfriend as one of the necessary markers to belong to their friendship group.

Angela:(text cut)...., if every girl has a boyfriend in that group then you feel like you kinda have to have a boyfriend.

Megan: but it's not like that with us I don't think.

In unison: no

(Lines: 82-91)

Later this group also discussed how if you began to develop very different interests to your friends it was unlikely that you would remain within this group of friends. This happened within their group and one friend, who had a boyfriend before the rest of the group were interested in heterosexual relationships, left them through her own decision to change schools to be with her boyfriend. I expand on how these participants viewed this specific heterosexual relationship as unhealthy later.

Riley, Jane and Rachel (Group 1) make the distinction between wanting a boyfriend to be normal within your own group of friends and wanting a boyfriend through a desire for heterosexual intimacy:

I think with our age group, like some of us, some of us, like "oh we want a boyfriend, like you know" (light high voice).

Jane: yeah, yeah

Riley: Like we want to be (I) like, like Valentine's Day when everyone getting flowers and stuff, "oh I want a boyfriend who does that for me," (soft high voice) but.

Jane: (yeah, more open between our age now)

Rachel: but it at our age it's way more open like compared to like, you know, 13 or 14 you kinda keep it to yourself.

(Lines:74-84) (see Appendix I for full excerpt)

When you are older you may desire a boyfriend more for your own pleasure and it is okay to talk about a desire to be a girlfriend to your friends. Riley talks about wanting the flowers and presents within the same conversational topic: "***oh I want a boyfriend who does that for me.***" Here she wants a boyfriend because he will attend to her needs, with the emphasis on a desiring *me* in terms of desiring pleasure such as getting gifts. This is different to wanting a boyfriend largely because a girlfriend has one. Our western culture and philosophy enables women to talk about individual wants and needs, a desiring '*me*'

within heterosexuality, particularly if this is congruent with heterosexual love and does not compete with the 'normal' male needs.

6.3.1 Learning through difference: referentiality and the co-constitution of knowledge

The developmental discourse was identified from a coherent story within Group 1 where all three participants repeatedly stated that at the moment they were not boyfriend people, their priorities lay elsewhere, such as sport and academic achievement. Group 1 thought that boyfriends would be an option when they went to university next year and met a new (different) group of boys. This group, while being more than able to access heterosexual discourses, simultaneously accessed resistant discourses when speaking about themselves and their desires and preferences. For example, Jane stated "*Um well my Mum does a lot of different things to me um she has a job and our family and that's sort of what her life revolves around whereas I, {laughs} I say it sounds selfish but my life is sort of is about me at the moment knowing where I want to go and things like that*" (Lines: 212-215). Jane wanted to go to a design course next year with her friend Rachel, and they talked about not wanting boyfriends:

Prue: It sounds as if you would rather be on your own.

Rachel: I would rather just you know, especially through school we have got plenty of time

Riley: have a pash and a dash.

{laughter}

Rachel: We have got plenty, we're got plenty of, you know, time to have boyfriends, you know like when we leave school we meet so many new people, whereas here we have got the same group of friends you know like at the weekend we hang out with the same group of people, it's not like you are meeting new people.

Prue: Um, Um

()

Rachel: Yeah, you know like when you finish school and you, I don't know, go to Uni you meet just so many new people and you just (1) you know I reckon that is the time whether, I don't know when you can, when you can maybe find someone like, someone, (quietly) but, yeah, I am not really interested now.

(Lines: 1574-1593)

The boys these participants have daily contact with are too well known to be interesting from a heterosexual perspective, which gets back to ideas of difference and what they considered appropriate developmental tasks. Riley talks about having a '*pash and a dash*' in terms of having heterosexual contact that is different, and is being sexual and having pleasure through kissing without the commitment and the workload that goes with having a boyfriend (points of resistance). Claire also talked about 'hooking' up with

guys at parties and how this was different to learning your sexual likes and dislikes in a committed heterosexual relationship. *'Hooking up'* in several individual interviews referred to being sexual with a boy who was not yet, or was never going to be a boyfriend. Hooking up was usually not referring to penetrative sex but touching and kissing. Claire spoke about having a boyfriend as better sexually because you had the opportunity to learn what you liked and did not like. Within the discussions and individual interviews heterosexual relationships were talked about as a site of learning sexual preferences.

Claire: Um it's, you just, you feel more relaxed, you feel like you can enjoy it without feeling "is he going to do that without me knowing" um like yeah, you just enjoy it more, especially if you're in a relationship and you can, you kinda learn each other and(text cut)....yeah, um like if you went to a party and you had sex with a guy, had a one night stand, the other guy he would know you, but he wouldn't genuinely know what you wanted, what you liked, whereas if you're with a guy for a while you tend to learn

Prue: So you learn what he likes and he learns what you like?

Claire: Yeah, yeah

(Lines: 315-331)

Claire's individual interview had a dominant theme of not wanting to be in a committed relationship *"I don't like to be tied down for too long"* and she talked about learning through difference and experience this way:

Prue: So how, how old were you when you started, have you had one relationship longer than another?

Claire: Um, I've had a few, there haven't been like lots and lots, cos' I don't know, I don't like being tied down for too long but um my first boyfriend was probably, like I was real (young) I was in 3rd form.

(Lines: 87-107)

Claire was part of Group 3 who talked about the difference between early and later heterosexual relationships as occurring at a younger age than the other discussion groups. In other parts of the individual interview she talked about the later boyfriends being *'more real to me'*. I understand this as she was more connected to the later boyfriends at a physical embodied level; they were more visible to her as an intimate partner, as a real person, because she kissed them, rather than having the boyfriend as a symbol of normality for her particular group. Here she continues to talk about difference and not being tied down:

Prue: So can you remember where, when you thought I'm bored?

Claire: Um well I was looking for my girls at school and I was talking to them about him and they picked up on it and my Mum asked me and "so how's J going," and I said "alright." And she picked up on it too, and she said "you don't sound too

excited” and I was like “yeah well, I’m just getting bored with the same thing, it’s the same routine, we hang out, he’s cool to hang out with, but I want something different” like I said “I don’t like being tied down for too long”.

(Lines: 414-420)

Claire’s talk demonstrates how difference may be talked about within the developmental and heterosexual discourses. She talks about the difference between early and later heterosexual relationships where the early relationship is about becoming normal and the later relationships are more about intimacy i.e. *“that was good, it was, it was heaps of fun hanging out with a lovely guy um my that’s more than a friend um, yeah, it’s just someone extra that was closer than like a friend, that you could just turn to whenever you wanted and um you knew that they were always going to be there for you”*(Lines 77-80). This excerpt access the security discourse but what is interesting is Claire’s talk about boredom is that once again there is this desire for interest or difference during these later teenage years, even when the boyfriend she is with is someone she really likes, is comfortable with and has had a good sexual relationship with. In this context Claire is still learning about sex and different guys and is resisting the cultural norm to be sexual in an established, monogamous relationship, in order not to be bored. Claire also points out that there is a difference for her to learn through *“hooking up”* with different guys at parties and being *“a slut.”* Claire *“and also I think like our age now is all about learning and experiencing not being tied down to one guy. I think like when you go out there, not be like a slut or anything but like you kinda like experience like what we like in a guy and stuff.”* (Line: 230-232). To be a slut within this discussion refers to having penetrative sex casually with more than one boy and meeting young men’s preference for casual penetrative sex instead of protecting your reputation and saying no.

The newness of different boys appears to be intrinsically exciting as a learning experience and was reflected repeatedly in both the discussions and individual interviews. Mabel (Group 6) talked about the newness of being positioned as a girlfriend:

Mabel: Yeah. I went out with this guy like once and that didn’t work out, but um, yeah we got along really well and when um, I was walking around town with him it felt like weird because I had gone to the other world and I saw people I knew and they were like hey, and hey to the guy I was with. They all looked at me like you have a boyfriend. I was like “yeah”, but you know, yeah it’s, it’s.

(Lines: 252-257)

During this interview Mabel seemed to really enjoy talking about being a girlfriend because it was a relatively new, exciting topic that she had just begun to experiment with.

Isabella also talked about how having a boyfriend allows you to step outside one way of being “not being a girlfriend sort of person” and into another, providing access to whole new topics of conversation. Talking about boyfriends was weird animated and fun, with participants describing it as like being in another world.

Isabella: Like, in terms of like young people I think if you have a girlfriend. Like I liked this boy for a while and this was like a couple of months ago, and I was thinking of like asking him out, but it didn't work out anyway. But um I suddenly got like, um it felt like I was introducing like this other world, like this group. It was really weird, it's like “so how is he”, “how's this”. “I was talking to my boyfriend and blablalabla,” and so it's so strange and when you don't have that sort of thing in your life you're not like in with that discussion, you know, it's like something totally different.

Mabel: Definitely

Isabella: It's weird

(Lines: 249-257)

Group 6 are not normally boyfriend people and being a girlfriend is the exception rather than the norm. Other participants talked about how it opened your world up and you found out about new interests and new people that you would not necessarily have experienced without a boyfriend. This is similar to Warr's (1999) Australian participants who viewed boyfriends as providing resources such as cars, transport and parties and subsequently pleasure and fun, but the site of pleasure here is more about difference and newness. In contrast these participants had their own cars and went to parties in groups of girlfriends whether they were from a lower or higher decile school.

Group 5 talked about learning through difference and experience this way:

Nina: Different people really want different, want boyfriends for different reasons

Jemma: yeah definitely

Nina: () individual

Georgie: but then boyfriends can provide like lots of things um like new skills that they can teach you(text cut)

Nina: yeah, I guess it totally, I mean yeah it probably depends on the person and yeah

Jemma: and that can be really exciting because it's something different every single, time, like you can't have this you know scene where like every relationship, like you might go into a relationship and think oh yeah so that it's what it's like, but then you might meet another boy and that what you have with that other boy is so truly different and you might have to learn all over again how to build a good relationship

Prue: So some of it's about learning new things

Nina: yeah

(Lines: 160-178)

The newness of boys and their individual differences make them exciting and learning about how each boy operates is intrinsically exciting. Boys provide girls with an opportunity to learn new skills in a way that is not cumulative but forever changing, a semi permanent site of learning that will never be repetitive is exciting and promotes an enjoyable embodied subjectivity and feelings of wellbeing.

Maggi talked about learning during early to later adolescence in terms of risk and gaining cumulative knowledge through experience and maturation (see Appendix I). Here she notes that through lack of knowledge and understanding about what men are like, young girls who go out dressed in a sexualized manner are at risk of sexual assault. The accompanying idea is that as young women get older they are more ready to understand the danger of men and the risk of sexual assault. Maggi does not outline the pathway that young women learn how to prevent risk but other participants talk about learning from their own and others' experience. The next section looks at how young women may need to experience a degree of transitory risk in order to learn what they want or do not want through "*being with*" bad boys.

6.3.2 Bad boyfriends should be transitory

Participants view relationships in year 12 and 13 as needing to be transitory, and remaining in a heterosexual relationship at this stage and age prevents young women experiencing several different boyfriends and learning what makes a good and bad boyfriend. A permanent bad boyfriend is seen as a risk and can decrease your wellbeing in the future in terms of both reaching your individual potential and your wellbeing in other heterosexual relationships, as shown below:

Abby: What they like about boys and what they don't like? Umm I think just things like parties like I think every girl has to be with a bad boy at some stage of her life to understand who is the better one.

Mildred: Yeah

Several voices: [.....(text cut)...

Abby: No I think every girl will always go out with a boy that's? sleazy or a bit of a player.

Mildred/Betty? Not really go out with them, but be with them

Abby: Yeah be with them intimately or something at some stage, will I know that I have

Maggi: to know that you don't like that kind of thing () going through heaps of small um small relationships to find out what you do or don't like about those form of relationships

(Lines: 754-781)

The participants discuss how you ‘know’ about boyfriends through experience and that you can get to know what you do not like by being with a bad boy. A bad boy in this specific discussion is someone who is sleazy and promiscuous, *“a bit of a player”*. The participants spoke of being with bad boys in a sexual context as *“but be with them”, “intimately”*. Maggi talks about how the process of learning what you do and do not like is facilitated by having heaps of small transitory relationships. The understanding is that once you have had your obligatory ‘bad’ boy you will then be able to identify a boyfriend who is better because he can provide what you like. Claire also talks about learning through sexual contact this way: *“and also I think like our age now is all about learning and experiencing not being tied down to one guy. I think like when you go out there, not be like a slut or anything but like you kinda like experience like what we like in a guy and stuff.” (Line: 230-232)*. This is beginning to define how young women can have and experience sexual desire without being a slut. The definition of and the risks of being a slut will be discussed in Chapter 7. *“Be with them”* also infers a corporeal knowledge. As Claire discussed, this form of being sexual will not be as good as when you are with someone who has learnt your likes and dislikes but it’s still about learning in a way that does not tie you down to a permanent relationship. This is compatible with the idea that young women are more able to know what they can speak about and know what they do not like (Tolman, 1994). A good boyfriend in the above text is what a bad boyfriend is not. So a good boyfriend is not sleazy and within Group 3 a good boyfriend was a respectful boyfriend who was evaluated through how they talked to the participants and other young women.

Lisa : I’ve never met okay guys on Bebo,

Abby: No neither have I

Lisa ?: they’re all been hey BABE () looking good all that, ()they say that to someone they barely like know..(text cut)...

Mildred: like they just have a conversation with you, like a person that um () say they () like I talk to them on bebo, they say hey what you up to this weekend um you know good seeing you babe like that. That’s good guys. But (not) good guy “hey sexy you know what you doing this weekend love to meet up with you [like

(Lines: 1231-149)

Young men were classified as sleazy if they talked in a sexualized and disrespectful way to the participants and this depended on a specific conversational context and referential learning. For example, it is how the words are delivered within a conversation that provides Mildred with information on whether this guy is a good guy or a player. A player’s conversation is aimed at a sexual opportunity whereas a good guy’s talk is

involved in a conversation with the participants in a way that makes them feel like a person, which I read as not being talked to solely as a potential sexual conquest. These participants position women who are with men who relate to them as sexual conquests or “*hot babes*” illegitimately compared to women who are with men who view them as people. They also have access to media releases that Bebo is potentially risky for young women. Both media releases and traditional feminist discourses enable resistant commonsense discourses around heterosexual risk that include a definition of a ‘bad boy’. Female hierarchies function to identify the sleazy boys and encourage friends not to go out with them and hence open up alternative ways of learning about good and bad relationships. This form of female hierarchy functions to support ‘good’ boys having more access to these participants. In this situation the ‘good’ boys were defined as being ‘white’ and on the right side of the bridge as well as being able to speak to young women outside of overt sexual connotations. These ideas of geographical and ethnic status as well as ‘*sleazy*’ styles of communication defining what is and is not a ‘bad’ boy were co-constituted by two recent British immigrants and was challenged by Lisa who was a first generation New Zealander. She was from an immigrant family who moved to avoid overt racial immigration. Therefore within this group colonial race discourses competed with racial equity discourses when defining who was or was not bad boy.

6.3.3 Learning about heterosexual risks through friends

The majority of participants talked about the consequences for friends in long term, not transitory relationships. Each group had a story about one or two girlfriends they knew who have been in a ‘bad’ permanent relationship. Over-all these ‘cautionary tales’ were utilized when talking about how the participants knew a relationship was not good for a friend and hence were a learning tool for them about what not to do. I utilized these stories as a means to explore the participants’ embodied subjectivity when getting an idea of what they thought of as ‘bad’ boyfriends. The tales of bad boyfriends came from my asking about how they knew their friends were not doing well in relationships as well as from questions around wellbeing, female friends and boyfriends. The balance discourse and how the participants experienced their friend’s distress will be discussed later on. Within this developmental discourse the participants used their own and other friends’ experiences of the aspects of heterosexual relationships they did not like, to outline the risks of being in a permanent relationship at their age and stage. Group 4 talked about how dangerous permanent heterosexual relationships are at this age (see excerpt 4. Appendix I).

Group 4 discussed their main developmental teenage task as to find ‘themselves’. Having a permanent bad boyfriend restricts a young woman from learning about what to expect in a healthier relationship and encourages her to accept the status quo of inequitable heterosexual relationships. A healthier relationship, as will be discussed in the next discourse, is a balanced relationship where a young woman is able to both have a good (not permanent) heterosexual relationship and concentrate on her own developing potential (achieving academically). They also critique romantic love, “*movie love*”, through their friend trying to get her boyfriend to change to fit this ideal, which is a false hope. By talking about their girlfriend holding false hopes for “*movie love*” they are assuming this particular boyfriend will not change. Movie love includes ideas that a typical boyfriend in romantic relationships is devoted and faithful. The participants are utilizing a critical lens and are accessing resistant commonsense understanding that ‘*movie love*’ is not real but a media generated idea of romantic love. The participants’ recognize that their friend knows that what she has with this boyfriend is not good for her, she is aware that there are better relationships but she accepts this form of relationship because she is not confident about her own worth and status.

Angela: She’s got this movie idea of the ideal guy.

Celeste: She always used to tell me like there were guys that she liked that were like this status

Several voices: yeah {laughter}

Celeste: She could never have them because

Competing voices (self esteem)

Celeste: so she just settled with this status

Competing voices (she doesn’t realize that she can)

Megan: she’s really pretty and she’s really nice.

Sarah: She’s got a great personality when she’s not like around him

Charlotte: I also, I don’t know if it was, but I think that um she’s was, she is really smart but I think she wasn’t pushing herself to her full potential um I don’t know if it was because of that or other issues but I always thought she could be doing like pushing herself more, maybe like we would. She did and she’d get really () grades but like, but I thought that she, I don’t know.

Prue: So she’s got the potential to be a really good academic?

Several voices: umm, umm

(Lines: 831-848)

They used the term ‘*self-esteem*’ and were not quite sure how this low self esteem came about. At one point in the excerpt they identify that their friend has a “*great personality*” when she is not with this bad boyfriend and they worry about her not reaching her potential because of being with this boyfriend even though “*she is really smart*”. They speculate that either her low self-esteem or other issues or both of these factors may be

why she does not push herself academically and why she settles for less than ideal in a heterosexual relationship. If this girlfriend was not with this 'bad' boyfriend she would achieve academically, retain her great personality and have better heterosexual relationships in the future. This is a commonsense resistant discourse drawn from the psychological discipline and their interpretation of traditional feminist ideas that certain men are 'bad' for young woman and will lower their self-esteem (Walker, 1989). This form of theory is consistent with how this group is positioning this friend as having less legitimacy and agency to achieve because she is with a 'bad' boyfriend. This commonsense discourse enables the idea of external factors impacting on a young woman's wellbeing but simultaneously restrains her sense of agency in that they are viewing the health impact such as lower self esteem as more permanent than transient.

Group 1 talk about how boyfriend's are not necessary for developmental maturation in year 13.

Rachel: But it's like weird when we, when we're been talking about how like you know when we were 13 and 14 that's what happened like it's we're matured so much since then like our year group.

Prue: Um

Rachel: It's unbelievable that everyone this year is actually enjoying school, getting along. The whole seventh form is getting along with each other. Everyone, it just feels different, you know ...

Riley: [everyone's grown

Rachel: [everyone has just grown up so much.

Riley: You just learn from other people's mistakes like you hear about it so much.

Prue:(text cut)....

Jane: Um, well it's sort of everyone is sort of thinking about their life ahead.

Rachel/Riley? Yeah, Yeah

Riley: It's not all about the relationship, it's more

Rachel: Everyone is concentrating on school and just having fun it's our last year. Everyone just needs to... I don't know be friends=

Riley: =Like in that younger age group when you had a boyfriend it was all about the boyfriend, you did not care about school.

Jane: Yeah

Riley: Yeah 3rd-4th form there is not much at school but then this year it's like, school friends.

Rachel: You know like make the most of your last year, (make the most of it)

Riley: More mature

(Lines: 1174-1212)

The participants discuss how moving away from desiring a heterosexual relationship is a process of maturation. These young women are identifying that their purpose is to get along with others, care about their school work and think about their life

ahead. They view having a permanent boyfriend as stopping young women from following and enjoying their current sporting interests and friends, and they talk about boyfriends having a transitory developmental purpose, and that once you have completed the two earlier boyfriend stages you now need to concentrate on school and future study. Part of this transition away from heterosexuality is learning from friends' adverse consequences of having long term relationships. You do not have to experience a bad relationship yourself in order to learn relationships are not good for your wellbeing at this age and stage.

Rachel: I'm not a commitment person myself {laughter}.

Riley: make the most of it. Like the right guy will come. I mean we are still at school. You can't be in love when you are 16.

Rachel: Like we see all our friends like..... =

Riley: =You have to live your life. Me and Rachel have got friend whose like 20 something K and she said um (1) that she was in a relationship um at school for 3 years with this person and she said it was just a waste of her time, you know, like she just did not have the time to spend with her friends, like it was just her and him, like every weekend did that, you know, everything revolved, you know, around each other, whereas she just missed out on so much time with her friends, you know sports.

(Lines: 244-257)

Rachel and Riley discuss making the most of your teenage years, especially since you cannot **"be in love when you are 16"**. They do not exclude the possibility of having a boyfriend later on, but not now as it may restrain other developmental tasks. This excerpt is still giving lip service to the heterosexual life style for older women, possibly after 27, but not for themselves now. This form of resistance is discussed more thoroughly in the balance discourse.

Summarizing this section on the young women's ideas around desiring boyfriends and developmental learning is quite difficult because even though it consists of quite distinct stages, desiring to be normal, desiring intimacy and a desiring **'me'**, it also intersects with most of the other discourses identified in this research. For example the second stage of having a boyfriend is about intimacy and security, and having a good boyfriend is very closely aligned to having a balanced relationship. Ideas that young women desire boyfriends partially because of the intrinsic pleasure of difference and the newness of boys sit across both the security and the developmental discourse. In a previous PhD attempt I reviewed adolescent developmental theory in the area of heterosexual intimacy. One of the more prominent researcher's in this area is Furman

(1999). When reading the texts within this project I thought about Parker's idea's of how cultural ideologies are constituted through academic theory. At times while I have been analyzing what ideas constitute this specific discourse I have felt like the participants have picked up a psychology book on adolescent development and intimate relationships and are simply repeating back the main findings of positivist research in this area. This feeling was particularly present when the participants were reflecting back on their first relationships and how these relationships are more about being normal within female friendship groups prior to going into more intimate relationships in the mid to late teens.

The other very dominant cultural resource utilized within the participants text is the idea of individual wants and desires which partially constitute a desiring "*me*" within and outside of heterosexual relationships. This idea of a desiring '*me*' is associated with the western philosophical idea of an active agent in control of their life. An individual's entitlement and right to self fulfilment is very much at the heart of traditional psychology's idea of an appropriate 'self actualized subject'. This idea of self and development as drawn from western liberal ideas of self and forms the basis of wellbeing as defined by the psychological discipline, has for these participants intersected in such a way as to enable resistance to the subjective desire to be a girlfriend. However, this is achieved in the context of female friends which I understand offers an alternative space for embodied pleasure. This experience of embodied pleasure is illustrated more clearly in the resistant discourse co-constituted within discourses around female friendship in Chapter 7.

6.4 Balance and wellbeing discourse

Most of the discussions and several interviews included talk about what was difficult about having a boyfriend in terms of balancing being a girlfriend with other aspects of life. The excerpts that I have selected as representative of the participants' ideas of what is and is not a balanced relationship also fits into the next discourse on the risks and pleasures of being a girlfriend, in that an out-of-balance relationship is talked about as a risk or a problem, and a balanced relationship as pleasurable. Ideas of balance refer to the participants talking about heterosexual intimacy outside of overt sexuality, in terms of the heterosexual relationship predominating too much in a young woman's life at the expense of other areas, as Betty (group 3) explains during her individual interview about girlfriends:

Prue: So what have your experiences been like in New Zealand?

Betty: Um (1) yeah, kinda the same, you sometimes kinda have a bit of pressure to like you know like some boys will basically like want you to ditch your friends for them, or the boys ditch their friends for you which I don't really like. So but it's okay, I think like my age now like nearly seventeen um it's you kinda have to balance it and you to know where your boyfriend and girlfriends you have to spend time with your girlfriends and your boyfriend and stuff like that, so it kinda like harder at my age I think yeah, you already know.

(Lines: 42-50)

In contrast the risk and pleasure discourse around being a girlfriend focuses more on sexual experiences as girlfriends. The balance discourse was readily apparent whereas the risk and pleasure discourse emerged more through my reading and re-reading the texts.

This excerpt (Group 6) on balance occurred at the end of this group talking about how girlfriends could become obsessive about boys and how this can impact on the rest of their lives:

Isabella: Yes you just got to make a balance to everything, not many people can

Boborange: Yeah not many people can

Prue: So what's difficult about it, what's difficult about being a girlfriend and a best friend and a good student

Mabel: balancing your () life, like organizing

(Lines: 705-713)

The balance discourse was also distinct from the more embodied sexual discourse on risks and pleasures of being a girlfriend in terms of the language used, such as balance, clingy, draining, obsessive, and as later excerpts will illustrate, possessive. As Claire (Group 3) explains:

Claire: At times he got a bit clingy, I got back and there was, I think something like, six messages from him and he called my house like 3 times, in the day,oh like he was quite clingy at times.....(text cut)...

Prue: What's the feelings around that?

Claire: It's kinda draining

(Lines: 147-180)

The main idea in the balance discourse is that boyfriends at this age and stage should not become all consuming, '*addictive*' (Group 6: Boborange). These ideas draw on western philosophy and the traditional feminist idea that young women should have interests, ambitions and important relationships outside of heterosexual relationships. They arose from a variety of questions, some of them around what they liked and did not like

about being a girlfriend, some around dilemmas, some around how they knew their friends' relationships were not making them happy, as will be illustrated below.

Group 3 talked about their concerns around boyfriends interfering with their relationships with girlfriends:

Prue: ... what are the good things about not being a girlfriend?

Betty: I don't have to worry about like when you're got friends your boyfriend, you don't have to worry about like spending time with boyfriend and spending time with your friends and then your friends getting angry with you for ditching friends and the boyfriends saying oh you're not spending enough time with me, then [friends=

Mildred: and also like when you are with friends and with other like guy mates without your boyfriend, your boyfriend will like oh she's going to cheat on me

Betty: Yeah

Mildred: So when you don't have a boyfriend you can still be friends with guy

(Lines: 215-230)

This excerpt talks about the constant juggling of trying to spend enough time with your friends and boyfriend in order for neither to get angry or dissatisfied with how you are allocating your time. This juggling is experienced and talked about as “**worry**”. The next section of this conversation is more explicitly about how ‘**boyfriends and worry**’ occurs:

Prue: What don't, what do you like about not being a girlfriend?

Mildred: I don't know I haven't had a relationship for so long but whenever I do have a boyfriend it's so hard because I am always with her. I'm, I am always with her and like it kind of hard to split it up, to make it like spend some time with my boyfriend but also spend some time with her (Betty) but.

Prue: In other words you enjoy being close to Betty.

Mildred: I love being close to Betty we are like best mates we are always together like where ever we go and you know just laugh about everything make fun of each other.

Prue: So you, you enjoy not being a girlfriend because you're got a good friendship=

Mildred: Yeah but I love them both, these guys as well, when we go out at the weekend it's so cool because we go out all together and then like we, we meet up with these guys and you can talk to them and whatever you don't have to worry about your boyfriend and what he's doing=

(Lines:255-375)

This excerpt is about going out, having fun, and being able to meet guys without carrying the constant emotional responsibility for a boyfriend and worrying about what he is doing while you are out having fun. Abby and Mildred then talk more explicitly about what they do not like about boyfriends and why they may not desire to be a girlfriend in specific heterosexual relationships:

Abby: =....(text cut).... I, I've been in a few relationships and I like being, I don't like being a girlfriend, I like being a girlfriend when I am with him and it's alright and I have a balance of him and my friends but like

Mildred: =(... them too clingy)

Abby: yeah, yeah, if they are too clingy then it's just, [but like

?: [that's so not fun

Abby: not being a girlfriend its fine, (1) [you feel free=

Mildred: =[like the boyfriends she's just had like he was kind of like clinging her and like taking her away from us, we said that to her and she said like okay and she kinda like changed it but he was too clingy she just couldn't put up with it anymore

Prue: You picked up um there's a conflict coming up(text cut) Abby and that she was being, being pressured to spend time with him rather than you

Mildred: Yeah,

Prue: he was becoming clingy how did you know this was happening?

Mildred: because whenever we, we all us of us were trying to talk to her he would always butt in, they were like oh yeah we could come to my group or stuff like that, and we're he would always touch her and be like in her face and she would be like trying to look [round

(Abby imitated someone trying to extend their neck to look around an obstacle)

[Abby: And another thing is, and another thing is, he's probably ditched all his friends to be with me so whenever I was going out in the weekend I would go out with the girls but I would have to drag him along with me because he wanted to come with me and he didn't want to be with his [friends

Mildred: [yeah

Abby: so either way if like if, like if I was with the girls I still couldn't get away from him because he was like I'll come, and it's just "oh well"

Mildred: so it's () ooohhhhhh

(Lines:277-319)

The language within this excerpt produces a sense of heaviness and a dragging of something that is clinging and restraining freedom, the ability to move forward. This sense of heaviness, weightiness is partially co-constituted through how the participants utilized language such as **"I would have to drag him along with me"**, suggesting pulling something reasonably heavy. The other phrases indicating being restricted included the clinging and the impression Abby's friends had to physically detach her from her boyfriends. This language was in contrast to Abby's subjective experience of 'you feel free' when not being a girlfriend. The embodied sense and language utilized by Abby and her friends co-constitutes a commonsense resistant discourse around not being a girlfriend because of a subjective desire to be free and not burdened by a 'cling-on'.

The other idea discussed in this excerpt is how this boyfriend became an obstacle to Abby's freedom not merely by being there but also with his physical material body, when Mildred talks about how he would touch Abby in order to get her to pay attention to him and how he would block her friends' vision of Abby by standing in front of her. This

accesses Braidotti's ideas around how knowledge is constituted not only through discourses and their conceptual ideas but also through what is 'real' in terms of materiality. The boyfriend is not only demanding Abby's attention through intrusive touch, but is also blocking her and her friends' vision of each other through his physical body. Mildred's subjective embodied response, "*so it's () ooohhhhhh*", represents frustration at having a friend restrained from being with her and her other friends. This exclamation portrays an embodied subjective state that Mildred has not fully articulated and connects to Damasio's (1994) ideas of young women representing more corporeal embodied states with an 'as if' but in sound rather than words.

Group 3's understanding of the impact clingy boyfriends may have on their friend's wellbeing is shown fully in excerpt 5 (see Appendix I). This group, including Abby, did not think that this boyfriend would be permanent or have a long term impact on Abby's wellbeing. Mildred accesses the developmental discourse and assumes this boyfriend was a stage that Abby would get over. The participants position Abby as agentic and as someone who learns through experience. Power operates through Abby's embodied experiences of being with friends and with a clingy boyfriends and being able to identify what are her preferences and talk about what was fun and what was not. The function of a 'bad' boyfriend is to teach you what you do not like and what you like. The next excerpt talks more about Abby's embodied experiences of an out-of-balance relationship.

Abby: It was horrible I felt like I didn't have any freedom I felt like he was pract?, he was controlling as well, anything I did I had to let him know for like he would want me to ring him three times a day just like stuff like that, just like, I felt like, like I went to um have a coffee with the girls and he'd ring me and be like why didn't you ring me whrrrrr, I am just like, can't you just leave me [alone

Mildred: [I know

Abby: I need time with the girls and stuff like that so I thought it was, it was just too much, it was enough so I just said it's not it's not working out

Prue: So you realized it made you feel horrible

Abby: Yeah

Prue: which long term would have impacted on your wellbeing so you called it quits?

Abby: it wasn't, it was making me feel bad but like I could see in the long term if I had stayed with him it was going to get more complicated it was going to get worse it was going to, (cut off while ?) so it wouldn't get that bad."

(Lines: 377-411)

Abby is being more explicit about how frustrated and fed up she was getting with this boyfriend and his need to know where she was and what she was doing several times a

day. Whereas the research participants talked about heterosexual intimacy as having someone to think about on a more or less constant basis what Abby was experiencing was different in that she experienced his behaviour as controlling, rather than pleasurable intimacy. My analysis of this specific context relies on the participants embodied response to a specific relationship. The “*Whrrrrrrrr*” indicated to me exactly how fed up she was getting with her boyfriend’s “*controlling*” behaviour. Her friends’ description and their embodied response, “*so it’s () ooohhhhhh*”, to the intrusive way he obtained her attention and his access to her body in their presence informed me that this level of attention was not pleasurable intimacy but experienced as controlling behaviour. Participants use sound rather than words to portray embodied experiences that are more distressing than pleasurable which supports them having access to ‘knowledge’ outside of articulation. Abby was not totally comfortable with the implied position of victim, that is a young woman who is ‘suffering’ from a controlling relationship. In the last sentence of this excerpt Abby appears to be saying it was not affecting her that badly, but she could see that if the relationship continued it was going to get worse and it would impact on her wellbeing, therefore she finished the relationship. She is both accepting the commonsense ideas of the impact of controlling boyfriends on girlfriends but is also simultaneously resisting the position of victim by saying ‘yes I know risks and I avoided them by finishing the relationship’.

Very few women desire the position of victim and the women I work with will actively work within a conversation to both acknowledge that there is the potential for harm and state that this specific situation has not harmed them. This form of victim monitoring operated in how, different to Abby, group 3 watched and guided Lisa, and accessed Schippers (2007) ideas around female hierarchies. Within this research discussion Abby was frequently positioned by both her friends and herself as a very strong (agentic) young woman who was able to take care of herself in most situations. The criteria within this group of who was ‘strong’ and who was at ‘risk’ were defined through the traditional feminist discourse. Within this discourse having the agency to say ‘no’ was viewed as strong whereas being a girlfriend to ‘bad’ boyfriends and putting yourself at ‘risk’ of forced sexual behaviour and drug taking was understood as risky. Within group 3 Lisa was positioned as a victim and in her individual interview she strongly resisted this positioning and reclaimed her authoritative position as being more experienced than her friends around ideas of reputation and sexual pleasure. Whereas within this friendship

discussion the female hierarchy operated to support both traditional feminist discourses around assertiveness and heterosexual discourses that positioned women as the gate keepers of not only rampant male desire but also their clingy and needy behaviour (Fine, 1995; Tolman, 1999; Walker). The ‘risk and pleasure’ discourse will demonstrate how much planning and effort Mildred required in order to say ‘no’ to her male friend’s desire for penetrative sex. This level of thinking and emotional effort of gate keeping male entitlement could contribute to emotional over-crowding and out-of-balance relationships where the female needs to be constantly orientated to male needs in terms of either meeting their needs or resisting them.

The participants know a relationship is not working for them and are clear about what they like and do not like in relationships. Here Claire provides clarity around knowing what she desires in terms of intimacy:

Prue: So what did you like about that, you clicked?

Claire: We clicked, um he was really easy to make conversation with, h um (1). He would make an effort to come and see me, like the one before, um and he would make an effort to text me first instead of me texting him, um, although, not too much, he wasn’t clingy...

(Lines: 222-227)

Claire’s idea that the boyfriend she is talking about was not too clingy came from previous experience of a clingy boyfriend and from these two experiences she is able to assess what degree of ‘boyfriend’ contact is right for her. The boyfriend Claire was referring to cared for her as a separate other without being clingy and she experienced this relationship as good and balanced.

6.4.1 The battle of achieving balance, emotional workloads and the impact on wellbeing

In her individual interview, Bob (Group 2) discussed her ideas around the pressure from a boyfriend to be a priority, how this desire conflicted with other commitments and how this form of pressure from competing demands impacted on her sense of wellbeing and happiness. Bob’s main concerns are juggling church, work and family with her boyfriend’s desire to be her priority more than needing time with female friends (see excerpt 6 Appendix I).

She experiences these competing obligations as a catch 22 in that she had non-negotiable work, family, school, and church obligations she had to meet in order to avoid unacceptable consequences. She couldn’t always leave other obligations in order to be

with her boyfriend and this left her feeling frustrated, “**orrorr**”. Bob’s way of negotiating this dilemma was to take responsibility for not being able to meet his needs and say sorry and in this way they could move on until “*our next little hissy fit*”. Despite her talking about how this was a deliberate strategy in order for them to move on from his emotional withdrawal this heterosexual process of resisting his gender expectations left her feeling guilty, which I understood as having a negative impact on her wellbeing. This negative impact is demonstrated by Bob talking about guilt as being a need to question herself about having a legitimate right to say no to something she could not do within the relationship without severe consequences to herself, that is not meeting her family obligations, or going against her parents’ wishes, “*like “am I doing this right is the whole (team) situation orrorr you know saying ‘no’ to something*”. In this situation Bob is positioned in a contradictory position where she simultaneously knows she is right but feels guilty and wrong for not meeting a commonsense gender practice of putting your boyfriend’s needs before your own and others’ expectations of you. Reading this excerpt I access the multitude of other women I work with who occupy similar contradictory positions and who are also adversely affected by the amount of effort it takes to say no. The following illustrates how Bob experienced this as a battle.

Bob: =...(text cut)... but if you actually try, to fair to everybody and give them all the time you can without having other things clash well then just, you shouldn’t be guilty about it and if he is making you feel guilty it’s like, he’s not, he’s not, he doesn’t understand you...(text cut)..

Prue.....(text cut)... when you positioned yourself being able to say ‘no’ he would then withdraw, you would feel guilty that you were able to step away from that that, and, and, and not take responsibility for him, for him not being pleased?

Bob: Sometimes, sometimes I would I would be, be just as stubborn as he was and say I was right=

Prue: =Um

Bob: =I couldn’t be there, but sometimes like it was too much of a battle to say, not to say sorry=

(Lines: 340-354)

Bob being stubborn and being positioned to say no, while agentic, comes at a cost and this has an adverse impact on her embodied subjectivity and sense of wellbeing. The discourses she utilizes to explain her subjective experiences of battling with saying no draws on psychodynamic theory and enabled the co-constitution (understanding) of her distress as guilt. Bob is in a no win situation because with each responsibility not met there is a material consequence such as parental anger, boyfriend’s withdrawal, going with one responsibility and not another, and understanding that the consequences make her feel

bad. Bob, unlike other participants, did not talk about this embodied subjectivity as sitting at a more central corporeal site but described it as: *“Prue: Is it up, you know you’re pointing to your head is it up into your head or? Bob: Yeah it like (sometimes, well it was in your head it was just like “am I doing this right is the whole (team) situation orrrr you know saying ‘no’ to something.”*

The self vigilance that Bob talks about as a series of thoughts questioning your right to say no is about gendered power operating through a disciplinary internal gaze (Foucault, 1972). This constant need to justify to yourself and others where you put your time and energy is an emotional work load. This excerpt is very representative of how I understand power operating in young women’s everyday life where, in the absence of overt violence, they struggle with the right to say ‘no’ while experiencing a valued partner’s withdrawal of positive visibility and invitations to question themselves. Throughout both the discussions and individual interviews the participants talked about the effort and work involved in maintaining a heterosexual relationship. Group 4 talks about this effort this way:

Megan: It means you’ve got a boyfriend and which means you make the effort to go and see him, like, you know.... Like with your mates you don’t make an effort to go and sit and eat lunch together, you know you just do it, it’s not that [effort].

(Lines: 1260-1267)

Therefore in a way the idea of balance and putting effort into prioritizing how much time and attention to allocate to a heterosexual relationship functions to both maintain and resist the commonsense gender practices that enforce young women’s being in relationship to boyfriends. This orientation towards boyfriends and the subsequent emotional workload of resisting is about paternal occupation that takes up maternal space (Braidotti, 2003). A consequence of this *‘battle’* is that there is less emotional energy for being outside of heterosexuality in an alternative space. Young women occupying the position of being ‘balanced’ are simultaneously resisting and attending to the requirements of heterosexuality in that even as they resist they do so as girlfriends. Davies’ (1999) ideas of young women being simultaneously active and acted upon fit in very well with what Bob is talking about. Bob is not occupying this overcrowded maternal space with ‘good grace’ or acceptance but is *battling* this form of patriarchy. By talking about this as a *‘battle’* Bob is consciously resisting the demands of heterosexuality. Group 1 avoid this dilemma altogether by not being boyfriend people.

Rachel: I am not a boyfriend person. I don't do boyfriends {laughter}. Yeah, I just like, I just think like if I do not see someone that I can you know that like that that I would want someone that you know is not sporty [or(text cut).... I won't I won't like if I don't see someone that I don't see myself being with at least a few months. It just like.

Prue: Um

Rachel: It's just getting hurt. It's a bit of a waste of time really. I just see all my, like quite a lot of my friends just have gone through that it's just,

(Lines: 1555-1572)

Given the above considerations Rachel has decided she is not a boyfriend sort of person and is positioned as a resisting desiring subject outside of heterosexuality and who does not want to hand over her commodity of time to someone who does not meet her priorities. Her comment that being a girlfriend is about **'just getting hurt'** is referring to her friends experiences of being in 'bad relationships' and the effects this had on them and will be talked about in more detail in Chapter 7. Within clinical settings young women expend a great deal of thought about what their boyfriend may reasonably expect or need but do not talk about what they deserve or desire quite as much as older women. Within the more recent academic literature on wellbeing there is an emerging theme that Westerners are defining their happiness based on a consumer ethic (Dittmar, 2008) (i.e. what you have is what you are). Through these lenses I understood Rachel as utilizing a consumer idea when critiquing heterosexual relationships such as "what I will get out of this if I put in this amount of time". Because I was aware of her mother's occupation I wondered if Rachel had access to a female cultural context within her home of fair exchange and whether there is an emerging resistant practice of rejecting heterosexual relationships because they are not a fair exchange of human effort. This resistant practice could be further promoted within young women's talk through applying economic business ideas of an input and out goings column that should balance within heterosexual relationships. This form of talk sits outside of normative values of heterosexuality because Rachel assumes that a boyfriend should be orientated to her interests rather than expecting her to be orientated to a male's needs. My understanding of Group 1's discussion of boyfriends and fair exchange needs to be understood within the context of their stories of girlfriends who had suffered in inequitable relationships with boyfriends.

6.4.2 Boyfriends and paedophiles: Why heterosexuality is not a fair exchange

Group 1 identified feelings of being restricted within heterosexual relationships at the instigation of boyfriends and talked about how they could restrain freedom in a way that made their girlfriends unhappy this way:

Prue: ...(text cut)...What would you sense when you first start thinking about a relationship you are not comfortable with?

Riley: I just saw that she was like my friend was unhappy like just you know. I told her. () She just did not have any time, didn't think. He's just, he was all over her and just you know

()

Rachel: just wanted her (2) to me almost paedophilish,

Prue: ..(text cut). Just like what's paedophilish?

Rachel: All over. {laughter} all over [

Jane: [yeah just like

Rachel: [her without, without her liking it. Um, ummm (2) same age.

Prue: Did you ever ask her what she was experiencing when I presume you talk about he was physically all over her?

Rachel: Yeah I asked her, in those words and she had no (1) space like.

Prue: And what did she say that was like?

Rachel: She couldn't stand it. She just, she just felt, wanted to be WOOH [free

Riley/Jane: [wanted to be free

Prue: It's almost like the way you are using your body, that she felt constraint

Rachel: Umm

(Lines: 616-650)

Rachel, Riley and Jane are accessing the victim, perpetrator discourses of traditional feminist theory and describing a boyfriend as paedophilish and as someone who sexually touches a same age girlfriend against her desire, “*without her liking it*”, and in a way that makes her feel she has no space. The word paedophile usually refers to an older adult (usually male) who sexually touches a young child without consent. This group of participants was far more able to use their physical bodies to convey meaning about being crowded out and restrained by out-of-balance relationships. For example, once these participants drew their upper bodies in tightly and then spreading their arms out as if to shake something off when talking about heterosexual restriction and a desire to be free.

Group 1 also talked about how young women's lives became out-of-balance through becoming obsessed with being a girlfriend, as well as young men becoming obsessive or over protective about girlfriends and about guy mates who disrupted their friendships with them through being obsessive about their girlfriends and heterosexual relationships. For this group being in a heterosexual relationship was risky whether as a

boyfriend or as a girlfriend. Group 1 used the word prioritize when discussing ideas that group 3 talked about as balance:

Jane: Um being able to um spend as much time with your friends and um and still be real close with your girlfriends as well as being able to have a close relationship with this boy.

Prue: And how do you manage that?

Jane; Um

Rachel/Riley: prioritize {very softly}

Prue: Is it easy?

.....(text cut)...

Jane: NO

(Lines: 465-481)

This excerpt, where Jane puts a strong emphasis on the **“NO”** also illustrates how most groups and participants spoke about how balancing a boyfriend with other parts of their life was one of the most difficult parts of being a girlfriend. A large part of this difficulty is how your friends respond when you are no longer available to them with the same amount of interest and time. Group 1 uses commonsense ideas around friends and responsibility and where they locate the ‘problem’ person (see excerpt 7, Appendix I). They discuss young men and women becoming possessive and obsessive about being in a heterosexual relationship through the common practice of cheating and insecurity. For example Rachel stated **“She let, wouldn’t let me see him you know, just to catch up or anything and it was just really, she was real insecure about herself and just wouldn’t let him anywhere near us or any others, other girl mates”, and “cheating on boyfriends and girlfriends SO maybe that are just scared like that.....Jane: insecure”**.

These participants discussed how boys demonstrate their desire to be a boyfriend not so much through talk, “I want a girlfriend” but through their possessiveness. They did not like a male friend’s gender expectation that they will listen to him ‘bitch’ about his girlfriend when they were not prepared to be available when they wanted to see him. This gendered behaviour sat outside their ideas of fairness and accessed a consumer discourse around equity and exchange. Billig (1988) talks about how this intersection of ideologies such as gender and consumer discourses produces new knowledge and ideologies, in this situation the legitimate right to resist a guy mate’s needs. The very strong ‘NO’ portrayed indignation that a guy mate would expect such gendered roles from them and also appeared to produce a lack of empathy for his heterosexual unhappiness. These young women did not drop their guy mate but were positioned as morally legitimate in conversations that involved his heterosexual woes and subsequent lack of legitimacy to their time and

resources. In contrast, they talked about several situations where girlfriends had become involved in obsessive relationships which had a negative impact on their wellbeing, and they were far more empathetic. They not only recognized that the relationship was not good for their friend, similar to their guy mate, but they also intervened more actively, such as spending time with her over New Year. This form of resistant gender specific response to guy mates and female friends in heterosexual trouble may go some way towards addressing the resource differences where men traditionally have more access to heterosexual pleasure than women in heterosexual relationships.

6.4.3 Young women's vulnerability, personality types and out-of-balance relationships

One of the more frequent themes in groups 1, 3, 4, and 5 was that young women who were vulnerable were more likely to become too focused on a heterosexual relationship at the expense of other aspects in their life. Vulnerability was seen by the participants as both being outside of and within the individual women. I have selected two excerpts to represent the more frequent ideas discussed about out-of-balance relationships: one excerpt from Angela's (Group 4) individual interview talks about how a long term friend is largely orientated to her boyfriend in preference to any other interests and the other excerpt is from Group 6 where Boborange and Isabella talk about how a friend who has lost her father, had sex at 13 and come to school drunk, has become involved in an out-of-balance relationship.

