FIFTH FORM BOYS' SENSE OF SELF

AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree

of Master of Arts

in Education at Massey University

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1996

ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with how boys grow to be men and the subject positions which the secondary school curriculum constructs, supports, and invites boys to take up. Thirty predominantly Pakeha, high achieving boys from a fifth form class in a single-sex school participated. Two boys in particular were focused on throughout a series of mathematics and english lessons. Using a generative methodology, I investigated and illuminated curriculum enactment as it pertained to the lived realities of these boys. This study supports previous studies which have uncovered the androcentric nature of the school curriculum. It also reveals the contradictory and conflicting subject positions embedded in curriculum enactment in the classroom. The processes of negotiating and mediating these subject positions in the formation of a personal 'sense of self' are complex and involve the curriculum and familial contexts which are class and ethnically located.   Two conclusions that I have reached have particular significance for possibilities for change: limited opportunities are afforded by the secondary school curriculum for the boys to develop critical self-reflective skills; those boys whose sense of self is in conflict with a hegemonic masculinity experience little support for their different ways of being in the world. I argue that, through addressing these two issues in curriculum reform, possibilities for change can be created.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

Since men are born into male bodies, but not into successful accomplishment of culturally appropriate versions of masculinity, becoming a man is a complex process of learning and doing within shifting sets of social constraints (Holland *et al*,1993:2).

It is this "complex process of learning and doing" with which my study is concerned. In particular I am interested in uncovering the ways in which the secondary school curriculum is implicated in this process.

MALE SENSE OF SELF

The binary opposition of gender in our culture is particularly salient. In all areas of society - the labour market, education, economy, sexual practices, language use, personality traits, state policies, and family responsibilities - the pervasiveness of this gender dichotomy has been well documented, analysed, and theorised. As Davies makes clear

The division of people into males and females is so fundamental to our talk as usual and to our understanding of identity, that it is generally understood as a natural fact of the real world rather than something that we have *learned to see* as natural (1993b:7).

This is what Davies (1989:x) refers to as "the incorrigibility of the male/female dualism". The persistence of the distinctions between the two genders is so taken-for-granted as to remain largely unquestioned.

However, in order for gender to function as binary oppositions there must be a set of characteristics that embody the distinct differences between male and female categories.

The literature and research on sex-role development and sex differences has been significantly premised on identifying those characteristics which are peculiarly male or peculiarly female. It is within this binary opposition of the gender categories, on which society is predicated, that a person's very sense of self develops (Hopkins, 1992). A person's material, psychological, and social situatedness is significantly motivated, reinforced, reproduced or continually created, by their social identity as male or female. Theoretical analyses must be developed that acknowledge the dynamics of gender relations within which the male sense of self is developed. These analyses must also recognise the effects of external pressures and rewards that are part of the masculinizing practices of class and race located families and schools. Furthermore, there must be acknowledgement of the impact of internal desires and conflicts which boys mediate and negotiate. The competing, contradictory, and mutually undermining subject positions that a boy must reconcile in developing his sense of self can be more readily understood through the tools that poststructural theory offers.

MY PERSONAL INVESTMENT

My personal investment in this project arises from three areas of interest. First, I am a mother of four children for whom I have been the sole caregiver and income earner for many years. As I have watched my three sons and one daughter growing up in the 1990s I have become acutely and painfully aware of the constrictions placed on young people's futures. Young men and women are being encouraged to stay longer at school and continue into post-compulsory training or education. Yet, the secondary school sector seems poorly equipped to offer either the flexibility or environment necessary to meet the multiple needs of diverse groups of young people.

Second, as a practising mental health professional I have become increasingly aware of the social and economic problems that often go hand-in-hand with a diagnosis of mental illness. As I have noticed, and as the literature substantiates, female social, political, and economic subordinate positioning significantly affects a woman's mental and emotional wellbeing (Chesler, 1972; Saltman, 1991; Ussher, 1992). This is also evidenced

in mental health statistics. Although these figures present only a small window on the total mental health picture distinct gender patterns are evident.

Table 1.1

Public Hospital Inpatient Discharges and Deaths 1992

Diagnosis	Males	Females
Mental Disorders	4,371	5,307
Alcoholic Psychoses	104	41
Drug Psychoses	81	53
Alcohol Dependence Syndrome	509	252
Drug Dependence	132	80
Non-Dependent Abuse of Drugs	279	134
Acute Reaction to Stress	55	88
Depressive Disorder	218	422

Source: Ministry of Health (1994) Hospital and Selected Morbidity Data, Wellington, New Zealand Health Information Service.

Third, as an extramural undergraduate student I was introduced to feminist theories and analyses of the gendered nature of social structures and processes. The concepts of dominance and subordination are central in feminist analyses. I see significant links between male dominance and female subordination and the large numbers of depressed and dysfunctional women who are suffering from mental health problems.

Having experienced the effects of my two oldest boys growing to be men and having watched the ways in which they attempted to carve out dominant subject positionings, *in a feminist household*, I developed an interest in trying to uncover some of the mechanisms by which dominant subject positions are made available to males in our society. This research project is the result. It has been my study in the fields of sociology of education and feminist theory that has lead to this current investigation.

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Along with other institutions, such as the family and labour market, schooling has been shown to play a central role in the production and reproduction of masculinities and femininities (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler & Dowsett,1982; Pringle,1983; Middleton,1988; O'Neill,1990). Schools both shape and are shaped by historically specific conceptions of masculinity and femininity which permeate all levels of policy, administration and practice. Secondary schooling begins at a time when "becoming a man" is what adolescent boys work at (Whitson,1990:22). Schools, families and the boys themselves have various investments in this process. Under considerable pressure from family, peers, and social institutions, each boy must also construct out of his own body and desires, and within his own social context, a personal way of being in the world (Connell,1983). Indeed, during the adolescent years there is much unsettled about the kind of man a boy will become (ibid). The secondary school curriculum, therefore, has particular significance.

Internationally, initial feminist research exposed the androcentrism and male dominance of both curriculum content and classroom dynamics (Deem,1980; Spender and Sarah,1981; Spender,1982; Stanworth,1983; Mahoney,1985). New Zealand studies, although fragmentary, have supported these claims (Abigail,1984a,1984b; Newton,1988; Fry,1988; Alton-Lee and Densem,1992), as have curriculum reviews and guides produced during the 1980s (Committee to Review the Curriculum for School,1987; Women's Advisory Committee on Education,1988; Department of Education,1989).

As part of this legacy recent curriculum reforms in New Zealand seek to address the problem of sexism in the curriculum by including the concept of a 'gender-inclusive' curriculum. This has been defined as a curriculum "which acknowledges and includes the educational needs and experiences of girls equally with boys, both in its content, and in the language, methods, approaches, and practices of teaching." (Ministry of Education,1993a:1). However, this move is being carried out against a backdrop of economic rationalisation and the retrenchment of the State from educational provision along with the State's historical failure to seriously work towards gender equity. As O'Neill states

> ...the recent educational restructuring and current policies must be seen
> against the backdrop of an administration which has consistently attacked
> the personal, structural and political gains that women have made
> (1992a:36)

Change strategies and models of a gender-inclusive curriculum must be developed that not only take cognisance of the political climate in which change is taking place but also acknowledge the particularly gendered nature of our culture.

Although the emphasis in this study is on masculinities as they are produced and reproduced through the secondary school curriculum this does not detract from the significance of institutions such as the family and the labour market in this process. Educational provision also acts within the wider social relations constitutive of society. As O'Neill makes clear

> (New Zealand) society is structured by three major processes or systems
> of domination which are temporally and historically specific. These are
> the class structures inherent in the social relations of production, the
> structural arrangements which perpetuate racial oppression and inequality
> and the dominant nature of our gendered culture (James & Saville-
> Smith,1988) or the sex/gender system (Rubin,1975; Cockburn,1983;
> Connell, 1987). These structural processes, or the ways in which social
> life is continually being organised and disorganised through time, shape
> and impinge upon the nature of educational provision, which in turn

contributes to the maintenance of these divisions....These systems should not be construed as separate entities or hierarchically organised structures, they do not operate autonomously but interact at all sites of oppression. Thus, the social inequalities of race, class and gender arise out of the material existence of people's lives and have their basis in the capitalist relations of production and reproduction (1990:82).