This Group 6 excerpt follows a conversation about a friend who has had 'sex' (penetrative) with a boyfriend she has had for two years, after her father died.

Boborange: Um she lost her virginity when she was 13, um she came to school drunk in year 9 um, yeah she has just been through lots of things. Her dad has died when she was in year 9 um and with her I would feel so comfortable talking about sex.

.....(text cut).....

Prue: So in her case having a boyfriend may not be working for her or?

Boborange: I think she is bonding to one person like too much. She doesn't have any other people that she can go to. So if she breaks up with him it would emotionally totally shatter her. Like at school she only has one other friend and that friend can't really understand her situation that well. They are just friends because they suit each other but emotionally they can't really share many thoughts and um so if she breaks up with him she is just totally going to feel worthless and he's. She texts him all the time. Um she looks forward to when school finishes to just meet him and. He went through all, he went through all the disasters that she has been through and he has always supported her.

(Lines: 442-452)

Boborange talks about how J has come to depend on being emotionally supported by her boyfriend, to the extent that if she loses this boyfriend she will feel worthless and views J as needing emotional support in order to feel worthwhile. Boborange talks about this desire for support as having occurred through circumstances rather than an inherent personality trait, and accesses language from psychological discourses, such as feeling worthless, but does not locate 'the problem' within the individual person. Instead Boborange talks about the circumstances surrounding this relationship becoming out-of-balance. This silence, or absence of commonsense psychological ideas about individual personality traits being responsible for relationship difficulties, is resisting discourses that emerge from what Parker identifies as 'the psycomplex' and what is known as a person within our western culture (Parker, 1992).

My clinical lens assumes that at 13 her father's death may have left J with a space, a loss in terms of intimate regard and this space maybe experienced as a loss and a subsequent desire for a boyfriend. This commonsense understanding comes from the idea that we as women are partially acculturated to desire both paternal and heterosexual regard (Grosz, 1989). Boborange does not make the same assumption, but instead she talks about both the father's death and drinking and having sex as possibly making her more in need of emotional support. Boborange talks about J being depressed but believes that even though her heterosexual relationship may not be good for her in terms of achieving her potential; it would also emotionally shatter her to leave it. This is a common dilemma when more mature women impact on their wellbeing through staying in and leaving heterosexual relationships (Fisher, 1991; 2005).

This section of conversation was initiated by talking about who these participants were comfortable talking to about sex. Boborange identified that she felt very comfortable talking to J about sex because of her way of being within the conversation i.e. "***I would feel so comfortable talking about sex***". This ease between girlfriends will be further discussed in chapter 6, but this form of embodied connection between two friends may have influenced how Boborange talked about J's situation outside of heterosexual discourse of female deficit and responsibility. Although Boborange positioned J as vulnerable, she did not take a position of authority within this particular conversation in terms of knowing better than J. At no point in this conversation did Boborange indicate that there was an easy solution to J's situation. Her talk was more a non judgmental commentary on the circumstances of J's life that had led to her emotional reliance on one

boyfriend. Therefore Boborange is talking about how young women may experience out-of-balance relationships through specific circumstances.

Angela, (Group 4) describes a long term friend who is so immersed in being a girlfriend to the exclusion of her own interests and female friends (see full excerpt 8, Appendix I). Angela sits between several competing, contradictory discourses and embodied feelings. She utilizes western liberal discourses around how each individual has the right to be respected for their choices, developmental and individual psychology discourses about adolescent goals and stable personality traits, and liberal traditional feminist ideas that support the idea that every individual woman has a right to autonomy outside of heterosexuality. These discourses position her as respecting her Christian friend's choice to have a permanent boyfriend but views this heterosexual orientation as problematic because it will restrain her from developing an autonomous self, and make her more vulnerable to be a victim if this relationship does not work out and she no longer has the security of friends. The discourse of respecting her friend's choices was in contradiction to what I was aware of throughout this excerpt which was Angela's dislike and lack of empathy for this friend. This embodied experience is supported by the following excerpt.

Angela: okay, um (1) honestly he makes her really happy and that's why they've been going for so long, um but I find she can be a bit of a different person when she's not with him. When she's is with him it's almost like there's this huge aura about her that she's so nice, so everything nice, {laughs} there's almost nothing, it's almost false to me sometimes, I'm like "oh does he really know the real side of her". I mean obviously they do because they hang out so much

Prue: [MM

Angela: [and

Prue: What's the real side of her?

Angela: She's quite a cold person, in that you can talk to her but she may not converse back willingly and she'll often just turn her back on you, I don't know....(text cut)....

It's just little things like that, that I'm like well, obviously she doesn't want to be around her friends more as much as she wants to be around

(Lines: 438-480)

Angela accesses language from psychology idea's of stable personality traits i.e. cold, weary, the real her, false her which I experience as judgmental which illegitimately positions her Christian friend and herself within an authoritative, expert position. Angela utilizes resistant commonsense discourses about women occupying positions outside of heterosexuality but in the absence of empathy or liking. My understanding of this young

Christian woman is consistent with Davies ideas of the multiple lines of force present in Christian and heterosexual cultures which co-constitute this young women's desire to be good in specific ways. Being good makes her happy; being with a friend who positions her illegitimately in competing, judgmental moral ideologies makes her unhappy. Angela has this friend positioned as 'abject other' and this position will be discussed in Chapter 7. The relevant research question is how do we facilitate young women's compassion for female friends who are situated within competing moral ideologies and how do we assist young women who may not be well in specific heterosexual relationships without them feeling judged within the disciplinary setting of specific friendship groups (Schipper, 2007)?

6.4.4 Soul mates and out-of balance relationships

Boborange discusses how meeting a soul mate would make her become clingy which returns once again to one of the central ideas of an out-of-balance relationship, but this time associated with desired heterosexual intimacy:

Boborange: so much more to talk about, so much more I feel like he is my type of guy, [

? [Yeah.

Boborange: [more attachment um, more in common, I would feel like he is my soul mate {laughter} and I would feel he is more precious because I think they are more hard to find

? Yeah.

Boborange: and I wouldn't want to lose him and that would be a disadvantageous then because I would be so clingy

(Lines:1253-1263)

Boborange discusses clinginess in the context of soul mates, suggesting there will never be another male partner who will match 'you' and your needs this well, or provide exclusivity and exaggerated attachment. The necessary comparison is with an ordinary boyfriend who is replaceable and not a 'one' off. If you leave this boyfriend you may be lost and never find another perfect fit which in turn may lead to a life time of regret and loss. This idea of soul mates is an exaggerated form of 'romantic love' and is present in both older and younger women and is part of our commonsense talk about romantic love. With younger women this often works as a restraint to leaving heterosexual relationships which are impacting negatively on their health. With much older women I access the idea less frequently but usually in the context of gynaecological cancer. In this situation a 'soul mate' usually refers to a male partner who is emotionally and physically supportive and

facilitates the patient's diagnosis and adjustment to cancer and where both partners fear the loss of this special connection through death. These couples not only start out soul mates but have built on this connection through safe, gender flexible intimacy. The term soul mates in refuge usually refers to the beginning of a relationships which an incredibly intimate man who is not safe and is not gender flexible. The way Boborange is talking about what characteristics define a soul mate accesses, for me, more the older women's experiences and will be discussed later in chapter 6.

6.4.5 The problem with being a 'proper girlfriend'

Group 6 talked about the risks of forsaking other aspects of your life in order to be a girlfriend:

Megan: because there are girls in the school who have boyfriends and do nothing else. They're not involved in school, they're not involved in sport, and they're not involved in arts or culture. Anything, they don't do anything else and their life revolves around the guy and then, I'm not saying that's a bad thing, but then how are they 'proper' when you're [got girls that

Angela: [Standing on their own two feet

Megan: yeah and when you're got that are fully [involved,

? You can't rely on that.

Charlotte: [() you want the guy to support you whatever, if you're just going to be like, like a (wife) who just looks after the kids and. It's fun for you if that's what you want to do but I think you also um part of your self- fulfilment you need to have other interests.

? Yeah: Competing voices

Sarah: You have your own life, have your own life while you can,

Charlotte: Especially since you're so young you can't expect your relationship now to carry on until you're an adulthood kind of thing.

Angela: Sounds like quite narrow minded like it's, it's just saying that this lady all she wants to do is have, is to be a good girlfriend and it's like well why can't she be herself, like her own person and develop her own interest and what, whatever else.

(Lines 208-240)

This excerpt summarizes the central ideas embedded in the balance discourse, namely that young women need to preserve a sense of themselves outside of being a girlfriend. This is an idea of an autonomous self that is known outside of and separate from being a girlfriend. These participants are saying that you must maintain your own life, because you cannot rely on a transitory heterosexual relationship. This emphasis on the unreliability of heterosexual relationships is referring to ideas of remaining well as a young woman and where being well is referring to reaching your potential as a person separate from being in a heterosexual relationships. To rely solely on a boyfriend for your wellbeing is very fragile and when this relationship finishes you could be without friends,

behind with your academic achievement, and without a sense of self. Further, participants view young women as only having a finite time to explore their potential and interests and that they need to make the most of this time, the inference being that older women may not have time for their own life (to be outside of relationships). This particular conversation defines being a proper woman as outside of heterosexuality while at the same time inferring there may be an inevitability about heterosexuality taking over older women's lives. This idea that heterosexuality will strike at some time, and be expected to take over older women's lives, sits across several of the discourses. This is a commonsense discourse that I have heard many times young women need to make the best use of their young years because their later life will not have the same freedom. Group 4 participants also talk about young women who are "*[Standing on their own two feet]*" as more legitimate than young women who concentrate on being girlfriends who they view as "*narrow minded*".

6.4.6 Being a 'proper' women within and outside of heterosexuality

Overall the participants from most groups overwhelmingly talked about relationships they and their friends have experienced that were out-of-balance, more than heterosexual relationships that were working and enhancing young women's wellbeing. However Angela (Group 4) talked about her own experiences of a heterosexual relationship that she defined as balanced and Boborange, Group 6. talked about a friend's balanced relationship. Ideas of balanced relationships support the conclusions from the out-of-balance relationship discourse. Angela's definition of a balanced relationship drawn from her present relationship and involves a view of heterosexual relationships are transitory and conditional on each being able to '*strive*' to be your own person by maintaining a sense of self including being able to excel at your own hobbies and keeping up with school work as well as making each other happy. Here happiness is experienced as a feeling such as "*like you get that rush of like feeling it's like "oh yah" you know, hello, it's like with friends too. Like whenever you see a friend you just feel really cozy and yeah, um wow*", an embodied subjectivity of happiness "*I guess I'm happy, I know I'm happy*".

Angela's definition of a balanced relationship was drawn from traditional feminist discourses including ideas about respect and fairness which she quoted from the North Shore's Women's Refuge expect-respect website. Angela also utilized ideas from our current educational curriculum on respecting and celebrating differences as well as western

liberal ideology around autonomous independent individuals. Angela defines a balanced relationship as: where each partner is not restrictive of the other's preferences; an absence of critical self-questioning and an entitlement to being positioned as legitimate subject with specific preferences and desires (see excerpt 9, Appendix I). For example "is this relationship making me happy?" instead of "am I doing this right, am I wrong?". Angela's view is that being a girlfriend is a legitimate subjective desire only if it is transitory, conditional, effortless, and easy and provides embodied experiences of happiness, suggesting that Angela perceives there are right and wrong ways to 'do' relationships. Angela's individual interview also suggests a silence about what happens when your difference has 'real' consequences on the other partner, which fits more with Braidotti's and Cromby's ideas of difference and 'real' material consequences (Braidotti, 2003; Cromby, 2006). My persistent critical voice questions "aren't many relationships like this at the beginning? Isn't the conflict over difference only problematic when one partner is repeatedly disadvantaged, in very 'real' terms, over the other?" Throughout both the discussion and individual interview I understood Angela as initially a very tentative girlfriend, but stayed in this relationship because of her experiences of wanting and feeling happiness. Angela is negotiating the dissonance between an autonomous assertive individual and her more corporeal embodied experiences of happiness. Clinical and refuge experience informs me that many mature and young women sit between these two desires: the desire for the more culturally formed autonomous 'self' and the (less articulated) embodied desire for pleasurable intimacy and connection with one other. She demonstrates her fears about losing her autonomous self:

Angela: well in my relationship um I didn't tell anyone I was going out with this guy

Prue: and

Angela: for several weeks because I wanted a sustain my own personal identity I didn't want everyone to say "Hi how's Adam" like and um that's what I'm getting a bit now, which is okay like I get it from a few friends, but a lot of my friends know he's not my world {laughs}

Prue: What do you think when, if I walked in here and said "Oh hi how's your boyfriend?"

Angela: um(text cut)...I would have thought "Oh I'm good too thanks" {laughter}

Prue: There's a little bit of anger and [resentment there

Angela: [a little bit

Prue: that you're being viewed as a girlfriend rather [than

Angela: [um rather than who I am.

(Lines: 548-570)

Angela's embodied discomfort about being in a intimate relationship reflects our historical understandings of good feminists rejecting practices of romantic love. Ironically I found that silencing experiences of love and pleasure, in many situations restrained establishing an effective advocacy relationship that enabled them to leave dangerous men (Fisher, 1991).

Boborange introduced ideas that the best heterosexual relationships are about avoiding treating boys as exotic and exciting creatures and the subsequent risk of becoming a 'clingy' girlfriend and instead treating your boyfriend as a female friend:

But I think it also depends on your personality and also who you are coming out with in your life because I think tomboys, tomboy girls, um they tend to not cling to guys like B. She is so not the clingy type. She is really in control of her boy relationships and I think that's cause she has been exposed to boys because she went to a coed school and she doesn't treat them like they are an exotic species or "man I have to act like this so that he will like me", or "I have to conform to his wants", she totally treats him like a girl, {laughs} like one of her good friends and that's a really steady relationship.

(Lines: 766-772).

This strategy of treating a boyfriend as a female friend enables girlfriends to resist gender normative practices, such as "“man I have to act like this so that he will like me”, or “I have to conform to his wants”. Boborange goes on to talk about how her friend is gradually developing a feeling of sexual attraction within this relationship with a male who is first of all a friend: “I would say that they have been friends for so long that she doesn't want to really have sex with him. Um she doesn't want to ruin their friendship um but she did tell me that she did sometimes feel you know sexual-ness (Lines: 804-806).”

Both Angela Groups 4 and Group 6 produced resistant ideas around being able to have a boyfriend to feel an exclusive and a special closeness which is largely in the absence of sexual activity. For example Angela states “**Um and it's almost proving them wrong you that don't just have to have a physical relationship to be considered a boyfriend and a girlfriend**” (see excerpt 10 Appendix I). The potential is there but there is no rush for Boborange's friend's relationship or Angela's to be sexual in terms of heterosex. Boborange talks about her friend's relationship this way:

Boborange: But it's not as big as other girls and they have been steady friends for a long time and they have only just started kind of really, sexually interested in each other quite a short time ago and they haven't really taken it to that extent. They have just kind of hugged and kissed I think.

(Lines: 810-812)

Both Angela and Boborange challenge the commonsense idea that you have to have a full on sexual relationship, usually assumed to be penetrative vaginal sex, in order to be a 'proper' girlfriend. Instead Angela and Boborange resist paternal consumption by desiring a heterosexual relationship that avoids the risks of gender normative practices, through enjoying competing differences and preferences and providing happiness. This form of heterosexuality rejects romantic love ideas of pleasing your boyfriend and instead uses a criterion that incorporates the idea that young women desire subjects outside of a phallogentric framework.

6.4.7 Summary of the balance discourse

For the participants, heterosexual relationships contain both pleasure and risk which young women are required to negotiate in order to achieve balance and wellbeing. The discourses that intersected to co-constitute the out-of-balance discourse included the developmental, psychological, romantic love, liberal ideas of an individual autonomous self, celebrating difference discourses, equity and resource exchange within a consumer discourse and traditional, liberal feminist discourses.

Relationships become unbalanced primarily through the boyfriend's need to be a priority and his clinginess. These feelings and embodied experiences of 'cling-ons' access commonsense resistant discourses in the community that position men as 'needy' and women as more balanced and authoritative. What enables the participants avoid the risk of out-of-balance heterosexual relationships are their resistant desires for freedom and space and their embodied subjective desire to avoid feelings of being burdened.

Commonsense heterosexual and feminist discourse co-constituted disciplinary female hierarchies, which in the absence of compassion, may operate to discipline other females and decrease female friendships and wellbeing. A 'proper woman' reached her potential as an autonomous self which included having their own preferences, interests and academic achievements as well as maintaining female friendships. Young women could also be proper within a balanced heterosexual relationship that promoted a sense of happiness, respected differences, was effortless, exclusive, respectful and fair. Young women who treated their boyfriends as female friends instead of exotic special creatures had healthier heterosexual relationships and eliminated gender normative practices. Proper women have access to resistant ways of being within heterosexual relationships that

challenge heterosexual imperative (Gavey, 1992). This specific way of being a girlfriend co-constitutes an alternative subjective desire to be a girlfriend.

6.5 The Risk and Pleasure discourse

In this discourse ‘risk’ refers to sexual risk. In discussing this discourse, I begin with describing how Angela experiences the risk of cheating as a threat to her emotional wellbeing, and then discuss how Mildred experiences the risks of heterosexuality, sees her female body as risky and identifies the strategies she has to undertake to maintain control over her body and reputation. Young women lose their reputation through being sexual, and I discuss Lisa’s experiences as a girlfriend as someone who has experienced being heterosexual as a risk, a chore and a pleasure while maintaining her reputation. I consider my embodied response to female strength and size and associate Claire and Group 1’s tall, strong bodies with greater agency and access to resistance. I discuss how past experiences of witnessing male violence and over-burdened mothers enables resistance to heterosexual normative practices such as being a girlfriend. The ‘risk and pleasure’ discourse incorporates ideas of embodied sexual pleasure and the idea of ‘risk’ through loss of reputation in your own specific friendship and peer groups and the more silent risk (threat) of sexual and physical assault.

6.5.1 The risks of having a boyfriend and the pain of ‘cheating’

Angela describes how she negotiated the risk of her boyfriend getting drunk and the potential risk of cheating which would have threatened her heterosexual relationship and her position as a girlfriend through a specific form of embodied subjectivity, i.e. a dark cold feeling, that is associated with a thought of how unexpected it was, such as ***“I just feel kinda cold like “what” kinda thing like didn’t expect that coming”*** (see excerpt 11, Appendix I). Angela recognizes this embodied subjective state as a threat to her relationship and wellbeing at a physiological level i.e. a cold, dark feeling intersects almost simultaneously with cognitions, thought (Damasio, 1994). Angela clarifies this somatic/thought response to threat:

Prue: and that cold feeling you’re talking about where is that situated?

Angela: Um, gut really, I just feel like “ohh” and then

Prue: okay

Angela: yeah, I guess it rushes up to the head as like “What do I do now”? but um

(Lines: 257-263)

The threat is not an immediate physical threat to the integrity of her physical body, but culturally produced (co-constituted) through hearing, witnessing and ‘knowing’ the effects of alcohol on young men and their heterosexual relationships. Angela’s simultaneous somatic and discursive response to drinking and cheating appears embedded in her specific culture. One of her male friends also recognizes this threat of guys being drunk and cheating and reassures her that her boyfriend did not cheat (see excerpt 12, Appendix I). The risk in this heterosexual context is that Angela will be emotionally hurt if her boyfriend did cheat. Angela explains about hurt and worry: **“but if you feel scared to address that with your partner then I don’t think that’s very healthy, because then you’re kinda restricting yourself in your relationship and then um possibly kinda hurting what (you might become)”**. Different desires in heterosexual relationships are a risk if they are not identified and discussed. Angela defines this specific risk further when she talks about either being able to influence her boyfriend or being brushed off, silenced and hurt (see excerpt 13, Appendix I). This form of hurt is understood partially through a romantic love discourse where men are expected to cherish their female partner and remain faithful as well as psychological theories around emotions, self worth and depression i.e. **“Oh it hurts them, it scars, it’s like bringing up that self emotion of, “am I good enough am I,” it kinda depresses them.”** Angela talks about a boyfriend’s unfaithfulness as scarring a girlfriend and producing doubt about your own self worth. This embodied discursive concept of hurt illustrates the reasonableness of Angela’s initial embodied response to the boyfriend’s desire to get drunk. Angela is both agentic and not agentic: agentic in that she has an immediate discursive thought that accompanies her initial embodied response to her boyfriend’s intention to get drunk which incorporates an active “I” **“feeling that I just can’t agree to what he’s done or said”**. However, within this gendered context and her understandings that boyfriends can get drunk and cheat she does not have agency.

Traditional feminist theory attributes agency in the form of personal responsibility and choice toward men and their abusive behaviour such as drinking and cheating on their girlfriend (Dobash & Dobash, 1998). It constitutes the female body in heterosexual contexts being permanently vulnerable or at ‘risk’ because of men’s bad behaviour. Given the ‘real’ risk of being silenced Angela approaches a discussion about their competing desires with caution:

Prue: and the “oh what do I do?” What, what do you think after that?

Angela: I kinda pause um to gather my thoughts, um, um, how best to approach my concerns to him, because you don't want to say something silly, and he'll get all defensive, you've got to be on the same level I guess, um yeah think how I can express my concern and if he will take it well, {laughs} that kinda rushes through my head as well. "Oh how will he take it"?.....(text cut)..... because um, I guess he's got this plan and he'll go through with it if he does that but um, you know, Adam didn't which was good {laughs}

(Lines: 269-293)

Similar to the security discourse, young women are demonstrating a surprising degree of skill and strategizing in order to negotiate the risks of being a girlfriend in a heterosexual culture. This degree of strategic thinking is very different to how my friends and I talked about problems with transitory boyfriends during the 1970's and 80's. Are we training young women to be better care-takers of men by teaching them more indirect communication skills?

Utilizing Damasio's (1995) ideas about the body and its somatic response to both physical and culturally constructed risk, what are the outcomes on the corporeal body of silencing these heterosexual threats, 'risks' in order to strategically plan? What is the impact of silencing more socially constructed risks on women's bodies? Health research is illustrating how midlife women are presenting with abnormal neuroendocrine stress responses responsible for conditions such as pre-diabetes, thyroid abnormalities, cardiac arrhythmias and liver functioning abnormalities associated with the complexity and degree of gendered paid and non paid work load (Mellner, 2005). Thus, when your body responds through neuroendrine change i.e. fear and increases in adrenaline, what happens when you resist this physiological response through stillness, planning and thinking: what is the impact on the corporeal body? Are these gender practices, such as putting effort and time into carefully wording your desires for safety, established at this age and stage, the training ground for the multiple gender requirements of mature women? What is the cumulative corporal impact of this resistance to fear and planning? In other contexts how do women experience this form of patriarchal orientation in terms of risks to themselves and the long term impact on their wellbeing?

Angela's orientation to the 'risks' of her boyfriend cheating did not go on to become a burden, or a significant responsibility. Angela does not talk about this negotiation process around risk and safety as being an effort and it is almost like this form of thinking and planning happens very soon after the 'risk' is experienced at both embodied and discursive sites. She acknowledges it is uncomfortable and is happy the risk

of competing desires are negotiated successfully such as *“It was just like it’s kinda good to reassure at the same time that you can feel uncomfortable and it’s not like you have to be pressured to be the perfect couple and always have the same views and what not, so”*. Angela’s orientation to a boyfriend has enabled her to negotiate potential risk through the presence of competing different desires within her heterosexual relationship and maintain her access to pleasure through being a girlfriend with this boyfriend. How may the female body both ‘know’ desire and risk and thereby negotiate safe pleasure such as Angela recognizing the ‘risk’ of a boyfriend cheating, experiencing the pain but not being scarred through personal self-doubt? Boborange provides some insight into this dilemma in Chapter 7.

6.5.2 Losing your ‘reputation’ is a heterosexual risk for young women

Group 3 talked about how young women lost their reputation within heterosexual contexts. This conversation arose from Lisa discussing how boys act in a disrespectful way towards her and other young women:

Lisa: totally is, when I, when I am going out with one of their friends the other friend’s texting me “oh you look dam fine.”

Abby: It’s like get a life

Betty: they, they don’t have a life all they do is like pick up girls.

Claire: Sometimes I think like though, I’m not saying it’s you

Lisa: Oh no

Claire: but oh sometimes I think it’s the girl that brings it on themself=

Lisa: =Yeah it is

Claire: =because one of our other friend’s um when she first came to the school

? oh {laughter}

Claire: um () she got around a bit, right um

(Lines: 1107-1126)

In this excerpt Claire is very careful to qualify her ideas about girls losing their reputation with a *“sometimes”*, in order to avoid criticizing Lisa who is positioned in this group as someone who lost her reputation through being involved in risky heterosexual behaviour. Negotiating these competing commonsense ideas enables this group of participants to talk about a friend in terms of her own moral responsibility for behaving badly as a female friend through pursuing who own sexual desires (see excerpt 14, Appendix I). This girl (‘V’) had recently immigrated to New Zealand but the participants reject that her culture had taught her to act badly around boys. V is positioned illegitimately in terms of her going for what she wants in the moment, which is sex with a hot guy, and resists being a good woman as defined by her particular friendship group. V’s

illegitimate position is discussed within an a moral deficit framework. She is seen as wrong for not even attempting to mediate between what she wants and what her friends want i.e. *“she just doesn’t care”*, for having casual sex when she has a boyfriend, and for not complying with the hierarchal status in her friendship group. For example, Mildred positions herself as having the moral right to be angry because she had stated an interest (staked a claim) in the hot guy before V had casual sex with him. Mildred utilizes a fairness and equity discourse in which men are positioned as equally responsible as women for bad behaviour and tells both the young man and V why she is angry. She then goes on to condemn V because whereas the young man responded in a way that Mildred experienced as caring about her and understood her anger, V did not. Despite her friends counselling to be different and meet their disciplinary practices V continues to want this young man that Mildred is also interested in, *“of course I do I want to go out with him, he’s so hot, I’m so lucky I did that with him, [in front to my face, I’m so lucky”*. In this context a sexually desiring woman is condemned while the young man is relieved of moral condemnation through demonstrating care and understanding. Within this conversation V is resisting both commonsense friendship understandings as well as the traditional heterosexual understanding of female desire being silent and not acted upon.

Participants explain how young women lose their reputation through meeting male sexual desires rather than their female friends’ disciplinary advice, and results in getting a reputation as a slut. For these participants, being labelled a slut means you are more likely to be sexually assaulted in the future and will not be able to get a good boyfriend who acts respectfully not sleazily towards you (see excerpt 15, Appendix I). Participants talk about how V is “pussy-whipped” by being dominated by the boys at this party to the degree that she will initiate, or simulate being bisexual in order to gain attention from the guys. These participants understand guys’ requests for girl-on-girl sex as ‘just fun’ for them, but disastrous for young women to do because it loses them respect and a good reputation. For this friendship group, boys don’t go out with slutty girls. Abby utilizes male gendered authority by reporting her male friend ideas that ‘good’ girls do not comply with young men’s wants and desires for party sex such as ‘turning bi’. Female friendships function in such a way as to monitor and maintain these double standards. Within this disciplinary system, higher status young women such as Abby and Mildred attempt to monitor and discipline their friends’ sexual behaviour in order for them not to become ‘sluts’. This fits

with poststructuralist research findings on how femininities function to meet specific forms of masculinity (Connell, 1995; Moore & Rosenthal, 1996; Snippers, 2007; Warr, 2001).

These participants acknowledge the boys set girls up to lose their reputation, and that some girls do this in order to gain male attention and have access to 'sex'. Lisa clarifies a similar situation that she has experienced where she *'put out'* more sexual contact in order to get a boyfriend and maintain that special attention. Lisa repeatedly talked about how she loved the male attention, but also as the next section will illustrate she did not take this form of attention very seriously. Therefore protecting your reputation, not acting on your sexual desire, protects your risky body from future sexual violence. This threat of violence through loss of reputation is operating more covertly than overtly but is nevertheless a dominant line of force in maintaining a visible male sexual desire and silent female sexual desire.

This disciplinary power operates through the intersecting heterosexual discourses around reputation and egalitarianism about fairness amongst female friends and feminist ideas that men are as responsible for bad behaviour as women. What these intersecting discourses silence is the unequal playing field in terms of men and women's access to pleasure. For many young women gaining male attention is a more available form of pleasure than having access to alternative sites of pleasure. Young men in comparison may have access to a greater number of sites of pleasure, including different forms of sexual pleasure and through the commonsense gender practice of having their needs prioritized and 'boys being boys.' Young men have greater access to pleasure through freer movement within the world, with less worry around the dangers of sexual violence, pregnancy, loss of reputation and maybe still have greater access to car racing, alcohol and 'hot chicks', casual sex. Young men's greater access to sites of pleasure may be facilitated by the way disciplinary power operates for them, in the form of not being morally responsible for 'bad' behaviour that harms others' wellbeing. It is reasonably hard to imagine a group of female friends being able to ask a group of New Zealand young men to turn bi with a male friend. It is even harder to imagine this resulting in a commonsense discourse being readily available to young women in terms of gaining pleasure from watching two male friends engaging in sexual activity. If young women do experience embodied sexual pleasure from watching man on man sexuality it is not commonly talked about.

The commonsense discourses around young men desiring embodied pleasure from ‘girl on girl’ sex is reinforced through readily available pornography which also reinforces the idea of their being two distinct forms of sexuality available to men, loving intimacy with a heterosexual partner which usually assumes the loving joining of two bodies through vaginal-penile penetrative sex and sexual activity with ‘sluts’. Here again are Foucault’s ideas of disciplinary power intersecting with the material, i.e. the consequences of losing your reputation and ideas available through pornography which is compatible with Davies and colleagues (2002) ideas of multiple lines of domination and Braidotti’s (2003) and Nightingale & Cromby (2002) ideas of how discourse intersects with the ‘real’ material world. When V resisted this form of domination and discipline she lost friendships and future sexual safety. Mildred and Abby (Group 3) appeared to have very legitimate speaking positions and it was Mildred who had such articulate ideas around the importance of maintaining reputation. Part of Mildred’s legitimacy was accessed through her cultural background and how she and Betty utilized their immigration status to support statements around why V acted in a ‘sluttish’ way. Mildred’s legitimacy and the advice she had for her female friends created an impression of a very forceful form of colonialism, where the people from the ‘home’ or more sophisticated European countries are positioned as knowing better than the ‘natives’. In this situation ‘natives’ refers to young women from a Pākehā rather than Maori cultural heritage. One of the lines of force, utilized within this specific research conversation, is a cultural voice:

Betty: [like your parents, like in xxxx you’re brought up older than you are like, so like, in year 7 I would be able to go to town by myself, bus by myself. I came, moved here none of my friends were allowed to do that, and I am like are you kidding me, you are not allowed to catch a bus=

Mildred: =yeah.....

Betty: and we were allowed to do quite a lot of things because our parents were like you know getting into New Zealand. Then if I was still in England now I’d be out (at night) (getting into drugs) doing things with boys.

(Lines: 1171-1188)

But while emphasizing the risks of this parenting approach both Betty and Mildred, because of their recent immigration status, are also in a more legitimate position of knowing better the risks of doing these things with boys and losing your reputation.

As noted, multiple intersecting lines of force are apparent in this group. There are also emerging rules of female friendship. Female friendship disciplinary discourses operating legitimate high status members defining what circumstances defined ‘good’

female friends, girlfriends, sluts, partially through silencing female sexual desire (Schippers, 2007). Female hierarchies operate through legitimately positioned male friends which co-constitute female subjective desire utilizing western dichotomies of good and bad girls which intersects with the feared of sexual violence and functions to support dominate heterosexual practices that enables male pleasure and silences female sexual desires. This form of hierarchy and specific ways of being feminine did intersect with cultural and a colonial discourses. Here this risk and pleasure discourse functions to provide guidelines for young women on how to protect their 'risky' bodies from pleasure in order to maintain their reputation and a safety within their heterosexual world.

6.5.3 Keeping a risky corporeal female body safe and keeping your reputation

Mildred's (Group 3) Christian mother provided a structure that protected her reputation. Group 2 also identified that being Christian provided a structure that enabled them to say 'no' to penetrative sex prior to their own readiness for this form of sexual activity (Appendix A). The following excerpts outline how Christianity works for Mildred:

Prue: how would your relationship with boys change if you weren't religious?

Mildred: Um I reckon my personality would be I don't know it would be different if I had, if I didn't have a Mum that was Christian I'd be one of these, like um I don't know probably get into the like popular people gang and do all those, you know do drugs and all that type of stuff

Prue: Um

Mildred: but because I've got a Christian mum and she doesn't believe in that, you don't have sex before marriage and stuff and I have all that in me as well, I wouldn't, I'd probably change in that perspective but I only, like if I went out with a boy and he didn't accept me the way I am then obviously he you know he obviously wants more advantage of a girl and stuff so.....

(Lines: 73-87)

Without her mother's Christian beliefs, her own concerns for her reputation and the subsequent consequences, Mildred would have already had sex. Mildred talks about not being in the popular group because of her Christianity and defines the difference between being a Christian and non Christian girlfriend:

Mildred: I know. Christians you don't have sex before marriage and um basically you don't do drugs and stuff like that, but like you're, you're allowed to drink alcohol you're allowed to you allowed to (touch) stuff and the opposite is obviously you know going around, sleeping around taking drugs every weekend and everything. But me and Betty are in between so we're we probably, I don't know would have sex before marriage, but not 16, later on and that and like when we do

drink alcohol we don't drink it all the time, like we would probably get drunk and stuff but not every weekend and stuff like that. And if we do like smoke or something it's like one every month or something like that.

(Lines: 122-129)

Mildred is defining how she can be a Christian and goes out with friends who are not Christian and how she achieves this through being 'in-between'. In-between is defined as the possibility of sex before marriage, being able to sexually touch a male partner but not have penetrative sex at 16, drinking and getting drunk, sometimes, but not all the time. Mildred and her friend Betty negotiate a compromise of sitting somewhere in between being heterosexual and Christian. Mildred and I picked up the conversation on how she would be as a girlfriend if she was not a Christian:

Mildred: Um, I'd probably be a smoker and drinking alcohol like all the time, because my Dad's a smoker so then I would have got it from him, um all my (cousins) are smokers actually, on my Dad's side, and I don't know um I would have been completely different because Mum's basically like set the rules type of thing, um.

(Lines: 2274-2278)

Mildred is utilizing commonsense ideas from medical discourses that we inherit certain parts of our parents, including personality traits that are passed down through the genes. Mildred talks about her Dad as being addicted to smoking and speaks about her father in terms of deficits such as getting angry and at times acting weird where as she talks about her mother as being loving, less angry, more hard working and a better parent than her father. Mildred talks about how close she is to her mother and how her mother see's her as a '*mini me*'. Mildred see's her mother's influence as saving her from her own risky tendencies which she has inherited from her dad.

Mildred explains how being in-between enables her to differentiate herself from both her mother and friends such as "*to myself me.*", which in turn enables her to identify "*my place*" (see excerpt 16, Appendix I). When I attempted to ask at which site this knowledge sits she replies that "*[it's a (literal) thing because you know that it isn't right for you so you try and stop because you know it's not right for yourself*". When questioned further, both a traditional feminist discourse is used in terms of not having a boyfriend taking advantage of her just because he wants sex as well as ideas around reputation such as being concerned about what her friends and family's response would be to her having penetrative sex. Mildred draws on the developmental discourse when talking about what is and is not a suitable age for penetrative sex. Mildred is agentic in how she

'knows' herself and her place within a heterosexual culture as she is actively negotiating a site of being that doesn't replicate either her mother's Christian beliefs or her non Christian friends' normative practices. Sexual pleasure is probably not absent but present at a more embodied than discursive site because Mildred is concerned about her more symbolically co-constituted risk to reputation if she does not stop sexual activity prior to having penetrative vaginal 'sex'.

For example, Mildred discussed how in order to keep her place of being in between she needs to predict and plan before going out with a young man (see excerpt 17, Appendix I). Mildred talks about going further than planned but not to the point of having penetrative sex and the consequences for other young women "***Oh um after I'd done stuff with him he just thought he could do it with anyone and go into any type of relationship and make girls do what he wanted and stuff like that***". Mildred is gaining knowledge about the risks of doing what young men (and possibly what she wanted at an embodied sexual site) want, not only for herself but for other young woman. Mildred is utilizing a commonsense heterosexual idea present in feminist literature that men will try for intercourse and women will stop them. This form of gate keeping restrains young women from exploring what they want and like sexually but in this situation Mildred saying 'no' is also a form of resistance (Fine, 1992). This form of gate keeping is also drawn from the heterosexual discourses that position female desire as invisible and male desire as uncontrollable and very visible (Gavey, 1992). Mildred may have experienced sexual pleasure, but she does not explicitly talk about this other than in response to my explicit question i.e. "***Prue: Does the pleasure of the activity stop or does the pleasure stay but your mind say this isn't good for me? Mildred: Um it depends really, probably um stop it and then that would completely stop.***"

Mildred discusses what she wants in a heterosexual context and her agentic desire to remain at an in between position: "***so I knew I had to stop somewhere in the middle so I stopped somewhere in the middle***" prior to having penetrative sex. When asked slightly more explicit questions, Mildred talks about stopping herself experiencing pleasure in order to avoid heterosexual coercion (risk), being pushed in the future; "***[yeah, um I guess I'm kinda glad I didn't do it because I experienced it but um, kind of, I didn't want to do it in case next time I would was drunk (sort of) and then he would make me do it. Then he'll know that I've gone to that point so he would push me even further***". Mildred's use of the phrase "***because I experienced it***" suggests she experienced sexual pleasure. By

saying 'no' in this situation Mildred is both agentic in controlling a potentially risky situation where she could lose her reputation and experience future sexual violence but is also simultaneously restrained, acted upon through not experiencing pleasure. She is also limiting the degree of coercion she can potentially experience in the future and protect her reputation from *"oh that girl's really hot and I want to do stuff with her"*. Mildred is in a resistant position in being able to say 'no' to heterosex and as a consequence while recognizing her female body as at risk from pleasure it is also a strong body 'self' in that she can over-ride her corporeal body's desire. These examples demonstrate how through emphasizing symbolic resources as constituting heterosexual practices, past literature has also silenced the very 'real' presence of the potential of violence in young women's cultural contexts. In contrast the following excerpt shows how Mildred may have been invited into a relationship that positioned her at 'risk' through romance discourses and embodied experiences of intimacy:

Prue: What did you like, what did you love about him?

Mildred: Ah just his comfort like he would text me and give me nice compliments and you know "you're gorgeous" that type of thing, and he would want to spend time with me and by meaning, like when he spent time with me he wasn't try to force me to do things. He would just hold my hand and walked to somewhere and spend time with me. That meant quite a lot with me because he liked me for who I was. Then he obviously got into, like because he left school and then got into, got into an (older) crowd started doing all these different things and he completely changed....(text cut)..

Mildred: [But the guys he mucks around with ah, um he would you know smoke all the time, and get drunk and always have to have drugs in them=

(Lines: 441-469)

The intimacy discourse has been identified in the previous section, but what Mildred's conversation illustrates is how this sense of being liked can change within the course of a relationship. This idea that of positive visibility invites young women into heterosexual relationships that are potentially risky is supported by Angela's understandings around the risk of young men drinking and cheating (discussed previously). Our heterosexual culture, with its emphasis on romantic love, may enable young men to be intimate in a way that makes being a girlfriend desirable, while simultaneously accessing heterosexual practices that may in the future place them at 'risk'. Mildred's interview illustrates how power operates for her within heterosexual discourses in a way, after the initial intimacy has been established, that impacts negatively on her well being, such as her pre-planning 'risky' heterosexual situations to the point where safe, non-risky corporeal embodied sexual pleasure is restrained and silenced. Mildred attributes this change within

this young man's behaviour to his new group of male friends. Angela also attributes male friendship groups as operating, some of the time, to establish normative practices that may position young women's bodies at risk in a heterosexual context. For example, at the end of Group 4's discussion I asked the participants if there something we hadn't talked about that they considered important and I should know when working with young women and relationships, and Angela responded:

Angela: yeah, and how their friends influence them and stuff like.

Prue: How do you see that happening?

Angela: I think guys are strongly influenced by their mates. So they may follow or not what the other's do, which ends up determining their status or personality within the group. I guess this is like any relationship that you are affected by others, but I think this is so influential in a guys group. This influences girls in the relationship with one of the guys' cause his personality is affected, affecting her.

Prue: So we looking at what influences girls and you're saying that what influences girls is the type of boys their boyfriends hang out with

Angela: Yeah

(Lines: 1993-2013)

This supports the view that young men's disciplinary process in the contexts of masculinity function to structure disciplinary processes within female friendship groups. Mildred talks about the differential status amongst young men and young women by using terms such as 'hot girls' and 'popular boys' and how popular boys are more likely to push for what they want. Therefore power operates through male heterosexual desires function through disciplining young women and the operation of reputation and specific material consequences such as Mildred's fear that she would be forced to go further sexually in the future if she had gone too far with him on a previously occasion (Foucault, 1975).

In summary, this section highlights the importance of a young woman maintaining her reputation in order to not to disappoint a mother she is close to, to maintain her female friends and her place in the female hierarchy, and to protect herself from future male violence.

6.5.4 Heterosexual pleasure: "Not like chore, more like it just became a bore"

In her interview, Lisa (Group 3) talked overtly about risk in terms of going out with bad boys who had a reputation for physical violence and sexual assault but also occupied different position in terms of what being heterosexual and having a 'reputation' compared to her other friends in Group 3. Lisa had greater access to language when talking about her experiences of sexual desire such as *"I like the build up to sex...more like the touching"*

and pleasure and what enabled and restrained saying ‘no’ to unwanted sexual activity. Lisa was both a very experienced girlfriend and a very casual girlfriend, in that she largely talked about being a girlfriend in terms of pleasure but had an attitude than none of this form of heterosexuality was permanent or should be taken too serious such as ***“But to me it’s like yeah it is important and it should be with someone special but it’s not that important”***. Lisa explains how ‘sex’, which she defines penetrative sex, can start as ‘fun’ but become a bore when it becomes about male not female pleasure but where Lisa is accessing commonsense ideas that it’s okay to please her partner in the absence of her own sexual desire (see excerpt 19, Appendix I). Lisa’s talk is very much embedded in the risk of not being positioned to say ‘no’ and the importance I place on women experiencing corporeal embodied sexual pleasure as a means to enhance not decrease their wellbeing. This form of understanding influenced how quickly I accessed a question around sexual pleasure straight after Lisa talked about having penetrative sex in the absence of her own sexual arousal. My ‘panic’ somatic response to a potential heterosexual threat was redundant as Lisa was very agentic in accessing knowledge around her own corporeal sexual desire through experiences with another sexual partner.

The commonsense understanding within both Mildred’s and Lisa’s talk around having penetrative sex with one male partner carries an understanding that once started, young women then have less of a choice of saying ‘no’ to future penetrative sex. What Lisa has gained through being sexual is the knowledge of her own preferences which are to both have access to sexual pleasure and access to saying ‘no’ when she does not feel like being sexual. In this way Lisa is accessing a resistant way of being within a heterosexual relationship, i.e. ***“: but that doesn’t mean I want it all the time I’d want like break periods when like no or anything”***. This idea of choice and female desire functions to protect and preserve the integrity of the female body, for example, when I access commonsense discourses around young women not being position to say ‘no’ to unaroused penetrative sex I simultaneously access visual images of fragile looking vulva tissue, pale, sore vulva’s than when I access more resistant discourses. With female desire, I access visual images of plump and pink, vulvas which I understand as having a good blood supply and well functioning muscles which promotes healthy surface and internal vaginal tissue. Cromby’s ideas around difference and referentiality provide a theoretical construct for why I have access to these very materially ‘real’ corporeal embodied images from nursing. This form of ‘knowing’ that I accessed within Lisa’s conversation has me responding to ‘risks’ in

such a specific way such as *“Prue: When you, has there been a time when you’ve actually felt pleasure during sexual activity and I don’t just mean intercourse, I mean any form of sexuality activity. Are there things you like?”* The knowledge that I have gained from working with young women who are not positioned to say ‘no’ to penetrative sex in absence of their own desire functions to produce a somatic response in my own body with the accompanying thoughts “quick, quick, you need to access female desire.” This is a similar process to Angela’s embodied subjective response to her knowing the risks to herself if her boyfriend goes out and gets drunk. My response here is similar to Damasio’s ideas around ‘as if’ where the body learns to respond ‘as if’ this is a ‘real’ risk and circumvents previously discursive thinking, knowledge. My response to a young woman not being positioned to say ‘no’ is to simultaneously experience the somatic ‘fright’ experience while framing a resisting question.

Lisa talks about pleasure when she began having penetrative sex with a former boyfriend ‘as fun’ in terms of newness, rather than the more corporeal pleasure she talks about having with her current boyfriend and her enjoyment of both touch and penetrative sex. Lisa’s talk contains three different pathways for achieving sexual pleasure, the form of intimacy of a particular relationship such as *“We haven’t been going out long but we had, have a (rapport)”*, physical fit and preferences such as *“I really, really, really rude you know, {laugh} just he was bigger than there, than the other person {laughs}”*, and what I understand to be the degree of arousal experienced before penetrative sex occurred and the even greater pleasure during penetrative sex such as *“he wasn’t that big but it was fun, like the build up to it, it was “ohhhhl”*, and *“it’s still like nice the build up to it but even better when it’s like, when it’s actually happening”*. Lisa’s experience of pleasure has shifted from enjoying sexual touch to still enjoying sexual touch but finding the actual penetrative sex even more enjoyable. Lisa attributes this enjoyment of vaginal penetration with this partner to his size and the degree of rapport they have experienced prior to penetration. Here agentic female sexual pleasure is identified and discussed. Lisa, is accessing not only ‘romantic love’ discourses when she talks about rapport and reciprocity of mutual spontaneous desire, but is also beginning to be able to talk about ‘real’ sexual arousal i.e. *“the build up to it but even better”*. Similar to Allen’s (2002; 2003) findings Lisa still needs to use exclamations such as “ohhhhl” to convey pleasure. Lisa utilizes the word ‘sex’ to refer to penetrative heterosexual activity. Lisa is positioned with agency in terms of knowing and being able to talk about her own specific ways of achieving sexual

pleasure. She is also learning and thinking about her own desires in terms of when she does and doesn't want to be sexual and how she would go about saying 'no' when she doesn't want to be sexual and is negotiating differences of sexual desire in heterosexual relationships. She has also learnt that by complying with and receiving pleasure through normative practices such as pleasing a boyfriend in the absence of her own desire functions make being sexual in a heterosexual relationship a '*bore*'. She accesses resistant commonsense heterosexual discourses that are usually present amongst female rather than male friends when talking about size and is resisting commonsense discourses about the heterosexual imperative when she talks about her preference and liking of sexual touch.

6.5.5 Claire's story: "Hooking up" pleasure and negating the 'risks' of heterosexual relationships.

Screening each participant for physical safety both within their families, friendships and heterosexual relationships meant that all of the participants, but one, were physically safe at the time of the discussions and interviews. Claire was currently physically safe but during her individual interview disclosed a past family history of her father being physically violent to her mother. This part of her individual interview is relevant to the 'risk and pleasure' discourse in that Claire's embodied subjective response and 'knowledge' about when she did not like being sexual with specific boys intersected with her embodied response to remembering and witnessing her father's violence towards her mother.

During this section I am going to discuss how when 'hooking up' Claire experiences an embodied 'gut' response which functions to stop further sexual contact she is not comfortable with and how she recognizes this form of 'embodied knowing' being present when she remembered hearing her father's violence towards her mother as a young child. The impression I got from this interview but which was not clearly stated by Claire is that 'hooking up' did not involve penetrative sex. Part of my assumption about Claire's meanings around 'hooking up' is drawn from her friendship discussion and the groups ideas about penetrative sex was not appropriate at their age and outside of committed heterosexual relationships. Mildred who instigated much of the heterosexual disciplinary process within Claire's friendship group discusses this position as being '*in between*' (p155). The other part of Claire's overall story I will discuss in the last part of this section, was her discomfort with her mother's current live in relationship with another woman. Although same sex sexuality was a one off conversation and does not reflect the main

emphasis of the thesis, it is relevant to therapeutic practice in that it demonstrates how silence works through an 'expert's' inability to speak through feminist psychological disciplinary practices. For example, how to explore a young woman's homophobia.

In contrast to these two aspects of Claire's experiences within her family she also had a strong desire for fun through both dancing with friends and 'hooking up' with young men at parties. This section explores how Claire talks about the risks and pleasures of heterosexuality as 'known' at both intersecting discursive and embodied subjective sites and as a consequence of witnessing her mother's experiences and 'hooking up'.

The first aspect I paid attention to within Claire's story was about how she left what she defined as a good intimate relationship because she was bored and wanted difference. She defined boredom, partially, through witnessing her mother's current life style i.e.

Prue: Tell me, how you picture someone who's tied down. What's their life like?

Claire: Oh it's just boring and they're like, so much responsibility that they don't have fun, or they can't, yeah they pretty much don't know how to have fun anymore, like they don't go out really, they work always and stay home all weekend. Just don't do like, just don't do anything.

Prue: And have you anyone in particular when you have that picture?

Claire: {Soft laugh} Well my Mum she works really hard, um I love her to pieces, but she just works so hard in the week, in the weekend she doesn't have any energy to go out. I don't know if she doesn't want to, or she wants to but is too tired, but um.

(Lines: 703-717)

Within Claire's individual interview the strongest theme that arose concerned the 'risks' of heterosexual relationships, such as boredom and an absence of fun. In this way the 'risk and pleasure' discourse intersects with the balance discourse and where young women are accessing resistant positions within heterosexuality by acknowledging how undesirable it is to be burdened with the responsibilities of being a girlfriend. Claire was very aware of how both heterosexual and female to female intimate relationships were associated with boredom, hard work, a lack of opportunity (maybe through tiredness) as well as, within heterosexual relationships, the risks of women and children being exposed to male partner violence i.e.

Claire: Um, (1) at the time I didn't really process it I didn't, I was half asleep at the time, I just waved it off but then I kinda, over time I started to think about it more and especially when we came to New Zealand that conversation came to mind especially when I saw that the divorce was getting violent, divorce was getting ugly, that flash back just came to my mind instantly and like a lot of things just made sense. Um (1) Yeah, but at the time I didn't really think about it that much, I kinda waved it off.

Prue: But when it came back to you was it just more of a thinking thing rather than a, anything sort of somatic, body wise?

Claire: Umm, no I, no I got that feeling again in my gut like it cos' because it's like "Oh my God, it's my Dad he's meant to be a real good guy" cos' you just grow up and you kind of, especially if you're a girl, you're meant to be Daddy's little girl

(Lines: 1194-1209)

Claire understands previous conversations she has heard between her parents about her father's physical violence towards her mother. Claire is experiencing the material 'risk' of male violence towards a female body and its potential for harm through a somatic 'fright and flight' adrenaline response (Damasio, 1994). This somatic fright is part of Claire's embodied knowing around heterosexual risk and having a vulnerable female body. She experiences this fear a long time after a specific event in her country of origin and through witnessing more recent violence by her father towards her mother. She talks about being instantly triggered back to that previous experience and suddenly knowing that that conversation between her parents was about her father's violence. Her somatic body knows 'risk' through an embodied somatic experience and discursive memory. Damasio talks about this form of learning through the primary (old brain structures) and secondary neurological brain structures (new brain structures, the cultural frontal lobe structures) as being different to a stable permanent knowledge as represented by positivist knowledge paradigms such as traditional behavioural cognitive psychology. He envisions this form 'knowing' as both cumulative and constantly shifting as the physiological body attempts to maintain homeostasis within unstable normative cultural practices and knowledge of risks. For Claire this somatic response to risk intersects with how she experiences less pleasurable forms 'hooking up' at parties and will be discussed shortly.

Another part of Claire's more somatic response to her father's ability to hurt her mother is it challenges her idea of her father being 'a good guy'. This response when women realize that someone they love, have been intimate with either within a parental or heterosexual relationship, produces a sense of confusion and betrayal (Fisher, 1991). Claire's response to her father's violence towards her mother is a commonsense response I know from working with other women who come out of similar experiences of violence and who carry an embodied subjective knowing about the risks of men and heterosexuality. This form of 'knowing' enables resistance which in Claire's situation is an avoidance of being a girlfriend. Young women who have been exposed to heterosexuality in the relative absence of 'real' overt violence may be less able to access this form of 'knowing' and resistance to romantic love discourses. Thus, resistance to heterosexuality normative

practices is enabled through witnessing and/or physically experiencing male violence during childhood. In this way young women who have contradictory experience of both loving specific men but hating their use of violence may have a very specific line of force that enables resistance. This may enable them to understand that loving intimacy, safety and trust as promoted by romantic love narratives are not absolute and that men can both act lovingly and dangerously. What Claire's story demonstrates is that young women can avoid both violent and 'boring' heterosexual relationships but can experiment and learn about heterosexual pleasure outside of being a girlfriend. In this way Claire has access to an alternative pleasurable way of being that is more than violence prevention. A similar form of resistance was present in both Group 1's discussion and their ideas of 'a pash and a dash' in way that inferred the pleasure of a 'pash' while avoiding the 'risks' (dash) of being a girlfriend and as repeatedly witnessed by their friends relationships with boyfriends.

6.5.6 'Hooking up:' Women's sexual desire outside of being a girlfriend "a pash and a dash"

Claire is able to access heterosexual pleasure in the absence of losing her reputation (see excerpt 20, Appendix I). 'Hooking up' here and elsewhere refers to non-penetrative sex. Within this research I did not explore talk about oral and anal sex as these practices are too explicit for conversations with young women I may only meet twice. I also did not ask explicitly about whether 'hooking-up' referred to young women providing oral sex to casual partners and boyfriends in two situations where I sensed this may be relevant. Working with young women I am aware that 'oral' sex performed by a young woman for a young man is not considered 'proper' sex and can, in some contexts, enable her to maintain her status of girlfriend (Fisher, 2005).

For Claire the function of 'hooking up' as distinct from 'sex' is that it allows Claire access to sexual pleasure "Oh yeah {soft laugh} it's fun, it's just, it's just, you know, like it's still not the same as having a boyfriend, but it's still fun to do" without risking her reputation and without the responsibility of being a girlfriend. In this excerpt I understand the 'still' refers to the degree she is sacrificing the sexual pleasure of a boyfriend "who knows you" for avoiding the lack of interest with an established boyfriend. The second 'still' in this excerpt is inferring that 'hooking up' in the absence of a permanent boyfriend is still worth doing, even though it may not produce the same degree of sexual pleasure. What maybe symbolically silent but understood in Claire's discourse around 'hooking up'

is that fun is referring to corporeal embodied pleasure, that is, the experience of a desiring, physiologically aroused, corporeal pleasurable body. The function of ‘hooking up’ in this context is desiring and assessing corporeal pleasure where desire is not understood or limited to an innate biological body and its instinctive drives that sit outside of individual control. Claire’s tone and embodied delivery provided my interpretation that ‘fun’ is bodily pleasure. For example, how Claire talked in this section of the interview and is difficult to portray for research purposes. For example she looked up at me through lowered eyes (slightly shy) and lowered the tone of her voice and chuckle, it’s a look that from other women I have interpreted as ‘talking enjoyable sex’ not to a lover but another female. I understand “hooking up” at parties is more than a normative cultural practices defined and known through discourse and as talked about by Claire as i.e.” *like I mean you go to a party you get drunk, you hook up but it’s just what happens*” (Foucault, 1978). This normative practice is also about bodily pleasure, “*fun*” which intersects with heterosexual knowledge defined within discourses and accessed by young women about what happens if you go to parties.

Claire points out that some of these occasions were ‘not so pretty’ but overall ‘hooking up’ at parties was okay. The ‘*not so pretty*’ comment may refer to when Claire needs to ‘draw a line’ and say ‘no’ or the way young men take rejection, i.e. “*sometimes the guy gets annoyed but you know, not my problem, and sometimes they are like “whatever I’ll go find somebody else.”*” I would have liked to have explored the ‘not so pretty’ comment further because whereas Claire took an agentic position and said ‘no’ when she didn’t like a specific incidences of ‘hooking up’, I wonder what she would have experienced when she physically enjoyed ‘hooking up,’ but went too far and on reflection was not happy with. Claire occupies an agentic position in that she both talks as if it is her responsibility to have the guts to draw the line and that if the young man does not like this, his response is not her problem. Here the Western philosophical idea that we are in charge and in control of our own life operates to enable agency.

My reading of Claire’s body language when she talked about having the guts to draw the line, i.e. raising her hands and pushing away, suggests this a physical as well as an emotional agency because of her size. Bureta (2008) and Hamby & Jackson (2010) demonstrate that size matters and provides greater legitimacy for physical autonomy and choice. Claire was tall and (from my perspective) strongly built. It was not difficult for me to imagine her having the strength to ‘*pull away*’ and all through the discussion and

during our individual interview I was aware, at an embodied level, that she was bigger than me, such as taller. My interview with Claire has me questioning how this idea of might is right co-constitutes women's embodied experiences of being more or less agentic in physically risky situations. Do taller, stronger appearing women feel more confident in physically protecting their own bodies and occupy more space with less adverse consequences than smaller women?

What I observed in within research discussion was that Mildred and Abby (Group 3) and Angela (Group 4) occupied legitimate, forceful positions and instigated specific disciplinary practices in conversations with their friends. All three of these participants were physically smaller than others in the group and their specific form of forcefulness (lines of domination) was accessed largely through both heterosexual and other western discourses around individual entitlements, potential and responsibilities. Claire as a taller, stronger participant appeared less concerned in negotiating friendship authority and more concerned with her own desires.

I attended to the size of participant's material body through a lens of my own embodied subjective knowledge and experience of my own sense of agency within heterosexual contexts around ideas of masculinity and safety. As a young woman I carried an understanding of myself as big and strong and as a consequence spent very little time concerned about the potential of sexual assault during my young adulthood years. This sense of invulnerability (safety) was also partially reinforced when at 16 I was able to physically overpower a strange male who dragged me off the street behind a building in an attempt to assault me. It was through repeated exposure to women in refuge, my clinical work in women's health and a decrease in my own physical strength through aging that vulnerability to assault became a more visible aspect of my embodied understanding of risk and hence part of the lens I understand Claire's text.

Bureta (2008) discusses how our culture and legislation supports bigger people having greater material and cultural legitimacy to control and materially supports masculine dominance of our western world. This form of masculinities in New Zealand may advantage bigger women. For some years I have noticed how very tall, strong women may use their bodies in a physically intimidating manner and our culture 'might is often right'.

Do very tall and strong young women incorporate this form of embodied knowledge into the sense of their own agency in saying no? Bureta (2008) provides ideas that bigger

male subjects have greater access to physical control over their own bodies, smaller, female bodies and the available space. Connell (1995) theorises an exaggerated form of masculinity which structures gender relations that also has flow on effects for those men with less exaggerated forms of being masculine. She also theorizes that there are hierarchies within female groups based on masculinity in that more dominant women may have 'emphasized femininity', will be assertive, self confident and independent and which works to maintain the gender status quo. Schippers (2007) identifies a gap within Connell's theorizing in that it silences different forms of being female outside of and within hegemonic gender practices. For example, research has not examined young women's embodied response to risk and their own strength and size. Does hegemonic masculinity produce an embodied (non-discursive) site of agency for physically strong women that does not necessary involve extensive discursive resources or an exaggerated form of femininity as outlined by Connell (1995)?

Schippers (2007) recommends that we need to more thoroughly examine different forms of femininity and how they intersect with hegemonic masculinities. Claire's material body in the form of size both complies and resists normative heterosexuality. Embodied subjectivity may provide her with both a material and cultural legitimacy to say 'no' to unwanted sexual touch while this legitimacy of the taller stronger subject is partially derived from our New Zealand's culture of exaggerated masculinities.

In conclusion: Claire's resistant positioning within and outside of heterosexuality was partially enabled by experience and exposure to male violence and partially enabled by the materiality of her physical strength, intersecting with our culture legitimatization of might over small. New Zealand's form of masculinities works for Claire in 'risky' heterosexual situations. Claire's process of accessing pleasure without being exposed to the 'risk' of being a girlfriend is discussed accessing commonsense discourses of an individual right to choose and having control over who has access to her body. This western discourse on the individual right to choose and responsibility to choose correctly may intersect with the traditional feminist imperative that women have the right to say no and if a man is distressed or angry from being denied access to a woman's body, that is his problem, not the dissenting female's problem.

6.5.7 How to have sex without the burden of a boyfriend

Claire's research conversation is about seeking heterosexual sexual pleasure in the absence of the responsibility and workload of being a girlfriend. Claire also utilized a commonsense discourse that was not extensively talked about in other discussion and that is once women have children and responsibilities they no longer have access to pleasure. I think of this discourse as the 'workhorse' discourse, where mature women's needs have less legitimacy and they are defined by what they provide for others. I always screen for this form of 'risk' to wellbeing in committed heterosexual relationships but Claire is the only participant who explicitly referred to this as a risk within this research such as *Claire: {Soft laugh} Well my Mum she works really hard, um I love her to pieces, but she just works so hard in the week, in the weekend she doesn't have any energy to go out. I don't know if she doesn't want to, or she wants to but is too tired, but um.*"

Group 4 accessed this discourse through talking about developing your potential while you could which indicated that at some stage, older women lose the choice over the direction and development of their lives. In her interview, Jane (Group 1) talked about how different her mother's life was to her own in that she was completely orientated to paid work and family needs, but did not relate to that form of femininity in terms of her own life. My questions when analysing Claire's text on women and overwork through my clinical work is : Is the workhorse discourse silenced through the dismissal of traditional feminist theorist such as Simon de Beauvoir's ideas around the oppression of maternity and our current postmodern curriculum emphasis on specificities which privilege differences other than gender? Does this silence function to have young women positioned less critically when it comes to examining the level of work in the form of emotional and physical responsibility required by each intimate partner? Claire's talk highlighted how mothers in same sex relationships may also be overworked due to paid and unpaid labour. Did Claire's access to a discourse around the maternal workload enable her resistant ways of being i.e. does not want to be tied down to being a girlfriend? As well as ideas of burden and a desire for heterosexual pleasure Claire's access to resistant ideas is enabled through her past experiences. For example, when I accessed her 'body talk' to 'at risk' situations she recognized her 'gut' response as being 'known' across contexts such as hooking up at parties Claire talks this: "*Um I tend to like breath up, I get butterflies in my stomach and I just get hyped, but in stomach around here, I got my feelings in my stomach and I suppose I just pull back and draw the line (Lines508-510).*" And when we

were talking about when she realized who Dad was a 'risk' to her mother Claire talked about her corporeal experience this way: "*Umm, no I, no I got that feeling again in my gut like it cos'.....*" (Lines: 1202-1204). This next excerpt is Claire responding to my questioning around risk at a party and being exposed to unwanted sexual touch and needing to 'say' no in order to prevent sexual assault: "*Um well if you don't like that, then hopefully you'll have the guts to say "I don't like that" and you'll draw the line..... If not it could lead, I don't know, maybe sex that you don't want* (Lines: 489-490). Within these excerpts Claire uses discourses around it being an individual women's responsibility to say no to unwanted sexual contact in order to avoid being raped but part of her agency in drawing this line may be facilitated by her previous embodied knowledge of heterosexual risk i.e. the situation of her father being violent towards her mother. I understand this as a fundamental shift in what we know as women and have been taught to understand in terms of the 'rightness' and sanctity of heterosexuality. This is an overt display of physical violence that is rarely present in traditional heterosexual discourses. Within romantic novels men maybe portrayed as dominant and sexually aggressive but this form of dominance is portrayed as stimulating female desire, not in a form that leaves flesh torn and bleeding. Male violence has been excused under various psychological and deficit models, but a female being beaten by her male partner is rarely explicitly portrayed within romantic love discourses.

Witnessing male violence against another female produces an embodied subjective state of fear and physiological arousal that cannot be fully understood by discourse. This is similar to Cromby's (2005) notion that the experience of orgasm is not the same as talking about it. Witnessing or experiencing violence is difficult to fully represent through words. Often women utilize language already available to represent the shock of that first beating, such as betrayed, disbelief, shock and a fundamental breach of trust with someone who is meant to love them (Fisher, 1991). Maybe in these circumstances the 'body' response, if positioned legitimately, functions as a protection against heterosexual risk. Too often the women are taught to ignore the 'body' and give legitimacy to heterosexual and other western discourses including traditional feminist discourses. Claire demonstrates at the end of her interview how her somatic response can be used to benefit her wellbeing within heterosexual play and relationships.

Prue: ...(text cut)... if that started to happen a lot around a boy what would you start thinking, that the gut's telling you?

Claire: He's probably not good for me, he's not going to be good for what I want, and (2)

Prue: and often there's all sort of messages out there saying no, no he's fine um, but

Claire: he's not really

Prue: () your processes, you gut sounds like it's your, it's one of your instant things, occasionally it may be misleading but if keeps on being there with the same person

Claire: then I'll know

(Lines: 1259-1272)

Claire's last sentence "***then I'll know***" demonstrates an agentic position that is about resisting heterosexual discourses that have young women meeting gender expectations that decrease their wellbeing. Claire may be able to access this agentic experience partially because she has had the corporeal embodied experience of witnessing male partner violence and has an embodied sense of strength. She understands her desire for fun comes from knowing what she does not want. This knowledge has emerged through witnessing both the overt and covert practices of heterosexuality, including her mother's maternal work load of needing to support children and which is still present in a same sex relationship. Claire's ideas and conversation within this research contexts support Tolman's (1994) recommendation that we need to assist young women articulate what they do not like in order to identify what they want. Claire is more than able within this context to identify what she wants and does not want outside of be a girlfriend.

Conclusion: Risk and Pleasure Discourse

Throughout the risk and pleasure discourse there have been, as with the other discourses, competing intersecting discourses and intersecting, sometimes contradictory embodied subjective states, which may enable more resistant discourses both within and outside of heterosexuality. I have examined how Angela (group 4) 'knew' the risk of a cheating boyfriend, how in this instance she carefully negated this risk but that this may not always be in a girlfriend's control. This discourse also highlighted how young women desire heterosexual pleasure that operates simultaneously in the presence of risk. For these participants knowing risk may be co-constituted through the intersection of the corporeal body and cultural ideologies, such as the physiological process of 'fright' (corporeal) some young women may experience at the threat of losing their reputation (symbolic) and the increased 'risk' of in the future of sexual assault (material/corporeal outcome). This discourse also highlighted how Mildred (group 4) negotiated risk and pleasure through being in between. This in between position did take up a reasonable amount of planning

and managing. Lisa Group 4 who took more risks also had greater access to articulating her own embodied preferences and Claire had both access to accessing sites of learning her sexual preferences without the ‘burden of a boyfriend’.

Section 1 of Chapter 7 “Young women in relation to female friends” will examine more thoroughly how female friendship and embodied, corporeal experiences resulting from this form of intimacy and ‘risky’ heterosexual intimacy intersect with commonsense heterosexual discourses to produce resistant ways of being .

Reflexivity and the silences still operating that were not more thoroughly explored within this analysis

This discourse was extremely easy to analyse because it best represents my clinical practice with young women. It also highlighted silence still operating within my own ‘knowledge’ around how heterosexual discourses intersect with potentially more resistant ideas.

One of the more obvious silences within my discussion with Claire was about her relationship with her mother and her mother’s current same sex intimate relationships. Claire talked about her embodied response to her mother being with a female partner:

Claire: Um yeah, I haven’t like, I personally don’t like the life-style

Prue: What is it about the life-style that you don’t like?

Claire: Um just, I don’t, it’s not like I don’t agree with it, I just get uncomfortable about it, like I see them sitting on the chair there holding hands or they’ve got like their arms around each other, it’s just, it gives me the creeps.

(Lines: 917-922)

This response around ‘knowing’ that sexual preferences exist outside of heterosexuality and the embodied experience of witnessing a biological parent being sexual towards a new partner identifies two of our specific cultural taboos. Many people do not like to think about parents being sexual. This very common taboo while silencing mature adult’s sexual pleasure may also simultaneously function to set boundaries and limits on adult sexualized behaviour in the presence of children. Claire’s embodied subjective response may be a resistant way of being to sexual outside of heterosexual normative behaviour which sits in contradiction to her educational experiences of appreciating cultural and sexual specificities. Furthermore I am aware from previous discussion that Claire has experienced witnessing girl on girl sex at parties in a context where it is set up by young men to meet their needs in the absence of female desire or

even, as identified by Group 3, females without consent. In this context Claire understood girl on girl sex was risky as it adversely impacts on the young women's reputation and carries the risk of future sexual violence.

Over-all this is very much an embodied subjective state that is not fully understood by either Claire or me at a discursive level. Claire has no language than '*creepy*' to more accurately describe how she feels. This form of homophobia during young people's own 'learning' of sexual preferences may function as part of the induction into specific forms of femininity and masculinity within our western heterosexual culture (Connell, 1995). For Claire who is currently experimenting with heterosexuality, this witnessing of two women resisting hegemonic femininity, outside of and separate to masculine preferences, may have had her positioned in a way she did not 'know' how to be. Claire's more embodied subjective response *i.e. "it gives me the creeps"* reminds me of my assumption that the young women I work with, do not know how to be outside of being girlfriends, they just know that when it is suggested or becomes a possibility it makes them feel distressed, uncomfortable, it just does not feel okay for them at a very embodied level. This is also similar to Lather's female students who initially resist feminist ideas (Lather, 1991).

In contrast to how she spoke about difference in the developmental and heterosexual discourse this form of difference *i.e.* her mother's acts of intimacy with a female partner, unlike 'hooking up' at parties, does not provide her with pleasure but with embodied discomfort. Maybe Claire is processing her mother's sexual preference as 'a risk' in terms opening a site of possibilities for herself and her own sexual preferences in a way that she may experience as out of her control?

Utilizing a clinical lens and my more embodied sense gained over many years my assumption is this not a solid form of homophobia but more a daughter's adverse response to a mother being sexual in a new way that differed from her own sexual preferences (ways of knowing) with a woman she does not particularly like. In retrospect and thinking about the theoretical literature on masculinities and femininities it may have been worthwhile to explore how young women take up specific forms of femininity and how this process may or may not require guarding against forms of other forms femininity that sit outside of hegemonic masculinity and are not sanctioned within your friendship group.

Lyons (2009) advocates that we need to explore the intersection between local, contingent and specific forms of femininities and how they intersect with masculinities. For example, this specific excerpt provided by Claire may have, if further explored,

provided insight into the theoretical gaps, silences around the two very predominant taboos in our culture; mature parents' sexuality and gay sexuality and the intersection between specific forms of femininities that resist and conform to concurrent forms of masculinity in terms of heterosexuality and experiential knowledge of sexual pleasure.

Chapter 7

Young women positioned as female friends and discourses of resistance

Ideas about female friendship intersect with all the other discourses i.e. girlfriends provide security, guidance, balance and fun without being so burdened compared to being with a boyfriend. I have focused on two specific ways that young women were positioned more as friends than as girlfriends or in relation to themselves: the very obvious repeated talk about the fun involved in being friends to other females, and how the participants were positioned outside of heterosexual discourses in specific ways when helping friends in boyfriend trouble. Section 7.1 explores the participants' talk about having fun and talking with each other. Sometimes this talk was about boyfriends. Friendship talk, that I have defined as 'Female friends as fun', also accessed resistant ideas through the humour the participants utilized about themselves, amongst themselves: As Group 1 stated:

Jane: Yeah like in your group of friends you sort of tell each other certain things but it is not until really like you don't get a chance to all sit down really and you just start talking and talking [
Rachel: [yeah, and talking and
Jane: it's fun.

(Lines: 1420-1424)

And Group 4 stated:

Several voices: We mock each other, we mock each other...(text cut)...
Charlotte: , we just have like girls' nights and stuff ...(text cut)...
Angela: see even that's just a joke

(Lines: 1884-1120 929)

Section 7.2 will explore how young women are positioned as friends within heterosexual dilemmas. Section 7.2.1 will examine the participants' embodied responses to friends having boyfriend trouble and how they negotiate their friendship within dominant heterosexual contexts. Specific excerpts highlighted how 'silent' embodied knowledge may operate when negotiating their relationships with female friends who are in trouble. Section 7.2.2 examines how friends respond to friends in trouble outside of the responsibility of being a girlfriend, such as experiencing heterosexual 'risks' at dance parties. I categorized this discourse as 'negotiating female friendship' and 'object other'. In section 7.3 of this chapter, I explore the way group 6 positioned themselves as nomads

and employed the ‘nomad discourse’, and the possibilities for alternative ways of being both inside and outside of heterosexuality for these participants. This section will explore how corporeal, material and physical sites intersect to co-constitute young women’s subjective desire for resistant, alternative ways of being.

7.1 “Female friends are fun”

Lyons and Cromby (2010) examine how subjects attempt to position themselves favourably in conversations with others and how this is associated with our corporeal (physiological) and embodied feeling states. The current research aimed to facilitate the participants being pleasurable oriented to each other rather than men. The participants did access ideas that female friends were more important than boyfriends. For example, Mildred (Group 3) in the balance discourse identified how female friendship works better for her than having a boyfriend, as it produces fun without excessive responsibility.

Two groups described enjoying friends in a more existential way. Group 6 talked about liking each other’s *‘presence’* and Group 4 talked about being friends *‘just because’*:

Celeste: But we have a quite genuine friendship it not about, it’s not about like, it’s not about like, the whole status thing, it’s not about like I’m just friends with you just cos, convenience or whatever

Prue: Um

Celeste: it’s cause

Sarah: We are friends with you just because

Celeste: Yeah

Sarah: Not in that sense, not for a reason just because {laughs}

(Lines: 1552-1560)

In this excerpt *‘just because’* is a means of saying we like each other in a way that we do not want to theorize, *‘not for a reason’* and ‘we know what we like’ and it is not necessary, nor do we want or need to language this liking of each other. Groups 4 and 6 experience female friends in a way that is resistant to utilizing extensive language and resists the need for languaging this form of pleasure. What these participants ‘know’ is largely outside of discourse and this form of embodied friendship knowledge is desirable. Simultaneously and in contradiction the participants also talk about female friendship that follows specific guidelines known through comparison to other friendship groups who value getting drunk, dressing the same and desiring boyfriends. Angela: *Like um we are all really tight and um respect each other’s space and views and morals, well because we*

all have the same morals and ethics (Lines: 1882-3). Group 4's liking each other is defined through how their particular group operates in creating fun outside of restrictive boundaries of status such as having a boyfriend (see excerpt 21 Appendix I).

They also talk about their group enjoying competing opinions and debates whereas other groups function on being the same and excluding young women who have competing, different ways of talking and being.

Megan: if some girls you get shitty, and it's like this massive fight,

Angela: Tension. There's no tension.

Megan: No I think we are really loosely together but are still tight

(Lines: 1932-1933)

These ideas about tension and exclusion use ideas of female friends being 'bitchy'. These participants are resisting 'bitchy' friendships and position boys as having better, easier friendships. They define their friendship as both tight and loose, where tightness refers to being able to talk and be different from each other without censorship or exclusion, and looseness refers to being able to exit the group sometimes. Similar to good heterosexual relationships these participants belong to other groups within and outside of school and have access to friendship intimacy that does not require constant vigilance (see excerpt 21, Appendix I)

Group 4 discusses how fun is generated through talk and identifies a connection with others that is intrinsically pleasurable, known both outside of and within the use of language as illustrated within the introductory excerpts. These participants desire female friendship intimacy and see it as enabling fun, freedom, closeness, and differences without exclusion or other punitive consequences. This group defines themselves through enjoying discussing moral and ethical issues, having different opinions and making fun of each other as part of their identity.

Group 1 talked about how exclusive female talk was pleasurable and exciting and this context provided an alternative site for pleasure for young women that enabled them to leave domineering heterosexual relationships. For example, *Rachel: Show them that they are missing out on how much fun that they missed out on, how much that you are missing, you know, her as a person, like as a friend (Lines:1333-4).*

Friendship pleasure assists young women to identify a loss of pleasure in dominating relationships (referentiality) and this loss enables resistance. This group discussed how having fun enabled a friend to leave a dominating boyfriend through

remembering what it is like to be a person, as opposed to a girlfriend, and in relationship to friends. They also talked about orientating their friend to care for them in order for her to understand that they were missing her when she was with her boyfriend and they were out without her having fun. As illustrated in the next section this approach positions the friend in trouble as legitimate and very visible, and while it is a form of friendship discipline it does provide this friend with enough pleasurable resources to leave an unsuitable boyfriend. Therefore, in this group, disciplinary power within female friendships functions to increase young women's wellbeing. What is known and defined here as a useful 'entity' is the subjective embodied experience of 'friendship pleasure' which has the power to resist dominant boyfriends.

Female friendships talk appears spontaneous, reactive and fun, ***'to all sit down really and you just start talking and talking'*** and sits in contrast to the very considered strategic talk with boyfriends in out-of-balance relationships. Group 1's excerpt demonstrates that it is not necessary to have a boyfriend to be happy, but that good friends are an aspect of wellbeing where wellbeing is defined as:

Rachel: Mental Well I see wellbeing as physically healthy, mentally and emotionally healthy, spiritual healthy within yourself and socially healthy so with social you have got a good group of friends, um support from your family, friends um healthy relationships, then, spiritually you are happy within yourself, self, good self belief and self worth and then mentally and emotionally, how happy you are, your happiness.

Prue: How do you wake up, if you are happy, how do you wake up, now what is different to being unhappy when you first wake up. What's your day like?

Rachel: Actually ready to start the day,

Jane/Riley: yes, yeah

Rachel: like if you are not happy you know, it's like oh!

Rachel: just a lot of love for what you do, just enjoying everything....(excerpt cut)

Jane/Rachel??: You don't have to have a boyfriend

Riley: you don't have to have a boyfriend to be happy you know,

(Lines: 875-902)

In summary, Groups 1 and 4 access a 'female friends are fun' discourse in which having fun is understood through pleasurable talk and is an embodied pleasurable experience. This intersects with an emerging resistant discourse that having fun with girlfriends will allow a young woman to recognize how having fun is lost within a dominating heterosexual relationship.

7.1.1 Mimesis through emotional tone: the co-constitution of resistant discourses

Group 1's enjoyment of each other's conversation included talk that exaggerated heterosexual normative practices through satire i.e. a repetitive exaggerated tone and speed of voice when using a commonsense heterosexual phrase, "**yeah got a missus**" and spoken with a great deal of hilarity. Similar to Irigaray's idea of mimesis and Butler's ideas of reiteration and performance these young women produced this form of resistance within the talk itself. This next excerpt emerged from my question about how they 'knew' a boy was interested in a 'hot chick' and how they knew it was more about 'sex' than other aspects of the person. These participants use mimesis to resist the heterosexual position of being a 'hot chick'.

Riley: yeah got a missus ().

Jane: yeah

Riley: ..is hot

Prue: And what's hot?

Rachel: Oh you ask the guys. {All laugh} I wouldn't know.

Prue: So how would you know um a boyfriend is interested in you as a person rather ...(text cut)*....*

Riley: Oh I've got a story....(text cut)*.....*

Riley: This has just happened over the last two days. I have been out at the um International xxxxxx tournament...(text cut)*...And I was sitting at the desk collecting money and stuff and anyway the first day this Canadian guy came in {laughter soft} and he goes "Hey ladies", chatted to us for a while and offered us some lollies, New Zealand naturals. {laugh from others} He came out after his game, came out for NZ naturals again and the next day...*(text cut)*... and he comes back with 3 chocolate bars, one for R and Rachel and one for "like you for hanging out with all the hot girls" ...*(text cut)*.... he was like a 20 something old guy, nice guy and he goes "so can I get a peck on the cheek" {laughter} and I was like "Ok what's a peck on the cheek, you know, I am never going to see this guy again. {laughter} but NOT ANYTHING and then I go, I went to go like this (put her cheek forward) and then he goes WOOF right to my lips and goes and gave me a big smooch on the lips.*(text cut)*...*

Riley/Rachel : Oh my God (whispered)...(text cut)*...*

Pru: So how did you know he was not interested in you as a person?

{laughter}

Riley: WELL NO, he probably wasn't. {laughter}

(Lines: 1032-1109) (see excerpt Appendix I).

The Canadian's idea of what was a 'hot girl' in terms of height, size, hair colour and physical attractiveness matched my New Zealand assumptions of what is currently considered a 'hot' female. The three participants of Group 1 laughingly drawled and extended their language and generally gave the impression that the Canadian's sexualized behaviour was not threatening but expected, obvious. Group 1 had ready access to

resistant discourses and alternative subjective desires which I will trace through examining the intersection between this discourse, the security discourse and the risk and pleasure discourse. The lines of force, including symbolic (discourses), corporeal and material resources which intersected with mimesis and co-constituted these participants' desire not to be 'hot chicks' included: Material resources such as their access to secure, pleasurable and safe exclusive female friendships; access to commonsense heterosexual discourses (symbolic resources) that they could exaggerate and create space for a critical reflection "taking the piss" out of young men desiring 'hot chicks'; their subjective embodied experiences of themselves in a heterosexual world and having access to the symbolic disciplinary power of being a 'hot chick'; having high status and being visible and desirable in their friendship world without necessarily being a girlfriend; their use of referentiality and being able to classify themselves as 'not boyfriend people' through comparison groups that have normative practices that make being a girlfriend more compulsory; their subjective embodied pleasure of enjoying difference and knowing their guy mates too well for them to be interesting; having access to sexual pleasure outside of being a girlfriend i.e. a 'pash and a dash'; and being immersed in highly competitive sports and a positive sense of self (embodied pleasure through experiencing being successful) through their sporting achievements. As already discussed in chapter 6 Group 1 also had access to a consumer discourse around boyfriends and inequity of exchange. Theoretically if we think in terms of Davies' and colleagues ideas around multiple intersecting lines of force leading to domination the above analysis demonstrates how multiple intersecting resistant lines of force may co-constitute alternative ways for young women to be outside of hegemonic heterosexuality. Furthermore the above analysis illustrates Braidotti's form of material embodiment through material, symbolic and corporeal resources intersecting to co-constitute a subjective desire of 'not being boyfriend people'. These participants are consequently orientated to self and female friends. The lines of force present in these participants' lives enabled them to co-constitute being a female friend as a definition of wellbeing. When talking about well-being Rachel in Group 6 utilizes expressions such as having a 'love' of life and in this way draws on both discursive and corporeal sites of knowledge and is recognized through both language and bodily 'feelings'. *Rachel: just a lot of love for what you do, just enjoying everything...(Line 899)*. (see excerpt 32, Appendix I for full excerpt on wellbeing).

Underlining a word to indicate humorous exaggeration does not adequately portray the impact these young women's drawled sentences and dramatized words had on the research process and my understanding of their talk. But it did make the interview processes very enjoyable and at times the research process itself provided a great deal of embodied pleasure, which is not unlike other exclusively female conversation and enables resistance to subjective desires to be a girlfriend.

7.2 Female friends and 'abject other' discourse: "The contradictory embodied experience of resistance and compliance"

My introductory discussion illustrated the possibilities of dissonance between the heterosexual discourses accessed in contexts of male domination and how subjective embodied responses such as empathy may create space for resistance. My clinical standpoint illustrates that limiting female friendships to ideas of discipline and hierarchies tends to silence other aspects of female friendship such as my discussion in chapter 3 on 'abject other' (see page 55). Each group talked about friends (outside of the research setting) in trouble in heterosexual relationships and this was a reasonably safe way to discuss the impact of commonsense heterosexual practices on both their friends and themselves. I analysed the talk to identify both discursive and non-discursive (more embodied responses) resources participants accessed when witnessing or knowing about a friend in heterosexual trouble. For example Group 5:

Nina: Yeah it's kind of like you don't where the boundaries are or whether to tell them what to do and like to actually step in yourself because there were some points where I was like this is getting, like he pushed a friend of mine and I was like well where do you step in kind of thing

Prue: And what was that feeling like to be in that situation, that dilemma?

Nina: It was really very awkward because you are like friends and your friend, being watched as well by him,

Prue: Um

Nina: like being judged as well not just

Georgie: It is very confusing, its sounds like ()

(Lines: 470-479)

Nina is talking about feeling awkward because she is feeling she would like to do something for her friend but is being restrained by being watched by a physically intimidating boyfriend. Nina is accessing two specific simultaneous concerns about intervening in an intimidating heterosexual context such as what her friend would think of her and how would the intimidating boyfriend respond toward her if she did intervene. I

asked about the more embodied aspects of feeling confused around a friend's boyfriend's intimidation:

Prue: Have you ever felt like that anywhere else?

Nina: No, not really.....(excerpt cut)....

Nina: No, not as strongly as I felt then when that was happening.

Prue: If I asked you where was that feeling centred, like if we think about our bodies and our minds, what is the first sense that you have that you feeling=

Nina: =Heart

Jemma: It's so (weird) {laughs}

Prue: It's your heart, your heart, yeah

Nina: Yeah

Prue: and what does your heart do?

Nina: it (jolts) kind of like

Georgie: oh yeah

Prue: So it's ophhh?

Nina: Yeap (heaps) adrenaline and you feel like crap then

Georgie: I think your heartbeat increases a bit

Prue: What else, when you are feeling that sort of confusion about what do here?

Georgie: I am little bit flustered

(Lines: 483-505)

All three participants are relating to how they may feel, or have felt, when intimidated by a friend's boyfriend. They identify the body's physiological fight and flight somatic response to danger, such as heart jolting, adrenaline, racing heart beat and that initial feeling of being flustered when you are trying to figure out what to do. Nina talks about pushing as not 'real' violence but after 20 years of exploring male violence and intimidation, for me, pushing someone is indicating you have the desire to physically dominate another. Nina is reluctant to name this physical act as violence and this reluctance functions to protect her friend's reputation and which will be clarified further on in this section. I explored what else may have been alerting these participants about a 'real' physical risk at an embodied site, for example:

Nina: Yeah he, it was just kind of like a, I don't know it wasn't, um, it wasn't like violence or anything it was just like a nasty action

Prue: What else were you reading as intimidating..(text cut)...

Nina: When he first got in the car, cause we drove my friend there, you know I felt really like he was watching me, even though he wasn't, he was just like really overpoweringly angry, really angry, because he didn't want to come because we were, it's kind of difficult but

Jemma: he didn't want you hanging out with her

Nina: Yeah it was really like go away, this is my friend

Georgie: You were pushing him

Prue: He wasn't saying it so what were you looking at?

Nina: I don't know it was really tense because we both kind of knew what each other were thinking.

Prue: No eye contact?

Nina: No eye contact and it was like very quiet, like it wasn't chatty and

(Lines: 513-528)

Nina is talking about her sensing her friend's boyfriend was really overpoweringly angry because his girlfriend was with a female friend as well as him. This is consistent with feminist theory that dominating men do not expect to have their girlfriend's gaze directed anywhere but on them as a right and entitlement (Dobash & Dobash, 1998). Nina interpreted this very powerful emotion as anger by what he did not do: he did not look at her and remained silent. Most of us can understand the difference between a comfortable and uncomfortable silence; many women I work with are familiar with a strong negative silence from a male and interpret this as anger. This commonsense idea of a strong negative male silence being associated with anger is a cultural understanding partially situated with the psychological discipline and theories of cognitive-behaviouralism (Ellis, 1976). The New Zealand context also has a commonsense historical understanding that men get angry when a female partner does not prioritize their desires (Fisher, 1991). I then explored Nina's fears:

Prue:(text cut)... what will your fears be if you went too far....(text cut) if you were too outspoken about what was going on?

Nina: Not being listened to ...(text cut)...

Nina: not even getting a say

Jemma: or them turning on you

Georgie: yeah or even if she like if she was talking to her boyfriend about what I was saying he sounds like the kind of guy who could be like send a really abusive text...(text cut)... yeah, or like I don't know, I, I don't actually have a clue what he would

Nina: [yeah

Georgie: [do but he would probably say to J, "oh don't see her anymore, like she is really"=

Nina: =be passed on, we wouldn't actually talk to each other but it would be (I) discussed

Prue:(excerpt cut)...: you could be rejected

Nina: Mm,

Prue: as a friend, not listened to,

Georgie: or turned on

(Lines: 555-577)

Group 5 have identified that if they intervened they could be ignored, not be listened to and therefore not positioned with enough legitimacy to intervene and stop the intimidating behaviour. Not being listened to may also be about 'not being' for that moment of time which young women find distressing and they may be rejected and lose a friend. The participants speculate that they could also put themselves at risk through their friend's boyfriend's willingness to intimidate and dominate others by using both abusive

texts and his physical body. Therefore the participants' overt resistance to this act of 'real' physical intimidation is restrained through their somatic fear. In this conversation, unlike Group 3's response to V during the pleasure and risk discourse, the participants silenced and resisted heterosexual discourses that positioned their female friend as responsible for her boyfriend's intimidating behaviour. They are more concerned about preserving a friendship and safety for themselves and their friends.

In the above excerpt resistance is simultaneously accessed through the silencing of heterosexual discourses of female responsibility and their desire to resist male domination. The participants are experiencing simultaneous competing subjective desires, a desire to help a friend in a way that does not make the situation worse, does not lose them the friendship and a desire to protect themselves which they talk about as confusion and being flustered. This subjective state of confusion produces tentativeness and has them contemplating intervening very cautiously. This excerpt did not access language utilized within the balance discourses i.e. heaviness and burden. There was a somatic fear response but not in the presence of a specific known consequence such as when Georgie said *'yeah, or like I don't know, I, I don't actually have a clue what he would do'*.

The participants care for and want to maintain their relationship with this friend, but the unpredictability of the situation in the presence of embodied fear and limited access to discourses around male intimidation have silenced discourses of individual control. Women who have not witnessed or experienced overt violence may not have extensive access to commonsense resistant discourses around male intimidation and the possibility of violence in many heterosexual contexts. My experience in Women's Refuge demonstrates how men may use their bodies and voices to imply a threat of physical violence which intersects with our culture's taboo on silencing this form of threat because it positions an active subject as a 'victim' or 'abject other'. Here, being 'abject other' and responsible for 'bad' male behaviour functions to support the status quo and maintain men's access to women's sexual and maternal bodies. Outside of our legal context being a victim of violence is not okay and there is something very shameful about being associated with a man who physically assaults or threatens you as an intimate partner. Currently it is 'okay' to acknowledge the presence of male violence within families and to promote change but it is still 'not okay' to be the woman (victim) who has been beaten.² The position of 'victim'

² This may not apply when women need to be legal victims within the justice system to obtain restraining orders (Coombes,, 2008)

continues to deprive women of legitimacy in many situations and conversations (Dobash & Dobash 1998; Stark & Flitcraft, 1996). To be a victim of violence produces a very negative embodied subjective state which is not only about the actual experience of being beaten but also about how others (and social institutions) are in relation to victims (Dobash & Dobash, 1998). Clinical experience illustrates that young women lose face and status within their friendship group and their reputation if they ‘choose’ to go out with a man who once established in the relationship uses violence.

Georgie (Group 5) illustrates how a lack of resistant discourses restrained her helping a friend in trouble:

Well I know I was talking about before with the boyfriend I don't like, {laughs} um whenever she was having issues with her boyfriend she would always talk about it, but then I cause I commented on it, I was like "oh well I don't think you should be dating him because he doesn't deserve you and he is treating you badly, she kind of stopped talking to me about it ...(excerpt cut).... I am going to cricket so I took her to cricket and then she was .always texting him, always, always texting him whenever she was with me and she was like um, stupid, (useless), he is doesn't think I am with you he thinks I am seeing some one else like a boy or something he was really overprotective of her and always thought that she was like lying to him and it really annoyed me how he didn't trust her like and he was untrustworthy one.

(Lines: 381-385)

Georgie does not understand why her friend stopped talking to her, although I understand the friend interpreted Georgie's advice as either too hard to do, i.e. leave her boyfriend, or felt positioned with less legitimacy within this conversation because she was still with a boyfriend who cheated on her. Georgie is discursively unable to assist her friend but at an embodied site is angry on her behalf. Georgie is very careful with how she explains what she feels in relation to this female friend and her distressing heterosexual situation (see excerpt 25, Appendix I).

Georgie: Ok I don't think, when she was talking to me about it, it just, it made me feel angry, like he shouldn't like be treating you like that, and like when she was telling me and it just made me just feel he shouldn't be treating you like that.....(text cut)....yeah and um (1) it also made me feel uncomfortable around Jimmy because I couldn't really say, like it kind of changed our friendship, like I couldn't really say what I felt anymore around her and we kind of became a lot more distant and she became extremely preoccupied with him and it just made me kind of not disrespect her but kind of pity her and it made me feel sad

(Lines: 533-543)

She talks about sadness and accesses the idea of pity but is careful to say she does not disrespect her friend. Western philosophical ideas of an individual's right to choose promote the idea that we need to suspend our judgments about another individual's

decision, although what is silent is that an individual's decisions impact on others; for example a girlfriend remaining with a 'bad' boyfriend impacts on her female friends through sadness at losing this friend. This careful wording may be an attempt on Georgie's part to provide meaning for why she feels helpless and angry about her friend's situation. Georgie's view that young women should leave men who do not treat them respectfully was questioned by Jemma:

Jemma: Like what you said how you told her "oh you shouldn't be going out with him" that's quite an out there

Georgie: I didn't really say it like that, I was just like oh

Jemma: yeah but the idea and then she might think oh like who are you to tell me you know

Georgie: Yeah

Nina: and how much time you put in to it as well cause you have got your own life and it's her life really and her decisions

Jemma: Mm,

Nina: and, but then also it's like your responsibility almost kind of

Jemma: Do you feel obliged to?