Schools do not simply reflect social inequalities, they also contribute to the production and maintenance of these inequalities. The curriculum, therefore, must be interrogated for its contributions to gendered power relations in our society.

To date, all the non-sexist initiatives for schools have focused on girls as the medium of change. Yet, feminist research has consistently demonstrated that boy's behaviour in the classroom has significant implications for the girls' development of sense of self and concomitant future possibilities. As my discussion in Chapter Three shows, the ways in which boys are supported in this by teachers, schooling structures and practices has also been well documented. It is time the focus shifted to boys and dominant cultural forms of masculinity as the medium of change. This study is a step in that direction.

THE NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

In 1993 the Ministry of Education published *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* as a key document that will underpin learning and teaching in *all* New Zealand schools from 1994 (Ministry of Education,1993a). According to *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*, recent educational reforms represent in part a response to the challenges of particular social changes, namely, an increase in the level of violent crime, an increase in adolescent suicide, a high percentage of teenage pregnancies, and a high level of alcohol and drug abuse (ibid:28). *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* does not give a gender analysis of these "disturbing social trends" (ibid) yet statistics show distinctive gender patterns. Young men in particular

are overwhelmingly involved in risk-taking behaviour and over-represented in anti-social activities.

Statistical data is variable. Some is dated, some depends on the way particular institutions define, for example, alcohol abuse, some provide only superficial information, and some exclude sex as a category. However, the figures available do provide clear evidence that men's actions constitute significant social problems (Coney,1990). I shall discuss figures for each of these "disturbing social trends" in turn[1]

Comprehensive statistics are available form the ACC on sports related injuries. These are collected according to specific age groups, sports, and sex. They provide an illustration of the financial cost of our gendered culture.

The three most costly sports in ACC claims

Sport	Sex	No.Injured	No.Killed	Cost
Rugby	M	9,733	-	24,407,277
Rugby League	M	2,710	1	7,094,842
Soccer	M	1,899	1	5,595,653
Totals		14,542	2	37,097,772

Women's injuries were highest in netball and horseriding

| Netball | F | 2,044 | - | 4,580,355 |
| Horseriding | F | 905 | 3 | 2,353,072 |

The next three most costly sports are

Skiing Snow	M	854	1	3.043,282
Cricket	M	1,278	-	2,703,826
Swimming	M	739	32	2,371,641

Even the 'Other' category looked like this

| Other | F | 1,639 | 4 | 3,129,227 |
| | M | 2,448 | 33 | 6,797,879 |

I then looked at age groups and ACC payouts. In all groups males cost more than females in sports related injuries except in the 75 plus group

| 75+ | F | 36 | 1 | 55,472 |
| | M | 34 | - | 46,191 |

Despite the population gap between males and females at 75+ the difference in the number injured is not great.

Source: ACC Injury Statistics Claims Paid 1992.

Violent Crime

Between 1985 and 1994 the number of convictions for violent offences rose 110% (Spier,1995:28). Of the 11,529 convictions for violent offences in 1994, 92 percent were male (ibid::40). The majority of these offenders were aged 20 -24 or in their thirties. Convictions for rape and other sex offences numbered 2371 (ibid:41). The victims of violent sex offences were primarily females under seventeen years of age (82%). Another dimension to these figures is seen in family violence statistics. In the first six months of 1994, 10,000 women and children sought help from women's refuges (Snively,1995). In addition, evidence about hospitalisation and death among young men shows that 73% of those admitted to hospital as a result of attempted homicide or deliberate injury were men, and 60% were aged 15 to 29 (Department of Health,1992a). Violent men are not only inflicting injury on women and children, they are also harming other men.

Adolescent Suicide

Adolescent suicide is primarily a male problem. In 1987 adolescent suicide victims numbered 229 males and 80 females (Pritchard,1992). In Aotearoa/New Zealand young men are suiciding at a rate greater than any other country. However, when the self-inflicted injuries are added to the suicide figures, a different pattern emerges. Accident related discharges and deaths from public hospitals in 1992 show that 1,000 males and 1,448 females had diagnoses of suicide and self-inflicted injuries (Ministry of Health,1994). Female self-inflicted injuries are higher than male self-inflicted injuries but less often fatal. This difference is likely to be due to the more violent means, such as guns, that males use.

There is evidence to suggest that the male adolescent suicide rate is related to, though not necessarily causally, increasing violent crime, increasing drug and alcohol abuse and mental health problems such as depression. These may all be linked to wider socio-economic problems such as a high rate of male unemployment and increasing numbers of people living below the recognised poverty line (Public Health Commission, 1993)

and the links these have with conceptions of masculinity in our society. It is clear that much more research needs to be done in this area.

Teenage Pregnancy

In 1990, 5037 women under the age of twenty gave birth and 2287 had abortions (Department of Statistics). Although the fertility rate (number of live births per 1,000 women) has halved over the last twenty years, it is still the highest of the developed countries with which we are usually compared (Public Health Commission,1992:15). Holibar and Wyllie's (1992) study of Form 5 to Form 7 students found that alcohol played a significant role in unprotected sexual intercourse.

Maskill's (1991) review of adolescent sexuality studies found that sexual activity in the 14 to 19 age group was significant. Between 30% to 45% of females and 40% to 60% of males reported sexual experiences. There was a definite difference in perceptions of sexual activity between males and females. The young women surveyed were more likely to report that they participated in sexual activity within the context of a steady relationship. The males, however, reported earlier sexual experiences and more partners. If these young people are essentially having sexual relationships within their own peer group, it would appear that the males and females have quite different perceptions of the relationship. This may be a significant factor in explaining the low rate of contraceptive use amongst sexually active adolescents.

Family Planning statistics show that to the year ended 30th June,1990 170,000 women, 6000 men and 2300 couples visited Family Planning clinics (Department of Statistics,1993). Information is not readily available regarding the age of people seeking family planning services but there is an enormous discrepancy between male and female consultations. It is evident that males far less frequently seek contraceptive advice.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Alcohol is a major public health problem in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Public Health Commission, 1993). Men drink three times as much as women and have three times the number of alcohol-related problems (Department of Statistics,1993:151). Studies

carried out nationally in 1988 and 1990 found that the 18 to 23 year age group had a disproportionately high rate of alcohol consumption (Wyllie and Casswell, 1989; Black and Casswell, 1991; Dept. of Health 1992a). This was particularly so for young men. In addition, use of illicit drugs by males was significantly higher in all age groups and for all types of drugs. Males represented over 80 percent of the 8139 convictions for offences involving drugs in 1994 (Spier, 1995). The drug and alcohol inpatient statistics presented on page 3 also indicate distinctive gender patterns.

Alcohol is also associated with other social problems. It is implicated in the high rate of teenage pregnancies, in the increase in violent crime, in adolescent suicide, and in motor vehicle accidents especially amongst young people. In 1989, motor vehicle accidents accounted for 44% of deaths in the 15 to 24 year age group yet only for 3% of deaths in the general population (Department of Health 1992b). One study found that half the fatal road accidents involved excess alcohol consumption, and 20 percent of hospitalised drivers had been drinking (Bailey and Allo, 1987:5). Convictions for traffic offences involving excess alcohol numbered 19,321 in 1994 (Spier, 1995). A gender breakdown of this figure is not available (ibid).

Statistics provide only a superficial knowledge of the *nature* of social relations. In Chapter Two, my discussion on masculinity in New Zealand makes explicit the link between alcohol consumption and male culture. Phillip's historical analysis maintains that alcohol consumption in New Zealand has its historical origins in frontier boozing and in exclusively male consumption in bars and clubs (Phillips, 1987)). James and Saville-Smith (1989) argue that the combination of alcohol and vehicles is a particularly important and destructive aspect of young New Zealand men's manifestation of masculinity. The divergence between male and female representations in these "disturbing social trends" cannot be explained simply by individual deviance. They are embedded in a historically and socially constructed "gender order" (Mathews, 1984). This gender order, with its concomitant pattern of power relations between the male and female cultures in Aotearoa/New Zealand, forms the basis of our gendered culture and carries with it particular heavy financial and social costs (James and Saville-Smith, 1988).