Nina: Yeah

(Lines: 580-677)

Jemma's comment of *"that's quite an out there"* is accessing ideas that Georgie is undermining her friend's ability to make the best decisions about her relationship. Jemma recognizes that what we say to women in dominating relationships may position them illegitimately, making them feel less able than ourselves i.e. *"who are you to know"*. New Zealand culture has historical access to ideas around how capable young woman do not choose to stay with dominating boyfriends (Fisher, 1991). In this way, young women in dominating relationships are interpreting friends' advice about leaving through the lens of heterosexuality and ideas of female responsibility. Jemma and Nina appear very aware of the risks of their friends being positioned this way and the risks for their reputation if they experience male violence. This awareness of the potential for 'shame' and a male's potential to use violence is largely silent but is understood by these participants within phrases rather than established commonsense discourses. This illegitimate position of females in heterosexual relationships is what I define as being 'abject other', which then leaves young women with less access to resources and wellbeing. Jemma tries to avoid positioning a friend as an 'abject other' and suggests that women can avoid these dilemmas with female friends by just being there and listening. In contrast, my advocate and clinical lens suggests that due to our heterosexually saturated culture, women are so immersed in being responsible that a friend's silence is often interpreted as blame. Young women need greater access to resistant discourses that enable them to help friends in trouble effectively,

in a way that both honours their agency and assists them to safely avoid or reduce further incidences of male domination. We have very few discourses that position women as okay and men as active agents who are in control of their dominating strategies. Even traditional feminist discourses expect the woman to take responsibility for leaving the offending male without consideration of the material resources and embodied subjective emotional states of attachment (Fisher, 1991). Resisting commonsense heterosexual discourses that position young women as 'abject other' is about an 'active' subject who does not desire dominating heterosexual practices and who is simultaneously positioned as a transitory 'victim'.

Nina's conversation illustrates the intersecting discourses available when faced with a friend in trouble by accessing both the maternal care discourse about being responsible for a friend's wellbeing and the western philosophical ideas of individual responsibility. Two intersecting heterosexual normative gender practices are simultaneously operating to produce a resistant discourse of women taking responsibility for a friend in trouble. The participants are deliberately silencing and resisting the idea that women are responsible for men's bad behaviour through individual choice while enabling the discourse around how female friends can take some responsibility for caring, not for men, but for each other.

Georgie points out the difficulties of holding such information without being able to receive support yourself (see excerpt 25, Appendix I). *Georgie: and there is also a bit like trust because they have told you something special and you are then holding and you can't pass everything back onto her or talk about everything so you kind of need somebody else, which is also pushing the boundaries because they don't really want anybody else to know that you have (lines:599-602)*

This group talks about needing to silence heterosexual discourses of female responsibility in order not to make a friend feel bad, providing emotional support through listening but also recognizing how emotionally hard it is as a friend to 'know' your friend is being hurt. In this situation Nina gets support while simultaneously protecting her friend from others' judgment by editing the information she is holding. Holding back some information will protect her friend from others' judgment and hence protect her reputation and avoid later consequences such as having an increased risk of future male violence. Stark and Flitcraft (1996) describe how victims receive secondary abuse through our society holding them responsible for male violence. One consequence of this form of heterosexual positioning is illustrated by the 'risk and pleasure discourse' where a young

woman may be excluded from friendships and be at greater 'risk' of sexual assault in the future. The way Group 5 talked about protecting their friend's reputation illustrates the operation of this silent normative practice of being aware of the risks of being positioned as 'abject other' largely outside of discursive resources.

Because of the taboo operating in our culture that silences the real possibility that every woman is at risk from male violence I asked about friends' rather than participants' personal experiences of violence and screened to eliminate any participant who was currently at risk from overt violence. I wanted participants to feel safe and not to experience shame within my research process. Silencing men's potential for violence in many heterosexual relationship silences the material lines of force maintaining the gendered status quo and women's responsibility to meet male needs. My experience of New Zealand's western liberal discourses is that 'violence' is understood as the exception not the normal possibility of all women engaging in heterosexuality. Epidemiological research during the past 20 years in New Zealand has estimated between one in ten and one in four women are exposed to male partner violence at some point in their lives (Elvridge, 1997; Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; Snively, 1994) This form of positivist research implies that three out of four women in New Zealand are not exposed to the possibility of male violence. This form of research silences how male violence intersects and supports all women's frequent position as 'abject other'. I would argue that young women's embodied subjectivity should be further explored in the area of embodied knowing and larger male bodies in order to further articulate their fear of larger male bodies and to clarify the function of 'abject other' within heterosexual discourses (Bureta, 2008).

7.2.1 Participants' orientation to female friendship where friends are not at risk of losing their reputation as girlfriends of 'bad' boyfriends.

I was interested in how participants would experience being in relation to female friends in the absence of risks to their reputations as girlfriends. Group 5 said the following:

Prue: If, if you were out....(text cut)... dance now dance, and you saw a girlfriend be approached or get involved in a what you saw as a potentially dangerous situation, what would be your thinking and your response in that situation, first off how would you know it was risky?

Jemma: If she wasn't looking too comfortable

Nina: or how like kinda sober, like if they were in the right state of mind, like maybe emotionally or, cause like sometimes they can just broken up with somebody, big family things going on and you know it's not right for them that could be .

Georgie: ... (text cut) Um I .it depends on the state (I'm in) {laughter} I think I would probably just kind of intervene and just like walk up and pull my friend away pretty much

Nina: Mm, me too

Georgie: ... (text cut) ... it totally depends on my mood and how I am feeling everything the time of the situation but I would pretty much just pull my friend away..... (text cut) ...

Jemma: It's happened to me I have known a few situations where friends have seen something and think that something is going to happen and they go up and try to intervene but really nothing was actually happening and they just sort of saw it a different way and um... (text cut) but yeah, I think if that happened to me I think I would just um make sure that it was something that was wrong just like "hey howzit going, are you alright there?" and kind of be real like happy in their face kind of like if something was wrong you would have to tell them

Prue: If you don't know them?

Nina: Yeah if you don't know it's more an instinct to take them away, if you do know them then it's more like a hang out thing, check out what is actually happening before you

Prue: the reading is easier if you know someone isn't it?

Jemma: I think it's the opposite,

Prue: Mm?

Jemma: because if I saw you or something I wouldn't feel rude to just pull you, but if I didn't know you I would feel rude to do that so I would be like "hey, [what do you think]"

(Lines: 619-688) (see excerpt 26, Appendix I).

Jemma holds an agentic position ***"I think it's the opposite"***, supporting the impression that the research conversation has enabled authoritative spaces for the participants to occupy and is producing some resistant discourses. Georgie's and Nina's ideas of specificity, such as mood, sobriety, emotional state of the friend involved, and their subsequent assessment of what's going on demonstrate that they 'know' that how they act in any situation is specific and conditional on multiple factors that they are simultaneously assessing at any one point of time. This supports a critical realist ontological and epistemological lens that knowledge and subjective desire is co-constituted through multiple, shifting, contradictory specificities such as young women 'knowing' i.e. is my friend sober, what point is she at emotionally, does she need my help or not, am I able, at this moment, to intervene. There is an absence of an embodied sense of shame or responsibility for protecting a friend's reputation. The constant commonsense idea of the possibility of heterosexual risk is present outside of being a girlfriend. Given the presence of this assumption around risk the main discussion points are whether the participants would intervene quickly without much thought or whether they would check first how the female in the situation was experiencing the situation. Outside of the discourse of female responsibility and the embodied knowing of the risks of 'abject other' it appeared simpler

for the participants to talk about intervening. Group 5 would intervene either directly or indirectly; they would have some concern for getting it wrong, or misreading a situation but they would check it out rather than ignore it and walk away. At the end Jemma talks about it being easier to intervene with a friend and get it wrong than if it was a stranger; she would be more careful with a stranger in order not to be rude. There is an intimacy within friendships that enables more direct intervention in at risk situations outside of being a girlfriend but within a heterosexual context of partying. Jemma talks in a resistant way and indicates she would use her body to check out if another female she does not know very well is in difficulty, *“hey howzit going, are you alright there?” and kind of be real like happy in their face kind of like if something was wrong you would have to tell them*”. Jemma utilizes dissonance in this context, using exaggerated, happy and not overtly aggressive talk, but using her body in a way that crosses both the man’s and the woman’s physical space. In this way her material body is taking up room in a way that another female is forced to attend and respond to. Jemma’s speech act is allowing space for the other woman to be agentic and indicate she is or is not okay. The way Jemma was describing how she would act is quite exaggerated. So Jemma has produced resistance through various lines of force, including dissonance between the material body and speech act, and exaggeration (nearly mimesis, but not quite) that enables her and another woman agency in an at risk heterosexual environment.

In summary, Group 1 have illustrated that Irigaray’s ideas around mimesis and access to fun outside of heterosexuality may provide young women with sufficient knowledge and alternative ways of being outside of heterosexual relationships which are making them feel bad. Group 1 through doing and talking provided a friend with an embodied enjoyable and resistant way of experiencing pleasure which may have enabled her to re-access a subjective desire to leave a heterosexual relationship and spend more time with female friends. Therefore the function of female friendship is providing the material space for young women to experience pleasure together. Group 5 participants provided me with a greater ability to more thoroughly language my embodied subjective response to young women I work with in physical health settings who are experiencing dominating and abusive relationships. These partially articulated but subjective embodied states of shame and illegitimacy are embedded in our heterosexual discourses as ‘abject other’ (Davies et al., 2002). Group 5 demonstrated how young women can use the contrast (dissonance) between their bodies and their speech acts to produce resistance to

heterosexual risk as women taking care of other women. Women utilize both their material corporeal bodies and voices to produce a form of exaggeration that works for their own safety. The next section on Nomads will look more closely at what, including mimesis, enables young women to take a critical stance, and to stand outside of normative heterosexual practices, in a way that provides them with alternative ways of being that function to provide pleasure and resistant subjective desires.

7.3 Young women as nomads an alternative subjective desire

This last section will outline young women's ideas on the advantages of being a nomad. The idea of being a nomad allowed the participants to sit outside of harmful cultural constructions of being young women, female friends and girlfriends, in a way that produces the "*healthiest*" way of being. To be a nomad is to be metaphorically located outside of the commonsense gender normative practices but the participants who positioned themselves as nomads also had the 'real' material resources to access being in different geographic locations. I attended to Group 6's ideas on nomads immediately and explored this theme further in the interview with Mabel:

Mabel: There is a group of nomads

Isabella: Oh God.(text cut)..

Boborange: We don't really let ourselves be judged by like a name for a group, we kind of like just a group

Isabella: Yeah

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: we enjoy each other's presence

(Lines: 1033-1049)

My immediate interest in nomads was due to reading Braidotti's theory on material embodiment which mirrored my own material and symbolic experiences of being outside of my own cultural's gender normative practices and which enabled resistance in the form of critical reflection. Having access to the material resources to be nomadic may enable young women access through the physical, material and symbolic intersecting to co-constitute resistant subjective embodied desires.

7.3.1 A nomad is the 'healthiest way of being'

Mabel initiated the discussion of their group identity being 'nomads'. During her interview I asked how being a nomad arose, and she talked about her experience of wanting to join a 'cool' dance group at school, being auditioned and being rejected (see excerpt 28 Appendix, I). *Mabel: Um well I know that in year 6, when I was 10, I really*

wanted to be with cool group, the popular group ... (text cut)... and I guess I got over it a bit when I decided I had more fun sitting in trees after all (Lines 39-5).

There were no significant consequences to being rejected by the cools, she could still dance, have fun, have a best friend and be liked by other people. Mabel's location of being outside of a particular culture and her embodied subjective experience of happiness and freedom enabled her to resist a desire to be 'cool' (Braidotti, 2003).

As the following discussion will illustrate being a nomad is about wellbeing through an intrinsic sense of pleasure and enjoyment: "***Well I think that's the best way to be because I think that's where you are happiest, you have the most healthy relationships with other people and yourself.***" It also influences Boborange's understanding of what would make a good boyfriend: "***they can be sad but mostly quite positive because we all seek happiness and we like being around happy things, um but I love sweet caring guys.***" Therefore wellbeing is being happy and having healthy relationships with nomadic boyfriends who have an ability to care for others and who also seek to be happy. This idea about having a nomadic boyfriend who also has an ethics of care will be discussed shortly.

7.3.2 Geographical and symbolic location of being on the outside

Boborange, who provided a large part of the conversation around being a nomad, had a material location of sitting across two cultures as an immigrant as well as having the economic resources, via her family, to travel extensively. Boborange talked about her involvement in a 'save Tibet' online organization and this interest was associated with her travel experiences "***I really want to travel to like weird places like Israel, Tibet, um... Oh Tibet's gorgeous (lines: 112-116).***" This 'real' experience of being within other cultures which are so different from her own and New Zealand culture enabled her to experience and 'know' at an embodied level (consisting of both discursive and non-discursive 'knowing') what it was like to be immersed as an outsider. My own experiences of travelling in Asian cultures allowed me access to freedom from my gendered cultural responsibilities while observing and interacting with other fascinating ways of being. I was able to recognize both cultural and gender oppression but not be subject to it.

Travel for some young women who have access to enough money may also be a time of relative freedom from occupying the maternal space within current New Zealand culture. Boborange's travel experiences and desire to be a nomad are co-constituted through being fascinated (pleasure) by other cultures in a way that allowed her to occupy

alternative spaces to her own gendered specificities in both New Zealand and her own Asian culture. Boborange's experience of being an Asian immigrant in a predominantly white culture may also provide her with an embodied experience of being positioned as a minority 'other' while simultaneously having access to her own agency in other non-European cultures. She may not have always had access to a legitimate position in New Zealand as an Asian immigrant.

Braidotti (2003) discusses how having access to more than one language constitutes what you know in a way that is different from people who have access to only one form of knowing. A critical realist perspective carries an understanding that part of our ontological and epistemological knowing is constituted through discourse and that what we 'know' is not always transferable in another language. This allows bi-lingual speakers automatic access to the site of intersection between two competing cultural ways of being female. Part of our social constructionist understanding of language, power and knowledge is that two competing intersecting forms of female subjugation (ideologies) may produce resistance (Billig et al.,1988). I accessed so many resistant voices within this piece of research partially because of immigration, not only in terms of colonization practices amongst white Europeans, but also in terms of Asian immigrants who have such a different way of structuring their language. The different Chinese dialects, and the Korean and Japanese languages are not derived from Latin or the western alphabet, and their bones, structure, and means to structuring 'knowledge' are so different from the structure of the English language. Saussure's ideas of signs and signifiers mean that Boborange had access to multiple intersecting meanings across two different cultures and that this would co-constitute specific subjective desires (Weedon, 1991). These experiences may explain why Boborange can so easily position herself as a nomad. Boborange has been brought into being simultaneously at more than one language site as well as travelling extensively, thus at an embodied level she has experienced different forms of being female and an outsider.

7.3.3 Being a nomad and the material, physical and symbolic aspects of being legitimately positioned

The idea of nomads emerged from a conversation on how make-up empowered women through the media and models such as Tyra Banks.

Isabella: I think that's also, like that social standard is also set by like models Tyra Banks and celebrities and

Mabel: like how you should look

Isabella: yeah, and so we don't want to feel like an ordinary woman, you want to feel empowered and I guess looking good is your main form of empowerment like looking supernaturally good

{laughter}

Isabella: So that's why makeup is there

Mabel: that's women's biggest triumph if we accept we are of equal intelligence to men and whatever, so yeah people want to use it. I would use it.

(Lines: 891-905) (see excerpt 29, Appendix I).

Isabella and Mabel employed a satirical lens and mimesis when utilizing the current pop psychology idea of **'empowerment'**. Group 6 take both an outsider's view as well as being immersed within this feminine culture when Mabel says, **"I would use it."** This humorous view of pop culture also utilizes these technologies for their own advantage. Having more power is about being positioned with greater legitimacy than others, such as being **"empowered"** and being **'intelligent'** looking, **'supernaturally good'**, an ideal form of femininity for young women in this western socio-economic context . Young women who demonstrate both intelligence and beauty occupy higher hierarchical positions in both friendship and heterosexual contexts, which enables better treatment from a boyfriend: **"Isabella: If you feel like you are more socially higher then I think you feel like he will treat you differently"** and **Isabella: If you are socially lower than him, if you treated like, if you think you are a geek or a nerd or.....Boborange: Like a popular boy.**

These participants accessed ideas that they will either be treated well or not so well by a boyfriend depending on their social-economic status and levels of popularity or geekiness. Consistent with a critical realist position, materiality such as physical looks and socio-economic status does intersect with discourses to co-constitute access to power through being a more legitimate subject than other young women. Power is about being in the world and it functions to bring respect or disrespect from a boyfriend and is associated with a young woman's wellbeing (happiness, unhappiness), and legitimacy to say 'no' to unwanted commonsense gender practices. White (2002) research illustrates that it is not only what young women do sexually with a boyfriend but also what they physically look like that can ruin reputations. For example a young woman who is blonde and has a body that matures earlier than others, such as having very early breast development, may be positioned by other young women as a slut and be more pressured by male peers to be sexually active (White, 2002). Group 6 recognizes that social power operates partially outside of individual control, through physical looks, and socio-economic status while simultaneously recognizing that young women have access to partially transform this form

of power through the use of make-up. What was interesting was that Group 6 talked about these contradictory experiences of social power as nomads who were simultaneously within and outside of this western culture. I am therefore reading these participants' location as fluid within and outside of heterosexual contexts, and spending quite a bit of time at the peripheries, rather than as stable at the centre.

Nomads emerge as a reasonable option for Group 6 if they want to avoid being categorized into one group with the subsequent hierarchies and the material consequences of being either 'cool' or 'geeks'. The participants talk about nomads being in-between different categories of groups but also having group norms: nomads are generally outgoing and likeable. The idea of being in-between also draws on the idea of uniqueness and individuality. Nomads sit between social hierarchies, and prefer to think of themselves as enjoying each other's presence without judging or categorizing.

These participants also use western colonial knowledge accessed through the media and American forms of masculinity and femininity, such as the '*cools, jocks, sexy, wannabes*' as a referential difference from their group of nomads who sit between specific categories. Being nomadic makes them likable but not exciting, not distinct enough to be represented in movies "*because we are not particularly exciting people to watch*". However even within the nomad group there is an element of judging and categorizing and a sense of excitement within this process of deciding which groups they can move between and which they cannot, as in the situation of '*bad asses*'.

Prue:(text cut).. What does it mean, what does it do for you to be a nomad? What are the advantages?

{laughter} (freedom)

Prue: Concrete, freedom in what?

Mabel: Well, I feel like, I don't know, just some of my English class for instance. I could sit with um probably three out of four groups of people probably not the bad asses

(Lines: 1046-1054)

And

Boborange: So you can make more friends with more people I guess.

Isabella: You are not stopped by your category if you are a nomad

(Lines: 1079-1081)

Sitting between clearly defined groups such as the cools means that you have freedom of movement between these groups and that sitting in-between includes obtaining enjoyment of '*we enjoy each other's presence*'. This statement suggests that the friendships they enjoy allow for movement and difference and draws on the western idea that an individual is specific and different from anyone else. This excerpt also draws on

eastern and existential philosophies that each living thing has a unique spirit or way of being. The presence of a person is more than individual elements, consistent with Irigaray's ideal that the potential of women to become alternative subjects needs to be based around differentiated possibilities within an ethical ideal outside of current phallogocentric belief systems (Grosz, 1989b). Ideas of 'presence' and 'essence' fit with Braidotti's ideas that feminine desire can exist as a "positive expression of respective differences" (Braidotti, 2003, p.43). The freedom of being a nomad and moving between groups and enjoying each other's presence is not limitless however, because the bad asses may not let you sit with them and you would not want to sit with them.

My clinical standpoint is that if you look towards people, or you relate to others in a way that is open to newness, interest and enjoyment, you are more likely to identify the unique difference, essence of being, and points of resistance that enable change. This open position is different from looking for similarity, which is also useful in terms of empathy and shared experience but considered harmful and dangerous by this group of participants in the situation where young women and men need to be the same as others in order to fit into a higher status group.

7.3.4 An ideal nomadic boyfriend and the dark and dangerous world of heterosexuality

Group 6 defined themselves as nomads partially through sitting outside of and being critical of the 'cools' who they categorize as undesirable and *'dark and dangerous.'* Group 6 partially define their ideal nomadic boyfriend in reference to the 'dark and dangerous' world of heterosexuality. Boborange draws on the psychiatry discipline that has produced specific personality types and the theories that have emerged from the original personality theories such as literature that focuses on different forms of intelligence, i.e. *'emotional quota EQ':*

Boborange: "Like I said before, that you normally go for guys that are of a similar intelligence level, similar like physical appearance, like and socially like similar standing and like emotionally similar as well like emotional quota EQ, kinda, emotional reasoning. So I would go for a guy who is really sensitive, who can judge situations and who's like not out of it {laughs} and really sensitive....(text cut).. [thoughtful guy, and I definitely want someone who knows, who doesn't think like in stereotypical clichéd way. I would want them to like be an outsider in a sense, like me being from an outsider's perspective, rather than being in there and not knowing anything else outside

(Lines: 1195-1343) (see excerpt 30, Appendix I)

Boborange's desire is for a boyfriend who has the attributes that she associates with someone who is also able to be outside the bubble i.e. "*Boborange: like view things from an outsider's perspective rather than being in there and not knowing everything else outside because like I normally tend to think from an outsider's perspective (lines: 1346-1349)*". She does not desire a boyfriend who exists inside the bubble and is limited to being a drinker interested in hot chicks. She positions these young men illegitimately as they are less intelligent and less desirable to a nomad. Mabel takes this idea of undesirable boyfriends who comply with hegemonic masculinity even further when she describes them as 'dumb' (see excerpt 31 Appendix, I).

Group 6's use of mimesis enabled them to have a 'critical view' of commonsense normative practices. Using mimesis necessitated stepping back from immersion and enabled Group 6 to sit outside of harmful heterosexual practices.

Boborange: Um I don't want a guy who brags a lot, just arrogance is something associated with kind of bad guys, guys you don't want to be around and I think when guys are arrogant they are just totally unpleasant like

Mabel: Arrogance is dark and dangerous.

Boborange: Yes it is dark ()

Mabel: Teenage boys are stupid in the first place but to be arrogant as well you're going to do some dumb stuff

(Lines: 1372-1376) (see excerpt 31 for full excerpt).

Groups 6's location of viewing this form of heterosexuality on the outside, enables a resistant position and utilizes the idea of approaching things from a different *angle* in a way that facilitates becoming 'other of the other' rather than 'other of same' as discussed in chapter 3, and being able to have access to seeing alternative ways of being other than 'yourselves'. The term 'yourselves' is referring to being able to look outside of our youth culture's obsession with being 'cool', 'hot' chicks and drinking.

7.3.5 Taking a different angle in order to step outside of heterosexuality

I identify Mabel's statement "*Arrogance is dark and dangerous*" as a resistant idea to hegemonic heterosexuality. There are not many representations within our culture of those who are profoundly 'different' being happy people, and there is rarely a media representation of high status heterosexuals and their specific normative practices as being as stupid: "*Mabel: Teenage boys are stupid in the first place but to be arrogant as well you're going to do some dumb stuff.*" Group 6 associate being teenage, male and utilizing commonsense heterosexual behaviours such as desiring 'hot chicks' as being abusive toward, and a health risk for, young women. This form of talk may be present in

commonsense conversation of exclusive female groups but is generally not represented in academic discussions.

These young men are unpleasant to be around, devalue others, do not provide interesting conversation, are not able to look outside of themselves and consequently decrease their female partners' wellbeing. Women who access this form of talk have usually experienced the material consequences of hegemonic femininity such as overwork, overcrowding with maternal responsibility and diminished access to their own desired spaces. These women usually have had access to a passion, or way of being before experiencing a permanent heterosexual relationship and perhaps access a sense of 'loss'. I understand most women to have access to this sense of loss or silencing of their resistant desires. I am always astounded when there is a relative absence of 'knowing' desire outside of hegemonic femininity. These resistant ways of speaking about teenage boys could be criticized in many contexts, but are similar to mature female talk about male partners amongst other women who do not always desire to practise hegemonic femininity.

Feminist poststructuralist theory now needs to explore the function of silencing these forms of commonsense resistant ideas within theoretical frameworks and how this has positioned female subjects within feminist research and subsequent community practices such as feminist therapy. For example, has this silence functioned to silence both resistance and women's access to alternative ways of being? Furthermore have past academic discussions focussed on the technologies of heterosex, in the presence of a male audience and predominantly Foucauldian analysis, inadvertently silenced commonsense resistant desires and satirical discourses? I suggest we may have inadvertently produced poststructuralist feminist knowledge that is acceptable to an 'enlightened' male audience who do not position themselves as complying with heterosexual normative practices. I could not imagine accessing the commonsense resistant discourses I hear amongst women in other contexts in the presence of these very gender aware academic males. I have never been in a solely female group when discussing the technologies of heterosex.

7.3.6 What emerges from a critical nomadic location

Group 6 illustrates the resistant discourses available within exclusive female groups about the trouble and danger of heterosexuality and the subsequent forms of alternative masculinities it enables: Boborange "but I love sweet caring guys. I once met this boy T {laughter} he was such an outsider, he's like the most outside person I'd ever met. He viewed things with such an interesting angle. I found him, I found I could learn things from him ..(text cut..) because I consider myself to be an outsider

and he really could take me all the way kind of and emotionally he was so sensitive he was kind of like a girl”

(Lines:1349-135), (see excerpt 31 Appendix I).

These participants recognize the possibilities of other young men resisting these forms of masculinity for their own wellbeing. They enjoy being with young men who are able to step outside of ‘hot chicks and drink’, hegemonic desire, and take a different view and think outside of themselves. The idea of a young man thinking outside of himself is defined by having a view of ‘others’ outside of heterosexuality and their own preferences and being able to see what others desire and need. Recognition of difference allows for negotiation and hence alters the way power operates because heterosexual normative values no longer dictate who deserves what. Braidotti (2003) writes that when ‘knowing’ positive difference, different forms of being in relation to others is possible. Braidotti talks about Irigaray’s ideas of positive difference this way: “More specifically, she wonders how to elaborate a site, that is to say, a space and a time, for the irreducibility of sexual difference to express itself, so that the masculine and feminine libidinal economies may coexist in the positive expression of their respective difference.” (Braidotti, 2003: p.46). Braidotti’s idea of positive difference includes the idea of desire as it is constituted within the subject both within and outside of libidinal desire. How Mabel and Boborange are talking is cognizant with ideas of differences between them and simultaneously difference within themselves as subjects. They desire boyfriends who are different from popular heterosexual ways of being and who can stretch them but simultaneously want these different boys to be the same as them and sit on the outside as nomads.

There are few examples of academic literature discussing how men in heterosexual relationships may demonstrate an ethic of care for a distinct female other. Beres and Farvid (2009) utilizing a Foucauldian analysis within the area of sexual ethics explore the need for a male ethics of care of a female partner. This research supports work in both women’s refuge and clinical practice that demonstrates women are able to say ‘no’ to male sexual desire but this desire may not be heard if young men do not have an ethics of care for others. This is compatible with Irigaray’s ideas of mutual respect and equity between different subjects with different desires. However as already noted an ethics of care for a differentiated other requires hard work in our material world. Within sexuality a mutual ethics of care may require a silencing of a competing desire in order to provide pleasure for a different other. Given our inflexible social structures and outside of sexuality, I cannot envisage men flocking to acknowledge and celebrate gender differences and the

accompanying hard work. Group 6's relative silence around competing differences between genders and competing desires may be because of their relative inexperience of having a boyfriend. The participants who accessed the position of nomads, and Group 1 who occupied a critical position within heterosexual discourses, were all outside of the workload required in long term heterosexual relationships. As Jane in Group 1 demonstrated, she knew her mother's life and had access to discourses around maternal care but did not have access to a similar embodied subjective site. Her mother's life was spoken of as alien, completely different from her own and one she was not particularly interested in despite loving and admiring her mother. While I experience pleasure through reading about female resistance I am also simultaneously worried about what impact a long term heterosexual relationship would have on these participants' wellbeing. What would nomadic 'knowing' enable and restrain when negotiating competing needs and workload requirements in a heterosexual relationship?

7.3.7 Discussion of the nomadic ideal from the standpoint of 'real' difference

The next two sections will examine the intersection between the 'Risk and Pleasure' discourse and 'the nomad discourse' in order to identify the possibilities for how young women may enjoy being a girlfriend without an internal critical gaze that produces 'battles' and 'guilt' in the presence of resistance. The following argument is from my standpoint as an experienced health worker who simultaneously appreciates the ideal 'nomadic' boyfriend co-constituted by Group 1 while worrying about what happens to this 'ideal' in the real context of differential preferences and pleasurable outcomes. I argue that feminist poststructuralist theories of embodiment and subjective desire require expanding to include competing desires and competing material outcomes that produce real embodied loss of pleasure.

My appreciation of the 'nomadic' ideal produces the following thoughts: Boborange and Mabel talk about alternative ways of being in a heterosexual relationship that is exciting but only if it sits within a nomad framework. In this situation this desire for happiness is known within a dichotomy and from having the embodied experiences of both happiness and unhappiness, which is consistent with ideas of differential referentiality such as Boborange's ideas around soul mates and the fear of losing this form of intimacy. These experiences of embodied subjective states of 'knowing' co-constitute what we like or desire, and do not like or desire. As already discussed knowing what you like sits at an

intersection between both discursive and non-discursive sites, but these sites are transient rather than stable.

Group 6 appear less concerned about others' desires and are more concerned with what they need and desire in an intimate partner in order to be further stretched: *"I found I could learn things from him"* and *"because I consider myself to be an outsider and he really could take me all the way kind of and emotionally"*. Similar to Group 4, Boborange and Mabel desire being a girlfriend to a nomad boyfriend, as this would stretch them. They illustrate a resistant desire to be more than what they currently have access to and that is more than libidinal desire.

However, my 'worry' clinical lens accesses the following points: feminist research and Bob's Group 2 excerpt in the 'Risk and Pleasure' discourse demonstrate how the policing of female behaviour, not just through overt violence, but through a constant stream of disapproval, decreases young women's happiness and wellbeing. Women are understood in terms of good, bad, proper or not proper dichotomies in terms of how well they are orientated to others. Narrative theorists draw from Foucault's ideas of discipline and talk about how gender is policed by our social gaze which is then internalized to become our own internal critical gaze (O'Grady, 2004). Women are viewed in terms of what they do or do not provide for men and others and men are viewed in terms of what they are entitled to and how well they maintain their masculine position.

Within practice I experience many women as occupying a 'nomadic' resistant position outside of the material presence of men, but also simultaneously occupying a 'guilty' position for not meeting others' needs, and being angry, resentful and critical of themselves for desiring alternative ways of being separate to a loved intimate partner's desires. Boborange (Group 2) sat within this contradictory, intersecting space. Many women are able to resist but choose not to because they do not want to make a loved partner unhappy. I experience many women negotiating simultaneous contradictory competing embodied desires: the desire for sexual and other intimacy with a physically safe, loved partner and the desire for separation in order to occupy alternative desired spaces. What restrains women occupying alternative ways of being within their everyday lives is the distress experienced when someone loved is disadvantaged by their 'nomadic' position. Being outside, at times, means not being able to meet a differentiated other's needs and preferences. What also restrains them is when a male partner who has previously occupied a 'nomadic' position, transforms and occupies more hegemonic

masculine positions as required by contexts outside of the sexual relationship. For example, work, fatherhood, new male friends and the presence of competing needs with a female partner such as having sufficient time to work, play, rest and sleep.

7.3.8 The intersection between what is ideal and a feminist worry about transience

What we need is a form of ontology that allows for dichotomies of difference in relation to a 'real' lived experience as well as transience. Transience refers to the unique momentary lived experience that consists of shifting lines of embodied knowledge that are both simultaneously similar and different from previous and future lived experiences. An example is how we can evaluate or understand at an embodied subjective level that a new boyfriend provides pleasure, and is a 'good' boyfriend, not a 'bad' boyfriend, because he increases wellbeing, but this dichotomy is not stable and the good can become bad and decrease wellbeing. A transient dichotomy based on Cromby's & Nightingale's (2002) ideas of referentiality may function through embodied subjectivity to make sense of what we are experiencing in the moment and therefore provides us with agency (power) to access understanding of a specific situation. An example would be Boborange's desire for a male friend, where experiencing excitement around the possibilities of being loved by someone like him can extend her knowledge but also cause her to experience loss through his preference to not have a girlfriend. These feelings of excitement and loss would be experienced at an embodied subjective level.

I did not ask Boborange about her specific subjective states when this young man refused her offer to be his girlfriend but other participants, as demonstrated in the past sections, have more than demonstrated knowledge is known through embodied subjectivity which is partially co-constituted through both discourse and the somatic body. An example is when Jemma from Group 5 talks about how her 'heart' is an indicator of both good and bad events and she 'knows' which is which through the specific context.

Boborange desired a boyfriend who did not want her as a girlfriend but she did not demonstrate a strong internal critical gaze. There may have been a sense of loss but she talks as if he made a choice about not being her boyfriend based on his contextual needs and desires, not based on a heterosexual female deficit model: *"but he just wasn't interested in like a girlfriend boyfriend thing because he went to a coed school and he didn't view me the same way as I viewed him"*. Boborange is using the idea of a different view, similar to viewing from a different angle, in a way that allows her to desire but not

get something she wants, in the absence of self-criticism. Utilizing a psychological health lens I recognize this is an ideal view for Boborange to access because it enables young women to process loss without self dislike or excessive critical self questioning which can be associated with very distressing embodied subjective states. If we reject the western psychological idea that we are able to always control the world and subsequently always achieve what we want if we just do things properly, then we need an alternative means of processing loss without it impacting long term on our wellbeing or sense of ourselves as legitimate females. The location outside of excessive self-criticism is a location of wellness as it recognizes a legitimate subjective desire which is not always in our control to obtain. This form of positioning outside of a discipline of an internal gaze may provide an alternative pathway for an ethics of care of self that requires negotiating competing desires and subsequent 'real' losses and gains. Group 6 provided me with language in the form of angles that may provide possibilities for young women to experience the pleasure and losses of being female in ways that could enhance their wellbeing

7.3.8 Changing the angle may promote a different view and enable resistance

Boborange partially defines being a nomad as a function of changing the angle of how you view the world: "he didn't view me the same way as I viewed him"..... He viewed things with such an interesting angle....., and like looking around at the sky, looking around, and so like your angle on life is quite different.... You look for different things, you don't look just to become alcoholics or you don't look just to become the top of our social group" (See Appendix I, excerpt 31). Different metaphors initiate different meanings for different people. Boborange's access, very early on her life, to different angles through her immersion in a different Asian culture and her outsider status in majority Pākehā western society may have enabled her access to an embodied site being 'outside' and may be one of her more familiar or 'known' ways of being. Drinking and 'hot chicks' are not many Asian young women's ideals, particularly as some Asian women have unpleasant skin and vascular effects from ethanol. The conversation around angles triggered for me a familiar pathway or site of resistance that I 'know' both within myself and working with women at embodied subjective sites in the absence of discursive resources.

The idea of angles has extensive clinical implications in that it may enable a pathway of resistance when working with women across age groups. Having a view of the world and society outside of 'yourselves' through taking a different angle is a useful

metaphor for my purpose and the possibilities for our co-constitution as women. The metaphor of angles opened possibilities for my preventative lens, for example how I theorize resistant ideas of femininity, in relation to how desirable I view my own and others' female bodies. This metaphorical idea also becomes very 'real' when I explore the possibilities for young women's more corporeal experiences through touch and having a view of themselves outside of a reflection of a hegemonic masculine mirror.

Boborange's repeated talk of taking another angle, or taking another view, has enabled me to experience at a very embodied level what Irigaray means when she talks about bringing women into being as orientated to a differentiated valued 'other' outside of heterosexual discourse. My own embodied experience that I can relate to the idea of angles is that similar to most mature women my body awareness is partially co-constituted through access to our medical, fashion and fitness discourses on middle aged women and partially accessed through 'real' change. For example when I look in a mirror my body and in particular my upper arms have changed, and are thicker than 15 years ago. The idea that the larger older female body is less desirable is commonly understood by most women and by commonsense terms such as middle aged spread. This idea of a bigger body as undesirable is absent when I look down casually and I experience my arms as looking great and access my more embodied experience of myself as smooth and strong, which, now I think about it, has been present for many years but not articulated. More importantly, this narrative also illustrates how we can offer young women opportunities to experience themselves in the world from alternative views or 'angles' at more corporeal embodied sites, ones that may enable resistance more effectively than intervention programmes focusing on specific positivist educational and feminist theories. Do we need a reflection of 'deficit' female self co-constituted through heterosexual ideals of what we should be when we have access to our corporeal embodied experiences of strength, pleasurable texture and view of being female from a different angle? Not all young women have the material resources needed for Boborange's and Mabel's experiences of sitting outside of our normative values and experiencing happiness. But this idea of taking a different angle can also be accessed through humorous critical talk, literature, travel and competing, different cultural experiences.

I spent three years prior to this project attempting to create an intervention programme that would disrupt heterosexuality, but stopped because I realised this form of intervention was producing knowledge that would not allow access to resistant positions

for all women. There is no one theory of effective intervention in the area of male violence and if there was this would not necessarily interrupt young women's orientation to the care of men and others. If anything it would increase their orientation to achieving an 'equitable' relationship which would take a huge amount of thinking time, time that could be spent in areas that produce more intrinsic embodied pleasure both inside and outside of heterosexuality. Therefore given the material resource restraints in many young women's lives what stops us simply presenting young women with different angles or views at both discursive and experiential, embodied sites that allow them to experience being in resistant positions and being happy? For me this difference came from being immersed in a wide range of non adolescent literature rather than literature focusing on heterosexual relationships during adolescence. Current adolescent literature complies with adolescent developmental theory, specifically theories of resilience, and does not provide demonstrations of alternative ways of being. Yet many of the participants demonstrated satirical and dramatic language within this research, very similar to Irigaray's ideas of mimesis, to resist dominant heterosexual ways of being. This suggests there must be other ways we can enhance young women's agency to "step outside of" heterosexual normative practice, take another angle, and "take the piss" out of the culture they know so intimately. This angle may enhance access to pleasure through humour, and to a more embodied knowledge of self. If desired, a different angle may also enable the pleasure of being in relation to another intrinsically different, interesting corporeal body with both competing and compatible subjective desires and a reciprocal ethics of care. In the final chapter I expand my theoretical arguments on what enables the multiple intersecting lines of force that co-constitute young women's resistant subjective desires and pleasurable, alternative ways of being outside of heterosexual normative practices.

Chapter 8

Conclusion and Discussion

Within this chapter I summarize the main research findings and use the theoretical lenses outlined earlier in the thesis to discuss these findings and their implications. I specifically examine the results that better inform my clinical practice and the implications these have for feminist theory and future research. I trace how this specific knowledge has emerged through utilizing Davies' theoretical framework of simultaneous, contradictory, multiple lines of force and Braidotti's ideas of the material, physical and symbolic sites intersecting to produce resistant subjective desire (Davies et al., 2002). Throughout the conclusion 'knowing' is defined, and therefore how power operates in the production of knowledge, as 'embodied knowing'. Embodied knowing is co-constituted through the operation of symbolic resources and referential differences, whether in terms of symbolically co-constructed 'as if' 'feelings' or the 'force' of the corporeal body and the function and materiality of 'real' consequences for specific forms of subjectivity (Parker, 1999; Cromby, 2007).

Utilizing Davies' (1997) idea of an active 'I' subject within feminist poststructuralist research does not assume a stable freely choosing subject, but enabled the participants to be positioned with authority throughout the research conversations and enabled effortless access to resistant subjective desires and ideas. I viewed this form of positioning as similar to Irigaray's idea that, different from men, women need to sit at the centre as subjects in order to become differentiated, equal subjects with alternative ethical ways of being outside of a phallogocentric framework. My argument is that this is not a 'dead' centre but an extremely active free flowing fluid centre which enabled the participants to take a critical view of heterosexual gender normative practices that would not have been available in the material presence of men and which produced multiple pleasurable trips to the peripheries. These pleasurable journeys included Group 1's resource analysis that the effort entailed in having boyfriends was not a fair exchange considering the risk of being hurt and Group 6's nomad discourse and their use of the metaphor of angles. Feminist poststructuralist theory needs to now focus on the material sites and specific locations that young women are immersed in and explore the resistant lines of force co-constituting alternative desire within research contexts that enable

subjects embodied experiences of legitimacy and positive liking (visibility). Providing participants with positive visibility through an intentional research location of female authority facilitated resistant ways of being throughout this project, and this will be discussed explicitly in Section 8.1.

This research illustrated how mimesis works to facilitate young women taking a legitimate position when speaking about ‘the trouble with men’. Contrary to my clinical experiences, these participants had ready access to mimesis, which I encouraged through not silencing my laughter, and this produced further exaggeration of heterosexual practices that provided the space for resistance. I discuss the implications mimesis has for theory and practice in Section 8.1. The results have also illustrated participants’ ‘real’ embodied knowing in the area of ‘might is right’ and how it co-constituted resistant and commonsense subjective desires. This form of embodied knowing became apparent within the security discourse, the developmental discourses and the friendship discourses. This particular finding was further enabled through my own embodied response to young women’s physical size and strength. Therefore, in 8.2 I will discuss the theoretical implications of ideas around ‘might is right’, for the safety of female bodies situated in public and more private heterosexual spaces through utilizing Bureta’s (2008) research. In Section 8.2.1 I also argue how this embodied knowing requires a re-evaluation of how disciplinary and sovereign power intersects to enforce male privilege and the implications this has for intervention.

I discuss Lisa’s (Group 3) resistance to female disciplinary practices in the area of embodied sexual pleasure as well as Group 1’s resistant ways of accessing sexual pleasure outside of being a girlfriend in section 8:3. This section will also discuss how young women experience pleasure through touch and how the force of penetrative sexuality was not present in most of the research discussions. Group 3’s conversation did support past western feminist poststructuralist research findings regarding how female sexual desire is silenced through female disciplinary practices that support hegemonic masculinity and specific forms of heterosexuality, but this colonized discourse was silent in other group discussions. Within this section I reflect on my recommendations for practice in the area of sexuality and the accompanying risks these recommendations would produce if utilized in the absence of specificity and safety.

I identified three forms of female disciplinary practices operating in the research conversations that enabled and restrained resistant subjective desires in specific ways.

These forms of female hierarchies intersected with cultural locations and suggest future theoretical possibilities of exploring the intersection between gender and culture in order to identify resistant lines of force when working with young women in saturated heterosexual contexts such as my clinical work with women and sexual pain. These theoretical possibilities will be discussed in section 8.4 'Female Disciplinary Power'.

Sections 8.5 and 8.5.1 will explore how embodied knowing and access to 'feeling talk' enabled the participant's resistance to the maternal workloads of out-of-balance relationships and rejection of female responsibility for 'bad' dominating boyfriends. I understood this rejection of maternal responsibility as achieved through the silencing the illegitimate position of 'abject other'. One of the predominant commonsense resistant discourses was the balance discourse which enabled young women a means of speaking about the 'trouble with men' and allowed them to position themselves outside of heterosexuality and more in relation to female friends. This has been addressed extensively within feminist poststructuralist literature through such theories as 'a male in the head' and Irigaray's ideas of alterity, maternal consumption and where women are raised to be in relation to an undifferentiated 'other of the same' (Grosz, 1989b; Hollway, 1989; Irigaray, 1885). A maternal/paternal moral orientation requires an ethics of care for a more legitimate male other, 'burdens' women and restrains 'freedom'. One of the silences within feminist poststructuralism that this research challenges is the assumption that this orientation is so well known to women that it is invisible. As a health worker I have always been aware of the visible maternal workload through women's distressing subjective embodied experiences. This maternal workload is very visible in the clinical assessment I conduct with women in our oncology, pre-menstrual distress, menopausal, and gynaecological pain clinics. This experience informs me that this maternal workload, though visible to women, is invisible (often strategically and cynically) to men and governments and functions to maintain free female labour at the expense of women's wellbeing (Waring, 1999). Therefore the balance discourse produces a line of force that enables this theoretical silence to be challenged through young women's ready access to embodied knowing around burden, distress and freedom. I will trace the sovereign origins of this gender practice of over-working women in specific forms across different ages in New Zealand and address the implications of how we can use the balance discourse within health and educational settings to undermine the intersection between sovereign and disciplinary power that makes women sick.

In comparison to ideas of balance the participants had less discursive access to embodied knowing when silencing heterosexual ideas of 'abject other'. I will discuss what enabled Group 5 to talk about how they cared for their friends in boyfriend trouble outside of positioning them as 'abject other' and the possible lines of force, including empathy amongst women, that silenced positioning friends in illegitimate positions when experiencing boyfriend trouble.

Sections 8.5 is on 'feeling talk' and intersects with the next sections and the discussion about how easy it was for me, utilizing a gender specific research framework, to access loving ideas around the participants' interdependent relationship with their mothers. This section and the following section form the more speculative conclusions to this thesis (8.6; 8.7). It is in these last three sections where I examine visibility and how female and male subjectivities are constituted through our culture's recent parenting practices that I begin to formulate ongoing research questions that are both compatible with and different from other emerging theoretical trends within Australasia (Beres & Farvid, 2009; Carmody, 2005). For example, Beres and Farvid examine how an ethics of care operates for self and others within casual sexual encounters and use a Foucauldian theoretical framework within a critical gender lens. As with other Auckland research that utilizes both Foucault and a more relativist ontology and epistemology they do not discuss how non-discursive resources may also partially co-constitute embodied subjectivity in the area of care for others. My theoretical location emerges more from a location compatible with Irigaray's theory of alterity and ideas of 'other of same' and Cromby's theory of embodied knowing, and incorporates ideas of feelings such as empathy within my conceptualization of a care for others (Cromby, 2005; Grosz, 1989). This location has me enquiring about the pre-linguistic and linguistic gender force of young women being brought into being in orientation to others and young men being orientated to their own needs within a phallogentric framework of normal. Using Morgan & Coombes' (2001) ideas of cumulative unstable gender knowledge I examine how parental practices may enable and restrain a care for a differentiated other in young adulthood. The first part of 8.6 discusses the theoretical and practical implications for how we theorize and work with young women's resistant subjective desires being located within an interdependent relationship with a maternal other. Drawing more on Irigaray's theorizing about sexual differences I am orientated to past reiterative practices, not just an ontology of the present location, that may partially co-constitute specific gendered subjective desires.

In contradiction to the balance discourse, the security discourse illustrated young women's subjective desire for positive visibility as part of their understanding of loving intimacy. I theorize, utilizing past developmental and parenting theories, that in the quite recent past we have robbed children of having pleasurable time alone and being positively visible to themselves and others outside of the '*dark and dangerous*' world of heterosexuality. Within section 8.7 I argue that feminist poststructuralists need to explore more thoroughly how the last twenty years have produced specific forms of masculinity that have co-constituted young men without regard for female authority, as well as producing both young men and young women with an aversion to being alone. This aversion, I argue, burdens women and makes men dangerous to women's health. I utilize the nomad discourse to discuss the possibilities for future pre-linguistic and post-linguistic lines of power than would enable more nomadic ways of being male and female.

Within these last two sections I will illustrate how Foucault's and Schipper's ideas of disciplinary power within friendship and Irigaray's and Braidotti's theory of corporeality and materiality and 'real' difference can produce a 'feminist ideal', resistant subjective desires that enhance female wellbeing. The discussion also reflects on the research process and looks at how alternative research methods may have produced further possibilities for theoretical development and lines of force for resistant subjective desires. All sections will produce future research questions and ongoing avenues for feminist enquiry and practice. However prior to discussing the theoretical implications and possible research questions I will first situate my analysis and understandings from my standpoint as an 'old' feminist health worker. In this context I understand 'old' to refer to someone who has extensive accumulative knowledge in the area of gendered/social power while recognizing how each moment of practice and research co-constitutes transitions of what and how I know.

Reflexivity and my specific Feminist Standpoint and research understandings

This research project has gone through several transformations as as I have clarified my own ontological and epistemological position and moved away from a previous incarnation of this project. Originally I responded to the clinical dilemmas outlined in earlier chapters through formulating a PhD project based on educational objectives. My original aim was to produce a sexual educational programme that made female desire visible, enabled young women to explore how cultural ideologies co-constituted their own and others' desires, and provide experiential exercises within the

classroom that illustrated gender differences of desire and practice at negotiating these differences. This project was situated within a positivist and relativist social construction paradigm and when I had difficulty articulated my own ontological position in the absence of the corporeal body I realised that I needed to employ a ‘critical realist’ position and new supervisory relationships in order to reformulate the PhD questions. These explored the intersection between the body, language and material resources within specific contexts.

My preventative/educational lens

However, despite putting the educational objectives aside, I have identified the force of this original objective returning throughout the writing and desire to capture some of these tentative thoughts within this concluding chapter. I have had extensive experience over the past thirteen years providing educational presentations to Family Planning, medical doctors, nurses, and community youth workers, and was one of the consultants in the formulation of a more recent Family Planning educational resources in the area of sexuality and adolescence. As already stated I can never analyse a research conversation without this educational preventative lens operating. Therefore some of my emerging research questions query how we can better explore prevention strategies prior to young women arriving at clinic presenting with sexual pain. These questions emerge from the intersection of the theoretical paradigms I have been working in, such as Irigaray’s theory of alterity, as well as the current research findings and my clinical experience.

My clinical lens

My clinical lens also influences how I make sense of the research conversations. Whereas the balance discourse and other researchers’ discussions on the heterosexual discourses in the area of risk and pleasure are well represented in both research and clinical practise, the other discourses identified in this thesis are less well known. Compatible with Parker’s critical discourse analysis, how I read and analysed the texts and identified the resistant discourses has emerged from accumulative, unstable knowledge accessed through clinical practice. My analytic lens, and my emphasis on notions such as ‘abject’ other, arises from knowledge drawn from my clinical and refuge practice. Here I desire greater meaning and articulation in order to practice more effectively. For example, it is through working with young woman and puzzling over the restraints to being outside of commonsense heterosexual practises that I was able to identify the idea of ‘abject’ other which in turn enabled me to understand how my ontological and epistemological stance

positioned me likewise within academic discussions. This in turn has influenced how I have identified and worked with the position of 'abject' other in this research process. As a consequence of this interweaving of practice with research I now ask the following questions of women presenting with sexual pain: How would you position a female friend in a similar position and what do you imagine your feelings would be for her? What do you think would enable her to 'know' her own sexual desires as different to her partners as legitimate? What are the possible dilemmas she may experience in a heterosexual relationship when she attempts to negotiate different desires with a partner? What do you think women are scared of if they step outside of what's normally expected of them? This form of questioning enables the woman to occupy an expert position, facilitates her adopting a more empathetic, less judgemental position and hence enables movement towards resistance and identifying her own embodied desires within and outside of heterosexuality. However it is very difficult for me to articulate how I 'know' the concept of 'abject' other is operating and restraining resistant desires, because frequently I will sense this in relation to others within specific conversations. I sensed this operating very strongly when talking to Group 5 about how they experienced being with friends who were having trouble with 'bad' boyfriends. This sense partially emerged from my accumulative embodied knowing which I am in the process of articulating. How we articulate previously silenced gendered power through accumulative embodied knowing is an ongoing process and will continue to be a difficult process (Morgan & Coombes, 2001). This PhD has contributed to this process and this contribution needs to be more thoroughly evaluated. Therefore I would recommend that both feminist researchers and clinicians be more aware of how to challenge and resist 'abject' other within their own health and education settings. I am not the only clinician struggling with the idea of 'abject' other. A British research project within the area of uro-genital difference (androgen insensitivity syndrome) has demonstrated that women described experiencing not being 'proper' women and the researchers conceptualized this in terms of 'fearing devaluation' (Alderson, Madill & Balen, 2004) This form of research provides some credibility to my current analysis and usefulness within the particular health context I work within.

I also think this discourse is useful for Women's Refuge. This, as this as well as my clinical experience and Irigaray's theory of alterity, have enabled me to articulate and analyse this particular theoretical idea. So although I could have identified other specific forms of resistance emerging from heterosexual discourses, I chose to focus on what was

going to benefit my practise and contribute to this PhD. An established academic outside of clinical practise may read and understand the texts differently.

In comparison, the nomad discourse which emerged spontaneously in conversation, co-constituted resistant ways of being. This discourse is useful to me in clinical settings and also relevant to both academics, educators and other health workers. I suspect this is a recent cultural shift as I have more recently noticed an increase in popular media of ideas around being nomadic and belonging to tribes. Because it is an emerging unstable cultural phenomenon, this idea of tribes and nomads may be useful to incorporate into our educational narratives around intimate relationships, sex and nomads. Like all cultural narratives it will not be stable and will shift and change as it intersects with other emerging cultural ideologies. However, this concept may be particularly useful for young women in bi-cultural and multi-cultural settings as it allows a way of understanding how to both sit on the outside with a critical lens as well as understanding the force of being within heterosexual contexts.

Therefore my concluding chapter will outline how the findings of this research project contribute to my clinical practice and also have potential to be generalized to other feminist research endeavours. As with all feminist poststructuralist research, the research findings may be useful in some contexts and not in others. This research is also beneficial for future theorising and research specifically in terms of articulating the processes through which resistance and agency were accessed within this research project.

8:1 Resistance and an active ‘I’ through positive visibility and mimesis as a feminist research tool

My first introductory chapter highlighted how the operation of gender normative practices is a ‘deadly’ serious topic. These gender normative practices are not only decreasing young women’s immediate wellbeing but through cumulative and unstable embodied subjective knowing may have long term impact on the female corporeal body. Despite the seriousness of my research topic, if we have a vested interest in our young women’s wellbeing this research illustrates that we need to be jointly negotiating, with young women, our cumulative, unstable, critical gendered knowledge in a way that enables humorous mimesis. However, educators who intend to utilize mimesis need a good understanding of what are the emerging commonsense discourses within each female community.

For the participants to experience a pleasurable legitimacy during the research conversations I positioned them within our conversations with positive visibility. For example, I demonstrated my enjoyment of their satirical critical humour through not silencing my laughter. The intention of not taking a more emotionally distant research position was to enhance, not restrain, the space available for further critical resistant discourses. This research position was not onerous but there were moments within conversations with young women that I became aware of the heterosexual risks they were encountering and had to deliberately silence my 'health' advisor discourses. I did not silence this advisor discourse in the presence of physical risk such as Mildred's concern about her father's potential to use violence, but I did not incorporate this section into the research analysis. I used this form of intentional silence because the heterosexual 'risks' within our New Zealand heterosexual culture have been explored, already, by feminist poststructuralist theorists (Allen, 2002; Gavey, 1992; McPhillips & Burns & Gavey, 2001). In contrast, the possibilities for accessing resistant subjective desires are not so well known.

Throughout the research process I was very aware of silencing questions in response to how the participants talked about being or not being a girlfriend that may have been interpreted as censoring. This was difficult when two recent European immigrants accessed a dichotomous discourse about 'black' boys being sleazy and bad while 'white' boys were respectful and good boyfriends. These ideas silenced the specificity operating across Muslim and immigrant European and Pākehā cultures and enabled and restrained specific cultural understandings within my discussion with Group 3. The other discussion I would have liked to explore further was Claire's response to her mother's sexuality with a same sex partner. If I had further explored Claire's subjective embodied response to her mother's intimacy with a same sex partner as 'creepy' I may have gained greater insight into young women's co-constitution of sexual femininities and what enabled or restrained resistance to hegemonic heterosexuality. Within the moment of these two conversations I did not have the linguistic skill within a framework that positioned the participants as legitimate, to explore their ideas of 'black boys' and 'creepy' same sex partner intimacy.

The following summary of how mimesis operated in this research may enable a line of force that assists the exploration of illegitimate subjects such as racial categorizations and homophobia with legitimate subjects in future research projects.

8.1.1 Mimesis, a forceful line of force co-constituting resistant desires

This research demonstrated that mimesis emerges within conversations between and within specific subjects in a form that produces simultaneously competing gendered ideologies, that draws on unstable cumulative knowledge and that enables resistant subjective desires. As stated, one of the most obvious processes operating within this research was how exclusive female talk is a site for embodied subjective pleasure. I did not need to generate mimesis within discussions about commonsense heterosexual discourses; it was there within the participants' talk in a very overt form. Therefore we need to further explore how mimesis may reduce embodied distress in the presence of competing ideologies and resistance. An example may be the competing ideologies that Angela was discussing when talking about her friend's commitment to heterosexuality and Christianity. Angela, while accessing a critical lens within a liberatory feminist theoretical framework, did not have a critical reflective view of how her and her friends were immersed in competing ideologies and how these competing views were disrupting female friendship. Mabel's and Boborange's more humorous access to the intersecting ideas of '*dark and dangerous*' and exaggerated enthusiasm for a '*soul mate*', simultaneously recognized the 'risks' and 'pleasures' of heterosexual intimacy and had a critical reflective lens which incorporated empathy with friends in heterosexual trouble. I propose that this gendered skill, namely being able to understand what it is to be immersed in and 'addicted' to a boyfriend, and their ability to satirize themselves as well as the institution of heterosexuality, silenced the dichotomy of individuals being right or wrong. Therefore I advocate that we need to provide humorous, critical contexts for young women where they can explore the potential pleasures that entice many of us into heterosexuality as well as explore the potential risks inherent for all of those who step into man-woman

One of the most powerful technologies I took from the participants' conversations was to mimic their exaggeration through using a sing-song voice of "I've got a boyfriend" and "he does this for me" within my conversations with young women outside of the pain clinic and within my conversations across health disciplines. This one phrase instantly positions health workers and women outside of compulsory heterosexuality and enables resistant discussions about health problems and gender practices that are causing distress. Mimesis provides pleasure within competing ideological discussions and therefore creates an embodied connection between speakers that enables negotiation. Feminist poststructuralist researchers need to explore how mimesis works within specific contexts.

For example, I do not use mimesis in academic settings where gendered power is being contested in terms of resource distribution and exaggerated masculinities are operating as a function of maintaining the status quo. In my work mimesis is already utilized in informal debriefings following resuscitations and death.

8.2 The ‘real’ risk of male bodies to female bodies in public and private spaces

The lines of force of the ‘real’ possibility of male physical force emerged from the security, developmental and ‘abject other’ discourses. The developmental discourse functioned to position the participants to move away from parental care to boyfriends’ or guy mates’ care in situations of heterosexual risk such as the potential for strange, drunk and drugged males to hurt them. These discourses intersected with ideas co-constituted within the psychological and psychiatric disciplines that position drunk and drugged men as helpless to control their physically powerful bodies. These discourses intersected with my increasing awareness, when interviewing and analysing the conversation, of my own cumulative embodied knowing about the ‘real’ physical power of men.

This embodied fear of the ‘real’ possibility of larger men hurting smaller women was present in Group 3’s derision of the effectiveness of assertion classes when talking about the ‘real’ dangers of strange men. Embodied knowing of ‘real’ fear consisted of both physiological responses such as increased heart rate and ‘as if’ feelings such as a struggle to identify their embodied states of empathy for friends at risk and anger at dominating boyfriends. This embodied knowing intersects with heterosexual discourses of female responsibility and normative gender practices of monitoring how to respond to dangerous men and how young women need to silence their own anger and preferences not to be touched. These participants ‘knew’ that what was being done was wrong but automatically silenced this ‘knowing’ and subjective desire for dominating situations being otherwise, such as being able to express their anger at men’s ‘groping’. Betty (Group 3) and her friends had the language to resist but restrained themselves because of our culture’s sovereign and disciplinary practices that enable young men to touch young women without censorship. There are no consequences for men who ‘grope’ young women at dance parties and who are not within another male’s territory. As yet we do not have disciplinary practices that make it ‘normal’ for a young woman to express anger at an intoxicated, drugged male who touches her against her subjective desire. Instead we teach young women the disciplinary practices of negotiation and care for others and hence

promote paternal consumption in the space where they could be accessing pleasure through dance, female friendship and flirting with men they desire. In this way we are establishing the reiterative practices of 'real' sovereign power which have women silencing anger and which if practised for many years may shift and change neuroendocrine responses and cortisol production, and produce multiple dis-ease presentation in later years (Mellner, 2005). Restraining female access to this form of anger and the subsequent reduction of pleasure does not enable wellbeing.

The ever-present possibility of violence intersects with our culture's understanding that 'might is right', which is often in contradiction with our discourses around non-violence and the criminalization of hitting children (Bureta, 2008). What all the debates around parents' right to hit or not hit children silence is our embodied understanding that you do not need to hit for a woman or child to know at an 'embodied level' the possibility of being physically forced. Claire's (Group 3) ideas illustrated that you could know more overtly the possibility of violence from witnessing your father's violence towards your mother but this fear could be mediated through your own physical size. Claire may rely on both symbolic and physical material knowledge to resist young men who want to go further sexually than she desires. In this way physical size and 'might is right' works for Claire and she has access to pleasure, to act on her own libidinal subjective desires. What is the function of the intersecting discourses and embodied knowing around the possibility of violence present in most young women's lives?

8.2.1 The function and possibilities for challenging 'might is right'

Bureta (2008) examined how heightism supports patriarchal power. She examined how men frequently take up more space and move their bodies in a way that enforces their entitlement to the available space. This was illustrated in Group 3's discussion of Abby's clingy boyfriend and the way he physically positioned his body to occupy the space that would have otherwise been available for her female friends. In this way he dominated a friendship meeting by using his body to enforce his male right to his girlfriend's attention. Bureta (2008) discusses how her attempt to take up more space in a public space was met with male aggression. For example she was shoved and pushed out of the way. In contrast she observed that when women automatically gave way there was no adverse response. This enables an interesting analysis on my experiences in the supermarket where I did not give way to a male. I took up space he felt entitled to; I was not orientated to or aware of a man who is stronger and more entitled to take up space and therefore has a rite (right) of

passage amongst women within a traditionally female public space. I understand this is a commonsense gender normative practice that is not articulated but known more through how our bodies are positioned and move through the world (Bureta, 2008). This male position of physical power is an essential symbolic and material (sovereign) resource that maintains male discipline over females and enforces our orientation toward their needs before our own and those of other women. Assertion classes are teaching our young women how to use their bodies and voices in times of heterosexual risk but rather than eliminate physical risk to women from men, the risk shifts and takes on different forms in each historical 'epoch'.

The participants identify that men are still entitled to sexually assault young women through access to the addiction/helplessness discourse. This discourse enables young men to have access to unresisting female bodies. Many men do have more muscle than females and those women who do not wish to take testosterone or spend many hours body building are at risk of being overpowered by a man. I would argue that women should not be expected to change their body shape in order to facilitate the 'might is right' ideology. Why should our young women forfeit doing something they are interested in and enjoy such as netball, dancing and being with female friends 'just talking', in order to build a body strong enough to protect themselves against larger men? This practice further enables female responsibility and orientation to being in relation to men in order to prevent male assaults. Abby's knowledge and judgment is reasonable in terms of having the agency to resist unwanted sexual touch but not resisting when she experiences 'real' fear of violence. The media do promote stories of out of control methamphetamine (P) use but at a corporeal site many women know they may be overpowered by some men. In this way this Auckland epoch has co-constituted a heterosexual discourse of helplessness and addiction that is facilitated and maintained through the 'real' strength differential in some situations where the man is physically stronger than the woman.

Both liberal and poststructuralist feminist theory needs to re-examine the intersection between disciplinary and sovereign power when exploring how to facilitate young women accessing subjective desires. Recent changes to the legal (sovereign) use of self-defence as justification for male violence against women may shift or challenge disciplinary practices around loss of 'reputation' and how 'sluts' or not 'proper' girlfriends deserve to be sexually assaulted.

Prevention programmes need to more deliberately utilize feminist disciplinary ideologies and sovereign power in the form of consequences for young men who utilize their larger bodies to indicate 'might is right'. Traditional feminist theory utilizes resistant discourses that young men can control their acts of violence even when intoxicated or drugged. That is, men make decisions to use drugs and therefore make decisions to hurt women (Dobash & Dobash, 1998). This feminist ideology fits with stories I collected for my research in Women's Refuge and my experience with male patients in a psychiatric institution. In both clinical practice and Women's Refuge I am told stories of drunk and drugged men stopping hitting a woman if they are about to be seen by other men who do not support the use of violence. Using violence against a female partner who has access to a protection order does run the risk of legal prosecution. In these contexts the men using the violence against women were in a relationship and were not strangers. Working in psychiatric institutions I witnessed how DSMIV diagnosed psychotic male patients stopped breaking windows when there was a significant consequence such as losing their weekly benefit that they required for their non prescription drug purchases. These experiences inform me that cultural contexts influence the form of 'madness' utilized and that 'madness' is partially co-constituted through gender normative practices. These mad men did physically intimidate female staff, including me. Therefore how can feminist poststructuralist theory, which acknowledges the physiological changes occurring through substance use, talk about the physically addicted male body and the 'risks' this form of masculinity poses for women? How can a theory that incorporates the idea that symbolic, physical and material resources co-constitute the subject discuss how our society can effectively discipline a drugged or drunk man who sexually and physically assaults a smaller female body? How do we assist young women to resist the intersecting discourses of men as stronger and drugged and drunk men as more likely to be a danger in order for them to be able to say 'no'? How can Abby skip assertions classes, concentrate on her voice training and singing, contexts in which she feels productively pleasurable and powerful, and go out and have fun without the 'might is right' ideology being a threat to her physical safety?

My Refuge and clinical experiences demonstrate that institutional consequences such as overt punishment function to stop particular dominant male behaviour. This implementation of sovereign power would intersect and enable a shift in our heterosexual discourses around female responsibility for men and male helplessness. This intersection

of sovereign and disciplinary power may undermine our normative gender practices of women prioritizing male needs before their own. Davies (2008) advocates we need to co-constitute alternative ideologies for young men to eliminate the heterosexual ethics that promote gang rape, or sexual assault of women who are illegitimately positioned within heterosexual discourses. However as I understand it, Davies' (2008) example of a young man having access to a resistant ideology was co-constituted through both a consequence, such as going to prison for gang rape, as well as having access to competing discourses. Would this young man have been as willing to shift his ideology around male violence if he was not experiencing a material consequence such as imprisonment? How can we utilize this intersection between sovereign power and disciplinary power to enforce resistant ideologies prior to young men going to prison? We do need alternative moral ideologies that promote men's care for a differentiated other but do we need prison to enforce an ideology that makes 'groping' ideologically incorrect?

Possible Implications

A line of force that could support sovereign power is if young women, rather than changing their bodies to fit into heterosexual discourses around 'might is right', worked together to ensure better protection and legal consequences for male violence. A recent American 20/20 programme screened in New Zealand in July-August (2009) challenges the male prerogative to physically dominate a vulnerable female. This comes from three young women's experiences of intervening in a gang rape of another intoxicated female at a party. These three women are talking to other females in colleges about working together to physically protect each other and to act as credible witnesses in a legal prosecution. This is a form of material consequence that needs to surround and support ideas about promoting resistant discourses that challenge the moral ideology inherent in heterosexual entitlement to female bodies which enables rape.

Group 3 demonstrated they have the ability to be vigilant about their own and their friends' safety and do have the potential to use their physical bodies in a way that would protect against a male who was attempting to disrespect a female friend's physical boundaries, such as experiencing male groping during dancing and physical overcrowding. This form of protection and group vigilance needs to be promoted in New Zealand and become a new disciplinary process amongst female friendship groups. Several female bodies working together to protect another female may negate one drugged and drunk male having 'real' physical strength to over- power one woman. Along with this

material force of combined bodies is the need to constitute ideology that intoxicated men are responsible for gate-keeping their own 'risky' behaviour prior to this behaviour being legally defined as rape or physical assault. In this way a female disciplinary practice of protection and enhanced legal consequences operate as sovereign power while intersecting with disciplinary power in the 'real' protection of female bodies in public spaces.

What restrains our society prosecuting young men who touch women in a way they interpret as unwanted both before and during previously consented to sexual contact? Or what is restraining young men gate-keeping and stopping sexual activity at a point where the young woman is no longer feeling comfortable or has had a decrease in desire? How can we begin to constitute young women as both agentic and potential victims of unwanted sexual contact where being a victim in specific moments of time does not position them as helpless or deficient (abject other) within other contexts? What stops specific organizations such as schools and dance venues placing appropriate consequences on young men who consistently behave in a dominant way towards young women regardless of their state of intoxication?

Both poststructuralist and liberatory pedagogies have the potential for instigating disciplinary and sovereign change in the area of women having the right to public and private space without unwanted male touch (Freire, 1972; Lather, 1991; Weedon, 1991; Weiler, 1991). Both theories advocate working on the ground floor and identifying what is relevant to young women in specific cultural contexts and challenge Foucault's ideas that male domination blocks female subjectivity. Female agency and subjectivity is not blocked; instead Group 5 talked about silently assessing the possibilities in these potentially risky situations through reviewing what was specifically happening for the potential victim and themselves prior to intervening. These participants have provided examples of how young women can be 'active' while potentially 'victims' in contexts of 'risk'. Jemma (Group 5) demonstrated how you can go up to a strange female and disrupt potential male physical dominance by using your body and voice without silencing another female's agency. Jemma resisted heterosexual ways of being by using her body in a way she has not been acculturated to. Jemma is a first generation Asian New Zealander whose parents immigrated in the 1970s, and whose father is still positioned as in charge of Jemma. Jemma is contesting this authoritative positioning through negotiation but is resisting other phallogocentric practices very strongly in public spaces outside of her family. What Jemma now needs is three other friends standing behind her adding to the physical

force and size of her body and in this way taking up enough space that hopefully they would protect another female from an intoxicated and drugged male in public spaces. If I was to conduct this form of assertion training amongst groups of female friends I would tend to use exaggeration and mimesis as Jemma portrayed in her story of how she checked up on a young woman she did not know in a dance party situation. Jemma utilized dissonance between a really happy friendly voice and a very active forward moving body. She talked about moving her body into the space of a female and male in order to check out the female's feelings of safety. To achieve this form of safety from strangers we need to further enhance young women's sense of care for other females (refer 8.5.1).

8.3 Sexual pleasure and intimacy inside and outside of being a girlfriend

The participants' emphasis on their enjoyment of physical intimacy and how a boyfriend's touch provided a different form of pleasure to female friends' touch was a form of difference they experienced as desirable. A friend's touch was more likely to be comforting than sensual and it is the sensuality and possibility of being more overtly sexual that I understand these participants were experiencing as a different form of pleasure. This subjective embodied enjoyment of being touched in a way that is more sensual and sexual than family or friends' touch is a 'desire' many of us 'know' at a more embodied site. Being touched by a sexual partner can have simultaneously fewer boundaries or degree of vigilance about where and when to touch as well as clearer boundaries in terms of what is not allowed, such as Group 3's ideas about when it is and is not appropriate to have vaginal penetrative sex with a boyfriend. This form of pleasure as illustrated by Lisa is not just about sensual intimate touch but also about the body's potential for female physiological sexual arousal and is distinctly different from a non-aroused form. Therefore what are the implications for feminist poststructuralist theory and the implications for practice if we promote greater access to commonsense discourses around female corporeal pleasure and sexual touch?

The participants in this research accessed resistant ways of talking about and desiring heterosexual enjoyment of intimate touch in ways that recognized the possibility of 'sex' (intercourse) in the future but did not necessitate 'sex' now or even with the present boyfriend. Lisa, through being immersed in heterosexual 'risk', learnt about her sexual preferences through what she did not like. She did not like having penetrative sex once and then being expected to have it all the time. Her initial preferences and learning

about sexual pleasure were enabled through touch, and heterosexual intimacy such as having a rapport with a male partner. She learnt that going along with a partner's desire for penetrative sex in order to give him pleasure, in the absence of her desire, led to 'sex being a chore more than a bore'. This enabled her to negotiate future sexual relationships on the understanding that she would have penetrative sex only when she desired. Within this newly negotiated relationship she also learnt that the corporeal physical size of a partner and their form of intimacy as well as pleasurable touch provide great pleasure. Therefore women should have space to discuss, within same sex contexts, what corporeal body and what male form and size fit their own corporeal body and size in a way that provides pleasure.

Therefore we should be talking to young women about these forms of difference within and between women in order to bring sensual and sexual touch back into our commonsense discourses as an alternative way to be sexual in an intimate relationship. Articulating how different subjects like different forms of touch moves the emphasis away from compulsory penetrative sex whether it is vaginal, anal, or oral. More importantly we can begin to expand on the commonsense discourses present in the participants' conversations which are orientated towards their sexual preferences and pleasure such as Lisa's and Claire's enjoyment of non penetrative sexual play outside of penetrative sex and in Claire's situation outside of a committed sexual relationship. Claire's discourses around pleasure and to a lesser extent Rachel and Riley's casual brief humorous comment about a 'pash and a dash' demonstrate that they have access to sexual desire co-constituted through the symbolic, material, and physical and outside of penetrative sex and outside of the responsibilities of being a girlfriend.

Clinical practice informs me that when young women go through pubertal physiological changes they are more likely to begin to experience corporeal desire known through their body such as a tendency to be aware of physical arousal (warmth, swelling, increased lubrication) at certain times of the reproductive cycle. For many young women the pubertal hormonal changes (corporeal) intersect with heterosexual discourses (symbolic) and the material presence of boys during adolescence. For example my clinical narratives with young and more mature women inform me this form of physical arousal of genital tissues as well as sexual imagery is reduced when they are on a hormonal contraceptive. I am also aware that often young women talk about having visual sexual images that are co-constituted through cultural symbols; that is specific body types that are

known as sexually attractive alongside genital changes around the physiological changes of puberty. However these intersecting lines of force (physiological, symbolic and material) to an active female subjective sexual desire are rarely talked about outside of therapeutic contexts. Thirty years on from Irigaray's sexual difference theory, romantic love discourses and the idea of female pleasure solely through compulsory penetrative sex are still the dominant pathway co-constituting sexual desire for some young women at symbolic sites. What is required is to take the philosophical and ethical intentions of Irigaray and explore individual women's corporeal, 'real' bodies. For this we need to continue to language young women's embodied resistant sexual pleasure, such as what touch produces what embodied feelings of arousal and what physical changes to their female bodies. To date young women in my physical health setting bring me stories of never having talked about their physiological bodies and sexual imagery prior to our meeting. This was replicated within this research context because I did not have a sufficiently established relationship with the participants, and I did not directly ask about physiological changes and, with the exception of Lisa, they did not access this form of corporeal knowledge when accessing ideas of sexual pleasure.

8.3.1 How difference and interest intersected and co-constituted resistant sexual pleasure and desire

The participants utilized Cromby's ideas of referential difference when accessing ideas around the interest of difference, pleasure, boyfriends and learning about sexual desire and pleasure within and outside of being a girlfriend. For example, Group 1 did not find their current male friends interesting enough to be boyfriends, were therefore not boyfriend people, but obtained sexual pleasure through a 'pash and a dash'. Claire, when she got bored with her boyfriend and no longer experienced pleasure through learning about his difference, continued to learn about her sexual preferences through 'hooking up'. In this way she avoided the burden and boredom of '*being tied down*' through the responsibilities of a heterosexual relationship.

Feminist poststructuralist theory, which has established a tradition of exploring the force of gendered power, needs to concentrate more on stories of resistance and the lines of force that enable young women to be a differentiated sexual desiring other outside of and within heterosexuality. To achieve this feminist poststructuralists are best working from a critical 'realist' position which enables theoretical understandings of 'real' differences within unstable knowledge paradigms that work across the intersection of discursive and

non-discursive sites and allow for physiological differences and preferences within embodied sexual desires.

Implications, reflexivity and specificity in the area of sexuality and intervention

Throughout this research process I have automatically accessed a process of reflexivity and specificity identifying the silences currently operating in some feminist poststructural research, formulating further research questions and discussing praxis. During writing my results and this discussion I have been worrying about the implications readers may take from my analysis and recommendations. One example would be educators working with young women to identify their corporeal sexual pleasure prior to a young women's physiological interest or readiness. This worry can be addressed by specificity to ensure that what may enhance one woman's resistant sexual desire does not restrain another's and leave her feeling 'creepy' (Lather, 1991). Through this worrying process I have identified four points around specificity and intervention (whether therapeutic or educational) that could both enhance and restrain young women's wellbeing, namely a) readiness, b) safety, c) theorist locations and d) clinical corporeal locations.

a) Readiness and accessing resistant female desire: Prior to doing this PhD project clinical practice illustrated the huge range of differences between young women becoming sexually ready which I assess through physiological changes and their orientation to a differentiated sexual other. For example some young women go through physiological changes and experience arousal and sexual imagery and an interest to be sexual with themselves or others before 11 while some are 28. Lisa's interview illustrates how young women may be orientated and ready to be sexual but this interest is not stable and can change across settings, relationships and individual needs. Therefore I advocate that we need to facilitate young women's access to safe material resources and resistant discourses both inside and outside of committed heterosexual relationships in order for young women to enjoy the potential for corporeal pleasure at the site of their emerging changing biological bodies. By safe I mean the opportunity to discuss corporeal aspects of aroused female bodies outside of the male gaze which could function to enable disciplinary process of heterosexuality such as 'women as objects' similar to pornography. Resistance may be enabled in the presence of female physiological readiness. Readiness is a concept that has been used in therapeutic practice for over twenty years within motivational therapy (Miller, 1996). It may be a useful tool to assess each young women's interest in and orientation towards sexual education through their own embodied responses and knowledge and this

should incorporate a critical realist feminist model of intervention that acknowledges differences within and between individuals through the intersection of corporeal, symbolic and material sites co-constituting sexual desire (Braidotti, 2003; Weiler, 1991).

b) Safety issues when assessing readiness for sexual discussions:

Safety refers to how young women talk in specific contexts of disciplinary power through reputation which intersects with future safety and the possibility and threat of male violence. Therapeutic and educational resources need to better attend to gender specificity and disciplinary safety when exploring resistant sexual stories with young women. Therefore discussions that facilitate each student's individual knowledge about readiness may be better outside of a standardized developmental framework that silences within and in-between differences but within a post-modern theoretical paradigm that promotes specificity. This fits with a theoretical 'critical realist' framework where readiness is a function of the material context, a particular partner, physiological readiness and arousal and 'feelings'.

c) Facilitation and disciplinary safety: This research illustrates the need for therapists and women's health workers and educationists with the ability to recognize and intervene when unsafe disciplinary processes are operating. I would have been extremely uncomfortable if I had not been able to explore and actively intervene in Lisa's illegitimate positioning within Group 3's discussion. However, what we as women's health advocates also need to acknowledge is the strength of young women's active 'I', as demonstrated by how easily Lisa accessed a legitimate resistant position within our individual interview. This is a form of tight-rope walking that education and health workers may want to expand in training programmes. Exploring the 'risk' of heterosexuality with young women needs to happen in the presence of an active sexually desiring subject and in the absence of an 'object other' present in most commonsense heterosexual discourses.

d) Specificity, corporeal and structural location and silence: As repeatedly stated, as feminist resistant workers in the area of sexuality and sexual differences we need to be promoting an emphasis on differential embodied individual female preferences. In the past both academic and clinical feminist poststructuralist theory had the potential to silence the embodied pleasure some women experience through penetrative sex (Allen 2002; 2003). Health workers who view penetrative sex as uniformly oppressive in all contexts for all women silence the variability of women's pleasurable corporeal experiences. As one young woman with uro-genital differences recently challenged me: it is all very well for

women with longer vaginas to theorize and write about desiring resistant ways of being sexual but it is different for someone who has not had the experience of a vagina. If a young woman does not have a vagina she does not have the differential experience of knowing if she prefers loving touch to penetrative touch. Who are we as health workers and academics with different corporeal bodies to inform her what her corporeal preferences may be? For some women vaginas are not so much a symbolic signifier of being a 'proper' woman but a means to corporeal pleasure that is different from other forms of being sexual. In this way academic theorists who write of the oppressiveness of compulsory heterosexuality need to be aware that frequently they are writing from a material stable subject position of being situated within a location of normality and greater choice. As theorists we may resist the idea that this piece of genital structure defines us as a 'proper' woman, but it does not enable us to change this referential difference with women who have a relative genital difference and absence. Therefore, we write at the centre and are able to travel to the peripheries on behalf of those on the periphery who cannot, as easily, move into the centre (Braidotti, 2003). As Parker (1999a; 1999b) points out, what is co-constituted within academia does partially co-constitute sexual ideology in practice and the community, and to date there is not an accessible theory for young women struggling with being structurally 'different' from other young women while, similar to many of their friends, they subjectively desire to be within a heterosexual relationship in both resistant and commonsense ways.

Mature transgendered women have written within the spaces created through their own embodied subjective desires and outside positivist theoretical paradigms (Roen, 2006). However, prior to reading the Boston Women's Health educational site I have struggled to find theory that is readily accessible for our 16-18 year olds presenting in our health contexts. Therefore the challenge is for feminist poststructuralists to examine the location in which they 'speak' sex and challenge heterosexual normative practices. One of the outcomes of this research is that I argue we should be doing more autobiographical research that examines the intersection between medically, structurally different bodies and how these female bodies experience the application of feminist poststructuralist therapy within women's health. What is needed are ways of speaking about different 'real' female bodies that do not position them too abruptly outside of their current subjective desires and allow them the spaces to explore being a 'subject' across both commonsense and resistant spaces. For example, currently young women with relative vaginal absence can frequently

explore having a longer vagina through dilation and then if a longer vagina does not fit their preferences, they can choose to stop dilating and allow their vaginal length to decrease. In this way they can become a 'subject' at a metaphorical centre and return to the peripheries at will. Finally, what would enable health workers, such as me, to speak of the corporeal body and its potential for pleasure within academia within and outside of commonsense heterosexuality without being illegitimately positioned within theoretical paradigms of 'positivist realism'? Similarly to Shildrick (1997) and Ussher (1999), as a health worker I desire the freedom to discursively roam and speculate about the intersection between the corporeal, the material and the symbolic within both an academic forum and health forums with young women in order to explore further resistant ways of being sexual.

8.4 Female disciplinary power

I identified three noticeable forms of female disciplinary power operating within the participants' discussions and interviews. The disciplinary practices present in the participants who were recent European immigrants, and who talked about sluts and reputation, I experienced as a colonial process (Davies, 2008; Moore & Rosenthal, 1998; Sobo, 1998; Stewart, 1999; Warr, 2001). These ideas of what is a 'proper' woman intersect with romantic love discourses (Jackson, 1999; Sobo, 1998). This form of female disciplinary practice was not stable and was resisted by both Claire and Lisa. Lisa's resistance was enabled by access to her corporeal body and the presence and absence of physiological arousal and pleasure. Claire's resistance to these ideas of reputation and sexuality was enabled through her exposure to the consequences of romantic love in the form of hard labour and male partner violence.

Feminist poststructuralists need to incorporate and explore the resistant voices of young women who have been exposed to and have witnessed their father's violence. Past theorizing that positions these young women as 'victims' in the silencing of their ability to resist and learn is robbing other young women of more overt knowledge of the frequency of violence within their own contexts. Claire chose not to talk to her friends about her father's violence but intentionally and silently went about avoiding being tied down and accessed sexual pleasure through 'hooking-up'. Therefore feminist researchers may benefit by interviewing young women who have witnessed male violence and who are currently safe and volunteer to talk about what these experiences have taught them outside

of being positioned as victims. This form of research should be conducted within a feminist framework outlined by Davies (1997) of an active other who has also experienced being a transitory victim and as such has specific co-constituted resistant knowledge and desires that may benefit other young women. Positioning these young women with legitimacy within friendship discussions may restrain commonsense heterosexual discourse, negative visibility and the consequences of being an 'abject other'.

Another form of female disciplinary power was illustrated within Angela's individual interview through accessing liberal feminist discourses in the absence of empathy. Angela accessed these discourses to explain why her Christian girlfriend was at risk within a permanent heterosexual relationship. One of the lines of force operating within this female friendship was a binary understanding that silenced negotiation, recognition and appreciation of differences. Angela's definition of a good woman was co-constituted through the very active 'I' within western liberal philosophy and feminist ethics of care for self in the presence of her ex-friend's illegitimate orientation to Christianity and a boyfriend. This liberal form of an ethics of care for self by being situated in a liberal ideology produces dichotomies and lethal exclusions, such as there being a right and wrong way of being a young woman, which silences an ethics of care for another different female (Kelly, 1999). Angela's Christian friend may have defined a 'proper' woman as a girlfriend who has an 'ethics' of care for her male other, which may have also silenced her care for a different female other. This form of female disciplinary practice was situated within an active 'I', but through the use of binary oppositions within liberal and Christian discourses silenced embodied knowing around feelings and loss, not fluidity, movement, pleasure and a mutual care for another woman.

These lines of force, co-constituted within binary discourses, are being increasingly challenged in our physical health curriculum with an educational aim of celebrating differences and reducing abusive behaviour towards different subjects. However this postmodern philosophical form of celebrating differences has not been sufficiently situated within female friendships and gender normative practices. There are established poststructuralist and social constructionist theories that may enable a critical exploration of disciplinary practices in the presence of competing ideologies in the context of female friendships. Therefore the theoretical frameworks that may enable better insight into how female friendship disciplinary practices produce resistance should include ideas of referentiality and 'real' difference such as recognizing the threat of losing a friend to a

competing ideology; embodied subjectivity and embodied knowing which enable feminists to talk about ‘feelings’ of compassion, empathy and loss outside of self-criticism; Foucault’s ideas of disciplinary power and Schipper’s ideas of exploring feminine specificities outside of hegemonic masculinities such as ‘bitchy’ competing females. The post modern ideology of celebrating differences needs to be explored within the context of female hierarchies outside of heterosexual normative practices and the lines of force that enable and restrain negotiating differences in a way that does not produce lethal exclusions.

As already discussed, Group 5 operated within a disciplinary process that resisted hegemonic ideas of female responsibility and illustrated an ethics of care for a female other who although a transitory ‘victim’ was also an active worthwhile other. This form of female disciplinary practice highlighted feminist poststructuralists’ need to co-constitute more readily available discourses of how to negotiate the distress experienced when a friend is in trouble with a ‘bad’ boyfriend.

Groups 1 and 6 did not position friends who were having trouble with boyfriends within commonsense heterosexual discourses of female responsibility. Group 1 had an ethics of care for other female friends that included empathy, a lack of negative visibility and a desire for the pleasure of their friends’ company free of heterosexual trouble. Group 1 had access to pleasure outside of heterosexuality within friendships and sports and had ready access to mothers who operated within resistant models of maternity that included being professionally successful and being orientated to both female friends and male partners. Group 6 had access to the nomad discourse which produced disciplinary practices that actively resisted the dark and dangerous world of heterosexuality through subjective embodied experiences of travel, living across competing cultures, accessing pleasure through being alone and having access to viewing the world from a different angle. Group 6 supports Braidotti’s theory of material embodiment and provides clear guidelines for assisting young women being able to step outside of dominant gender practices that are decreasing their wellbeing.

However, for the purpose of providing greater access to female disciplinary practices that support young women’s access to pleasure and wellbeing, feminist researchers need to focus more on how young women balance their ethics of care for each other with an ethics of care for a desiring, corporeal, pleasurable, sexually active self. We have sufficient research deconstructing heterosexual normative practices and how they put

young women's wellbeing at risk with the Auckland context. We will always need to be looking at the specificity of heterosexual normative practices within specific contexts (such as the young women I work with experiencing sexual pain) but future research should be focused more on how young women and men co-constitute an ethics of care of self, others and an intimate partner in ways that enhance wellbeing. This requires the utilization of feminist poststructuralist theoretical frameworks with participants positioned more within an active 'I' rather than as potential victims.

8.5 Subjective embodied desires for freedom and resistance; what 'feelings enable' in the co-constitution of knowledge

Throughout my work life I have been saturated with humorous stories about the trouble and burden of taking care of men and the real consequences of not complying with this dominant line of force. These stories contain both cumulative gendered knowledge that is known across generations as well as simultaneously shifting knowledge that each woman brings to the conversation. I would rarely hear one of these stories that did not incorporate feelings of anger, awareness of inequity and a desire for freedom. Within the research context the participants largely expressed their subjective desire for freedom through using their bodies. However they had very extensive articulation around the burden of constantly having to think about a boyfriend to the point they could not even go out and have fun with their friends without awareness that their absence was distressing him. These stories that challenge gendered power contain elements of reiteration (incorporating mimesis) of gendered knowledge that has been reasonably silent within feminist poststructuralist theoretical writing and speaking. The participants were more than able to language 'feelings' about what this level of heterosexual responsibility felt like: heavy, draining, and dragging, and used words to describe this form of boyfriend as 'clingy'. This form of resistant discourse and embodied knowing utilizing feelings through referentiality enabled the participants to speak with authority about what they liked, did not like, and desired within and outside of heterosexuality.

8.5.1 Implications for wellbeing

Identifying and defining the balance discourse through a critical realist lens incorporating embodied knowing and referentiality enabled young women to identify how a relationship was working or not working for them, such as what the participants felt ('as if' feelings) or sensed when a heterosexual relationship was becoming out-of-balance.

This necessitated me reading the participants' text and identifying those moments when the initial positive visibility shifted and being a girlfriend became a burden that incorporated taking on increasing responsibility for a 'cling-on'. Bob (Group 1) produced a coherent story of how she enjoyed the positive visibility and how this shifted when her boyfriend began emotionally withdrawing because he desired penetrative sex and more time with her. Jemma also identified in retrospect how a heterosexual relationship could move from positive visibility and connectedness to feeling distressed and silenced.

What this research has enabled is clarification and permission to go back to 'feeling talk' but within feminist poststructuralist and critical realist frameworks that incorporate the idea that non-discursive resources such as embodied knowing and subjectivity co-constitute what we are and what we know. I utilized discourses about embodied subjective states in terms of 'feelings' such as heaviness to talk to young women about what type of heterosexual relationship makes them feel well and unwell. The participants were able to identify what wellness was for them, not just through western discourses of reaching their potential but also through their embodied sense of themselves. For example participants recognize wellness as both having freedom to reach your potential and being in relationships that excite you through difference and the absence of boredom.

The pervasiveness of gender normative practices of a young woman being responsible for her male partner's 'normal' needs and the consequences of this have been well researched within feminist research (Adams & Towns, Allen, 2003; Gavey, 1995; Holland, Jackson, 1999; Ramazanogulu & Sharpe & Thomson, 1998). Young men will more forcefully try to take up space and separate young women from friends as illustrated by Group 3's talk about Abby's boyfriend. Participants such as Bob also spoke about feeling distressed through critical self-questioning of their rights to say 'no' and talked about feeling guilty. Young men do leave girlfriends when they say 'no' to their heterosexual desires. The introductory chapters outlined how I experienced this form of being a proper woman as very influential and how I associated this gender practice with a profound impact on women's wellbeing in terms of producing physiological symptoms of chronic stress and dis-ease.

Ussher's (2008) recent protocols of self care for women in the area of PMS within a critical realist framework are producing significant shifts within my clinical practice with women with significant PMS symptoms. These women are beginning to actively examine what they want and do not want in intimate heterosexual relationships that they associate

with an increase in PMS. Reclaiming discourses around embodied subjectivity within a critical realist framework may enable our young women to exit relationships that begin to feel too heavy. Exiting out-of-balance relationships sooner rather than later may improve their wellbeing, and provide greater space for development and economic viability outside of heterosexuality. Would accessing this form of discourse during adolescence partially co-constitute historical ways of being at both corporeal and discursive sites that can be more easily accessed as historical gendered knowledge when women in more mature relationships begin to feel burdened (Morgan & Coombes, 2001)?

8.5.2 The functions and implications of utilizing the out-of-balance discourse more systematically in health and education settings with young women.

Being able to identify the embodied subjective states for individual women when a heterosexual relationship is increasing or decreasing their sense of wellbeing negates the need to rely on standard definitions of what is and what is not a respectful relationship. Jemma's conversation highlighted how an embodied subjective response can occur with the same physiological trigger, namely a heart feeling, but have different meanings according to the context. Within a feminist poststructuralist 'critical realist' position this form of within and between individuals difference, the force of the body and our physiological response to stress and excitement, is a more reliable method for young women to identify what they want or do not want in a relationship at any one moment. Similar to working in Women's Refuge we as women can refer to our embodied states of 'knowing' instantly in situations where very forceful heterosexual discourses may make our language knowing less useful (Fisher, 1991).

What was interesting for me, and is probably a reflection of our current culture's social construction of expressing changes in bodily states, is the similarity of the feeling language and body language used to co-constitute the balance discourse. For example, Group 1's discussion around a subjective desire 'not to be girlfriend sort of people' produced ideas of restriction and freedom as well as very familiar body language demonstrating what it may be like at an embodied level to be restricted by a boyfriend. Groups 5 and 1 used language around the heart to discuss how an out-of-balance and balanced relationship was experienced or sensed at corporeal and feeling sites. Mabel 'knew' through her physiological response to the world when she was distressed or unhappy and when she was happy, such as enjoying eating chicken sandwiches. Once again this form of 'knowing' one's individual response to restriction, heaviness and joy

should be incorporated within intervention programmes aimed at reducing young women's exposure to heterosexual relationships whether they be overtly dominant, covertly dominant or boring through commonsense heterosexual practices. Since the 1980s we have had an educational practice of teaching young children to identify when they are uncomfortable around a potential sexual perpetrator within 'keeping our children safe' programmes (Plummer, 1993). Why have we have stopped utilizing these discourses of the body in relation to being girlfriends? What would happen to our traditional maternal workloads if mature women had access to legitimate positions when identifying that their workload was decreasing their wellbeing?