The cost of drink/driving accidents was estimated at $110 million in 1986 (Bailey,1986:1). This does not include the expenses incurred through the traffic and justice systems. In 1990 treatment services for alcohol use disorders cost $30 million dollars (Department of Statistics,1993:152). Males comprised 75 percent of this group. The major social costs, however, are borne by women. This has been accentuated through the restructuring of the health services with its emphasis on individual responsibility and community care. The responsibility for alcohol-related social problems does not fall on the brewer or the publican. The community to which those who need continuing care are returned is primarily comprised of women.

To date there has been no research in this country that focuses on the impact of the secondary school curriculum on the development of male sense of self. Yet if the secondary school curriculum is reinforcing social processes that lead to the social problems acknowledged in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* this needs to be identified. When linked to the research on sexism in education and the gendered nature of the curriculum the question arises: Do the processes involved in the systematic denigration of women in the school curriculum support a social ethos of violence and abuse by men? (Alton-Lee *et al*,1991:111).

Although schools provide only one site at which the processes that contribute to these social problems can be interrupted, it is a powerful site. The school curriculum in particular carries with it an authority that is rarely challenged. Consequently it not only plays a significant role in legitimating these processes but it also can play a significant role in changing them. There is therefore an urgent need for classroom research in this country into the cultural construction of the masculinities available through the school curriculum.

FEMINIST THEORY AND MALE SENSE OF SELF

It is feminism that has rendered men and masculinities problematic and open to inquiry. Extensive feminist literature over the past three decades has rendered the subject problematic, questioned theory in all disciplines, and debated difference (Luke & Gore, 1992). Feminists have been at the forefront of exposures of the masculine nature of both knowledge and the academic world from which the knowledge comes (for example, Spender, 1981, 1992; Weedon, 1987). They have argued that what we know and how we know has primarily been men's knowledge and men's ways of knowing.

Yet, most of the feminist and pro-feminist research on gender and education has focused on girls and women. As with other theories of oppression and liberation this presents a certain paradox in that dominant groups are still presented as the norm from which the other groups deviate. It also means that change strategies are focused on the subordinate groups or individuals. Yet gender is a relational construct. It involves both males and females in historically and materially specific power relations.

Feminist scholarship over the past two decades has clearly demonstrated that gender constitutes a basic social organising principle in all known societies. Through multiple and varied ways, gender serves not simply as a collection of individual traits that mark one as male (masculine) or female (feminine) but gender is also a structuring process founded on relations of power. As Connell *et al* remind us

> When we talk about gender we are talking about ways in which social relations get organised in the interests of some groups, overriding the interests of others (1982:173).

As I argued previously, these social relations are socially constructed and historical. That is, they vary between and within different societies and over time. They are therefore subject to change. They are also intersected by other social structuring processes such as race and class. This is not a straightforward process but rather class and gender "abrade, inflame, amplify, twist, negate, dampen and complicate each

other" (ibid:182). It is this understanding of gender as a socially constructed relation of power interacting with race and class that informs my study.

Feminism is not just a set of beliefs. It is also a set of theoretical constructions about the nature of women's oppression and the part that this oppression plays within society more generally (Stanley and Wise,1983:55). Although there are many strands of feminist theory, which interpret and explain women's oppression and patriarchal society in different ways, there are, according to Stanley and Wise's analysis, three central themes integral to all strands of feminism. First, women's oppression is seen as an indisputable fact which has consequences for *everyone* in society. Second, the personal is political. That is, the *political* is experienced in everyday life, and is not separate from it.

> ...feminism argues that systems and social structures, whether concerned
> with the family, the economy, or the oppression of women more
> generally, can best be examined and understood through an exploration
> of relationships and experiences within everyday life (ibid:53).

And third, feminist theory is informed by a feminist consciousness which means that women's understandings of our lives are transformed so that we see and understand the contradictions and conflicts within which we live.

Feminist theory has worked, and continues to work, on the social world in two particular ways.

> On the one hand, feminist theory has radically questioned and attempted
> to undermine the presumptions, methods and frameworks of phallocentric
> or patriarchal discourses and disciplines. On the other hand, feminist
> theory has simultaneously attempted to explore and develop alternatives
> to these phallocentric systems, bringing into being new, hitherto
> unarticulated, feminine perspectives on the world. In other words, today
> feminist theory is involved in both an *anti*-sexist project, which involves
> challenging and deconstructing phallocentric discourse; and in a positive

project of constructing and developing alternative models, methods, procedures, discourses,etc (Gross, 1986:195).

MY FEMINIST STANDPOINT

My research project is based on the central tenets of feminist theory outlined by Stanley and Wise (1983). It also takes cognisance of the two ways of acting on the world as summarised by Gross above. Changing the focus on gender analyses to specifically include males means that men and masculinities are also problematised. What goes on in a classroom when female students are absent? What is the significance of gender in this situation? If girls and women are being directed through social structures and processes to take up subordinate subject positions, are boys and men being similarly directed through these same, or parallel, structures and processes to take up dominant subject positions. How do men learn to take up dominant subject positions in relation to women?

Feminist analyses must be developed that acknowledge the intricacies of the masculinizing processes of schools and "in which the complex interaction of competing subjectivities and the power of gender, race and class is made clear (Weiler,1988:4). In my study I aim to elucidate the nature of the secondary school curriculum and the subject positions it offers fifth form boys.

My study is, however, not just a philosophical and social enterprise, it is also a political project. I aim to contribute to the feminist and pro-feminist politics concerned with changing gendered power relations. As Weedon states

> Feminism is a politics. It is a politics directed at changing existing power relations between women and men in society. These power relations structure all areas of life, the family, education and welfare, the worlds of work and politics, culture and leisure. They determine who does what and for whom, what we are and what we might become (1987a:1)

Feminist theory has been built upon investigating ways to elude or break out of the rigidity of gendered subjectivities and other oppressive power relations. This undertaking by feminists has been done in order to understand how the social characteristics associated with masculinity and femininity might be acquired so that new ways of constructing ourselves could be found. In Moore's words

...to unmake the processes which we feel are oppressive we first have

to understand how they work and why they feel so powerful (1988:170)

My study is centrally concerned with "discourses of identity" (Luke & Gore,1992:2) and the ways in which subjectivity, identity, and knowledge about oneself as male are constructed through the secondary school curriculum. As Luke and Gore state, "Institutional discourses define the classroom, the teacher and the student" (ibid). Inscriptions, such as 'student' or 'teacher' are central in the production of subjectivity, identity and knowledge in curriculum enactment. Along with discourses of identity, these institutional inscriptions are embodied by real women, girls, men and boys.

Deconstructing gendered discourses directly challenges the hegemony of taken for granted biologically based assumptions such as men-as-aggressors, and women-as-carers, and puts social and cultural conditions above considerations of biology. Gendered subjectivity becomes viewed as an ideological construction that informs every aspect of our lives. There is therefore a need to understand how particular subjectivities are lived at particular times. To this end I have found a feminist poststructural standpoint provides an appropriate lens through which to view some of the complexities associated with sense of self and curriculum enactment.

Founded on the epistemology of knowledge as socially and historically constructed and truth as contested, partial, plural and contradictory, poststructural feminist theory urges us to be self-reflexive in our approach and lay our own assumptions bare for all to see. Accordingly, Jones states that

Like that postmodern architecture which exposes the beams and pipes

and other elements of construction, post modern academics and

intellectuals display their accounts as the shaped products of the author's

assumptions, theories and other instruments of production - which in turn are historical, political and cultural artifacts (1990:5).

And yet, this is not an easy nor a straightforward process. Luke and Gore comment that the pressure on academic women is not only to identify their feminist position but to also mark it with a paternal signifier of 'real theory' (1992). As Cixous points out

..the moment women open their mouths-women more often than men-they are immediately asked whose name and from what theoretical standpoint they are speaking, who is their master and where are they coming from: they have in short to salute...and to show their identity papers (1981:51)

The first three chapters of this thesis constitute a theoretical journey throughout which I show my 'identity papers'.