Waring (1999) suggests that in New Zealand Rogernomics, the Labour party's economic reforms in the 1980s, cynically utilized their gendered knowledge of the unpaid maternal workload to withdraw funding for vulnerable disabled populations such as the elderly. Waring argues that this Labour government knew women would have to increase their unpaid care of others, while Helen Clark's government actively promoted women entering the workforce. This practice of using unpaid family labour for people with significant disabilities is currently being discussed in the national papers (Sunday Herald, 10th January 2010). I have witnessed the impact of these structural societal shifts on women's wellbeing every day in practice and view this as the operation of sovereign power which intersects with heterosexual discourses and disciplinary power. I also witness the emotional distress of women who need to step away from providing care for their elderly parents because they can no longer manage paid work, immediate family work and parental care. I witness how women lose female friends because they no longer have time to support them when they are distressed or share in their achievements and significant life changes. If feminist academics and health workers were more successful at constituting a discourse of resisting the male imperatives to care at the early induction period of heterosexuality would this enable young women to resist being over-burdened by maternal care when older? I would be interested to explore how a discipline of care for self and access to embodied feelings of being too burdened impact on New Zealand's economic dependence on unpaid female labour in area of children, the sick, the vulnerable and elderly. Would these new disciplinary practices have enough force to disrupt an economic policy that is based on exploitative sovereign and gendered hegemonic disciplinary power? Grosz (1989) interprets Michele Le Doeuff's work as being interested in the history of philosophy and how it problematizes femininities and masculinities. Le Doeuff views

phallographic male philosophy as being defined positively through devaluing femininity metaphorically within the great texts. In contradiction to this devaluing of the female, Le Doeuff identifies how female metaphors and imagery are utilized by phallographic philosophy to occupy theoretical gaps that are difficult to know linguistically. In this way the Woman is both devalued and essential to the understanding of western philosophical reasoning. Therefore would the disruption of invisible female labour illustrate the gaps in western philosophical ideas about the power and independence of the individual? Would individuals have the ability to control and run their life successfully without female labour enabled through an ethics of care for others? More importantly how do we instigate these lines of resistant historical force in the context of young women outside of the material presence of men and the force of heterosexual practices? What would enable women to meet, in the absence of men, across academic, personal, educational, community and work contexts without men understanding this absence of being visible to a female ‘other of the same’ as being a lethal exclusion? Would reducing men’s entitlement to constant visibility produce consequences such as positioning women as ‘radical feminists’ and further lethal silencing? We need more research and theorizing about how to disrupt the western philosophical obsession with individual control and transform how masculinities operate which would enable men greater access to alternative views and locations. We need to know more about how the material ‘real’ absence or presence of a visible ‘normal’ male operates in terms of women’s resistance to maternal workloads and an ethics of care based on phallographic ideology. Finally we need to research and theorize how visibility intersects with young men’s and women’s pre-linguistic and linguistic induction into gender normative practices of who cares for whom and in what contexts. I argue that gender normative practices of caring for a male other are more easily disrupted outside of men’s ‘real’ presence. This argument will be further rationalized in section 8.6.

8.5.1 Silencing ‘abject other’ through feelings of empathy and care of a legitimate other

We need to more extensively utilize Cromby’s (2005) and Damasio’s (1999) ideas of ‘embodied knowing’ and ‘as if’ feelings in order to better articulate what being an ‘abject other’ enables and restrains amongst female friends. Not utilizing ‘feelings’ and embodied distress within female disciplinary research enables colonial heterosexual discourse around sluts and good women, the use of ‘abject other’, and increases the possibility of ‘real’ violence through the symbolic force of loss of reputation (Stewart, 1999; White, 2003). In this way ‘feelings’ can challenge the ‘symbolic’ force of

heterosexuality which intersects and partially enables 'real' violence against women. Therefore I worry about feminist poststructuralist research which utilizes the relativist ontological and epistemological position that both challenges and enables this colonial discourse. What cultural, material and economic location intersected to enable this form of colonial ideology which appears similar to American 'rap' culture (Towns & Scott, 2008)? What silences a 'critical realist' theoretical framework within feminist poststructuralist research and accesses embodied knowing through 'feeling' talk? The more discursive form of research silences embodied knowing and the possibilities of co-constituting resistant subjective desire in feminist research (Towns & Scott, 2008). As already stated feminist research should be a liberatory process not one that maintains and reinforces the status quo of women as 'abject other' and as largely produced within other western cultures. Group 6 demonstrated how New Zealand's racial specificity in the area of immigration and Pākehā culture produced the nomad discourse. As New Zealand feminist theorists we need to more thoroughly examine the intersection between female disciplinary cultures that co-constitute resistant not colonial ideologies that reproduce oppressive phallogentric gender practices.

Feminist poststructuralists have provided us with the theoretical understanding of how an 'abject other' maintains the status quo of women being responsible for male violence (Davies et al, 2002). We need to utilize this theoretical concept as well as the theoretical concept of embodied knowing to resist the gendered line of force of 'abject other'. Group 5 illustrated how accessing an ethic of care and feelings of connectedness and empathy for another female enabled resistance to the heterosexual discourses of women being illegitimately positioned. But this group also illustrated how difficult this was to articulate without symbolic discourses around men's potential to use violence. Group 1 demonstrated how accessing pleasure together as female friends assists women resist forceful heterosexual practices. At no stage within the discussion did they position their female friends who were in dominating relationships as 'abject other'. Instead they accessed discourses on the trouble with men in terms of how this restricted young women in the presence of their subjective desire for freedom. Disrupting the 'real' paternal consumption of young women's space, through strong exclusive female friendships, enables resistant ways of being such as 'not being the boyfriend type' and silencing of heterosexual discourses positioning women illegitimately.

Implications: Therefore in both health and education settings we need to assist young women to identify and articulate their embodied subjective experiences of ‘feelings’ of freedom, restraint and fear of harm in relation to their own and their friends’ experiences of dominating relationships. The participants’ conversations in this area of friends in dominating heterosexual relationships demonstrated how these contexts reduce both their friends’ and their own wellbeing. Wellbeing in this example is resisting invitations of responsibility for dominating men’s bad behaviour and maintaining female friends, and a decrease in wellbeing is the distress both the girlfriend and her friends experience when in the presence of ‘bad’ boyfriends. This means we need to assist women to deconstruct specific events in their lives, and identify the function of commonsense heterosexual discourses such as the nurturance discourse and then to reconstruct resistant ways of being. For example, we could trace their previously unarticulated feelings, body responses and fears in terms of themselves, their friends, physical safety and reputation. We need them to identify the contradictions between what they know at more embodied sites and what discourses are currently available. In this way we can enhance friends’ co-ethics of care for each other which resists the disciplinary and sovereign power of being an ‘object other’.

8:6 Introduction to the silencing of maternal visibility and authority

Young women’s subjective desire to be ‘good’ and positively visible is well established within feminist poststructuralist research such as Davies’ and her colleagues’ autobiographies outlining young girls’ subjectification through being good (Davies et al., 2001). This research illustrated that young women experienced the continuous, exclusive, one to one, positive visibility of being a girlfriend to a boyfriend as pleasurable and this embodied experience partially co-constituted their subjective desires to be a girlfriend. However, as discussed above, boyfriends, while initially providing positive visibility, may transform this to a critical gaze when their needs are not sufficiently prioritized. From these participants’ stories I conclude that some boyfriends desire to be visible in a way that requires extensive maternal care, while their positive gaze towards a girlfriend within a romantic love context is more transitory. Young women desire to be positively visible.

It was my desire to explore young women’s visibility outside of heterosexual discipline that to a large extent drove this project and it is this form of subjectivity that I have not yet been able to fully explore because of the time limits of this thesis. On

reflection this research could have been differently designed to explore the lines of force co-constituting young women's subjective desire to be positively visible. The two areas that I would have liked to explore further were young women's subjective experiences of being positively visible to their mothers and their experiences of being physically alone, outside the disciplinary gaze of others. Positive visibility in this research refers to being in relation to others in a way that provides pleasure through a loving, reasonably non critical gaze. Maternal visibility which is largely positive does not exclude authority as will be discussed shortly. Critical visibility refers more to how a phallogentric culture looks towards women in terms of what they are or not providing in terms of others' needs.

Foucault's later writing in the area of sexuality began to discuss the resisting self-reflective subject who develops an ethics of self and others through critically examining commonsense cultural constructions (Beres & Farvid, 2009; Foucault, 1978). Similar to this research, Beres and Favvid (2009) illustrate how Foucault's theoretical understandings of the possibilities of an ethics of care silenced gendered power and a legitimate differentiated other. What I would have liked to more fully explore is what this process of self-reflection enables outside of the material presence of others' critical phallogentric gaze, whether within friendship groups or heterosexual relationships. I would also have liked to more fully explore a maternal gaze that was both simultaneously positive and critical in terms of daughters avoiding heterosexual risk and achieving wellbeing and happiness.

A smaller number of participants and a different research design, such as individual biographies, may have produced less text but more focused analysis of what it is like to be outside both a heterosexual and friendship disciplinary gaze and how this enhances resistance. Next I will discuss the data I do have and speculate what are the possible cultural lines of force that enable women to have greater access to self-reflection and resistant ethics of care for self and for men to have a better access to an ethics of care of others. The nomad participants illustrated alternative ways of being within and outside of heterosexuality which incorporated a male ethics of care. Furthermore this research illustrated what co-constitutes this desire for positive visibility which opens the way for me to discuss the possibilities for young women to be otherwise. For example, as I was reading the participants' embodied experiences of both positive and critical visibility, I was simultaneously accessing several competing clinical, academic and community arguments that constitute many of my concluding questions. These questions emerge from my

location as a critical thinker while being a health worker and parent for over thirty years. I have very specific questions since I have experienced and witnessed several transformations within our Auckland parenting culture, one of which I will be discussing in relation to maternal authority and parenting boys. These questions and arguments are not meant to infer a lineal relationship between our cultural practices and the co-constitution of male and female subjective desire, but they draw on Morgan & Coombes' (2001) ideas of cumulative gendered knowledge in the area of women and legitimacy and how these reiterative practices may partially co-constitute silences in the area of female and male subjectivities.

The relative silences I have identified within feminist poststructuralism and which I will discuss in relation to visibility will draw on Irigaray's and Braidotti's ideas that we are brought into being with a desire to be that is more than libidinal. These silences also incorporate Davies' ideas that young women desire to be good and that part of being good functions to provide a positive visibility as well as ideas that parental reiterative gender practices partially co-constitute children's subjective desire to be in specific ways. For example, feminist research has documented what is to be a boy and a girl and how boys are enabled to be in relationship to what they need to be in order to be masculine, which is often achieving physical competence, while girls are enabled to be in relationship to others such as being good and achieving a parent's approval (Dalley-Trim, 2009; Davies, 1988; Walkerdine, 1990; Young, 1990).

During the past thirty years as a health worker, I have identified very specific cultural disciplinary normative practices operating within parenting in Auckland which include: a relative silencing of utilizing time alone as a beneficial experience for children, an absence of maternal authority within boys' lives which I silently classify as gendered neglect, a proliferation of social networking and the constancy of peer visibility and disciplinary practices, and an increase in parental and adult supervision and protection of children from the dangers of paedophilia and pornography (Jefferys, 2005; Plummer, 1993). I question how these specific parenting practices have co-constituted young men's ethics of care for their own needs and silenced their care for others, as discussed within the balance discourse and young women's subjective embodied experiences of being alone outside of others' gaze.

8.6.1 Implications for incorporating maternal presence and authority into developmental discourses

This research illustrated how easy it was to access ideas of both love and difference in the participants' relationship with their mothers and the potential this positive visibility and interdependence may have in the co-constitution of a female ethics of care of self. For Claire it was avoiding the burden of heterosexuality and over-work, for Mildred it was being "in between", for Jane accessing ideas of a desiring self as distinctly different from her mother's maternal self, and for Rachel and Riley it may have been accessing ideas of commercial resource exchange when accessing ideas about themselves as 'not boyfriend people'.

Therefore further research is required to explore how the maternal relationship partially co-constitutes female subjectivity during the transitional years of adolescence and how this potential form of positive visibility functions to enhance or restrain specific forms of resistance to heterosexual gender normative practices that decrease participants' wellbeing. Feminist research that supports maternal visibility enhancing young women's access to resistance and wellbeing, as this research suggests, would directly challenge the western liberal discourse. These liberal discourses facilitate young women having the right to choose heterosexual relationships, contraceptives and terminations in the absence of a maternal presence. More extensive feminist theorizing in this area may require discourses around individual right to choose being replaced with discourses around negotiation of differences between mothers and daughters and discussion of what they desire for themselves and each other. Clinical practice has provided an understanding that many mothers desire that their daughters lead safe and happy lives while many daughters desire pleasure without necessarily distressing their mothers. Working within this negotiation framework would allow mothers to break the silence around the knowledge they hold about heterosexual risk and pleasure. This form of maternal negotiation framework would enable women's health workers to access our clients' wellbeing as being interconnected with the maternal and conduct our initial assessments within a critical realist rather than positivist framework. If there are severe limitations on the maternal relationship a feminist poststructuralist orientation to specificities should be more than able to identify those cases where the mother-daughter relationship is not currently safe. For example I recently conducted an initial assessment with a young woman and her long term female best friend who took the role of a maternal mentor in the absence of a mother. The

material resources that we would need to negotiate include getting mothers and daughters in the same health context at the same time. Mature women within our western context, through economic necessity, are often fully occupied in both paid and unpaid work and this has the potential to restrain material access to time with daughters.

Would a maternal resistant discourse enable us to successfully challenge the normative ideology around adolescent development and enhance the maternal position as authoritative and therefore enable resistant commonsense discourses? If we continue to resist the silence around maternal interdependence are we further restraining young women's ability to take a critical stance against compulsory heterosexuality? Claire's (Group 3) embodied experiences of witnessing the risks to her mother's life and feeling connected to her mother enabled her to resist a subjective desire to be a girlfriend but did not restrain her access to sexual pleasure.

Mothers and maternal mentors have a vested interest in promoting the wellbeing of the young women they have an embodied attachment to and acknowledge the interdependence between their wellbeing and their children's wellbeing. By female mentors I mean women or men who occupy a maternal role in young women's lives such as those who live with aunts, grandmothers or fathers in the absence of a mother. Within the past 13 years I have worked with fathers, in the material absence of a mother, who have raised daughters with genital and reproductive differences, and have needed to be part of their young women's decision making about what they may want in the future. Maternal in this context refers to a mature mentor who is primarily orientated to the care of a young woman and who has developed this attachment through the day to day physical care of another that requires an intimate knowledge of their needs, preferences and responses in moments of distress and pleasure. My own experience of the maternal relationship in a clinical setting is that we recognize and acknowledge the interdependence between our wellbeing and our children's wellbeing. Western discourses that promote parents separating out from children who are persistently immersed in risky behaviours silence the embodied distress carried when a valued child is distressed and unwell. Therefore we need to shift the positioning of the maternal within positivist psychological literature as illegitimate and provide commonsense discourses that many mothers act in the best interest of their daughters. This shifts an emphasis of expertise from academic experts to more maternal embodied subjective desire that functions reasonably in specific contexts. Academic theorists should develop theory in the context of young women and wellbeing in

conjunction with, not in isolation from, the embodied knowing of their interdependence with maternal relationships.

8.6.2 Developmental psychology and young women's subjective desire to be visible

The excerpt that extended my thinking around visibility was Mabel's comment that at 10 she learnt she could be on her own and be happy. This research finding is in contrast to my clinical experiences of young women who experience loneliness as an exclusion from other more 'proper' women, which functions in turn to increase their subjective desire to maintain a valued heterosexual relationship. The developmental discourse illustrated how young women move from being in relationship with their parents to increasingly going out with their female friends and guy mates to have fun. This movement in western cultures can be quite abrupt and has intensified with the advent of social networking sites and increased constancy of peer disciplinary practices (Caruso, 2005).

One of the questions I repeatedly accessed when analysing young women's ideas around intimacy and positive visibility was: does heterosexual intimacy function to provide positive regard for young women in a gendered world where they are being increasingly negatively disciplined for being resisting desiring subjects outside of heterosexuality? What is it like for those young women such as Lisa (Group 3), to move from the focused positive regard of her parents for their only child to the distressing gendered disciplinary practices within the workplace and female friendships? Does the critical gaze of peers, educational institutions, media representations of what young women should be and do, outside of female friendships, co-constitute a line of force that has young women desiring positive visibility within the readily available space of romantic heterosexual relationships?

Maternal visibility is both simultaneously authoritative and positively visible in order to enhance a daughter's wellbeing. Heterosexual visibility, although initially positive, frequently becomes increasingly critical and functions to support harmful heterosexual normative practices. Within female friendships a 'critical disciplinary gaze', such as Group's 3 ideas about reputation, intersected with young women's embodied subjective experiences of positive regard and enabled the commonsense balance discourse and spaces for resistance. But I associate a male critical gaze within heterosexual relationships, such as Jemma and Bob's experiences, as operating to increase critical female self-questioning and distress prior to leaving a dominant boyfriend. What would

enable young women to leave dominant boyfriends earlier in the absence of such intense self-questioning? This is where Mabel's story based on a nomadic narrative provides a possible line of force for parents, educators and health workers to intervene earlier rather than later during young women's distressing subjective experiences of dominant or clingy relationships. Would providing young women with space to be physically outside of heterosexual and female friendship disciplinary visibility throughout their life-span decrease the reiterative practice of self-criticism (O'Grady, 2005)? Would this space enable a form of reflection on their embodied subjective experiences similar to mature women who are free of the maternal burden when they are in hospital and going through a period of reassessment about what they want or do not want when they are discharged home? In this way I view physical time out from others, similar to Mabel's reflective space sitting in trees, as enabling resistance.

Traditional psychological theory based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs places autonomy through a self-reflective internal gaze as the highest level of moral reasoning within the linear concepts of positivist theorizing (Maslow, 1968). However Foucault (1978) within a poststructuralist theoretical framework also silences the gender inequity in material resource distribution and silences how women's thinking and access to critical self-reflective thought is frequently disrupted through an ethic of care of others. Without returning to a linear concept of moral reasoning, would 'real' material space for reflection enable resistance and space for reflection and transformation of subjective desires as illustrated by Mabel sitting in trees? Are women's subjective experiences of dissonance between heterosexual commonsense discourses and resistant embodied corporeal preferences better processed and further established within or outside of the 'real' presence of heterosexual disciplinary gaze/visibility? I speculate that because women have a far more uncomfortable embodied fit than men, in terms of being over-burdened within phallogentric practices, they have a greater subjective desire to understand this distress and therefore require more 'real' time in which to access and reflect on how to transform their current ways of being. I understand Irigaray's and Braidotti's theory of women having a drive to be outside of the libidinal as being partially constituted through the presence of maternal burden and 'knowing', at discursive and more embodied sites, this form of discomfort and distress as well as a drive for pleasure. Commonsense suggests that attempting to process distress and resistance in the presence of others' competing needs and demands would be more difficult than when alone. Feminist theorists need to more

closely examine how specific young women experience maternal responsibility for others and where this sits in terms of 'knowing' through the more or less intersection of discursive and embodied knowing. They need to explore how the material space of being with or outside others enables or restrains resistance to forceful maternal ethical care of others.

8.6.3 Restraints to self-reflection and resistance outside of others' gaze

There are several lines of force present in our female children's and young women's lives that may be worth exploring in terms of what restrains young women having access to time outside of heterosexual disciplinary practices. Both research participants and the women I work with in clinical settings are constantly in relation to others through texting and social communication sites. A review of the available literature demonstrates that to date technology has been reported and researched largely in relation to the 'risks' it poses for young women in terms of victimization and bullying and how social networking sites are constituting specific forms of subjectivities (Dare, 2009). Communications research explores how social networking (texting) is largely relational and maintaining a sense of connectedness with others, possibly at the expense of autonomy (Datz & Aakhus, 2002a; Pettigrew, 2009). One of my concerns, from a clinical perspective, is how texting and boyfriends are invading the therapeutic and educational contexts where young women who have their phones switched on are never outside of this form of disciplinary practice. Young women in clinical practice are very aware that if they do not respond to their boyfriends within both therapeutic and educational contexts there are adverse consequences. My clinical work in an educational setting illustrates how young women are utilizing strategies, within friendship groups and outside of a teacher's gaze, for organizing classroom work in a way that does not interrupt a boyfriend's access to a girlfriend through texting. For example, in private schools one girl takes the class notes and completes laboratory work on a laptop, and emails this work to friends while they text or browse the social networking sites.

How does this form of technology intersect with young women's subjective embodied experiences of being on their own outside of the disciplinary peer practices through internet and texting social communication? The other forms of surveillance of children that may intersect young women constantly under the surveillance of others is our culture's awareness, through liberatory theory such as feminism, of the dangers of young women being on their own unsupervised, such as the risks of strangers, paedophiles and

sexual abuse within the family, educational and religious contexts (Plummer, 1993). What would be the benefits of re-introducing the practice of being by oneself as an appropriate developmental task?

Feminist poststructuralists theorize that the lines of force that co-constitute women to be in relation to others in specific roles of care-taking are far more forceful for women than men (Davies, et al., 2001). Therefore how can we promote the ideology that not to be visible to others is not necessarily ‘not to be’? Would adjusting our parental practice to utilize time alone as a benefit not a punishment enable young women greater tolerance of not being visible to others, but instead having a space to explore, day dream, and read? Time away from others and away from excessive exposure to disciplinary power enabled Group 6 a view from another angle outside of ‘themselves’. Mabel had a sense of herself as happy outside of others and access to a very active “I” that remained present when in the presence of the ‘dark and dangerous’ world of heterosexuality.

In conclusion we need to examine how the developmental ideas within our western culture and the subsequent parenting and maternal practices enable and restrain young women’s access to resistant ways of being. We need to challenge the discipline of developmental psychology and the form of parenting it enables such as raising daughters as achieving their developmental goals within the very narrow confines of being socially integrated with peers, leading to casual heterosexual relationships and then more intimate mature relationships as older adolescents (Furman, 1999; 2003). Without placing young women back into humanist western understandings of an autonomous independent individual we need to start exploring what being alone outside of phallogocentric consumption enables in terms of the co-constitution of resistant subjective desires.

8.7 Boys and an authoritative maternal gaze incorporating both positive and critical visibility

Sitting alongside my research questions in the area of young women and positive maternal visibility is my concern for how boys have been parented within a positivist maternal gaze in the absence of maternal legitimacy. This research did not have the scope to talk to young men but throughout my writing about young women I have been increasingly working with young men in clinical practice.

A repeated question throughout this research process and within my clinical practice is how can a young man know female desire and act ethically if he does not know

the difference between an aroused and unaroused female body? How can we promote a shift in men's access to corporeal pleasure through intercourse if they do not have the skills to access pleasure outside of heterosexual practices? How likely is it that men will desire to leave the dead centre of heterosexuality for alternative ethical and discursive positions if they 'know' they would not have an alternative access to pleasure? Theories that talk about sexual assault as a process of power and domination are also silencing the embodied experience of orgasm and ejaculation. We do not need a theory of biological imperatives to understand that 'coming' is about corporeal pleasure. My clinical access to couples with sexual pain highlight men's and women's experiences of sensing their partner's corporeal discomfort and stopping sexual movement and experiencing a mutual decrease in their own arousal as a consequence. In contrast, other young men appear completely confounded and confused when I ask about what happens to their female partner's corporeal bodies when they are aroused, in pain or arousal is decreasing.

I wonder whether the forcefulness and vigorousness of current penetrative sexual practices are restraining some men being able to experience surface to surface touch and experience difference at this very corporeal cellular level of contact with a different legitimate other. Young men I work with who are exploring which part of their female partner's body surface, whether outer body skin or more internal genital tissue, is the most sensitive to pleasure have to slow down, think and orientate to a different pleasurable subject during this surface to surface contact. Young women who desire penetrative sex but can no longer tolerate vigorous movement need to create alternative sexual stories and practices with their male partners. In these situations the male needs to move the penis at the pace that the aroused vagina relaxes and opens and stretches comfortably and enjoyably to contact and enmeshment. Therefore, not only do we need to introduce alternative ways to achieve pleasure between heterosexual couples, we need to be teaching men about how to be observant, connected lovers. Once again I can best imagine this being taught in small groups with a male parent or mentor present to check a young man's readiness to know about sexual functioning. Women need not be the gate-keepers of sexuality if men are orientated to their sexual responses and readiness to continue (corporeal) sexual contact, have access to alternative forms of sexual and non-sexual pleasure (corporeal and material) and are exposed to gendered contexts that contain reiterative practices of care for a legitimately different female other.

Many young women I work with currently do not feel entitled to say 'no' if their arousal decreases and they do not wish to continue with sexual contact. This form of sexual knowledge is based on a sexual ethics of care for men embedded in our everyday sexual discourses (Beres & Farvid, 2009; Fisher, 2005). Women may have the choice to stop some of the time, just not all the time (Fisher, 2005). It is my understanding that many New Zealand young men have not been orientated to this process of their partner's enjoyment and variability and do not 'know' when and how their female partner's physical arousal decreases at this very basic corporeal level. This places the ethical responsibility on the female to gate keep sexual contact, and prevents young men experiencing changes in a different corporeal body. This lack of corporeal sensual knowledge and the reiterative practice of silencing women's discursive desires promote male domination.

During my final analysis of my research findings I had access to Beres and Farvid's (2009) research which utilizes Foucault's development of a subject's ethic of care through self-reflection in the area of sexuality. These theorists argue that young women have an ethic of care for the other, and that this ethic of care happens predominantly within the confines of commonsense heterosexual discourses. The question is what would facilitate young men developing an ethics of care for a female other and what would enable them to hear 'no' from an equal but different legitimate female other and act accordingly? Young men do know that 'no' is 'no' within heterosexual communication but may not have an ethics of care and coerce young women into having heterosex. Recent research in New Zealand is drawing on Carmody's (2005) research and is attempting to transform male ethical imperatives through small group intervention programmes utilizing pleasure and ideas of sexual preference and difference (Weekend Herald, December, 12th 2009; Section A, p.1). This form of intervention is aimed at improving young men's access to forms of intimacy that facilitate an ethics of care of self and a differentiated other. This aim is compatible with Davies' ideas around enabling young men access to discourses around a different form of heterosexual ethics and Irigaray's ideas that men need to exit the dead centre that supports phallogocentric structures. However, while agreeing with the intentions of this form of intervention we still need better sovereign power in the form of criminal legislation to enforce punishment for sexual coercion and overt assault, which positions women as legitimate desiring subjects who can say 'no' at any point in a sexual exchange. After 12 years working within the area of sexuality and gender negotiation I am still not sure whether men tell me they are unaware of female sexual arousal or whether they

'know' at an embodied level that their partner's arousal and desire to continue has decreased and they choose to continue because this is what they are entitled to and enjoy. Not attending to another illegitimate body is not only about accessing your own pleasure, it is completely irrelevant. To some men women are not legitimate subjects separate from their own selves and are therefore not visible within a moral ideological framework and do not require an ethics of care. The women are simultaneously active subjects while not being differentiated subjects to a male partner. Being unable to view a female other as distinct and different from yourself as a man is consistent with Foucault's silencing of women as active subjects and his theorizing of them not having access to resistance in dominating contexts. My experience in Women's Refuge and physical health practice informs me it is the intersection of pleasure and male entitlement in the absence of a male ethics of sexual care and the presence of inadequate legislation that enable sexual coercion. How do women experience this intersection between sovereign, corporeal and material resources and the 'battle' of saying 'no'? Part of my understanding of the young women I work with, as an outcome of this research, is that it is not that they are not more than able to say 'no' but that similar to Bob, it just takes too much energy and they would rather not experience the guilt that accompanies 'no'. For these women having penetration in the absence of arousal and the presence of pain is preferable to the material, symbolic and embodied consequences of saying no.

However, there are also reiterative practices that we need to shift prior to young men and women coming into the hormonal changes of adolescence. We cannot isolate the ethics of sexual practice from everyday ethical practice towards 'the other' gender. We need to offer male children a reiterative gender practice of being guided by a legitimate female authority from childhood through to young adulthood. Clinical experience demonstrates that some young men who have not experienced consequences for ignoring female authority prior to adolescence will often talk as victims when they encounter a young woman's 'no'. This form of gender practise is consistent with 'out of balance' heterosexual relationships where the boyfriend's gaze is focused on what he needs and is entitled to and his girlfriends is how to balance a boyfriend's needs with other competing responsibilities. Furthermore, a position of male victimhood within a heterosexual relationship enables male sexual coercion. I experience working with young men within the area of sexual pain as a battle if they do not have a historical location of subjective embodied experiences of being guided by a legitimate female other. In contrast, young

men I work with who have an ethics of care and loving attachment with a female partner outside of heterosex appear to be able to move towards an ethics of care within flexible ways of being sensual and sexual.

Therefore future research needs to explore an ethics of care not just within a Foucauldian discursive framework but also within a critical realist framework of corporeal referentiality (Cromby, 2005). We need to start exploring young men's embodied knowing of a different legitimate other's corporeal body. However, it is difficult to imagine that an absence of an ethics of care within the area of sexuality does not intersect with an absence of an ethics of care outside of overt sexual functioning. Men who do not have access to loving intimacy outside of sexuality and penetrative sex invariably have female partners who experience sexual pain or loss of desire. Therefore we need to examine the reiterative practices that co-constitute a male ethics of care prior to young men and women coming into the hormonal changes of adolescence.

Participation within educational philosophy as a student, health tutor, nurse, health worker and parent over the last 30 years informs me that the theories utilized to co-constitute the correct parenting practices emerged from the western liberal philosophical tradition of psychology, and civil and human rights ideology, such as Rousseau's *Emile*, Skinner's behaviouralism (1966), Bandura's developmental theory (1969), Abramson & Seligman's (1978) cognitive-behavioural theory and liberatory pedagogies such as Freire's (1972) educational philosophy. This form of psychological and developmental theory has specific gendered transformations. For example as a mother during the 1980s I was censured by an educationalist for saying a strong 'no' to my son for undesirable behaviour and during the 1990s praised by childcare educators for my 2 year old daughter's ability to negotiate with others during play. This historical era has produced parenting strategies that include diversion and time-out for unwanted behaviour, and positive reinforcement for good behaviour. Educational research has explored the gender differences during the 1970s and 1980s between how parents related to male and female children and have produced debates between competing dichotomies, such as nature versus nurture (Bohan, 1997; Feldman, Gowen, & Fisher, 1998; Owens, 1995; Tulloch, 1994). Within this era I have observed, within my own Auckland context, an increase in gender neglect and the absence of maternal authority with disruptive and aggressive male children. This gendered neglect has been enforced through both disciplinary and sovereign power. Mothers who do resist and utilize a 'no' and a significant consequence for a male child for

undesirable behaviour were often undermined by their male partner or female friends. How does this historical parental context intersect with men's moral right to pleasure before caring for female others? A repeated thought I have had throughout these years is how are these young boys and men going to respond to a young woman saying no to penetrative sex? What would enable them to hear this 'no' if they do not have a gender specific iteration of complying with a female 'no' and did not have a historical location of experiencing women as legitimate subjects with different desires and preferences? Has the silencing of the maternal legitimacy throughout the past three decades of liberal western parenting, within my own location, been one of the lines of force enabling my embodied sense that covert male domination is getting stronger than what I experienced twenty years ago? Am I now experiencing the exaggerated consequences of the co-constitution of young males who have not experienced a differentiated authoritative female voice?

More importantly, how will our current transformation of parenting practices with raising boys co-constitute the form of masculine subjectivities utilized by young men as boyfriends in ten years' time? Guidelines produced by Biddulph (1999), Latta (2009), and Mary and John Grant (www.parentsinc.co.nz) are repositioning mothers with varying degrees of legitimacy and authority within parental disciplinary practices. Biddulph (1999) advises mothers to form a close emotional bond with their sons and then to step back during middle childhood in order for the father to take a more primary role. He advocates that fathers support a mother's legitimate authority within their relationships with their sons. In this way he is using the established male dominance through size (sovereign power), such as using their male bodies to stand over their sons when they challenge their son's disregard of their mother's disciplinary authority. Latta (2009) reassures mothers that their sons will grow into caring good men, in the absence of a father, but the presence of a loving authoritative mother. Latta is utilizing television media to support parenting in a way that utilizes authority, humour and pleasure within parent-child relationships (Latta, 2009).

Both psychologists and more recent academic feminist poststructuralist research are co-constituting a moral ideology of male caring for others (Beres & Farvid, 2009, Carmody, 2005). What interests me is how this approach of facilitating an ethics of care is emerging from researchers and clinical psychologists who have been immersed in working with overt violence for significant periods of time. Latta spent many years with the Safe organization in Auckland working with young male sexual offenders; Carmody's

research has emerged from the criminal justice system in the area of male sexual violence and I have spent years within Women's Refuge (Fisher, 1991; Carmody, 2005; Latta, 2009). Therefore how have our years of being within liberatory, justice and psychological theories in the area of male violence created the space for this specific form of transformation in the area of intervention and prevention? Hughes (2002) describes sitting at the juncture between two competing theoretical paradigms enables the space for liberatory transformations. As already discussed when working within Women's Refuge you do need to work within dichotomies of what is right and wrong for women's wellbeing i.e. male violence is wrong. However, this context also illustrated the need for feminist poststructuralist ideas of specificity in the area of women's subjective desire for loving intimacy (Fisher, 1991). I imagine that Nigel Latta has worked with similar theoretical intersections within the Safe organization. The need to walk between two competing theoretical disciplines has been largely resolved through Cromby's ideas of referential differences and critical realism. Health workers or academics need no longer be silenced through a fear of their own and others of returning to positivist theorizing and lethal dichotomies. This enables future research to explore how current parenting transformations are co-constituting the next generation of boys as men and their ethics of care of a differentiated other within a critical realist framework. My current research demonstrates that a critical realist framework gives researchers room to move between talk, feelings and bodies when in conversation with participants and co-constitutes greater access to resistance.

Feminist theory now needs to explore how the intersection between liberal parenting and the specific forms of maternal authority within the new parenting scripts co-constitutes our next generation of young men's ethics of care for themselves and a different female other. The questions I imagine we may access in the future include: will these relatively new reiterative practices enable boys to want to please their mothers next time they are considering a destructive act towards another subject or property? How do we disrupt the male adolescent's movement from parental and maternal authority to peers in terms of maintaining care of differentiated others in the presence of competing masculine disciplinary practices? How do we achieve this without creating another form of 'object other' within a transformed male ethics of care?

8.8 Conclusion

Feminist poststructuralist research needs to explore the possibilities of enabling young women to sit outside the material presence of others, whether through social networking or within the material physical presence of others. Not to be immediately visible, is not not to be, but a time to reflect and daydream of possible resistant ways to be. The participants in this research have demonstrated how to experience pleasure across different sites, within friendships, maternal relationships, by themselves and focused on personal interests and achievements, outside of the material real presence of heterosexual discipline. These lines of force incorporated embodied subjective experiences of pleasure and the referential difference between burden and freedom, humour, mimesis, a critical lens of commonsense heterosexual gender practices and an ethics of care for each other, all of which co-constituted subjective desires that increase wellbeing. In this context wellbeing refers to a subject's individual subjective understandings and having the agency to resist gender normative practices that distress them.

Exploring the intersection between the historical and cultural practices may assist the identification of alternative sites of pleasure and visibility for young women both in terms of having relative 'real' space away from overt disciplinary gazes and within forms of visibility that enable wellbeing. However, young women will continue to struggle within heterosexual relationships if their male counterparts are restrained from becoming nomads with an ethics of care for self and a differentiated other. How we transform young men's ethic of care for immediate heterosexual pleasure through prioritizing their own needs before another's, now needs further exploration. We are currently in a unique period of time where clinicians are struggling with the consequences of women as 'object other' but are also aware of cultural transformation and what it may mean for the next generation of young men and women. Can we now accept that most women know what they like and do not like at intersecting discursive and non-discursive sites and concentrate instead on what circumstances enable them to experience wellbeing and pleasure and what circumstances will enable men to join them in a negotiated pleasurable space, some of the time? This form of research requires that although we recognize the force of a Foucauldian theory of the power and of disciplinary practices co-constituting an internal critical gaze, we need to incorporate how this theory intersects with Braidotti's ideas of location (materiality) and Cromby's ideas of 'real' physical material space for resistance. Time and time again, in practice, I have heard how having access to a material space to

think and be outside of others' critical gaze enables women to identify their desires outside of heterosexuality, which enables wellbeing. Utilizing a Foucauldian disciplinary theory in the absence of a theory of material embodiment silences young women's agency to resist and perpetuates the idea that women are more acted upon than active. As Mabel demonstrated, being by yourself in a material location of sitting in trees enabled her shift from a subjective desire to be 'cool' to her embodied experience of happiness in being by herself and her emerging identity as a nomad.

Not one of the participants I worked with in this research was in a crisis family situation in regards to safety and current economic viability. Researching the economic location and the presence of overt 'real' physical violence and how it enables or restrains young women having access to resistant ways of being is an essential site to consider within a material embodied theoretical framework. As Braidotti (2003) points out, being a nomad can incorporate both the metaphorical location of resistance as well as the real geographical location of being a refugee with no passport or means to resist dominant cultural regimes. Finally, we need to utilize a more consistent 'critical realist' feminist research approach in order to explore the possibilities within specific cultural contexts for young women to experience positive visibility outside of heterosexuality with friends, mothers and by themselves, and what this location enables in terms of resistance and wellbeing.

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Appendix A: Summary of the Conversational themes of Group 2

Hi, I have had an accident with my tape recorder and have (tragically) wiped the taping of our discussion. I found the discussion really useful and have been thinking about some of the points you all brought up. What I would like to do is summarize our discussion for you to comment on. As I mentioned in the information sheet please let me know if you want to eliminate any of the points I summarize. Please also let me know if you think what I remember is inaccurate. If you think I have not remembered something very important please comment in the space provided at the end of this summary. If you agree to participate in an individual interview I will check for feedback on this summary at the beginning of the interview. As I said at the end of our discussion I am really interested in following up on several of the ideas you discussed, particularly the ideas you were talking about right at the end of our 45 minutes when we were talking about young women and their authority to say no. Thank-you very much for your contribution to date it is really appreciated.

Group 2: Group two consisted of 4 friends who had been friends since year 9-10. Two had known of each other at primary school in another country but did not become good friends until both started at this school. They had similar cultural backgrounds and/or religious beliefs and seemed to have a very good understanding of each other's specific family and social background. This group had all had experience of being girlfriends, but not all of them were currently girlfriends when this discussion took place.

This is what I took from the first part of our discussion when I asked: "How you think this 'desire' to be a girlfriend comes about?"

The discussion highlighted how you thought this 'desire' comes from other girlfriends some of whom have boyfriends. One part of the conversation centred around how being with a group of friends who were receiving presents and chocolates from a boyfriend made you think "oh I want a boyfriend too." I took this and other conversations we had to mean that young women wanted and enjoyed having a boyfriend because it provided them with pleasure including someone who was exclusively interested in them more than others,

someone special. We talked about how if you didn't have a boyfriend in situations where most of your friends did that you may feel left out a lot of the time when they are discussing boyfriends. You discussed how this group of friends was very supportive and that if one of you didn't have a boyfriend that was okay. Your friends supported you no matter what but you also talked about (later in the discussion) that other females at your school lost their reputation as girlfriends and didn't keep other friends because of how they treated their boyfriends i.e. had boyfriends for what they could get from them (telephones?? jewelry?? I can't quite remember this bit), and then move on to the next boyfriend who could provide more. You also discussed how having a loving family, good friends and a strong beliefs system helped you if you went through a difficult time with a boyfriend i.e. a bad break-up and made it okay not to be a girlfriend some of the time. In other words being a girlfriend was desirable but if you had these supports it was also okay not to be a girlfriend. There was some idea that young women without these supports maybe more likely to place more importance on being a girlfriend. **(I can't remember whether we had time to specifically discuss what you thought was well being in terms of being or not being a girlfriend).**

I also wanted to explore how you would 'know' a friend was experiencing a hard time with a boyfriend? In this part of the conversation I asked you about what would tell you a friend was having trouble or was unhappy as a girlfriend. You talked about how you could recognize something was wrong with each other just by looking at a friend as well as by their silence. As a group you talked about how you approached someone who was in trouble through persistently asking them what was wrong, you wouldn't leave them alone until they told you. So I took this to mean that you could tell by non verbal cues that a friend wasn't happy but you found out what was specifically wrong through using language. One of the area's I'm exploring in this thesis is how verbal and non verbal resources intersect to create knowledge around being a girlfriend and that was why I focused on your experiences of sensing something is worrying a friend.

As I said at the time of our discussion, the last part of our conversation was addressing some of the central concerns of this project and in particular the way you began to talk about the young women's difficulty in having enough authority in relationships to say no to sex. What you identified here was that a lot of the old structures that gave young women the authority to say 'no' had disappeared and that they were now frequently placed in a

position where they were expected to have 'sex' even if they were not comfortable or ready. You talked about how young women as girlfriends may not say 'no', because they were scared that their boyfriends would leave them and that anyway the next boyfriend will have the same expectation, so what's the point of saying no this time. You all identified that your strong Christian faith as giving you more authority and structure to say 'no' in relationships. I took this to mean that if young women had an outside structure such as religion or cultural beliefs and friends that supported these beliefs that they then may have more authority to say 'no' as girlfriends when pressured to do something they were not comfortable with or ready for. It was also in this part of the discussion at the end that you started to talk about some of the risks for young women i.e. drinking too much and being more vulnerable to sexual assault at parties and how friends operated in these situations to protect each other.

I feel really frustrated in that you talked about a lot more and in more complexity than what I have summarized and I may not have remembered something really important but (unless you indicate otherwise) these are the points I will use as a jumping off point for individual interviews.

What I would like to discuss further in individual interviews:

- **Tell me about your own experiences of being or not being a girlfriend?**
- **How do you know what you want and do not want in relationships;**
- **How do you negotiate conflicting preferences with your boyfriend?**

Your Comments:

From your memory does this summary reflect what we talked about in our discussion?

Have I missed or forgotten something really important that should be included?

Do you want me to eliminate anything from this summary?

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Question Guidelines for Friendship Discussions & Individual interviews

Section 1: Possible research questions for the friendship discussions:

Tell me about young women wanting to be girlfriends?

How do think this desire to be girlfriend comes about?

Tell me about the good things, fun things about being a girlfriend?

Tell me about the not so good things?

How do you know something makes you uncomfortable/comfortable?

How do you know what you want in intimate relationships?

How do you know what you do not want in an intimate relationship?

How is being a girlfriend different to other friendships?

Section 2: Dilemmas. Introductory dialogue (example only)

Sometimes we can sense that something is very wrong in a relationship or our lives generally but struggle to find the words to talk about it. Sometimes we know that something is very wrong is going on in a friend's life and relationship with a boyfriend but it's difficult to find the words to describe this sense. Have you ever sensed that something's going very wrong with a friend and been able to talk to her about it? How was that possible? How did you translate a sense, a feeling into words?

Tell me about some of the dilemmas, conflicts you and your friends may have experienced as girlfriends?

How do you talk about the difficult stuff with your friends about what's happening with their boyfriend?

Section 3: Exploring alternative relationships:

Tell me about your other friendships?

Tell me what's good, not so good about these relationships?

How do your parents (mother) view your relationships with boyfriends/friends?

How has it been talking to me, an older woman?

Possible research questions for individual interviews:

Section 1: Exploring being a girlfriend, from examples identified within the discussion groups.

Tell me about your experiences of being a girlfriend?

Tell me more about what you said when we were with the group and you talked about being a girlfriend and.....?

How do you think being a girlfriend impacts on other friendships/relationships

How do you negotiate different wants/preferences

What about delimita's conflicts

What were you sensing when this situation occurred

How did that impact on your health

How did you know it wasn't getting better/what told you that?

Tell me about the fun, the enjoyable stuff in this situation?

What was that like in terms of your own sense of well being

How did you know that doing things differently in this situation was going to be okay, comfortable?

Did you know, how did you know it was worth the risk trying it this way?

How did you know that this was what you wanted in that situation?

How did you know that this was not what you wanted in that particular situation?

Appendix C: Principles Letter

To The Principal

School

Road

Suburb

Auckland

From Prudence Fisher

PhD Student

53 King Edward Street

Mt Albert

Auckland

16/05/07

Dear

Following a meeting with (counsellor) on Tuesday date and with her/his support I would like to submit the following recruitment information for your consideration. I am currently enrolled in a PhD at Massey University which will explore young women's desire to be a 'girlfriend'. The purpose of this research is to identify and explore what circumstances enable young women alternative ways of being both within and outside of intimate relationships in ways that improve rather than decrease their health outcomes. This project has emerged from my eleven years working with young women in a health setting where it seems that their desire to be a girlfriend has young women participating in common sense relationship practices that significantly damage their health. I am hoping this project will enhance my practice with young women in health settings in the Auckland area, as well as contribute to the secondary schools' health curriculum, by understanding better how power operates for them in their relationships with others.

Therefore I am requesting:

- Your permission to recruit, from your school, 9-12 young women from three friendship groups, in years 12 and 13 in order to talk to them about what it is like to be or not to be a girlfriend. This discussion should not take longer than 60 minutes and will require approximately 30 minutes organizing time which can be done via the phone prior to the discussions taking place.
- Your permission to recruit six young women for more in depth individual interviews of approximately one and a half hours duration. The young women will be selected for these individual interviews based on their contributions to the friendship discussions. The individual interviews do not necessarily need to be conducted within school grounds or time, but will depend on what is suitable and safe for both the young women and me.
- Your permission to remain in contact with your Guidance Department and for her/him to advise me on your specific school practices and the best place and time to introduce my project to the relevant students.
- Your permission to screen those young women interested in volunteering for the project for cultural, family, friendship and boyfriend safety. My last sixteen years as a health advocate and psychologist have convinced me that young women who are not physically safe should not be exposed to any form of intervention, including research, until they have been physically safe for some time. I have extensive community resources and contacts to offer those who are not safe.

I will provide the participants with copies of their discussion and interview transcripts for them to check for accuracy and offer them a summary of the research findings. I will provide you with a summary of the research findings.

Please find attached:

- The information sheet for the potential participants.
- The screening guideline and questionnaires prior to commencing the friendship group discussions and individual interviews.
- The resource sheet for all volunteers and participants.

This project has been approved by Massey University's Ethical procedures and will be directly supervised by Dr Leigh Coombes (primary supervisor) and Dr Antonia Lyons (secondary supervisor). They are both contactable through the Psychology Department,

Massey University, phone **09 414 0800**, and are willing to be approached if you have further questions about this project. Please feel free to contact me on **021 353584** or email prufisher@actrix.co.nz if you have any questions.

Thank you for considering this project.

Yours sincerely

Prue Fisher

Appendix D: Screening Questionnaire

Telephone Screening Questionnaire for Recruitment “Young women, Power and Intimate Relationships” PhD Project
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The information on this screening form will be collected from young women volunteering to participate in this research project and is confidential to the researcher, Prue Fisher, and her two supervisors at Massey University, Leigh Coombes and Antonia Lyons. Before screening Prue will check to see if the volunteer prefers a face to face discussion otherwise the information will be collected through telephone conversation. This information will be kept with other confidential data in a long filing cabinet at Massey University and will be destroyed in 2011.

Geographical

Location:.....

Age:.....
.....

Ethnic

Identification:.....

First

Language:.....
...

Country

Birth:.....

of

School

Year:.....

Place in
Family:.....

Friendship Group (1-
6):.....

Screening for Safety Guidelines

Family:

Because you are 16 or over you are legally able to participate in this discussion without your parents' permission. However it is important that young women contributing to this project are reasonably emotionally and physically safe so I would like to check with you if there is any risk to your safety from participating in these discussions. Are you comfortable informing your parents that you are going to participate in this project? Which are the decisions your parents encourage you to make by yourself and which decisions do they still expect to participate in? If your parents disagree with the project but you decide to participate are you emotionally and physically safe at home once you have completed the discussion and (if selected) the individual interviews? How does your family resolve differences? Is there someone in your wider family or circle of friends that you could talk to if taking part within this discussion caused significant discord at home?

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.....
.....
.....

Personal & Cultural Safety:

What would tell you that these discussions were comfortable enough for you to participate in? What would tell you a discussion was getting too uncomfortable? What's the first thing you notice, sense is happening when someone's talk is becoming too uncomfortable? How would you exit a discussion if it felt unsafe to you from either a personal or cultural perspective? If you did feel unsafe or significantly unsettled by this discussion who is the person you would most likely talk this over with?

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Friendship safety:

What are the first signs you pick up on that tell you to be careful when you are talking about something really personal with fellow students or friends? We all watch ourselves a little bit when talking to others, it is fairly automatic and it is part of learning how to get on with others, some of you will have got quite good at knowing who to talk to about which topic. With your group of friends, the ones you are coming to the discussion with, are you reasonably comfortable talking about being or not being a girlfriend? There is a lot of discussion within the media around bullying at school. Is this group of friends reasonably free of bullying? If you felt uncomfortable with any part of the discussion and interview is there someone in your family or wider circle of friends you usually discuss things with in a way that you find helpful?

.....
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.....
.....
.....

Boyfriends:

Some boyfriends are very comfortable with their girlfriends talking about their relationship with friends; some are not. Boyfriends may worry that this project could have you re-evaluating your relationship with him and as a consequence you may want change. It would not be okay if this worry had him pressurizing you not to join in with this discussion or threatening to leave you or hurt you if you did. If you have a boyfriend that can be very disrespectful or physically abusive and you are still working through what to do about this relationship it is probably not a good idea to participate in this discussion group. Has your boyfriend ever physically hurt you or frightened you? Have there been times when he has pushed, hit or punched you when you have done something he did not like? Would you like some of the contacts I have access to for young women who are not in safe relationships?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Most of you may enjoy this chance of reflecting on relationships but if you do experience any distress or feel unsettled during this research process please feel free to use the resource sheet provided for useful contacts and/or contact me on 012-353584 or leave a message for me on 09 630-1314. Your feedback is always welcome and is part of the research process.

Appendix E: Resource Information sheet

Resource Sheet for young women participating in discussions with Prue Fisher

This resource page has been formulated for young women participating in the “Young Women, Intimate Relationships and Power” PhD project conducted by Prue Fisher. A resource page, ‘**Useful Contacts**’ was formulated for an earlier stage of this project and can be found via the web site directory of www.expect-respect.org.nz. This web site provides you with the **Safer Families Foundation** 24 hour phone number of 09 4889-167 and can be accessed if any discussion or interview content results in you feeling distressed or worried about your relationship with a boyfriend. **The Useful Contacts** page will also provide you with the phone numbers for the four Women’s Centers in Auckland (including Central and North Shore) who have advocates and counselors for young women to talk to. Another service is the ‘**Stopping Violence Services**’ direct phone number, **0800 478 778**, where you can talk to someone about safety and relationship issues.

The **Youthline** number for more general worries is 0800 376 633 and also has expertise in talking to young women from Maori, Pacific Island, Asian and other cultures. Their web address is www.urge.co.nz Youthline is a useful resource if you are feeling bullied at school or feel unsafe from family members. If you are afraid of anyone in your family you can also contact the crisis line at **North Shore Safer Families** on 09 410-6736.

Family Planning have many years experience of working with young women who require more information on safe sex and can be contacted on www.fpanz.org.nz or ring 09 522-0120 (central Auckland).

Your school guidance counsellors are also aware that this research is being conducted and are more than willing to be contacted to talk about any worries or concerns generated through our discussions on relationships.

If you participate in these discussions with friends who identify as heterosexual but you are questioning your own sexual orientation during the process of these discussions the www.expect-respect.org.nz provides a link to sites for bi-sexual and lesbian women. All Women Centers within Auckland have information, advocacy, groups and counselling for women in same sex relationships, including information if you are in an unsafe relationship.

Prue has many years experience working with young women who have to negotiate potentially physically and emotionally unsafe relationships and is more than happy for you to contact her on her email prufisher@actrix.co.nz or her mobile 021353584 or messaging service 630-1314.

Appendix F: Information Sheet for discussion participants

“Young women, power and intimate relationships”

Informa

tion Sheet for Friendship discussions

Hello my name is Prue Fisher and you are invited to take part in a research project I am conducting in order to complete a PhD degree while I am enrolled at Massey University. My research topic is to explore how young women talk about and experience being girlfriends.

About the Study

Aims of the study

The aim of this research is to explore how young women talk about being girlfriends. The purpose of this research is to better understand the circumstances that influence young women's desire to be a girlfriend. My motivation comes from working with young women in both hospital and community settings who sometimes struggle to maintain their own well being while also trying to be a 'proper' girlfriend. I am hoping that the insights I gain from this project will improve my own effectiveness when working with young women and that I can also provide information that is useful for the implementation of the health curriculum in secondary schools.

How many participants will be involved and what is expected of them?

I am recruiting six groups of young women with each group consisting of three or four friends, a maximum of 24 participants. New Zealand research indicates that young women from single sex and co-educational schools may have different ideas about intimate relationships. Therefore I will recruit three groups of friends from a co-educational school and three groups of friends will be recruited from a single sex school. I am recruiting young women between 16-17 years because some of you will have begun to have boyfriends and will have gained some insight into your own preferences. You do not need to be in a relationship to volunteer for this project.

Twelve of you who participate may be recruited for an additional individual interview 2-3 months following the discussion group. The individual interviews will allow me to follow-up, in more depth, any experiences that provide greater insight for this project.

Both the discussion groups and individual interviews will be approximately one to one and a half hours long. The friendship group discussions will concentrate on your ideas about relationships generally and the individual interviews will be talking about your own experiences. The discussions will be held at your school and a time will be arranged that fits with school staff, you and your friends. The individual interviews will be conducted at the school or at a place of your choice that is private and accessible to me. The discussions and interviews will be conducted by me and will be audio taped or videotaped and fully transcribed for the purpose of analysis. Each friendship group will decide their own preference for either videotaping or audio taping. My interest in using videotaping rather than a tape recorder is to pick up on important emotions including body language that may otherwise be missed. Each group needs to make their own agreements on privacy and sign a confidentiality agreement before we start the discussion.

Benefits of the study

My past experience of running focus group discussions when constructing the www.expect-respect.org.nz web site demonstrated that young women are very interested in and enjoy an opportunity to discuss their experiences of being girlfriends. Within my health practice I have found that young women appreciate having the time to reflect on being girlfriends and sometimes to reflect on different ways to be in a relationship that enhances rather than decreases their well being.

Participant rights

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate you have the following rights:

- to withdraw from the discussions at any time without having to provide me or others with an explanation;
- to decline to answer any specific question;
- to ask me questions about the project at any time during your participation;

- to provide information for this research project on the understanding that your name is confidential and will not be used at any time in the writing up or summaries generated by the discussions and individual interviews;
- you will be given your discussion transcripts to be checked for accuracy;
- you can request that any information you have provided be withdrawn from the transcription, analysis and write-up until August 2007;
- you will be offered a summary of the research findings;
- you will be offered resources for debriefing if at any point in your participation you experience negative consequences or distress.

What will happen to the data collected?

Once the discussions are transcribed I will analyse these texts for reoccurring speech patterns and information on your experiences and knowledge around being a girlfriend. The transcripts, videos and tapes will be kept for approximately five years in a secure filing cabinet at Massey University. The transcripts may be reviewed for postdoctoral research, but will be destroyed with the tapes by December 2011.

Resource and screening process for this research project.

If you experience any distress while participating in this project either approach me or use one of the contacts provided by the resource sheet. I will check with each of you that you have physically and emotionally safe relationships before participating in this project and explore with you how you can comfortably withdraw from the project if it does not fit with your cultural, family or personal values and beliefs. I have extensive knowledge of community organizations and if you need more support I can provide you with the appropriate contact details.

What if participants have any questions and/or want to volunteer?

If you have any further questions, or would like to volunteer please contact:

Prue Fisher
 PhD researcher
 Phone **09 630-1314**
 Mobile phone **021-353584**
 Email: prufisher@actrix.co.nz

Primary Supervisor
Dr Leigh Coombes
Lecturer
School of Psychology
Massey University
Phone **06 350-577 ext 2058**

Secondary Supervisor
Dr Antonia Lyons
Lecturer
School of Psychology
Massey University
Phone **09 414-0800 ext 41215**

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 06/69. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8635, email humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix G: Information Sheet for individual interview participants

“Young women, power and intimate relationships”

Information Sheet for Individual

Interviews

Hello my name is Prue Fisher and you are invited to participate in the second part of the research project which I am conducting in order to complete a PhD degree while enrolled at Massey University. As you are already aware my research topic is to explore how young women talk about and experience being girlfriends.

About the Study

Aims of the second stage of this study

The aim of this second stage of this research is to explore through individual interviews, how young women talk about being girlfriends. Some of the discussion points you raised within the friendship discussions indicate alternative ways young women can be or not be girlfriends without compromising their own well being. I would like to explore these ideas and their potential for young women's well being in more depth.

How many participants will be involved and what is expected of them for this second stage of the research?

I am recruiting approximately twelve young women from the original six friendship group discussions based on the content of contributions to the friendship group discussions.

These individual interviews will be approximately one to one and a half hours long and will be talking about your own experiences of being or not being a girlfriend. . The individual interviews will be conducted at the school or at a place of your preference that is private and accessible to me. The interviews will be conducted by me and will be audio taped or videotaped and fully transcribed for the purpose of analysis. Each participant will state their own preference for either videotaping or audio taping. My interest in using videotaping rather than a tape recorder is to pick up on important emotions including body

language that may otherwise be missed. Each young woman needs to sign a confidentiality agreement before we start the interview.

Benefits of the Study

My past experience of talking to young women when constructing the www.expect-respect.org.nz web site demonstrated that many young women are very interested in and enjoy an opportunity to discuss their experiences of being girlfriends. Within my health practice I have found that young women appreciate having the time to reflect on being girlfriends and sometimes to reflect on different ways to be in a relationship that enhances rather than decreases their well being.

Participant rights

Your participation in this individual interview during the second stage of this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate you have the following rights:

- to withdraw from the interview at any time without having to provide me with an explanation;
- prior to or during the individual interview you will be asked to provide feedback on the initial analysis from the discussion groups, but providing this feedback is voluntary;
- to request that the tape recording or video recording be switched off at any stage during the interview process;
- to decline to answer any specific question;
- to ask me questions about the project at any time during your participation;
- to provide information for this research project on the understanding that your name is confidential and will not be used at any time in the writing up or summaries generated by the discussions and individual interviews;
- you will be given your discussion transcripts to be checked for accuracy;
- you can request that any information you have provided be withdrawn from the transcription, analysis and write-up until August 2007;
- you will be offered a summary of the research findings;
- you will be offered resources for debriefing if at any point in your participation you experience negative consequences or distress.

What will happen to the data collected?

Once the interviews are transcribed I will analyse these texts for reoccurring speech patterns and information on your experiences and knowledge around being a girlfriend. The transcripts, videos and tapes will be kept for approximately five years in a secure filing cabinet at Massey University. The transcripts may be reviewed for postdoctoral research, but will be destroyed with the tapes by December 2011.

Resource and screening process for this research project

If you experience any distress while participating in this project either approach me or use one of the contacts provided by the resource sheet. I will re-check with each of you that you still have physically and emotionally safe relationships before participating in the interview and explore with you how you can comfortably withdraw from the project if it does not fit with your cultural, family or personal values and beliefs. I have extensive knowledge of community organizations and if you need more support I can provide you with the appropriate contact details.

What if participants have any questions?

If you have any further questions, or would like to volunteer for this research project please contact:

Prue Fisher
PhD researcher
Phone **09 630-1314**
Mobile phone **021-353584**
Email: prufisher@actrix.co.nz

Primary Supervisor
Dr Leigh Coombes
Lecturer
School of Psychology
Massey University
Phone **06 350-577 ext 2058**

Secondary Supervisor
Dr Antonia Lyons
Lecturer
School of Psychology
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This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 06/69. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8635, email humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix H: Participants feedback

PhD Research Project: Young Women, power, intimate relationships and well being: Summary for the Participants

Thank-you all very much for your participation in this project, the quality of information you provided was great and is improving how I work with young women. I am sorry it has taken me 6 months longer than I intended to get back to you with a summary but there was more information to analyze than I had anticipated.

Participants: For this research I was able to recruit from 3 Auckland secondary schools, two co-educational and one single sex female school. I talked to 6 groups of friends and recruited 13 young participants for individual interviews. I used all six group transcripts and nine of you gave me permission to use individual interviews.

What the participants like about being girlfriends: The participants talked about liking being a girlfriend because it provided intimacy that made them feel loved and special for 'just' being themselves. One of the good things about being a girlfriend was the idea of having exclusive caring from someone that was different to a parent or girlfriend. Some to this difference was about the pleasure of intimate touch and the potential for sexual intimacy. Loving intimacy for participants was more about the day to day loving exclusive attention than 'sex'. Sex was understood as penetrative sex and was not always necessary for loving intimacy. Participants also liked the sense of security a boyfriend provides when they were out at night and in situations where they were likely to have trouble with drunk or drugged 'gropers'.

What the participants did not like about being girlfriends: One of the strongest themes within this research was the participants' dislike of '*clingy*', '*needy*' boyfriends who prevent them achieving a balanced life. In out of balance relationships exclusive one on one attention with a boyfriend became restrictive. Clingy boyfriends expected girlfriends to be available to meet their needs all the time and this decreased participants well being. The participants defined well being as having time to maintain their female friendships', pursue their academic, sporting and other interests, meeting their family and work

obligations, and having time to themselves. Many participants talked about how their main adolescent task was to develop their potential. Needy, domineering and abusive boyfriends restrained young women from meeting their potential as well as lowering their expectations of equitable loving relationships, increased their likelihood of being in long term bad relationships as adults, lowered their self confidence and in extreme situations could cause depression.

Participants used both language and their bodies to describe what it was like to be in a relationship with a '*cling-on*', i.e. throwing their shoulders and arms back and out wide indicating feeling restricted by clingy boyfriends and a need to break free. Other participants talked about carrying a heavy weight and which one participant described as needing to '*drag*' a boyfriend behind her where ever she went. A '*cling-on*' boyfriend took over their girlfriend's minds through always having to think and feel responsible for a boyfriend's well being. Most of the participants had had boyfriends who they experienced as an emotional burden i.e. one participant talked about wanting to go out and have fun and not feel responsible for her boyfriend at home who could not have fun without her.

What the participants thought was good and bad boyfriends: The participants talked about how they negotiated being a girlfriend and keeping a balance in their lives but at a certain point they recognized boyfriends who took up too much time and thinking were 'bad'. Good boyfriends did not require this level of responsibility taking and involved more reciprocal caring so having their attention or thinking of them was not such a burden. The participants also talked about 'knowing' whether a boyfriend was good or bad for them through more their gut, or a heart feeling, a sense within their body.

Boyfriends can change from good to bad:

Two participants talked about how, in retrospect, their initial feelings of being special and loved changed and they started to feel bad as a girlfriend when they said 'no' to a boyfriend and he got angry or emotionally and physically withdrew. One participant knew she should have the right to say 'no' but her boyfriend's response when she did say 'no' also made her feel guilty. So the idea I got is that boyfriends can be very loving at the beginning of a relationship and really care about what you want or do not want but that this can change further on into the relationship and they can make girlfriends feel bad for not giving them what they want.

Participants ideas on what helped them to say ‘no’ to what they did not want: The participants’ talked about female friends being a very strong influence on what’s the best way to be a girlfriend. Two groups of friends were very clear about what was and was not okay in terms of being a girlfriend and boyfriend. Man whores, ***‘sleazy’*** boys who cheated on girlfriends or who always talked to females as if they were sexual objects did not make good boyfriends. Young women who did what boys wanted i.e. providing casual penetrative sex lost their reputation. One of the consequences of losing your reputation and being known as a slut was that you had less chance of getting a ‘good’ boyfriend who treated their girlfriends with respect not disrespect. The two female groups that provided clear ideas of how to maintain your reputation also contained participants who were Christian and although young women did not completely adhere to these values they did appear to provide a structure that assisted participants to say ‘no’.

Other very strong friendship groups also guided each other to leave out of balance and overtly abusive relationships. Female friends put a lot of time into thinking about how best to help each other which I understood as having very strong feelings of caring for each other. Friends in turn learnt from other female friends’ experiences and this helped them avoid ‘sleazy’ boys or leave needy, clingy boyfriends. Female friends talked about loving each other and putting female friends before boyfriends because friends were more permanent, boyfriends at this stage are transitory. Friends encourage you to recognize and say ‘no’ to bad ***‘sleazy’ ‘disrespectful’*** boys, and they provide you with security and fun, making having a boyfriend less important. Having access to fun and friendship outside of having a boyfriend did appear to help participants say ‘no’ to boyfriends.

Taking a nomad position gives you a critical view of adolescent culture:

One group of participants found having an outside view of the world ***‘being nomads’*** helped them avoid some of the risks of adolescence such as wanting to be part of a ***‘cool’*** group of girlfriends and having a ***‘cool’*** boyfriend. Having the experience of not fitting in with the ***‘cools’*** but experiencing being happy and free outside of the ***‘cool’*** groups provided participants with this outside perspective. These participants believed they were able to resist popular pressure to be a certain type of person because they enjoyed sitting outside of these trends. This group believed that to have a boyfriend who drank and talked about ***‘hot chicks’*** and ***‘drinking’*** was ***‘dark and dangerous’***. Nomads wanted to be

girlfriends but with a boy who could also reject the *'hot chicks'* and *'drinking'* trends and who could think outside of themselves. Young men who can think outside of themselves are more interesting and recognize and enjoy a girlfriend having different wants and needs. A reoccurring observation of this research was that young women who were able to say 'no' were able 'to take the piss, used humour and exaggeration to talk about aspects of their peer culture they thought harmful.

Young women know what they want outside of being a girlfriend

Most participants could identify what they wanted outside of being girlfriend at a gut, heart and mind level. These ideas of knowing what you want appear to produce resistance when a boyfriend's needs for sex or attention crowd out young women's own wants. The participants I talked to wanted fun with their friends, sometimes going dancing and to parties, but also *'just because'* they enjoyed being in each other's company, talking, debating and making fun of each other. Most of the participants had an idea of what they wanted in the future outside of being a girlfriend. A few participants were not quite sure where they were going career wise, but did not see their immediate future as being in a long term relationship. More long term relationships were for later, when they were old, 27 or 28.

Why this form of 'knowledge' is useful for health workers: This information is very useful because it gives me alternative ways to talk to young women about being in relationships that are not overtly abusive but that still affecting their health and happiness. The participants from this study did identify that their boyfriend's expectation for their attention and time decreased their sense of well being and puts them at risk of not being able to meet their own developmental needs. Sometimes it's not always obvious that we are being controlled by quite subtle gender training and practices, and in these situations our bodies i.e. gut or heart feelings may function to alert us to look more carefully at what's happening in a relationship. A boyfriend and girlfriend relationship does not need to be overtly abusive, disrespectful in order for it to be bad for young women's well being.

Young women who had access to good, empathetic pleasurable female friendships and fun female discussions, had interests outside of boyfriends, were able to utilize humour, had good relationships with their mothers knew what they wanted and did not want within and outside of being a girlfriends in ways that improved their well being.

Thank you all very much for your contribution to this research, if you want to be kept informed of publications for this research please contact me at prufisher@actrix.co.nz.

Appendix I: Full excerpts from research discourses

Security Discourse

Excerpt 1

Maggi: It's more like the vulnerability and like the old guys that were out there um like all us girls we went to a underage dance party at XX University they had on and just some the girls were just so young, and like they were, they looked just so tacky, they were drinking and like, like, short skirt, they looked old but like girls can tell when a girl is like really young and act old, but guys, guys are more worry free, they're like "oh that girl's hot" you know and yeah, and I look back, I'm, I'm glad I didn't go out, like (girls and that sort of thing) you're not ready for it at that age, you are more in danger ().

Prue: What sort of risks did you see for those girls when dressed so sexualized at 12?

Maggi: Um, just um, they looked very vulnerable, like they didn't really know what guys can do if they wanted to, how they're so strong um or even like other girls can get picked on, other girls can pick on them but I don't know, it just so (.5) young and not inexperienced.(Lines 361-374)

Security Discourse

Excerpt 2:

Prue: I mean wanting to be girlfriends in a relationship heterosexual relationship or same sex relationship but more about intimate relationships than friendships. I am going to talk about friendships later on in the discussion.

Riley: Um I reckon it's the younger age at about Third and Fourth Form is a bit of a peer pressure in relationships (whole response very softly spoken).

Pru: Yep

Riley: () If your best mate has got a boyfriend you feel that you need to get a boyfriend but more at this age. It's..

Jane: It's more thrilling whether you want to have a boyfriend, () to work on a relationship.

Rachel: It's more about (2) personality[

Jane: [yeah

Rachel: not, more so the looks.

Riley: Yeah, when you were younger when everyone just went out with everyone like you did the rounds.

Riley: Yeah]

Jane: [yeah

Riley: and it wasn't really like, it wasn't really [Jane: [laughter]

Riley: like a relationship, it was more like just the title and going out.

Jane: yeah

Riley: It was mainly you did not really do much with that person, you just I don't know you were just going out really.

Jane/Rachel: Yeah

Riley: Whether later on it gets more intimate and closer.

Prue: So when you are younger you are saying that it's more like peer pressure or friends

Riley: [Yeah, yeah

Prue: [that you want, that you want to have the title of girlfriend,

Riley: Yeah

Prue: and then the process is different when you get older,

Jane: Riley: yeah

Rachel: Yeah and it's not necessarily that you (1) like we are all really busy or have a busy life, you know, like I do not have time for a boyfriend.

Riley: Nor me either.

Jane: I am sure I can relate to second Form going out with someone that I probably did not really like {laughter}.

Riley/Rachel: Yeah, yeah {laughter} exactly.

Prue: What exact

Jane: I don't know, I just,

Rachel: peer pressure, having the title

Jane: I did not feel like I had to but I kind of did.

Rachel: That is just what everyone did in form 1 and 2

Jane: yeah and it was (1) considered fun so.

Rachel: Yeah {laughter}

Prue: How does that operate? If we go back to the 13/14 year age how would you describe it um, sort of the pressure to have a boyfriend operate. How does it come about?

Riley: It's not so much like pressure from, you know your friends or anything but it's like pressure inside like yourself because

Rachel: you feel the need to have a boyfriend

Riley: because every one else does, and it's like.

Jane: It's not really like real bad pressure,

Riley: Yeah not like, (1) get a, you know, get

Jane: got to get the boyfriend
{laughter}

Riley: it's subtle, quite subtle.

Prue: Yeah and how would you, where, where, where, but how, does the, the, the subtlety come about?

Riley: Like someone saying (2) "Oh, have you got a boyfriend?" Oh (2) yeah and they say no and then you say like.... "I do" (high light voice) {soft laughter}, and so you kind of feel [it's stink

Jane: [it's normal

Riley: Yeah

Jane: it's normal to have a boyfriend and anything else isn't, yeah um.

Rachel: just subtle stuff like that (spoken really softly) {laugh, soft}.

Prue: For young women who don't have boyfriends how is it for them in a group that want them.

Riley/Rachel: Ohh'll!

Jane: I suppose it never really comes out,

R/R: yeah

Jane: kind of just like passed over, I'd say.

Prue: What do you mean "passed over"?

Jane: It's not really [ever

Rachel [discussed.

Jane: If, if someone was in a group who all had boyfriends and they didn't they would not say that they're would make it obvious that they wanted a boyfriend if you didn't have one.

Riley: I think with our age group, like some of us, some of us, like "oh we want a boyfriend, like you know" (light high voice).

Jane: yeah, yeah

Riley: Like we want to be (1) like, like Valentine's Day when everyone getting flowers and stuff, "oh I want a boyfriend who does that for me," (soft high voice) but.

Jane: (yeah, more open between our age now)

Rachel: but it at our age it's way more open like compared to like, you know, 13 or 14 you kinda keep it to yourself.

Prue: So do you discuss amongst yourselves?

Jane/Rachel: Yep, yep, yep

Riley: Yep, quite a frequent conversation.

{All laugh}

Prue: And how would a typical conversation go?

Riley: Umm (2) We'd be talking about someone else that has a boyfriend.

RRJ Yeah, Yeah

Riley: that's so and so has this and oh yeah she has a really got a nice boyfriend and "oh man I want a boyfriend", (light high voice).

{laughter}

(Lines:28-192)

Security Discourse:

Excerpt 3

Prue: and so you would put on this front that you were happy in fact you, you would feel quite [sa

Bob: [Sad about it, yeah at a distance () it's not that I blame them or anything it was for my good they were doing this

Prue: ...(text cut)... I'm trying to access stuff that we know that we don't necessarily talk about and how do we start wording that so we're clearer about what we want out of life. So you are talking about that day to day material closeness of someone who really loves you is that right.

Bob: Yeah

Prue: If you could describe a bodily state and last hard one I will ask you because () nearly finished

Bob: Yeah the bell just rang

Prue: Oh do I need let you go,

Bob: yeah {laughter}

Prue:...(tex cutt)... I wanted to just ask how it felt in your actual self to be surrounded by that day to day support

Bob: By my boyfriend?

Prue: Yeah

Bob: Um it was kinda a safety net for most girls because when like you have working parents both working parents you don't like have a lot, you spend a lot of time by yourself and having a boyfriend is like () even though you are by yourself ()you're talking you don't feel you're alone. It's the same even when you are like with your family it's just you'll call your boyfriend kinda thing it's just. It's like for girls like me boyfriends are

safety nets to not being lonely. You're not lonely if you have a boyfriend you can talk to and text

Prue: and giving you that day to day

Bob: Yeah

Prue: special time

Bob: yeah with someone

(Lines: 1036-

1147)

Developmental Discourse

Excerpt 4

Celeste: I get a bit worried in a sense, that like because it's the teenage years and you're supposed to be finding yourself. I think because of this relationship she's definitely going to develop some (.5) like problems when she gets older.

Competing voices

Celeste: I also think we she develops relationships at a later age, like when she's in her twenties or whatever

Prue: Um

Celeste: um I think she will also have a lot of baggage I guess

Prue: um

Celeste: from this that will carry into all her, her other relationships

Sarah: She's given up quite a lot for him

Celeste: Yeah quite a lot

Prue: Two things you have brought up, what sort of baggage will she take on with her?

Celeste: I think like her view of how relationship should be between a male and female

Prue: Um

Celeste: um if she didn't have this relationship I think she'd have a lot, well I think her view would be a lot healthier as to what kind of balance and stuff should be in a relationship. Because I think now she's had this relationship she's kind of happy to [settle for

Charlotte: She accepts it

Celeste: Yeah she accepts.

Angela: You'd think she would have learnt from these mistakes

?: Yeah

Angela: and like

Sarah: I think that instead of learning she accepts that's how relationships should be and [she

Megan: [still going Sarah?: doesn't realize that could have a better relationship with him

Celeste?: No I think she does realize that um relationships aren't supposed to be this way but she trying to change him into being the

?: Yeah

Celeste: the guy, like the typical guy in the relationship but it's not quite working, she's got this false hope that it will and so she just wouldn't give up on him.

Prue: So she's hoping she can get him to change. She's taking responsibility for him to become a better person. What are the sort of things she wants to make him a good boyfriend?

Megan: Stop flirting and stuff with other chicks

Several voices: Yeah

Celeste: To be devoted.

Prue: To be faithful?

Angela: She's got this movie idea of the ideal guy.

Celeste: She always used to tell me like there were guys that she liked that were like this status

Several voices: yeah {laughter}

Celeste: She could never have them because

Competing voices (self esteem)

Celeste: so she just settled with this status

Competing voices (she doesn't realize that she can)

Megan: she's really pretty and she's really nice.

Sarah: She's got a great personality when she's not like around him

Charlotte: I also, I don't know if it was, but I think that um she's was, she is really smart but I think she wasn't pushing herself to her full potential um I don't know if it was because of that or other issues but I always thought she could be doing like pushing herself more, maybe like we would. She did and she'd get really() grades but like, but I thought that she, I don't know.

Prue: So she's got the potential to be a really good academic?

Several voices: umm, umm

(Lines:753-848)

Balance Discourse

Excerpt 5 Group 3

Prue: One thing I'm really interested in is when young women are in a relationship and there's conflict and like they're making and they are asked to make decisions that are hard can affect their well-being.

?: Yeah

Prue: How did you see this relationship, um affecting

Mildred: I know. I didn't do too much about it like I thought it up to her

Betty: (talking simultaneously can't pick up what you were saying, can you remember?)

Mildred: and I just probably just like a stage () going through so I just "she'll get over it" you know

Abby: I noticed the girls like they didn't like ditch me or anything like that but whenever J was with me, that's like

Mildred: [they'd kinda back off a bit

Abby: [they'd back off a little bit because just J was just J (was)

Abby: Every time J was just so in your face

{laughter}

(Competing voice, cannot distinguish what was said)

Abby: and they just sort of left, I noticed that I like having time with like the girls at lunch time and stuff, always=

Lisa: = I knew it wouldn't last ay (big sigh)

{laughter}

Prue: So you had faith that this was a stage that she would move through and you didn't need to intervene in any way?

Mildred: I, I always knew she would come out

Betty: it's up to Abby um what she wanted out of it and like she =

Abby: = Like the girls told me he was clingy

Several voices: yeah, yeah

Abby: yeah he was clingy and I knew that like the fact that they noticed it as well was just an eye opener for me like, he actually was.

Maggi: but if Abby was really happy with him then I'd be, uhh, you know

Betty: (Oh I wouldn't say dump him because he's so clingy, I wouldn't say anything like that)

(Background conversation I'm not picking up on)

Maggi ?: Okay that's fair enough if you want it that way (Lines: 321-377)

The Balance Discourse:

Excerpt 6

Bob: Sometimes, like if he was going to a soccer game or something like that, he would be "well I want you to come" "well I can't come because"

Prue: Umm, Umm

Bob: I also said I am () of my church and I work part time as well so () I just couldn't get aways? to be with him

Prue: Umm, Umm

Bob: and he's like he sulks and get's angry about that

Prue: and when he got angry, how did you know he was angry?

Bob: well {laugh} mostly like um (wouldn't talk to each other) he would give one word answers or he would be like if it's you know wouldn't talk much about things.

Prue: Umm, umm

Bob: You just, just kind, of I just sense it that he was angry when I texted he wouldn't reply say he was busy and stuff like that

Prue: Basically he would withdraw?

Bob: Yep

Prue: Yep=

Bob: =(usual thing)

Prue: =and that, what was that like for you when he withdrew?

Bob: I kinda felt guilty he did that a lot () when they had family dinners or something and I said I couldn't come yeah he just made me feel really guilty about it. I always felt I was being selfish and not giving him my time.

Prue: So he made you feel, when you said 'no' to something he made you feel that were guilty and you were [wha=

Bob: =[Yeah

Prue: Guilty meaning what?

Bob: Like not giving him enough time and that I had like other things in front of him, like before hand like I put other things before him.

Prue: So the sense that were getting from him that it wasn't right to make him secondary to other things?

Bob: Yeah

Prue: Yeah. Okay and what would you do with that guilt where would it fit?

Bob: Ah after a while he couldn't stay angry for that long this was something about [him

Prue: [Umm, umm

Bob: I told him to just forget about it and move on until our next little hissy fit that we had,

Prue: Umm

Bob: but so just like try to be nice to him, say sorry and you know

Prue: So you would take the position that you were in the wrong for saying 'no'

Bob: Yeah

Prue: you wouldn't give in and do what he wanted=

Bob: = {laugh}

Prue: but you kept responsibility {laugh} and [apologized=

Bob: = {laugh} yeah apologized for it and I mean and just get on with it. I mean he didn't hold grudges against people for some reason couldn't do it

Prue: Was there another voice saying that saying what you were doing wasn't wrong?

Bob: Saying 'no' to him?

Prue: Ummm,

Bob: Yeah it does like you know () some things before him at times and that I kinda knew that I couldn't give ALL my time, I had other people in my life and other things to do. But then again like I just he had that way of making me guilty and if I was wrong, that I was doing something wrong.

Prue: Yeap, that that feeling where does it sit that you were in the wrong?

Bob: I don't I don't really know it's just (3)

Prue: Is it something that you would recognize instantly if you felt it again?

Bob: Yeah I probably would (2) um {laugh}

Prue: Is it up, you know you're pointing to your head is it up into your head or?

Bob: Yeah it like (sometimes, well it was in your head it was just like "am I doing this right is the whole (team) situation orrrr you know saying 'no' to something (Lines: 202-340)

Balance Discourse

Excerpt 7

Rachel: Like I have got a really good guy friend, F

Prue: Um

Rachel: and he um has just broken up with his girlfriend. He has had a girlfriend for like two years.

Prue: um

Rachel: She wouldn't let, wouldn't let me see him you know, just to catch up or anything and it was just really, she was real insecure about herself and just wouldn't let him anywhere near us or any others, other girl mates.

Prue: So how did you talk to him about that?

Riley: Oh, I was just like, I just told him like. I just tried () when he texted or rung me to catch up I was like, you know you are only doing this because, you know, like, it's be, it's your, it's, how do I say this, like when I try and make an effort with him to catch up it's like a complete you know No, but when he texts me he expects everything to be sweet and you know like me to be fine with it, I haven't seen him, and yeah it's good to like catch up again but it's you know, it just

Rachel: It's, it's just that we have been hanging out with him so much more like I am real good mates with him too and we have been. I have been able to see him every day and it was great.

Riley: Yeah

Rachel: It was just like it changes his life not being with her. He has got so much more freedom, and you know like he's doing, so much happier[

Riley: [so much happier

Rachel: [talking to his Mum as well.

Riley: *I still um, I still caught up with him quite a bit during my ...while, while he was with K but every time I caught up him it was all about K,*
{laughter}

Riley: *just talking about K and his problems with K and it was like NO.*

Rachel: *Yeah, like every time you did catch up with him it was just like a big bitch basically.*

Prue: *So what you are saying is I am looking at how how it works for young women who really want to be girlfriends and you are saying that there is also a very strong desire for boys to be boyfriends.*

Riley, Rachel, Jane: *[Yeah [Yeah,*

Rachel: *[Yeah there is=*

Jane: *It's not so much noticed because boys do not really talk about it as much, and um and not really a cool thing to admit to[*

Riley: *[Yeah*

Jane: *a guy to another guy, oh man, I so want a girlfriend.*

Prue: *So how do they show it. You said they show it by when you needed him that your calls were important, that he prioritised the relationship over you. You were neglected for a year as a friend.*

Jane and one other: *Yeah, Yeah*

Prue: *How else did they show that this was a really strong desire to be a boyfriend.*

Riley, Rachel, Jane, Umm

Prue: *You say they are not talking (2) and they do not sit down like girls and say I really want a boyfriend. I really want a girlfriend. I really want (to be a boyfriend).*

Jane: *No they don't do that.*

Rachel: *I just find that in some situations I have seen you know I seen some friends where the guys are REALLY POSSESSIVE AND REALLY OBSESSIVE, like (1) more protective.*

Prue: *Um,*

Rachel: *Ay? (in questioning tone of others)*

Prue: *So what's the difference?*

Rachel: *I think they are just scared....I think they are just scared....Really*

Because around in this age group there are a lot, (eating, pause) there are a lot of people cheating on boyfriends and girlfriends SO maybe that are just scared like that.

Jane: *insecure*

Rachel: *Yeah*

Prue: *Have you ever experienced that, to have a boyfriend who was possessive?*

Riley: *My friend just has. T.*

Rachel: *Oh yeah T.*

Riley: *and she has just broken up with him.*

(Lines:519-614)

Balance Discourse

Except 8

Angela: *and just kinda going through life by myself, like when I was single it was good just you know not be labelled with someone all the time and um she's almost got obsessed with him, I find, like everyday she'll bring him up and in the randomest of moments as well and I'm just like, well "What about you" like, I don't know if I'm making much sense here but*

Prue: *So can you give me an example of when she might bring him up randomly and you think that her as a person, separate from the boyfriends disappears, or isn't present, isn't as present.*

Angela: Oh'll, okay well the first thing that comes up into my head I don't know if it's right but um she I said I was getting my learner's, license, last year and she said, "Oh T has a car and it's number plate is XX" or something I was like, and I was like, that's kinda weird like how can she just suddenly think of him all the time in every subject. Like she could say "oh I'm getting my learner's sometime soon" or "I've already got my learner's I'm going, for a restricted, or carry on that kind of conversation where it's not just focused on T all the time. It's nice when she brings him in every so often but just that day I, some days, sorry, um she says it far too much, far too much.

Prue: We are looking at her way of being is frequently associated being with a boyfriend
Angela: Umm

Prue: and your experiencing that she is, what would a word to say that herself as separate from the boyfriend isn't, isn't often there.

Angela: Yeah

Prue: Are there times when she does talk about herself and her preferences outside of the [relationship?

Angela: [Oh of course, mm

Prue: So you're talking about degrees?

Angela: Yes definitely, like amounts of stuff, of conversation she says about T versus herself or um other stuff that is not related to either of them, um (sigh) there's a big differences, like she will talk about him heaps, like and girls just get fed up, even in her group she's had problems with her group because they've got feed-up with her talking about him so much. So it's not like every single conversation she has but it's enough to just you know, know too much.

(Lines:371-411)

Balance Discourse

Excerpt 9

Prue: and that's a good feeling and different feeling special, how's it different feeling special by your family?

Angela: Because, um you're kinda special unconditionally with your family like even if you do excel and whatever, you know, or even if you don't they'll still support you and it's kinda like outside love, or whatever, so yeah it's different it's conditional.

(Lines:778-790)

And

Prue: different to parents' love, it's conditional.

Angela: Yeah,

Prue: What's it conditional on?

Angela: Um that, well in my relationship it's conditional that um, we still strive to be our own people, like excelling in our hobbies as we do and you know, keeping up with school work and that kinda stuff um, it's conditional because we are happy together, there's kind of (1) um when we I see him, this sounds really like dramatic or whatever, it's like you get that rush of like feeling it's like "oh yah" you know, hello, it's like with friends too. Like whenever you see a friend you just feel really cosy and yeah, um wow, I'm saying a lot of um's.

Prue: No that's fine {laughs}

Angela: at least it's not like, like, like {laughs}

Prue: So umm, what do you like about him?

Angela: That he's really sporty and um not just that, because he is kind and his traits, whatever, really understanding, I could talk to him about anything really, I mean obviously there are some things I don't want to talk about, I'll talk about with my friends, he's really easy going and I know that, well he's told me he loves me for who I am kinda thing and it's like "oh that's cool" there's no pretence

Prue: Um

Angela: um, yeah, it's cool, and when he feels strongly about something like he'll debate it, and I'll debate it {laughs} you know it's like that easy going we're still our own person kinda thing, but we're together.

Prue: what are the things that are different? What are your differences?

Angela: Um I'm into the performing arts and he's definitely not. He's not as dramatic as I am {laughs} I think he's gets entertained by what I say and do sometimes

Prue: um

Angela: um, he's really into his running

(Lines: 811-850)

Balance Discourse

Excerpt 10

Angela: Um and it's almost proving them wrong you that don't just have to have a physical relationship to be considered a boyfriend and a girlfriend

Prue: Yeah so it's resisting,

Angela: Yeah

Prue: resisting the common sense understandings of being a girlfriend.

Angela: Yes, I don't think for me, it's an effort to resist, for me in my relationship, pardon me, fizzy makes me burp. Um lovely

(more talk of burping)

Angela: What was I saying um?

Prue: You're saying you, you, you are resisting and you are different from the common sense understanding of being a girlfriend but that it's not an effort it actually sounds as though it fits with you where you are.

Angela: Yeah um I'm in no hurry for anything, more than a really good friend that we just happen to be going out with. And I don't think that breaking up would affect our friendship because it's so, it would carry on pretty much the same as what we are now. Like when we talk and stuff, um yeah. I don't think girls my age are very clear about that that they can actually have a good guy mate as their boyfriend.

Prue: Or they can have different forms of being a girlfriend other than

Angela: yeah that's it.

Prue: what commonly accepted

Angela: yeah

Prue: So that that staying with what you are and what you want, as you said it's no effort to be type of girlfriend you want to be

Angela: Um

Prue: So I assume that fits with you?

Angela: Yeah, well if it's not effort then I guess I'm happy, I know I'm happy. (Lines: 983-1024)

And

Prue: It does sound that you don't have a lot of difficult dilemmas in this relationship.

Angela: Um

Prue: I'm thinking you have to juggle the time

Angela: I think because we are such easy going people and I (1) Okay I kind of believe that um I shouldn't restrict him in any ways because it's him who he wants to be. Like I said to him, if you want to get a Mohawk then go for it but I'll think differently, it doesn't matter if you want to do it, go do it, you know it's up to you, and I think that's where um we're quite good together in that we do what we want and we think and we feel.

Prue: So you don't restrict him to do what he wants and to be who he wants to be, yeah, so that's a really important theme coming through your whole talk about being a girlfriend

Angela: Um

Prue: That you don't want the relationship to position you in a way that has you doing stuff you don't want to do?

Angela: yeah, like I know a lot of girls who kind of cut down their boyfriends to this ideal match and they do restrict them in that they can't go out with their friends on a Friday night because that's her and his time even if he has a good mate's party to go to, or something like, it's almost the girl gets obsessive or vice versa and it's unhealthy because, especially in this time as I was saying before we supposed to be discovering who we want to be, I know it sounds very, you know, but um

(Lines: 1026-1052)

Pleasure and Risk Discourse

Excerpt 11

Prue: have you been, I want to sort try and remember to do both sides of being girlfriend both the comfort and the, and the discomfort but you brought up a boy may be uncomfortable so may choose to go a different path. When you're in a relationship and you feel uncomfortable, what's that about?

Angela: Do you mean how I'm feeling or [like?

Prue: [Yeah how your feeling.

Angela: [Or how I approached it kinda thing

Prue: Or how you know you're uncomfortable, first off?

Angela: Um, well I have a dark feeling that I just (can't agree) to what he's done or said, um

Prue: Tell me about that dark feeling

Angela: I just feel kinda cold like "what" kinda thing like didn't expect that coming in some ways and then um I've had that feeling once and I've approached him about it

Prue: Umm

Angela: Ah and it's kind of cool, because he, um like () to that and he talked about really as well and we sorted it out, that was fine. It was just like it's kinda good to reassure at the same time that you can feel uncomfortable and it's not like you have to be pressured to be the perfect couple and always have the same views and what not, so

Prue: That's not going to happen is it? {laughs}

Angela: No way, I don't think there's such thing as the perfect match, but

Prue: There's always going to be [competing

Angela: [Oh definitely, but if you feel scared to address that with your partner then I don't think that's very healthy, because then you're kinda restricting yourself in your relationship and then um possibly kinda hurting what (you might become)

Prue: Can you give a concrete example, of this boyfriend, or another boyfriend, that you feel comfortable talking about and we can take it out, if your not, later, what made you uncomfortable, what was the circumstances around this discomfort.

Angela: Okay, my boyfriend decided that he was going to a party purely to get drunk, just to get drunk, just so he could and I was like, right, how does this affect you kinda thing. Well it effected me because I was like, well what else could happen while he was drunk, how silly could he get, you know what are the consequences of getting drunk and um he talked me through it and in the end I was kinda okay with it because he has been drunk before and he's um a sensible drunk.

{laughter}

Angela: Whow {laughter} this is really not good to tell you because we young and under-aged.

Prue: {laugh} This is confidential.....(discussion about confidentiality) (Lines: 98-152)

Risk and Pleasure Discourse

Excerpt 12

Prue: In all relationships you have dilemma's, you talk about the drinking and how you negotiated that, and sounds like he still went out and had some drinks but he didn't go as far, you were reassured that he didn't really silly things when he was drinking.

Angela: Also his friend um, reassured me he was fine, he said he was faithful and all that kinda thing in a text, that was cool. Like his friend knew I was concerned too.

Prue: How did his friend know you were concerned about being faithful?

Angela: I don't know

Prue: {laughs}

Angela: Um I think because we all went to primary school together and he kinda knows me um from there, that's makes it's easy.

Prue: would he know you were concerned?

Angela: he would know what kind of person I was I think, that I wouldn't just, oh this sound really weird I can't word it but.

Prue: Just take your time

Angela: um, it was nice of him to do that. (I appreciate it) even though he did it in a jokingly way um I think he knew I would have liked to have known that just

Prue: How common is it

Angela: I don't know

Prue: that boys go out and get trashed and are then are, are unfaithful?

Angela: Quite common at our age.

Prue: Is it?

Angela: But then again that's the kind of guy the girls going out with, because um there aren't that many guys like Adam, who are, who are as careful, like guys just take it that they are guys and yeah the more tricks the better {laughs softly}

Prue: So they take that scoring point of view?