OUTLINE OF THIS STUDY

Chapter One

This study begins with a discussion of educational and feminist theory as it has informed my research. Early feminist work on gender and education has primarily arisen from sex-role theory and focused on the limits that conforming to a feminine stereotype places on women's participation in public life. This liberal feminist emphasis on sex-role stereotyping lends itself readily to non-sexist initiatives in educational provision. As Kessler *et al* point out, there is a certain appeal to the explanation that socialisation guides boys and girls into complementary but different roles (1985:34). Later feminist research has interrogated the *relationship* both between the male and female sex roles practice and between these roles and the wider social context and has consistently demonstrated that sex-roles contribute to the persistence of gendered power relations. These gendered power relations underpin western education systems (Deem,1980; Kessler *et al*,1985; Arnot & Weiner,1987; Davies,1989).

Most feminist research in the area of gender and education has focused on female disadvantage or deficiency within educational provision. The ubiquity of gendered power relations and their oppressive impact on girls and women must certainly be exposed and changed. However, identifying girls and women as the *issue* in gender inequities serves to mask the involvement of boys and men in this process. The relational nature of gender means that feminist work on education needs also to be directed at the effects of gendered power relations on boys and men. While feminist work has rendered girl's schooling problematic it has assumed, with few exceptions, that schooling for boys is relatively unproblematic. Observing boys in all-boy settings represents a step further in illuminating the dynamics of the gendered curriculum.

Chapter Two

My review of the literature on masculinities in Chapter Two demonstrates that a combination of "grand narratives" and feminist and profeminist analyses constitute the literature on men and masculinities. In particular, my review of "Men's Studies" demonstrates that many male writers on masculinity have a tendency to state their espousal of feminist theory and then ignore feminist writers and issues of power.

Writing from within a critical framework, Morgan (1992) argues that the relationship between men's knowledge and women's knowledge is one of dominance and contestation (ibid). The dominance of men's knowledge is, however, never absolute. Morgan adopts a profeminist approach and exposes the ways in which men and masculinities are implicated in the production of knowledge which serves to uphold the dominance of phallocentric and androcentric world views. He maintains that an investigation of men and masculinities cannot take place in isolation from the ongoing critiques of the institution within which the gendered knowledge is produced. Hence, the links between gender and systems of knowledge need to be made explicit.

Moore's analysis of male postmodern theorists suggests that much postmodern theory seems to be about a shifting in the position of masculinity, an uncertainty about manhood, a loss of faith in patriarchal authority (1988,179). Hence 'feminine'

strategies are advanced by male theorists as a means of living in this 'brave new world'. As Moore argues

> ...the world of the feminine becomes a way of men exploring, rejecting or reconstructing their masculinity, of 'getting a bit of the other' at the expense of women"(ibid:188)

This "gender tourism" enables male theorists to take packaged tours through the world of femininity, safe in the knowledge that they live elsewhere, in a more familiar, respectable and rational world (ibid). In effect such theorising gives the appearance of including women and feminism while in actuality women are subsumed into a universal category of Otherness. This is one reason why *problematising masculinity* needs to also be a focus for feminist research.

Chapter Three

In Chapter Three I discuss contemporary issues in gender and education particularly as they relate to masculinity and the curriculum. Specific masculinizing and feminising practices in schools need to be interrogated for the ways in which they contribute to producing and reproducing gendered power relations. Connell's work suggests that specific masculinising practices need to be recognised not as natural but as collective and mutually reinforcing practices through which patterns of empowerment, habits, and self-expectations of domination are encouraged in successive generations of boys, and through which structures of gender relations are produced and reproduced (Connell, 1983).

The time, effort and institutional support that is given to masculinizing practices as well as the sense of urgency given to such projects - by parents and by the boys themselves - belies biologically reductionist explanations (ibid). These practices can not be considered separate from the political, economic and social context of which they are a part. In particular, specific masculinizing practices need to be regarded as supporting the interests of men in the maintenance of male power. The historically specific character of hegemonic masculinity as competitive, confident "able to dominate others..

in situations of conflict" is specifically connected with the maintenance of male hegemony in the westernised world (Connell,1987).

Chapter Four

Formulating an appropriate research design, and maintaining integrity with feminist principles is by no means a straightforward procedure. Undertaking feminist research within the university milieu requires an interrogation of the ways in which taken-for-granted notions of 'men' and 'masculinity' shape what counts as scientific knowledge (Morgan, 1986). The dilemmas, conflicts and contradictions that this poses for feminist researchers are described well by Luke and Gore who, writing as feminist educators, state

> ...we are also women who stand hip-deep in cultures saturated with phallocentric knowledges, in institutional structures ruled epistemologically and procedurally by men and masculinist signifiers, and in a discipline which despite its historical terrain as "women's work" - a caring profession- remains the theoretical and administrative custody of men (1992:2).

A self-reflexive approach to my study must engage with the contradictions of being inside/outside phallocentric discourses which I simultaneously reject and accept. I reject them for the ways they serve to subordinate and marginalise women. I accept them for their usefulness in exposing the processes by which this subordination and marginalisation is legitimated. Although I position myself as a feminist poststructuralist, I do not adhere to Giroux's definition of poststructural feminism as a "feminism that rejects all forms of essentialism"(1991:44). Despite the usefulness of poststructural theoretical tenets for my study, my theoretical position is primarily feminist.

These are some of the conflicts and contradictions that I discuss in Chapter Four, as I share the decision-making processes that influenced the shape of my study.

Chapter Five and Six

Quantitative results from Stage One of my study captures a broad picture of these fifth form boys' perceptions and beliefs concerning gender relations and themselves. In particular the results raise questions about the links between the boys perceptions of themselves and their perceptions of men. Results from the questionnaires helped in the selection of the two case study boys, Michael and Nathan[2]. I provide a preliminary introduction to these two boys in Chapter Five and also introduce the English and Mathematics classrooms. The quantitative gender analysis of five English lessons and private utterances are also presented and discussed. This analysis of human mentions in the curriculum provides clear evidence of the relative invisibility of females in curriculum content.

The significance of this for boys' construction of sense of self becomes clearer in my discussion in Chapter Six of curriculum enactment and the interviews. Critical discourse analysis of the curriculum transcripts identifies several discursive themes centred around defining and upholding a particular hegemonic masculinity. These themes substantiate much of the previous work on hegemonic masculinity and multiple masculinities. Personal interviews with five of the boys, including Michael and Nathan, showed clearly the diversity of masculinities that these boys are developing. They also showed the marginalisation and alienation that boys investing in a non-hegemonic version of masculiity experience in a single-sex school.

Chapter Seven

This final chapter presents strategies for working with boys, based on the findings from my own study. Due to the reluctance on the part of the current administration to deal seriously with gender issues in education, these strategies are designed for feminist and profeminist teachers who want to work towards change.

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[2]In order to maintain anonymity, pseudonyms are used for all participants in this study.

ABOUT WORDS

My project is fraught with contradictions, conflicts and paradoxes. Like Lather, I too "wrestle with what it means to do research and teaching in a time noteworthy for broadbased questioning of the foundational assumptions of Western knowledge" (Lather,1991:xix). I see the contradictions around me in my little corner of academia, and of which I am a part, where few academics are actually taking on board this 'broadbased questioning'. This is one of the main features of 'the evaluative climate' (Doyle,1983) of qualification oriented educational research. Writers at the forefront of critical and/or feminist theory were not the writers presented to me during my studies. How then can I best use their insights ("as yet unnameable") (Derrida,1978:293) to provide useful knowledge in the interests of emancipatory projects yet still meet the evaluative criteria laid down in a positivist era?