Angela: Um

(Lines: 854-896)

Risk and Pleasure Discourse

Excerpt 13

Prue: *No this is fine, feel comfortable with it and know it's confidential.*

Angela: *Yeah, I thought so, anyways he, he didn't get overly drunk in the end anyway because he knew I was worried he, he, because I had um influenced him by saying "I'm worried about you. What happens when you do get drunk?" I think he took that on board as if he consciously knew to be careful while he was drunk, does that make any sense. Like it kinda reinforced the fact that he needed to be careful. So*

Prue: *What were you worried about?*

Angela: *[I was worried about*

Prue: *[what are the things that are likely to happen when a young boy goes out*

Angela: *[I was worried, to be honest*

Prue: *[He's not a young boy, he's an adolescent*

Angela: *[yeah I wasn't going to that party so I was worried that he would find another girl*

Prue: *hmm, hm*

Angela: *that was my primary concern and then I thought he might endanger himself, get all silly have an accident whatever,*

Prue: *mm*

Angela: *Then I thought he might do something later, that he will regret later, with his friends, like he might um you know have a bad fall out with a friend that he really didn't mean or something. You know how you just*

Prue: *you were just worried about risk to him and risk to your relationship really because if he got drunk and was promiscuous that would impact on you?*

Angela: *Definitely*

Prue: *mm*

Angela: *because, I mean, yeah if he did cheat, um that being drunk isn't a valid enough excuse*

Prue: *mm*

Angela: *so*

Prue: *could you talk about that more*

Angela: *Um basically I believe that if anyone cheats on anyone else, like Annie, and what her boyfriend did to her, I don't think there's any solidarity in that relationship, and what's the point because um yeah, sorry,*

Prue: *what sort of impact do you see it having on females?*

Angela: *Oh it hurts them, it scars, it's like bringing up that self emotion of, "am I good enough am I," it kinda depresses them in some ways I guess half the reason why some women, it's just because women are so sensitive and will I think and even if they do put up a wall, barrier and try and get over it, deep down they know it's hurt them and it's effected them, and nothing well be as special as it used to be between the two or um, yeah, it's not as special because.)*

Prue: *So it positions them to doubt themselves and their own worth.*

Angela: *Yeah especially if they have been married, I mean you've been, you given each other these vowels that you know you gonna, cherish each other {laugh} whatever, but yeah.*

(Lines: 182-247)

Risk and Pleasure

Excerpt 14

Mildred: but I (honestly) don't believe you can blame her actions for that because when she did, when she I was into a guy and she slept with him like she been [told that () not to do it and she does it exactly again.

(competing voices, cannot distinguish)

Betty: because she wants, she wants and doesn't think about anyone else, she only thinks about what she, [what she wants=

? = [Yeah

Lisa?: [She only thinks about that moment in time=

Betty: =[she wants that, she wants sex and she doesn't care how it affects anyone else, she only wants sex and that's why she only thinks of herself

Mildred: And even though I forgave her for that night right, I asked her two days after I forgave her and said, "do you like him" and she said "I do, of course I do, I want to go out with him" and (he still likes me)

(?? she picks boys way before.....)

Mildred: and I said it to her before she did anything with a guy that really liked me, I get, I get kinda didn't do anything about it though because I wanted to see like how we go it's like still be friends and then she did stuff with him and then I, I basically got angry at him as well as her because it's not fair just getting angry at her and then I talked to them about it why I was angry at them and stuff and like the dude completely regrets it, like fully regrets it and she's just doesn't care. She doesn't care about me at all, I said to her, do you still like this dude and she said "of course I do I want to go out with him, he's so hot, I'm so lucky I did that with him, [in front to my face, I'm so lucky

(Lines: 1205-1234)

Risk and Pleasure

Excerpt 15

Mildred: and we will say to her whenever she does things with guys she thinks are (dirty) and (roule?) we say to her you're, you're a slut you're going to get a bad reputation, honestly just don't do it

(competing voices {laughter})

Lisa: like she purposively acts like a lesbian with me in front of D, because she knows she'll get like a reaction.

Mildred: Boys like, you know girl and girl type of [thing

[Lisa: but only as a joke ()

Mildred: she always like, she always likes holds our (arms and stuff) like that particularly when boys are around

Prue: That's very playful behaviour and how does she know that, I know to you it must be very obvious question, but how does she know that boys in this part of the world, like girl on girl.

Abby: Because they talk about it=

Mildred: =Yeah

In Unison: they go on line

Abby/Lisa?: They've got posters like

Lisa: They tell us they're like, they're like "Lisa turn bi",

Mildred: Yeah Abby

Lisa: "Hook up with Abby"

Claire: At her party, um one of the guys, like she slept with two guys that night and then one of the guys had like

Mildred: guy had interest in me and it was my birthday

Claire: I go, I go to one of the guys I said to one of the guys you know she has a boyfriend and he was like, he was like "whooh you have a boyfriend" and she was "no, no, no I don't", I was like "V you do" and she was like "I don't have a boyfriend" and starts yelling at me and I'm like "Wooooo okay" and I back off and then one of the other guys tells her to do something and she does it, doesn't care, like. Okay one of the guys told her to hook up with some other chick so she went up to, starting look out for, didn't even care about the other chick at all, didn't even care if she wanted to or not, she just did it because the guy wanted her to. She=

Mildred: =she's that pussy whipped

Clarie: Yeah

(competing voices)

Claire: She only did because the guy gave her the attention she [wanted

Betty: [yeah gave her the attention she wanted

Prue: So how, tell me about, not particularly about this girl because I'm getting a very clear picture of this girl, but the boys set up a set of wants, you know, this is what we want, we want girls who do A B C and D.

Mildred: Umm

Prue: How do, you know how do groups take that on? Do you think some girls groups do take that on?

In Unison: Oh yeah, oh yeah, that's what

Abby: In a way when girls do that, the boys that ask them to do it I feel lose respect for the girls. Yeah they're a good laugh something to look at for fun, but they lose respect for them as people, I feel that those boys wouldn't want to go out with one of those girls I mean a guy has personally told me this like actually a really good friend of mine and lives down the road and I'm like "oh if you saw like girl on girl do stuff would you like wanna like want to have anything to do with them" and he said yeah it good to see it, it's fun to watch () he goes I don't actually want them as a girlfriend because they do that sort of thing.

Prue: So that's like your double bind, we want you to do this but when you do it we don't respect you

Unison: Yeah, Yeah

Prue: So how do process that sort of stuff coming from?

Abby: You don't do it, you don't do it.

Lisa: What happened to me was um in primary I could get any boy because you just, because that was what you do but then I realized in 3rd and 4th form I'm not getting () and then I started to realize that guys were getting girls who put out more and did sexual stuff so what did I do, I started doing that what did I get I got (guy) attention

Mildred: [but then you got the rep (reputation)

Lisa: [then I got the rep too

Abby: and the boys, the boys gave her crap for it as well. It's not like the boys "oh Lisa is so cool, Lisa is, [the boys thought she was a slut and they were the one's who made her do it

(Lines: 1272-1369)

Risk and Pleasure

Excerpt 16

Prue: How's that to have such clear rules I suppose?

Mildred: [um well

Prue: [From your mother?

Mildred: From Mum, she doesn't, she knows sex, no sex before marriage and stuff like that and she knows I wouldn't go along with that because you know, I don't know, (I don't, what am I saying) um (1) I don't like rebelling against my Mum probably because I'm so close to her and stuff, but whenever I, I have rebelled against my Mum cause we all do that, but I hate rebelling against her.

Prue: What's hard about it?

Mildred: I don't know probably because she is Christian and she wouldn't expect those things of me

Prue: Um

Mildred: So if I did have sex before I was married she would be, I don't know, disappointed in me but I'm not ah like a complete Christian like she is, she would believe no sex before marriage and stuff like that, I'm not one of those people I'm kinda in between.

Prue: Um

Mildred: Like I don't know, I go to church, but I do have relationships you know.

Prue: When you say in between when you're with boyfriends what does in between mean?

Remember you don't have to answer every question I ask you. {laughs}

Mildred: I'm probably, ah, I'm probably in between already like even without a boyfriend because of my friends, the other girls they're not Christian.

Prue: Um, Um

Mildred: Um but I'd probably move more towards, you know like um, be more sexually active and if they smoke, smoke with them and drink with them and stuff like that, because they would be more, but if they get you too far then you know it's not right. I know it's not right so I need to be back in my place. So if they're making me go too far then they're just trying to make me like, make me a different person that people won't like, so I put myself back like between Christianity and other stuff to myself me.

Prue: So when you are with a boy and you're not completely Christian, how do you know where you're right place is? What tells you this is the place you want to be?

Mildred: Um

Prue: In terms of sexuality?

Mildred: Yeah, I wouldn't have sex because I'm too young

Prue: By sex do you mean penetrative sex?

Mildred: Yeah

Prue: Yeah, you're not talking about all sexual activity?

Mildred: Ah, no not all sexual activity, like, definitely like sex, yeah, I wouldn't have sex with him, because it's not where I stand um because I'm too young, if you do have sex at 16 it's your own choice I wouldn't do that personally, because I reckon I'm too young but I'd probably, I don't know, it depends on what he's like to feel comfortable in our relationship, I would go to a certain point I wouldn't go all the way because he wants it. I would stop when I wanted, because I don't like being forced into doing stuff

Prue: Yeah, what's the sensation you get when you're at the point where, where you don't want to go any further, I mean what's the, is it a thought, is it a feeling, is [it a

Mildred: [it's a (literal) thing because you know that it isn't right for you so you try and stop because you know it's not right for yourself

Prue: Um

Mildred: and then you think of him as just taking advantage of you because he wants it, um but you also think of other things like um what are my friends going to say, or if Mum and Dad found out what would they think that yeah you know

(Lines:232-307)

Risk and Pleasure Discourse

Excerpt 17

Lines:

Prue: and when you get to that point?

Mildred: Um

Prue: Does the pleasure of the activity stop or does the pleasure stay but your mind say this isn't good for me?

Mildred: Um it depends really, probably um stop it and then that would completely stop and then the next time you see your boyfriend you'd talk to him about it because [I

Prue: [Um

Mildred: [say to my boyfriend I wasn't really comfortable going that far can we not do that again until I feel [comfortable

Prue: [um

Mildred: [and if he's alright with it

Prue: and has that happened that you're talked to boys like that and they have been [okay about it?

Mildred: [um yeah, yeah, () about a year ago, two years ago, I liked him for ages and um early on this year we'd be doing something because we're both at his work thing and we both drank and we got drunk and stuff like that. We were with his Mum and Dad as well and I knew we'd be doing something but I made sure that I didn't go too far, because if I went too far and people found out I'd get a reputation and I didn't want a reputation so I set myself before we did anything like when I was just thinking through like when I was without him, I'd make sure if I go, if I go to this point I need to stop.=

Prue: =Um

Mildred: That if I don't get to that point then that's fine I can you know be okay with it. If I get to that point I need to stop and he didn't, if he asked me to do anything more, I'd say no=

Prue: =Um

Mildred: and he wasn't fine with it, that's not my problem he's got

Prue: In that situation was he fine with it?

Mildred: Yeah=

Prue: =You'd pre thought it out and decided where you wanted to [go?

Mildred: [yeah, yeah I did tell him when I like when I wanted to stop, um I kept like doing stuff and he asked me to do something with him and I said no at that point and he said okay that's fine. He was probably disappointed in it I talked to him a few days after that and he was alright with it=

Prue: He was fine.

Mildred: Um, but I wouldn't do anything with again because he's completely changed now. He's one of the guys that you don't want to mess around with, that you don't want to get to know.

Prue: Why's that?

Mildred: *Oh um after I'd done stuff with him he just thought he could do it with anyone and go into any type of relationship and make girls do what he wanted and stuff like that, so I just said you know you can be my friend but I'm not going, [I'm not*

Prue: *[I'm not going there with you*

Mildred: *[I'm not going to go there*

(Lines: 309-

374)

Pleasure and risk discourse

Excerpt 18

Prue: *What sort of stuff, are you comfortable me asking what sort of stuff he wanted or is that uncomfortable for you to talk about?*

Mildred: *Oh I don't know*

Prue: *Don't answer if you not comfortable.*

Mildred: *No that's all right probably where, where we stopped was um when he was doing stuff to me and I was doing stuff to him at the same time and he wanted to go further and after that it would have been sex, so I knew I had to stop somewhere in the middle so I stopped somewhere in the middle.*

Prue: *When you're in that, we talked about it right at the end of the discussion, when you're in that mode of monitoring yourself and how far you go how does that impact on you experiencing pleasure, if you're the one, you know [yeah*

Mildred: *[yeah, um I guess I'm kinda glad I didn't do it because I experienced it but um, kind of, I didn't want to do it in case next time I would was drunk (sort of) and then he would make me do it. Then he'll knows that I've gone to that point so he would push me even further*

Prue: *so getting toward you feeling pushed?*

Mildred: *Yeah, yeah, [definitely.*

Prue: *[If I do this then I wont have the choice of saying 'no' next [time?*

Mildred: *[Um, yep*

Prue: *Does that often happen with boys?*

Mildred: *Um (1) it depends because you get the boys and girls that are in different groups um, you get the popular boys and stuff who would definitely push, pressure you um unless you want it. If you want it, then it's not pushing you it's just doing what ever. Um but yeah but you get a few boys that you know, think that you're hot and they just say, "oh that girl's really hot and I want to do stuff with her" and they start doing stuff with you and then they push you even more because you're doing with a hot girl, so then they can say to people "Oh I did it with her she's so hot. I'm so lucky" that type of thing.*

Prue: *Um*

Mildred: *Um but*

Prue: *So they do push, so you do experience it of being in relationship where you're, where they will push so you've got to be=*

Mildred: *=But, um but there are other relationships that I've had that um haven't pushed me, they've, you know, let me and taken my thoughts () respect, respected me how I think I should, how far I should go, and they like me for who I am and stuff but um yeah.*

Prue: *So that experience you talked about was, was that the first time you ever felt pressured like that?*

Mildred: *Um I felt pressured, um when I wasn't when I hadn't done anything with him and he'd broke up with his girlfriend and ah he would text me and he would make me wanna do, go around to his, do stuff with him but I was strong enough to say 'no' you know I'm*

not that type of girl if you want stuff then you go do with your girlfriend or a person who wants to do it with you. So I told him straight up I said “no’ I don’t want to do it with you, if I feel comfortable enough then I will do with you, but I don’t want to”

Prue: Um, um, so what made you agree to go out with him?

Mildred: Oh I didn’t um I wasn’t going out with him at the time I just like, loved him, I loved him for about a year {laughs}

376-439)

(Lines:

Risk and Pleasure

Excerpt 19

Prue: to the time the times you want to be intimate that’s fine, but there are times when you don’t want to be intimate?.

Lisa: because I was, I had a really good relationship with a boy called Z when it was my first it was kinda like, “yeah this is really cool”

Prue: um

Lisa: so for the first couple, we went out for roughly 5 months, the first month or two “oh this is really fun” kinda thing, then like (a patch of my...) I just didn’t want to

Prue: Sorry missed that?

Lisa: There was a patch when I didn’t want to, I wasn’t really in the mood, like I would still do it, he didn’t pressure me or anything.

Prue: What sort of things did he want you to do?

Lisa: oh just to have sex, nothing like flash or anything, I just wanna, I didn’t say, because I didn’t feel threatened by him or anything so I could have easily said ‘no’ and he would have been “yep sure” but

Prue: what stopped you saying ‘no’, when you think back what stopped you saying ‘no’, when you think back, what stopped you saying no, he wasn’t physically threatening you?

Lisa: No he, I could have easily said “no, I don’t want to” and he would have been like “fine”, he wouldn’t get mad at me or anything. I don’t know why I didn’t say ‘no’ but probably it was because he, he really enjoyed it so much I just wanted to like in a way treat him.

Prue: Mm, so you wanted to give him [pleasure.

Lisa: [Not like chore, more like it just became a bore

Prue: mm

Lisa: I just yeah

Prue: It sounds, when you started being sexual with him, and by sex do you mean penetrative sex?

Lisa: yeah

Prue: yeah, did you desire it then, want it then, when you first started?

Lisa: yeah, it was his suggestion, but it was only like the end of last year, December.

Prue: When you, has there been a time when you’ve actually felt pleasure during sexual activity and I don’t just mean intercourse, I mean any form of sexuality activity. Are there things you like?

Lisa: Mm yeah

Prue: Is this too personal to ask?

Lisa: No, no, no

Prue: What are the sort things you like, and the way you like with a boy, say this one you’ve talked about?

Lisa: Z

Prue: Yes
 Lisa: Umm, (1) are we talking about what I like to do with him sexually?
 Prue: Yeah
 Lisa: I like to, I like more like the build up to the sex
 Prue: So you like the?
 Lisa: more like touching
 Prue: you like touching
 Lisa: I like that kinda part, but then it's completely different with this boy now
 Prue: How's it different?
 Lisa: We haven't been going out long but we had, have a (rapport) two days before leaving, a kinda special moment so that you kinda both wanted it, both, didn't plan it, it just kinda happened
 Prue: Um
 Lisa: and it was just really enjoyable
 Prue: you enjoy it, mm
 Lisa: yeah
 Prue: Was that the first time for you, that you enjoyed it?
 Lisa: probably
 Prue: Yeah, so how did that, what made, I'm trying to trace what made this time enjoyable, compared to, the other times where you haven't really felt like it but you've done it please someone else, what made this time different?
 Lisa: I really, really, really rude you know, {laugh} just he was bigger than there, than the other person {laughs}
 Prue: {laughs} But that's individual preference isn't it?
 Lisa: Yeah
 Prue: why's that rude
 Lisa: it's like, he wasn't that big but it was fun, like the build up to it, it was "ohhhl"
 Prue: um
 Lisa: it's still like nice the build up to it but even better when it's like, when it's actually happening.
 Prue: so it's something you really enjoyed and have pleasure from?
 Lisa: but that doesn't mean I want it all the time I'd want like break periods when like no or anything.
 Prue: with this boyfriend, um how would it be to say 'no' if you wanted a break?
 Lisa: From sexual stuff?
 Prue: Yeah
 Lisa: oh it would just be like, "I don't want to do anything for a while" and I'd know he would respect my decision, "that's fine" because and I know he's not just after me for that kinda stuff because we had the opportunity, to like stuff with me, but we didn't do anything we just talked and
 Prue: um (Lines: 784-916)

Risk and Pleasure Discourse

Excerpt 20

Prue: Have you been with other people?

Claire: Yep, not, I haven't had sex with anybody thou' um just at parties you know.

Prue: What are those encounters like?

Claire: What do you mean like, how I feel about them?

Prue: Have there been things you've liked or disliked about those encounters?

Claire: Umm, (2), I like (1). Some of them were okay, like I mean you go to a party you get drunk, you hook up but it's just what happens, um some, some of them were not so pretty, yeah, but most of them were okay. It wasn't. It's not like the same as having a boyfriend you know make out with him. (1) Cos' it someone different you don't know them, what they want, it's, you just kinda hook up and hopefully it's going to be okay.

Prue: What happens if you hook up and it's not feeling okay? Where do you go from there.

Claire: Um well if you don't like that, then hopefully you'll have the guts to say "I don't like that" and you'll draw the line

Prue: Um

Claire: If not it could lead, I don't know, maybe sex that you don't want

Prue: um, have you ever been in the position where you haven't been comfortable saying no?

Claire: Arhh, no

Prue: Didn't feel able to say no, you've always been able to say no and stop it if you didn't like it.

Claire: Yeah

Prue: What's your body talk, what's your body doing if you don't like it?

Claire: umm?

Prue: What's the body sensation?

Claire: Um

Prue: what thinking the whole, you know

Claire: Um I tend to like breath up, I get butterflies in my stomach and I just get hyped, but in stomach around here, I got my feelings in my stomach and I suppose I just pull back and draw the line

Prue: mm, and do you verbally say that's it or do just pull physically away

Claire: Um, I pull away and I say that's enough and I just walk off, sometimes the guy gets annoyed but you know, not my problem, and sometimes they are like "whatever I'll go find somebody else."

Prue: and when you do like, what's that like? When you are enjoying it?

Claire: Oh yeah {soft laugh} it's fun, it's just, it's just, you know, like it's still not the same as having a boyfriend, but it's still fun to do. (Lines: 475-534)

Female friendships as fun

Excerpt 21

Angela: We're covered it all I think. Like um we are all really tight and um respect each others space and views and morals, well because we all have the same morals and ethics um we all kind of click.

Megan: yeah

Charlotte: And like exactly the same and also I feel that if there's something I need to talk about I could share it and like it would be kept confidential by ()

Megan: Yeah we're not going to blurb it all out

Charlotte: yeah and just be comfortable you can be entirely like who you are in front of each other

Sarah: Yeah, yeah, I think that's yeah, always respect each other, it's not forced there aren't any barriers like we could talk about any problems that we had, and like we all respect each other and yeah, yeah

Celeste: yeah, the same how we can be ourselves and um, like um, basically like, things, things like, it's really hard taa, ummm, well like you when you hear of other groups like having fights and stuff you're kinda like oh well oh, you feel really proud of your group
Competing voices

Celeste: You fell really lucky. You just feel like, wow, you know I'm, I'm friends with all these fantastic girls and it's just amazing you know, it's like a really amazing feature.

Megan: Because we've never split like actually we have never

Charlotte: It's if I know I'm a little bit crumpy I'll kinda just be quiet like or off and do, like lunch time I'll go off to the library or something, I need space {laughter}

Megan: and if we get shitty with each other like you get over it

Competing voices {laughter} yeah, okay

Megan: if some girls you get shitty, and it's like this massive fight,

Angela: Tension. These no tension.

Megan: No I think we are really loosely together but are still tight

?: Yeah, yeah

(Lines: 1742-

1784)

Female friendship as fun

Excerpt 22

Prue: I was going to say that about fun. I mean what are the things you do together that is, that is fun and that is just about it?

Angela: Fun um. We crack jokes together

{laughter}

Several voices: We mock each other, we mock each other

Prue: Tell me

Celeste: It doesn't have to be anything specific, we don't have to, some girls have to go out and get drunk in order to have fun

Charlotte: No we don't have to be like that, we just have like girls nights and stuff

Competing Voices

Angela: see even that's just a joke

?: {laughter} yeah

Prue: So it's actually in conversation with each other you have a lot of fun

Several voices: Yeah,

Megan: Like we see quite a lot, sometimes we may not see the whole group but we all see each other

Angela: We enjoy each other's [company

Megan: [company, and like last weekend we went to the SS, ZZ [game

Angela: [game

Megan: game, grain, game, doesn't have to be the whole group, no

Angela: Yeah

Megan: sometimes we () together and then like, () career's expo, like it's not, if two of us do something together it's not offensive to the rest of the group.

Several voices: Yeah, yeah, definitely

(Lines: 1882-

1940)

Female friendship as fun

Excerpt 23

Riley: *I would get involved*

Rachel/ Jane? *Yeah*

Riley: *like with your group, your girlfriends were going shopping you know, get them involved, ring them up and try and involve them as much as you can, to get that out of that situation.*

Rachel: *Just kind of hassle them in a way sort of thing.*

Riley: *Yeah*

Rachel: *Show them that they are missing out on how much fun that they missed out on, how much that you are missing, you know, her as a person, like as a friend.*

()

Riley: *AJ and S they have been together, I have got to be friends with J and S for how, for about three and a half years, AJ is 18 years old and they are just always together. She is just always with AJ, AJ, Aj, AJ, AJ*

Rachel: *But we took her out the other night () like if you take her out once in a while and she has just had such fun*

1317-1338)

(Lines:

And then they expanded on this night by saying:

Rachel: *=We went out for dinner the other night and it was just so much fun we just sat there for hours just talking, and you know, just catching up like we haven't had a good catch for ages.*

Prue: *So it was just basically talking to your friends [and*

Rachel: *[Yeah and it, it wasn't you know (just talking and seeing what's up)*

Prue: *Ummm*

Rachel: *Just talking to them and seeing what's up and what's happening in their lives.*

Prue: *Um*

Rachel: *At this age we're all got friends that are out, who are out of school now and still catch up with them.*

Riley: *You don't realise how much you have missed out on until you actually sit down and talk and telling and just telling all you the news, you know, [just*

Jane: *[yeah*

Rachel: *[telling the news, telling all the things that,*

Jane: *Yeah like in your group of friends you sort of tell each other certain things but it is not until really like you don't get a chance to all sit down really and you just start talking and talking [*

Rachel: *[yeah, and talking and*

Jane: *it's fun.*

1424)

(Lines:1392-

Female friendship as fun

Excerpt 24

Jane: *Um (2) I know I think I think that within a group of boys it is sort of considered as like to be able to say that you have got a chick is sort of ...*

Rachel: yeah (indistinct)

Prue: And so we are talking sex ()

Jane: Yeah.

Riley: yeah got a missus ().

Jane: yeah

Riley: ..is hot

Prue: The hotter the better is it? And what's hot.

Rachel: Oh you ask the guys. {All laugh} I wouldn't know.

Prue: So how would you know um a boyfriend is interested in you as a person rather than as...

Riley: they wouldn't, they wouldn't jump straight into ()

Riley: Oh I've got a story.

Prue: Tell us the story.

Riley: This has just happened over the last two days. I have been out at the um International xxxxxxxx tournament and we have had the boy teams from Canada, Serbia, all over the world best xxxxxx players from all over the world. And I was sitting at the desk collecting money and stuff and anyway the first day this Canadian guy came in {laughter soft} and he goes "Hey ladies", chatted to us for a while and offered us some lollies, New Zealand naturals. {laugh from others} He came out after his game, came out for NZ naturals again and the next day, L was there and um he walked, he walked past and I go "Oi where's, where's the lollies today" and he goes "No lollies today, sorry lady" and walks outside and I go "See ya". {laughter from others} and he comes back with 3 chocolate bars, one for R and Rachel and one for "like you for hanging out with all the hot girls" and I was like {laugh} and then yesterday he came, he came in and he offered the girls a lolly he had a pack open and he offered the girls lolly, then he a pack, a whole pack of lollies out for me, and goes "Here you are" and I was like "Ohh thanks, thanks" {laughing other's right through this section} and then um anyways he pulled me aside and he goes "so I guess this is the end of the tournament" and I like "yes" and

Jane: he's like a 20 something old guy, like Canadian

Riley: he was like a 20 something old guy, nice guy and he goes "so can I get a peck on the cheek" {laughter} and I was like "Ok what's a peck on the cheek, you know, I am never going to see this guy again. {laughter} but NOT ANYTHING and then I go, I went to go like this (put her check forward) and then he goes WOOF right to my lips and goes and gave me a big smooch on the lips.

Jane: Did he

Riley: yeah

Jane: oh my God.

Riley/Rachel : Oh my God (whispered)

Riley: and then later that night he came to the pools and he was looking for me and he's like and he was like asking "Where's Riley?, Where's Riley?"

Jane: Yeah sometimes it is more obvious than other {laughter}.

Rachel/Riley: Yeah {laughing}

()

Prue: So how did you know he was not interested in you as a person?

{laughter}

Riley: WELL NO, he probably wasn't. {laughter}

(Lines: 1037-

1109)

Female Friendship and 'abject other'

Excerpt 25

Prue: what was your feelings when the girl started to tell you stuff that made you go a bit flustering

Georgie: Ok I don't think, when she was talking to me about it, it just, it made me feel angry, like he shouldn't like be treating you like that, and like when she was telling me and it just made me just feel he shouldn't be treating you like that.

Prue: So it was thought patterns with you?

Georgie: yeah and um (1) it also made me feel uncomfortable around Jimmy because I couldn't really say, like it kind of changed our friendship, like I couldn't really say what I felt anymore around her and we kind of became a lot more distant and she became extremely preoccupied with him and it just made me kind of not disrespect her but kind of pity her

Prue: Um

Georgie: and it made me feel sad like, like

Prue: What were you sad about?

Georgie: The fact that she was in that situation and even though I kind of tried to like say "oh I think you shouldn't be seeing him", she kind of like didn't listen, not that it's like, not that she wasn't really listening but that she kind of just put up with him and keeps going along with it, like

Prue: Mm,

Georgie: I don't know (2), yeah for number of reasons just like that he is like treating her that way and that she stays with him and that she is kind of just like doesn't really talk to me anymore and she um like you can only like do so much as a friend

(Lines:532-552)

Female friendship and 'abject other'

Excerpt 26

Prue: In what way, yeah and that's an interesting one because if you are a friend of a girlfriend who is in difficulty what is your, you know what is that sense of responsibility?

Jemma: I think most important if you are unsure about it is just to be there to listen instead of giving any advice or because yeah just to be there and listen

Georgie: and there is also a bit like trust because they have told you something special and you are then holding and you can't pass everything back onto her or talk about everything so you kind of need somebody else, which is also pushing the boundaries because they don't really want anybody else to know that you have

Prue: Yeah and so you are holding it and your holding that dilemma and you are not feeling good about it so you need backup,

Nina: Yeah, you kinda

Prue: Mm, who would you talk to on those situations?

Nina: I talk to my mum and my friends but then it depends, like some details you can't obviously pass on and then you kind of see what it feels like wee what they can relate to

Prue: Can I ask you, don't tell me if you are not comfortable, this is where you make decisions, what sort of things wouldn't you pass on to your mum?

Nina: Mm

Prue: You don't have to answer that.

Nina: Not much really. I think, I don't know I kind of also want to protect her from what other people think so you kind of don't want to pass on anything really too bad of what their judgments are

(Lines:595-616)

Female and friendship and 'abject other'

Excerpt 27

Prue: If, if you were out and you were at um, what do you call them where you go to parties and dance now dance, and your saw a girlfriend be approached or get involved in a what you saw as a potentially dangerous situation, what would be your thinking and your response in that situation, first off how would you know it was risky?

Jemma: If she wasn't looking too comfortable

Nina: or how like kinda sober, like if they were in the right state of mind, like maybe emotionally or, cause like sometimes they can just broken up with somebody, .big family things going on and you know it's not right for them that could be

Prue: Wait for that phone, when I am transcribing I wont be able to....

Georgie: I just had a picture in my head just some like crazy guy walking up to like a friend and offering her like an e tablet or something

{laughter}

Prue: () that's giving me what relevant, what's an example that is relevant to you in your group, what would you be thinking and doing in that situation

Georgie : Oh God, I don't know, Um I .it depends on the state (I'm in) {laughter}I think I would probably just kind of intervene and just like walk up and pull my friend away pretty much

Nina: Mm, me too

Georgie: I think I mean I don't want any of my friends doing that so

Prue: So you would walk up

Georgie: I would pretty much, I wouldn't say anything to him, I would oh actually I don't know what I would do, it totally depends on my mood and how I am feeling everything the time of the situation but I would pretty much just pull my friend away.

Nina: Are we supposed to like know the person?

Prue: If you knew them yeah

Nina: If you knew the other person

Jemma: It's happened to me I have known a few situations where friends have seen something and think that something is going to happen and they go up and try to intervene but really nothing was actually happening and they just sort of saw it a different way and um

Prue: Was that ok, was that okay with the friend they went up to?

Jemma: yeah but they were just like "oh what" and then the friend that did that felt really uncomfortable but yeah, I think if that happened to me I think I would just um make sure that it was something that was wrong just like "hey howzit going, are you alright there?" and kind of be real like happy in their face kind of like if something was wrong you would have to tell them

Nina: I think it depends on if you know the other person or not because if you don't know them then it is wrong.

Georgie: yeah

?(pull)

{laughter}

Prue: If you don't know them?

Nina: Yeah if you don't know its more an instinct to take them away, if you do know them then its more like a hang out thing, check out what is actually happening before you

Prue: the reading is easier if you know someone isn't it?

Jemma: I think it's the opposite,

Prue: Mm?

Jemma: because if I saw you or something I wouldn't feel rude to just pull you, but if didn't know you I would feel rude to do that so I would be like "hey, [what do you think".

(Lines:619-669

)

Nomads Discourse

Excerpt 28

Mabel: Um well I know that in year 6, when I was 10, I really wanted to be with cool group, the popular group and um, yeah sort of, I wanted to hang out with them and stuff and they had this little dance troupe and they did this dance to that Corr's song "Leave me breathless" (singing) I thought was so cool. It was a really bad dance but you know, it was really great. And um so they gave me like a test and they were like here if you fill this out you can be in our dance group, it was all about popular music and I didn't know anything so oh course I failed and I couldn't be in their little club and then um, yeah, I idolized one of the girls who actually goes here now, like "why should I idolize her" but um, I don't know finding out I was deeply uncool made me feel really like I should, I don't know. Um. Yeah, and I guess I got over it a bit when I decided I had more fun sitting in trees after all.

Prue: {laughter}

Mabel: and so, instead of dancing or whatever. Actually at the end of the year I remember making up my own dance and everyone saying "whow you can actually dance" I thought "you didn't even give me a chance" but, yeah I had a best friend who we were freaks together and then by the time I was at at Year 8 then um I don't know I just sort of I was sort of over the whole kind of trying to be cool thing so then I was actually liked by most people. I was actually liked by most people.

(Lines: 39-58)

Nomad Discourse

Excerpt 29

"Isabella: I think that's also, like that social standard is also set by like models Tiara Banks and celebrities and

Mabel: like how you should look

Isabella: yeah, and so we don't want to feel like an ordinary woman, you want to feel empowered and I guess looking good is your main form of empowerment like looking supernaturally good

{laughter}

Isabella: So that's why makeup is there

Mabel: that's women's biggest triumph if we accept we are of equal intelligence to men and whatever, so yeah people want to use it. I would use it.

And

Lines: 940-999

Mabel: It's what you think you are and then people who think you are cool are all quite um (big headed)

Isabella: [Yeah

Boborange: [Yeah

Prue: So who judges the status line?

Mabel: Yourself definitely and () it's by what you put out, if you put out the aura that you are too cool and some other people who think they are too cool will see that you are too and they will band together and (that's cool)

Boborange? I think, I think that's also like a media, like a media group, you know like in movies, in teenage movies there is always like a popular hierarchy especially American movies its like the, the cool ones are the really pretty girls who look immaculate or the wannabe, sexy or whatever and the jock guys and then you know this is like very typical and then there is like, at the bottom there's like geeky people with bad looks and you know stuff like that and so I think

Prue: It's also someone's looks it's not just people's opinions of themselves it is also their physical appearance?

Boborange: Yeah

Isabella: Yeah, I agree

Mabel: Yeah

Prue: So where does your group fit, would you be the cools, the mid cools, the geeks, the which, where would you three fit?

Mabel: There is a group of nomads

Isabella: Oh God

{laughter}

Prue: What do you mean by the term nomads?

{laughter}

Boborange: We don't really let ourselves be judged by like a name for a group, we kind of like just a group

Isabella: Yeah

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: we enjoy each other's presence

Mabel: In between the social hierarchy (they don't show us in) American movies because we are not particularly exciting people to watch,

{laughter}

Mabel: but um there are always people that people generally um everyone likes because they're outgoing enough or whatever I think that's our group

Isabella: Yeah, normally

(Lines: 891-

905)

Nomads discourse

Excerpt 30

Prue: what would you want if you had a boyfriend what would you want?

Boborange: Um I would want. Like I said before, that you normally go for guys that are of a similar intelligence level, similar like physical appearance, like and socially like

similar standing and like emotionally similar as well like emotional quota EQ, kinda, emotional reasoning. So I would go for a guy who is really sensitive, who can judge situations and who's like not out of it {laughs} and really sensitive. I would love a sensitive boyfriend who can totally understand me and a listener, ah (1) like just really warm and I would love them to have a creative side which would be so fun for me to access and I'd defin, definitely want them to be of similar intelligence level, like I find it really hard to talk to a guy who is of a different intelligence level, like say not as smart or kind of you know dumber, {laughs} who is just like a partier and just thinks about weekends and hot chicks and everything. I just find them really hard to relate to and like nothing to talk to them about apart from hot chicks. {laughs}

Prue: And so you want an intelligent, articulate, [thoughtful guy

Boborange: [thoughtful guy, and I definitely want some one who knows, who doesn't think like in stereotypical clichéd way. I would want them to like be an outsider in a sense, like me being from an outsider's perspective, rather than being in there and not knowing anything else outside

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: like view things from an outsider's perspective rather than being in there and not knowing everything else outside because like I normally tend to think from an outsider's perspective

Prue: So like a nomad?

Boborange: yeah like I view society from an outside bubble

Prue: Umm,

Boborange: and I am not actually in it like I don't really want to be inside [

Mabel:: [Yeah, yeah,

Boborange: [being the partier, being the everyday person and [everyday life

Mabel: [Yeah, yeah,

Isabella: [people who can see the bigger picture

Mabel: [yeah, yeah (Lines:1194-1357 for the next two excerpts)

Nomad discourse

Excerpt 31

Boborange: [bigger picture. I don't want a guy who is so limited in their own world [

Mabel: [Yeah

Boborange: [that everything has to be in that glass bottle. I want a guy who can sit there outside with me, view society, or view whatever

()

Boborange: yeah from my angle

Prue: What's the advantageous of them having an outside view?

Boborange: so much more to talk about, so much more I feel like he is my type of guy, [

Mabel: [Yeah.

Boborange: [more attachment um, more in common, I would feel like he is my soul mate {laughter} and I would feel he is more precious because I think they are more hard to find
Isabella?: Yeah.

Boborange: and I wouldn't want to lose him and that would be a disadvantageous then because I would be so clingy then and I wouldn't like a guy who is negative, [

I & M: (simultaneously) yeah.

Boborange: *negative guys just oh God aren't pleasant.*

{laughter}

Boborange: *Um, Yeah just everything, not abusive. I would love to have a positive happy boyfriend.*

I & M: *Yeah.*

Boborange: *Um they can be sad but mostly quite positive because we all seek happiness and we like being around happy things, um but I love sweet caring guys. I once met this boy T {laughter} he was such an outsider, he's like the most outside person I'd ever met. He viewed things with such an interesting angle. I found him, I found I could learn things from him,*

Mabel: *Yeah.*

Boborange: *because I consider myself to be an outsider and he really could take me all the way kind of and emotionally he was so sensitive he was kind of like a girl*

{laughter}

Boborange: *and he was so cuddly and cute and so pleasant and so courteous I feel he would be the perfect boyfriend but he just wasn't interested in like a girlfriend boyfriend thing because he went to a coed school and he didn't view me the same way as I viewed him. I was like oh my god you're so special I don't want to lose you but um he went overseas. Um I don't want a guy who brags a lot, just arrogance is something associated with kind of bad guys, guys you don't want to be around and I think when guys are arrogant they are just totally unpleasant like*

Mabel: *Arrogance is dark and dangerous.*

Boborange: *Yes it is dark ()*

Mabel: *Teenage boys are stupid in the first place but to be arrogant as well you're going to do some dumb stuff*

I & B: *Yeah.*

Prue: *What about would, could you can you ever envisage yourself as a girlfriend or would you see yourself more of something else?*

Mabel: *Um I don't know really know what I think about the whole girlfriend type of (image)*

Prue: *It's interesting, when I get a chance I'll pick it up with you*

Mabel: *Yeah definitely I think I am a girlfriend type of girl*

{laughter}

Mabel: *Um, yeah I'm want someone who is as Boborange said the same um EQ and IQ and (Q) that's me and I don't know I don't mind, I don't mind, if he is not from the same oh, um, social circle, but I do want him to be in the nomads group otherwise he will be arrogant or um self, down, down what do you call that [() I don't know, dev, I don't know*

Boborange: *[()]{laughter} de, de, devalue*

Mabel: *devalue, yeah whatever*

Prue: *So you want him to be a nomad*

Mabel: *yeah pretty much. Well I think that's the best way to be because I think that's where you are happiest, you have the most healthy relationships with other people and yourself.*

Boborange: *yeah, your outlook on life is quite interesting it's not in the bubble, oh, its not like, it's like being on a dance floor, there are other people that are in it as being in like a nightclub and it just so in their way of life, in that they can't see where they are heading, like nomads who are like outside {laughter}(like you do)*

Mabel: *Yeah*

Boborange: *and like looking around at the sky, looking around, and so like your angle on life is quite different.*

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: You look for different things, you don't look just to become alcoholics or you don't look just to become the top of our social group

Mabel: Yeah

Boborange: or you don't have narrow dreams we have kind of broader interesting dreams

Isabella: Yeah the ability to see outside

Mabel: Yeah

Isabella: things that you are part of like groups in society and just being able to see other things

Mabel: Umm

Isabella: than yourselves

(Lines: 1311-

1438)

Nomads Discourse (Ideas of well-being)

Excerpt 32

Group 1

Rachel: Mental Well I see wellbeing as physically healthy, mentally and emotionally healthy, spiritual healthy within yourself and socially healthy so with social you have got a good group of friends, um support from your family, friends um healthy relationships, then, spiritually you are happy within yourself, self, good self belief and self worth and then mentally and emotionally, how happy you are, your happiness.

Prue: How do you wake up, if you are happy, how do you wake up, now what is different to being unhappy when you first wake up. What's your day like?

Rachel: Actually ready to start the day,

Jane/Riley: yes, yeah

Rachel: like if you are not happy you know, it's like oh!

Rachel: just a lot of love for what you do, just enjoying everything....

Riley: Yep, but you don't like, some people get especially 13 and 14 and stuff you don't have to be happy even though, like (1) with how do I say it

Jane: You don't

Prue: Um, Umm

Riley: you don't have, you don't have to be,

Jane/Rachel: You don't have to have a boyfriend

Riley: you don't have to have a boyfriend to be happy you know,

Prue: Um, Um,

Riley: like some people get caught away with this whole having a boyfriend thing, like just take you know? It's just

Prue: Um, Um,

Riley: People just don't wait for the right person and they just end up wasting their time, they like don't even you know like the person and they just go out with them for two weeks or something or.

Prue: And what do you see different when they are going out with someone they don't like, in terms of wellbeing. Like the 3 friends you talked about before, how would you describe them when they were still in the relationships in terms of wellbeing.

Jane: Not being [themselves]....

Riley: [It may have started off being good

Jane: Yeh

Prue: Um, Umm

Riley: but then they kind of got to know the person properly and it just kind of ()

Rachel: Maybe depressed about it.

Prue: How would you see that depression. How would you see it?

Rachel: Someone not being themselves if you know them well, them changing, maybe for the worse.

Prue: The worst being?

Jane: Um Rachel's example, before um that person was getting into drugs and doing things that you don't normally associate with them, yeah

Prue: So that they would be put into dilemmas that had [them,

Jane: [situations=

Prue: =[um? or situations (1) where what would make a young woman take drugs in a relationship?

()

Riley: Of course you know you had trust and you know you love your boyfriend, you trust him and, come on do it you know and of course you kind of maybe want to do [it

Rachel: [And with the depressed state anyway it would be like why not nothing to [lose.....

Jane: [yeah, [yeah,

Prue: OK so that's what's not how relationships may affect wellbeing. How would a relationship enhance well being? Does it enhance, yeah

Rachel: Socially it might (2) you might meet new friends through um your boyfriend.

Prue: Increase your friendship circle yep.

Rachel: Yep, um

Jane: You might do things that maybe you would not really think about doing, like maybe doing different activities or something like that where you sort of get yourself out there more and do different things, that may like turn out to be good. [Good things

Prue: [Give more, good opportunities=

Jane: =yeah, good opportunities

Prue: How would you know and this is just hypothetical within yourself that this was a relationship that was working for your wellbeing or not?

Rachel: Good balance of, I don't know both the girlfriend and boyfriend knowing that you have to spend time with your families, you have to spend time with your friends, so it is not all about

Riley: Of course you know like you are going to want to spend time together but it is not always every single minute of the day, like after school,

Rachel: texting, your own sk (indistinct?)

Prue: So relationship based

Rachel: TRUST IS A MAJOR THING.

Prue: and what is it? What is trust. What tells you, you can trust.

Riley: Um, yeh see, I don, I don't know that one.

Jane: You know how to explain it? {laughter}

Riley: No.

Prue: trust baffles like old old women like me, so [{laughs}.

Rachel: [I, Knowing that they trust you would be, um

Riley/Jane: TRUST!! {laughter from all}

Prue: Trust! I'm asking how, how, how?

Riley: How do you know you can trust them, how do you know they are trustworthy, a trustworthy person until they do something because you get to know them. I guess you get

to know them you build up a relationship and you (2) You rely on them to not hurt you. I don't knowtrust them to you, of it's just that word.....

Jane: I think it is knowing that they have your best interests in mind,

Riley: Thank you Jane {laughs}

Jane: Yeh that's when you know that

Prue: It sounds like that are interested in you.

Riley: Yep

Prue: It sounds like you are saying that they are actually interested in you.

Riley: Yep

Prue: How, you yeah, I am wondering how to word this. How would you know someone is interested in you as a person (3) like boys have girlfriends for different reasons. What are the reasons boys have girls. Maybe there is an obvious one.

Rachel: Sex {everyone laughed}

()

Riley: That's not always about girlfriends they just go to parties they like, () and the some girls are just that easy but (3) now that's a big part about having a girlfriend too, I guess.

Prue: What else. I mean?

Jane: Um (2) I know I think I think that within a group of boys it is sort of considered as like to be able to say that you have got a chick is sort of ...

Rachel: yeah (indistinct)

*Prue: And so we are talking sex ()
1042)*

(Lines:881-

Appendix Ji: Transcriber's Confidentiality Agreement

Young Women, Power and Intimate Relationships

TRANSCRIBER'S CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed) agree to transcribe the tapes provided to me.

I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me.

I will not make any copies of the transcripts or keep any record of them, other than those required for the project.

Signature:

.....

Date:

.....

Appendix Jii: Transcription notation

[C2: quite a [while Mo: [yea	Left brackets indicate the point at which a current speakers talk is overlapped by another's talk
=	W: that I'm aware of = C: = Yes. Would you confirm that?	Equal signs, one at the end of a line and one at the beginning, indicate no gap between the two lines.
(4)	Yes (2) yeah	Numbers in parentheses indicate elapsed time in silence in seconds
_____	What's <u>up</u> ?	Underscoring indicates some form of stress, via pitch and/or amplitude.
WORD	I've got ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT	Capitals, except at the beginnings of lines, indicate especially loud sounds relative to the surrounding talk.
{laughter}	{laughter}	Any other significant behaviour – laughter, sighing, intake of breath, etc.
()	Future risks and () and life ()	Empty parentheses indicate the transcribers inability to hear what was said.
(word)	Would you see (there) anything positive	Parenthesized words are possible hearings.
		(Silverman, 2001)
[C2: quite a [while	Left brackets indicate

	Mo: [yea	the point at which a current speaker's talk is overlapped by another's talk
=	W: that I'm aware of = C: = Yes. Would you confirm that?	Equal signs, one at the end of a line and one at the beginning, indicate no gap between the two lines.
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()	Future risks and () and life ()	Empty parentheses indicate the transcribers inability to hear what was said.
(word)	Would you see (there) anything positive	Parenthesized words are possible hearings.

(Silverman, 2001)

Appendix Ki: Informed Consent A

Young Women, Power and Intimate Relationships

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR FRIENDSHIP GROUP DISCUSSIONS

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being video taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me.

I agree to not disclose anything discussed in the discussion Group.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix Kii: Informed Consent B

Young Women, Power and Intimate Relationships

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR FRIENDSHIP GROUP DISCUSSIONS

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being video taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me.

I agree to not disclose anything discussed in the discussion Group.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

Full Name - printed

Format for Participant Consent Form

Revised 3/11/04

Page 1 of 1

Appendix Kiii: Participants Confidentiality Agreement

Participants Confidentiality Agreement

Young Women, Power and Intimate Relationships

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I (Full Name - printed)
agree to keep confidential all information concerning the project (Title of Project).

I will not retain or copy any information involving the project.

Signature: **Date:**