In a time when everything has its problematic aspect, how does one decide what issues or concepts to accept and what to reject? Butler, for example, highlights how the very categorising of gender identities can actually work towards the continuing oppression of women (Butler,1990). This view is also reflected by Hearn and Morgan when they state that the very categories of 'men', 'women', 'masculinity', and 'femininity' may have the effect of perpetuating the power structures that give rise to these distinctions (Hearn & Morgan,1990:13). Yet Hartstock has argued that at the very time when silenced populations have begun to express their 'voice' on behalf of themselves, the concept of subjecthood becomes problematic. "Just when we are forming our own theories about the world, uncertainty emerges about whether the world can be theorised" (Hartstock,1990:163). At the very moment when masculinity is problematised, masculinity as a unitary category no longer exists. This acts to undermine any sense of self as a gendered, ethnic or classed subject. As Seidler points out

> At some level it means that men are off the hook, at the very moment
> when they are beginning to recognise themselves in their masculinities.
> Rather sexual politics, as organised around gendered relationships of
> power and subordination, become sidelined, as they seem to be organised
> around pre-existing gendered subjects (Seidler,1994:ix)

Whatever the theoretical arguments, in my study I intend to "name men as men" (Collinson & Hearn,1994). In so doing I may be perpetuating the dichotomy around which gendered power relationships operate. Yet I am also acutely aware that the contradictions and conflicts surrounding what counts as scholarly educational research can actually serve to stifle any innovative or creative emancipatory research. Even if "the very categories we use to liberate us may also have their controlling moment" (Nicholson, 1990:16) we still need to hark back to some of these categories in order to be able to think or articulate our thoughts. Exposing our beams is one thing, doing away with them altogether is something else again.

Originally I wrote this thesis using the terms 'students' or 'male students' to refer to the fifth form boys who participated in this study. I wished to use gender neutral and more adult terms to describe the students. These students are caught up in the process of changing from boys to men. The terms students/male students position them in that process rather than at one end of it. However, the gender neutral nature of 'students' masks the boys as specifically gendered individuals. This stands in sharp contradiction to the central tenet of my thesis which is the problematising of male sense of self as a specifically gendered sense of self. Boys and men as gendered individuals are usually subsumed and thus hidden under the rubric of 'people'. This is well illustrated in the popular brain teaser that goes like this.

> A father and son are coming home from a fishing trip. They are involved in a car crash. The father is killed and the son is seriously injured. He is taken to hospital, but the surgeon sees him and says"I can't operate on him, he is my son". Who is the surgeon?

This puzzle generates all sort of interesting answers - stepfather, grandfather, foster father, father. The answer, of course, is that the surgeon is the boy's mother.

Surgeons, like farmers, accountants, leaders, achievers, and so on are supposedly gender neutral terms and yet most of us associate these terms with men. In such a way men are not named as men. To name men as men, however, takes away the cover of these apparently gender neutral terms and, especially when the issue is anti-social

behaviour, points the finger. Where it made sense to do so, I changed every mention of 'student' to 'boy' and every mention of 'male students' to 'boys'. My research project reads quite differently as a result. Naming 'men as men' does generate feelings of discomfort.

It must be noted, though, that the 'boys' to whom I refer are the fifth form boys who participated in this study. They do not represent a homogenous group themselves, neither are they necessarily representative of other fifth form boys.

In this study, I don't lay claim to discovering a new 'truth' or world view, but rather I hope that my written work will resemble Fraser and Nicholson's metaphor for postmodern-feminist theory in that it will look more like a tapestry composed of threads of many different hues than one woven in a single colour (Fraser & Nicholson, 1990:35).

Chapter One

FEMINIST THEORISING:
GENDER, EDUCATION AND THE CURRICULUM

Classifying different theoretical approaches into distinct 'strands' always runs the risk of oversimplification and reification. Trying to squeeze feminist analyses into 'man-made' theories also poses difficulties. Although feminist educational scholarship is informed by earlier 'malestream'[1] educational theories, this is not a straightforward process. Greenberg, for instance, assumes a universal acceptance and translation into practice of educational theories by feminists when she states

> ...feminists have, with incredible effectiveness, made operational the
> ideas, insights and practices educational philosophers and theorists have
> engendered and promulgated (1982:194).

Feminists have not simply reframed educational theories with a gender analysis. Much feminist educational scholarship has also emerged "from within the pragmatic contexts and conditions in which feminists found themselves" when working and studying in educational institutions (Gore, 1993:28). This has led to diversity, fragmentation and contextualisation of feminist educational scholarship. While 'malestream' accounts within critical educational theory are represented by key theorists and concepts which focus on class-based relations as the central social relation, feminist educational scholarship is not so easily reduced to a few primary proponents and concepts.

My aim in this chapter is to provide an overview of feminist scholarship particularly as it pertains to education and the school curriculum. The first part of this chapter is about gender theory, particularly sex-role theory and its critiques. I continue with a discussion of feminist analyses of education with an emphasis on the school curriculum.

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[1] 'malestream' is a term originating from O'Brien(1981) who uses it to portray the numerical and ideological domination of men and their concerns within sociology.

Feminist scholarship in educational studies, despite broad differences in approaches, has exposed, consistently and clearly, "the ubiquity of gender in all educational provision" (O'Neill, 1990:74). Some of this feminist work has been undertaken within the parameters of traditional sex-role theory and liberal philosophy or radical feminist theory. Socialist feminist educational theory is informed by critical educational theories which arise from Marxist and neo-Marxist analyses and are centrally concerned with a masculinist subject. This renders emancipatory projects concerned with gender relations theoretically and practically problematic, particular as that 'masculinist subject' itself is not critiqued. As I discuss in the concluding section of this chapter, poststructural feminist scholarship moves beyond these boundaries and develops conceptual tools helpful for understanding gendered subjectivities within cultural production and reproduction (Davies, 1989; Saco,1992; Luke & Gore,1992).

ORIGINS OF SEX ROLE THEORY

Functionalism

Functionalism is a social theory founded on the philosophy and methods of the natural sciences. This focus on systematic empirical enquiry underpins a view of society as constituting discrete concrete entities which can be observed and measured. These measurements are then used to predict and control outcomes. Society is viewed as evolving in an orderly fashion towards higher level functioning (Prunty,1984). The status quo is viewed as a natural and necessary state with change happening through an orderly process which benefits the whole society. Society is considered to work for the good of all, each with their own place and 'role'.

Within functionalist social theory, each individual or group has a particular role in society which serves to maintain an integrative, cohesive 'social system'. Through the process of socialisation, people in a particular social position (for example, mother, worker) learn the specific expectations of that role and behave accordingly.

Role Theory

According to Connell (1983), Linton (1936) formulated the concept of role in order to demonstrate that behavioural patterns between individuals and social groups are complementary and necessary for a society to function. Through the socialisation process, involving role position, role prescription, counter-position and sanction, a person learns their appropriate role in society. Given that the central task of functionalist sociology is to explain social stability, role theory posits that the *internalisation* of role prescriptions establishes particular personality traits which *match* with societal need. This guarantees the stability of the social system (Connell, 1983). As Connell states, role theory

> ...offers a framework of social analysis which allows a simple and
> straightforward account of the insertion of people into social relations
> (ibid:193)

There is an assumption within role theory that everyone in a particular position behaves the same way. In playing the *role* associated with a particular position, a person is expected to exhibit certain prescriptive behaviours based on a normative standard case. Failure to act according to this normative pattern renders the person 'deviant' and hence in need of intervention from a plethora of 'helping' professions. As Connell states

> 'Deviance' is typically explained via imperfect socialisation, or better
> still by role conflicts, produced by tensions between the different roles
> a given person has to perform or disputes about the definition of a given
> role (ibid:202)

Sex-role Theory

When this scientific logic is transposed onto the problem of social differences between males and females two discrete roles, the male sex-role and the female sex-role, are identified (Parsons & Bales, 1953; Parsons, 1964). Sex role theory maintains that male and female roles are distinct, biologically based, and complementary. Each is necessary to the stability of the social order. Biological differences are viewed as determining social and psychological differences between males and females. Sex-role theory maintains that the different social positions that males and females hold in both the

private and public sphere are natural. The 'naturalness' of these differences is so taken for granted as to remain unquestioned.

Within sex role theory male and female roles are viewed as not only distinct and biologically based, but also socially learned. The appropriate sex role becomes internalised into the personality. As Connell puts it

>...feminine character is produced by socialisation into the female role, masculine character by socialisation into the male role - and deviants by some kind of failure in socialisation (1987:49)

The 'naturalness' of sex differences has become embedded in taken-for-granted concepts of masculinity and femininity. Justified by this 'naturalness', psychologists, sociologists and child rearing experts focused on the problem of 'socialising' children into their appropriate sex-role.

Using methods grounded in positivist science, sex differences are able to be identified and quantified along masculinity/femininity scales. For example, Terman and Miles(1936) formulated a psychologically normative configuration of traits, attitudes, and interests for each sex and introduced the terms "masculinity-femininity" (MF) for the personality measurements on which males and females were seen to vary. Using their masculinity-femininity scales it was possible to determine "grades of deviates" from the normative personality style for each sex. At the furtherest end of Terman and Miles' "grades of deviates" were homosexuals; that is, those men displaying characteristics normally displayed by women. These tests were considered an effective means of screening male populations for homosexuals.

In describing masculinity and femininity as a list of traits and behavioural characteristics, sex-role theory upholds forms of masculinity and femininity as normative and embedded in 'common sense'. This normative standard is viewed as the way a male or female should behave. Within early sex role theory, sex roles are considered problematic when an individual has difficulty adjusting to their particular role (Carrigan *et al*,1985). The female sex role is a concern when women are infertile,

chose not to marry, or worse, choose not to have children, want a career, or are unhappy with their roles as wife and mother. That is, inability or reluctance to adhere to the 'natural' female role of nurturer of children and men is considered problematic. It was this problematic with which early liberal feminists were concerned (Edwards,1983).

In contrast, the male sex role is considered problematic when young men develop 'hypermasculinity' in the form of juvenile delinquent behaviour (Hartley,1959). That is, they adhere too strongly to the male sex role of toughness and aggression. It is also problematic when men are not 'masculine' enough. That is, they are 'effeminate' or homosexual (Dubbert, 1979). As I shall discuss in the section on Men's Liberation in Chapter Two, the male sex-role problematic has changed to one of concern about the *content* of the male sex-role and the constraints that this places on men.

Critiques of sex role theory and the stereotypes it upholds were generated from the developing consciousness and theoretical literature associated with feminism. Feminist scholarship exposes the biologically essentialist basis of sex-role theory (Franzway & Lowe,1978; Edwards,1983). These writers argued that the assumed 'naturalness' of women's and men's different social positions serves to mask male dominance and female subordination. It was further pointed out that men's and women's different social positions are upheld as natural and necessary for the smooth functioning of society and the relational nature of masculinity and femininity is ignored. Because this relation is a power relationship, sex-role theory therefore serves to uphold male dominance and female subordination by regarding gendered power relations as 'natural' sex differences and essential to the social structure.

Sex-role theory serves to provide biologically determinist explanations for the sexual division of labour ignoring the ways the gendered labour, segregation and stratification is inherent in the capitalist mode of production. Connell (1983) provides a compelling critique of sex-role theory which he views not as a scientific theory but rather "...as part of the practical ideology of academic social science" (ibid:189). According to Connell, policies and ideologies regarding sex role socialisation have less to do with

biological necessities than with culturally based perspectives. In conjunction with colleagues (Carrigan, Connell and Lee,1985), Connell also maintains that the sex-role framework, as a means of understanding gender, leads to a reification of expectations and self-descriptions, an exaggeration of consensus, a marginalisation of questions of power and a failure to analyse historical change. As these writers assert

> The male sex role does not exist. It is impossible to isolate a "role" that constructs masculinity (or another that constructs femininity). Because there is no area of social life that is not the arena of sexual differentiation and gender relations, the notion of a sex role necessarily simplifies and abstracts to an impossible degree (ibid:581).

Furthermore, the ways in which the power relations between masculinity and femininity underpin the structure and functioning of the wider society are also ignored. As Connell (1987) points out, what is 'normative' is really a description of what is socially acceptable. This, of course, raises the questions regarding whose interests are being served in upholding this normative standard case? In what ways do people manifest resistance to those interests? What potential changes could be made? (ibid). Connell argues that

> The dominance of the normative standard case in sex-role literature, plus the concept of deviance, have a distinct effect. They create the impression that the conventional sex-role is the majority case, and that departures from it are socially marginal and likely to be the result of some eccentricity, produced by imperfect or inappropriate socialisation (ibid:52)

In addition, sex-role theory has also been used to counter social changes that have come about as a result of the women's emancipation movement of the late nineteenth century, or what has been called "first wave feminism". This movement, based on liberal notions of human rights, argued that public life generally be opened up more to women. This began a gradual shift in the part that women played in society. Social institutions have become regulated towards increased opportunities for women, discriminatory and oppressive laws have gradually changed, education has become more readily available,

and the labour market has opened up work opportunities for women. With the phasing out of more overt social controls over women other, more covert ways of regulating sex differences and the power relations inherent in these differences, have emerged. The new social sciences have been used by particular interest groups to legitimise specific conceptions of masculinity and femininity.

Role theory provides 'scientific' justification for particular prescriptive behaviours associated with a given social position. 'Deviance' is thus scientifically defined. These gender differences are named and codified into two mutually exclusive categories, and any variation is considered pathological. The concepts of 'normative' and 'deviance' serve to legitimate and justify intervention via the medical and paramedical professions to 'cure' the deviant.

For example, it is only within the past few years, in response to Gay Liberation campaigns, that homosexuality has been removed from diagnostic manual of the American Psychiatric Association. Gender Identity Disorder is, however, still a psychiatric diagnosis. The manual states

> Girls with this disorder regularly have male companions and an avid interest in sports and rough-and-tumble play; they show no interest in dolls or playing "house"....Boys with this disorder...often have a compelling desire to participate in the games and pastimes of girls. Female dolls are often their favourite toys and girls their preferred playmates (American Psychiatric Association,1987:71-72).

In order to emphasise the serious (and rare) nature of this diagnosis, the manual states

> This disorder is not merely a child's non-conformity to stereotypic sex-role behaviour as, for example, in "tomboyishness" in girls or "sissyish" behaviour in boys, but rather a profound disturbance of the normal sense of maleness and femaleness (ibid).

The concept of "normal" used in this way exemplifies Connell's critique regarding the assumed normative standard of two distinct sex roles and the reification of descriptions

and expectations (Carrigan *et al*,1985; Connell, 1987). It also exemplifies the way in which biological differences are turned into prescriptive social differences, deviance from which is then medicalised and intervention justified. The manual acknowledges the social ostracism and conflict that these children endure. This pressure is so intense that non-stereotypical behaviour gradually decreases during late childhood. The manual reveals it's involvement in promoting distinct sex-roles when it states

> Most children with this disorder deny being disturbed by it, except that
> it brings them into conflict with the expectations of their family or peers
> (American Psychiatric Association,1987:72).

Thus it is the social environment and not individual psychopathology that causes difficulties for children who don't conform to sex-stereotypes. As Connell further points out, role theory in general and sex-role theory in particular constitute the practical ideology embedded in the daily work of counsellors, social workers, teachers, and personnel officers as they are concerned with shaping people to fit the requirements of the social system (1987).

The biologically based dichotomy on which sex-role theory is grounded promotes and supports the centrality of the male-female dualism in Western society. As Davies makes clear

> The meaning that we give to being male or female in the everyday world
> rests on the assumption of bipolarity of physiological difference which
> serves as the ground on which bipolar social selves are constituted. This
> construction has been aided by a great deal of faulty 'science' which has
> *assumed* bipolar physiological difference and set out to 'prove' that the
> bipolarity of gendered selves stems from that physiological
> bipolarity...(1989:x)

Exposing the ideological assumptions on which sex-role theory is based, does not, however, preclude it's usefulness for gender analyses. As Connell points out

To recognise these weaknesses,...does not prevent fruitful research on stereotypes of femininity and masculinity, that is, on sex roles as social constructs, cultural ideals, media contents and so forth(1987:54).

In my own study, I have used data collection tools that stem from previous research on male and female stereotypes which was grounded in functionalist social science. The cross-cultural research instigated by Williams and Best (1990a) focused on the stereotypes associated with males and females in thirty different countries, including New Zealand. The objective was to identify the beliefs commonly held in many cultures about the psychological characteristics associated with men and women and to examine these sex-trait stereotypes for cross-cultural similarities and differences. Using several different scoring systems developed in the United States, Williams and Best sought to develop an understanding of the nature of these stereotypes[2].

In a follow-up study the researchers set out to establish the extent to which males and females in a given culture incorporate male-associated and female-associated characteristics into their self-descriptions (Williams and Best,1990b). In each country the sex stereotypes discovered in the first study were reflected in the self-descriptions of participants in the second study. Williams and Best also investigated the normative beliefs associated with male-female relations, that is, the 'Sex-Role Ideology'(SRI), in each country.

Despite the problematic history and nature of sex-role theory, rooted as it is in positivist assumptions and functionalist social science, this literature has provided some useful tools for my own investigation. I have chosen to emulate some aspects of Williams and Best's work. I do so for three reasons. First, this research identifies characteristics that are *popularly* associated with males in this country. It thus gives a picture (albeit a limited one) of a masculinity that was hegemonic in the late 1970s when the research was carried out. Second, Williams and Best provide New Zealand data from which I was able to develop a sex-focused questionnaire specific to this country. As I explain

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[2] Full information concerning these studies can be found in Williams & Best(1990a) and Williams & Best (1990b).

in Chapter Four, I have developed three of my questionnaires using data collection tools and data from William's and Best's two studies. And, third, Williams and Best's work represents a change from normative, prescriptive analyses to an examination of sex-stereotypes. These researchers have highlighted the existence and nature of sex-trait stereotypes in New Zealand. This change in focus opens the way for research on constraints that conforming to popular so called stereotypes places on individuals. It is this latter that is the focus of the Men's Liberation literature, which I examine in Chapter Two, and liberal feminist analyses of schooling to which I now turn.

EARLY FEMINIST ANALYSES

Early liberal feminist educational analyses, premised on liberalism's philosophy of human rights, argued that girls and women have the right to receive the same educational opportunities as boys and men (Wollstonecraft, 1976; Tong, 1989). Liberal feminist educational theory stems from functionalist social science and sex-role theory with their concomitant biologically essentialist and determinist explanations of social differences. The main focus is on sex-role stereotyping and its repressive implications for girls. Sex-role stereotyping is viewed as underpinning all facets of the schooling system. Liberal feminist studies have exposed the gender differentiated curricula, sex stereotyped subject choices, disproportionate resources, space and teacher's attention directed towards boys, male bias in teaching materials, hierarchical power structures in schools, and lack of women in educational administration. Liberal feminist analyses demonstrate the stereotyping and bias that is a taken-for-granted part of curriculum materials and school practices. In particular, liberal feminist work significantly highlights and documents the exclusion of women and girls within educational provision and the sexism on which this exclusion is founded. These effects of sex-role stereotypes have been shown to have significant implications for girls' futures. For example, Byrne(1987), using liberal feminist arguments, draws clear causal relationships between the subjects girls 'choose' at secondary school and their later congregation in feminised occupations.

Liberal feminist emphasis on sex-role stereotyping lends itself readily to non-sexist initiatives in educational provision. Liberal feminist work has been at the forefront of the anti-sexist initiatives in schools. Examples of liberal feminist influence can be found in documents such as *A National Policy for the Education of Girls and Women in New Zealand* (Women's Advisory Committee on Education, 1988) and *Countering Sexism in Education* (Department of Education, 1989). Liberal feminist theory also underpinned the Vocational Training Centre's **Girls/Women Can Do Anything** campaign.

Liberal feminism sowed the seeds for the reform of gender as an organising principle in the public sphere. The strength of this approach has been the more ready acceptance of liberal feminist analyses into male-steam understandings, especially by policy- and decision-makers. As Connell declares, "Liberal feminism took the doctrine of "rights" seriously and turned it against the patriarchal model of citizenship" (1990:512). Exposing the gendered nature of schooling enabled liberal feminists to " ...inspire a formidable and sustainable politics of access" (ibid:513). This has, however, carried with it particular limitations.

Liberal feminist analyses of schooling are based on functionalism and sex-role theory. This focus, as I argued earlier, cannot account for the power dynamics in social life. Thus, the wider social and economic context, of which schooling is a part, is left unexamined. Change strategies are based on expanding the female sex role by changing teachers' and girls' attitudes and expectations, providing appropriate 'role models' and eliminating sex-based bias in texts. Of particular concern, though, is the lack of significant changes arising from anti-sexist strategies. Despite professed equality of educational opportunity, this has not been translated into equality of outcome (Sturrock, 1993).

The effect of liberal feminist programmes is to convey a message of male-as-the-norm to which girls and women can aspire. They therefore can perpetuate a belief in the immutability of the hierarchical power relations in our society. In addition they uphold the notion that girls and women will achieve equal power relations only when they take up the higher-status male roles. They also perpetuate beliefs about the superior value

of men's public work in relation to women's nurturing, servicing work either in the
home or in the paid workforce.

Girls are encouraged to aim for the same educational achievement and occupational
access that boys have. The lack of a class analysis means that the inequality of
opportunity that some boys experience is left unexamined. As Arnot points out

> Equality of opportunity in this context therefore appears to mean similar
> class-based inequalities of opportunity for both men and women. Or, one
> could say, equal oppression (1982:68).

Of particular significance to my study is the lack of analysis in liberal feminism of the
male sex-role. Schools have been shown to be deeply implicated in directing girls into
stereotypical roles, yet boys must be being similarly directed. However, an emphasis
on male sex-role stereotyping does not lend itself readily to 'equal opportunity' or 'non-
sexist' educational reforms. Liberal feminist theory has demonstrated the privilege that
the male sex-role confers on boys and men. Although, in response, the men's liberation
literature, as I discuss in Chapter Two, has rendered problematic the male sex-role and
the ways in which it constrains men, no persuasive educational reforms regarding the
male sex-role have emerged from that literature.

Increased educational opportunities available through liberal reforms have seemingly
benefited white, middle-class girls. Yet radical feminist analyses maintain that the face
of oppression has changed from girls' and women 's *individual* experiences of *private*
forms of patriarchy to a *collective* experience of *public* forms of male domination
(Arnot,1993:193)[3]. Radical feminists developed the concept of patriarchy as a basic
theoretical category to explain the seemingly universal domination of women by men.
Within educational studies, patriarchy was viewed as being reproduced through the
"sexual underworld of schooling" (ibid:198). As Arnot explains

> This underworld, so controlled by male sexuality, found expression in
> the 'spaces' created by the ideologies of individualism and personal

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[3] Coney's (1980) interview with Colleen Brown, a telecommunications student, provides a vivid
illustration of this argument.

autonomy. Within such 'freedoms' constructed through liberal discourses were to be found, for example, sexually and racially abusive language and harassment, the neglect or marginalisation of young women, patronising behaviour towards female students and reinforcement of traditional class and race-laden notions of femininity and masculinity (ibid).

Radical feminist educational scholarship exposes the sexual oppression of girls by boys (for example, Mahoney,1985: Jones & Mahoney,1989) and the patriarchal nature of the curriculum (for example, Spender & Sarah,1981; Spender, 1981; Spender,1982). These accounts provide valuable analyses of girls' and women's sexual oppression in educational settings, and the ways in which educational knowledge is shaped by the world views and interests of men. They uncover the dominance and control of education by men, particularly in terms of curriculum content and classroom dynamics. However, they do not acknowledge the social and historical changes in male power, nor the material base of patriarchy, nor the race relations inherent in capitalism.

Current educational and curriculum reforms have continued to be worked around liberal feminist analyses. The biological explanations which are subsumed beneath a rhetoric of equality of opportunity and equal provision have given way to psychological explanations of 'natural' differences (Ritchie,1988), and yet the complexity of gender relations including the links between gender and the economy and gender and sexuality continue to be ignored by policy-makers, as does the influence of ideology and culture. In other words, liberal feminist theory, because of its acceptance of the androcentric norm, has been used by the state as a model to perpetuate the very sexual divisions that feminist theory in general seeks to demolish. This is a theme which I discuss in Chapter Three when I consider feminist analyses of educational policy. For now, I want to examine the work of socialist feminists in educational studies. This work emphasises the relatedness and mutually reinforcing nature of capitalism and patriarchy. Socialist feminism maintains that gender relations within the education system can not be understood without reference to race and class. As Weiler states

...both men and women exist in interconnected and overlapping relationships of gender and class - and, as feminists of colour have increasingly emphasised, of race as well (1988:29).

THEORIES OF SOCIAL REPRODUCTION & CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Critical educational theory has rendered problematic the relationship between schooling, class structure and the capitalist relations of production (Weiler, 1988). Socialist feminist scholarship has extrapolated from this to focus on the relationship of gender, class and race and the ways in which educational provision works to retain these structural divisions which are useful to capitalism. Accordingly, the knowledge that the school imparts is seen to be inextricably linked with the reproduction and retention of these power structures. For critical feminist educational theorists, the curriculum represents much more than set texts, syllabus material, and prepared lessons. The curriculum is viewed as reflecting the interests of particular dominant groups in society thus legitimating the forms of knowledge that uphold their power. Socialist feminists have interrogated the curriculum for its contributions to historical patterns of male empowerment and female disadvantage. They seek to elucidate the role of the curriculum in the reproduction and/or transformation of contemporary relations between (and indeed within) the sexes.

Two main strands of critical educational theory are evident in socialist feminist theorising on education. The first includes those approaches that emphasise the reproduction of existing class, gender and ethnic relationships. The second strand emphasises individual and collective agency and resistance within the cultural production of culturally specific class and gender identities.

Social and Cultural Reproduction Theories

Reproduction theories are concerned with the processes through which existing social structures are maintained and reproduced (Weiler, 1988). Social reproduction theory is

concerned with the reproduction of class structure (Althusser,1971; Bowles and Gintis,1976) and cultural reproduction theory is concerned with the reproduction of class cultures, knowledge and power relations (Bernstein,1975; Bourdieu,1977). Despite their different foci each of these theorists have in common a view of students as shaped by their class location and school experiences to internalise and hence accept a subjectivity which results in the reproduction of existing social differences, power relationships, and social and economic structures. Such theorists are concerned primarily with male workers' incorporation into paid employment. The capitalist mode of production is viewed as the determining structure into which individuals and groups must 'fit'. The individuals in this theory are universally male with a projected future in the labour force. Schools are viewed as pivotal in reproducing particular masculine subjectivities that 'fit' with a stratified labour force. The work of social reproduction theorists has exposed the myths regarding the benign nature of schooling and rendered the role of schools and the process of schooling problematic.

Socialist feminist work (for example, Jones,1988) which draws on this strand renders problematic the relationship between capitalist production, the division of labour, the family and schools. By applying a traditional Marxist analysis, feminist reproduction theory views schools as functioning ideologically to provide particular skills and attitudes which reproduce not only class-based oppression but also existing gender relations. The centrality of girls' perceived futures within the family as a wife and mother, or within particular feminised sectors of the labour market, structures the presentation and content of the curriculum in gender specific ways (Wolpe,1978). As Wolpe states

> The effect of school organisation and curricular structure cannot ...be
> disassociated from the overall division of labour in regard to paid
> employment and within the family (ibid:326)

Schools are actively involved in mediating the allocation of girls and women into particular places in the paid and unpaid labour force. Reproduction theories view the individual as conditioned via the family and the school to accept a social position

commensurate with that of their family of origin. As Weiler points out, critical reproduction theories

> ...share the underlying view that students are shaped by their
> experiences in schools to internalize or accept a subjectivity and a class
> position that leads to the reproduction of existing power relationships and
> social and economic structures (1988:6).

The determinist nature of reproduction theories cannot account for the possibilities for change at the level of the school or classroom. Educational institutions are viewed as monolithic powers under which individuals and groups are subsumed. Individual and collective agency and resistance are ignored, as is the possibility for emancipatory change. In response to these omissions in reproduction theories, theories of cultural and social production have emerged.

Theories of Cultural Production

Critical educational theorists concerned with cultural production hold as central a "political commitment to human betterment" (Bates,1980:81). Cultural production theories argue that schooling is both exploitative and oppressive and yet can also offer possibilities for change through individual empowerment and social transformation (Giroux,1983; Freire, 1985). They recognise the need for a theory that takes into account the agency of individuals and groups, the production of knowledge and culture, and the power of structuring processes embedded in material and ideological conditions. This "dialectic between individual consciousness and structural determinants" (Weiler,1988:13) is central to cultural production theories. As Weiler points out, these theories

> ...are concerned with the ways in which both individuals and classes
> assert their own experience and contest or resist the ideological and
> material forces imposed upon them in a variety of settings (ibid:11).

It is these individual and collective actions of mediation and negotiation which serve to produce meanings and 'lived culture' (Apple & Weiss,1983) within school settings. And it is from this nexus that transformative possibilities emerge. Two key concepts

central to critical cultural production theories and critical pedagogy are 'hegemony'(Gramsci,1971) and 'conscientisation' (Freire,1973,1985).

Hegemony

Gramsci (1971) uses the concept of hegemony to explain the various ways in which dominant interest groups in society are able to organise the consent of subordinate groups so that they acquiesce in their own subordination. Hegemony is

> The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population
> to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant
> fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige
> (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because
> of its position and function in the world of production (ibid:12).

Spontaneous consent is not actively organised consent but develops out of everyday experience and "common-sense" (ibid:199). Gramsci uses the term "common-sense" to mean the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and interpreting the world that has become "common" in any given historical era. This 'common-sense' consists of meanings and forms of consciousness which are produced by internalising a system of values, beliefs and attitudes which are supportive of the existing hierarchy. In order to justify and legitimate its dominant social and political position, the ruling class must develop alliances at particular junctures with some of the interests of the subordinate classes.

It is through hegemony based on consent, coercion and persuasion rather than force that the ruling class exercises power over the subordinate classes. Arnot argues that the concept of hegemony rather than reproduction in educational studies can best account for human agency and consciousness. She states

> By putting the concept of hegemony, rather than 'reproduction' at the
> fore of an analysis of class and gender, it is less easy in research to
> forget the active nature of the learning process, the existence of
> dialectical relations, power struggles, and points of conflict, the range

of alternative practices which may exist inside, or exist outside and be brought into the school (Arnot,1982:66).

Gramsci's concept of hegemony is used by Connell (1992b) when he discusses the 'hegemonic curriculum'. It is also this concept of hegemony that Connell applies in 'hegemonic masculinity' (1987). A particular version of masculinity becomes hegemonic in society and is upheld by most men and many women even when that version of masculinity serves them poorly or actively disadvantages them. It is through everyday lived reality that popular consent is gained and maintained. We all 'know' that a normal man is heterosexual, married, in paid employment and provides financially for his family. This 'knowing' is reinforced through everyday lived realities. For example, the mass media (who gets the stains out of his shirt or overalls?), pay rates which assume a man has a family to support and therefore should be paid more than a women, and government taxation and income support policies which assume a man has dependents and a woman is dependent.

In Gramsci's analysis, hegemony is not a fixed entity but rather a process of contestation or struggle between different social forces. As different interest groups seek to both impose and resist counter-hegemonic shifts, the ruling group must not only gain dominance but also maintain it. The ruling group, therefore, must be alert to and able to 'capture' the interests of opposing or counterhegemonic groups and rework it into "common-sense" ideas that support the existing ruling class. It is this aspect of hegemony that I refer to in the next chapter when I discuss how feminist scholarship has been 'captured' at various times and in various ways in order to neutralise its counterhegemonic force. It is also what Yates(1993) refers to when she discusses the ways in which feminist theory has been used and reinterpreted to construct new policy agendas. The ruling group (those supportive of particular kinds of male hegemony) is thus able to appear to be incorporating feminist demands for equality and yet still maintain its dominant social positioning. This aspect is perhaps best expressed by the male cartoon character who states "I'm all for pay equity, but what about our relativity?"

Gramsci views schools as central mechanisms in this struggle for control. He argues that in any society particular individuals develop psychological structures which develop in response to the social structures. These individuals act in an essentially ideological function of articulating and transmitting the dominant ideas that justify the social, economic, and political structure of that society (Weiler,1988). Such individuals will transmit the hegemonic ideologies of the dominant class. Nevertheless, hegemony also contains the possibility of self-critique and therefore the possibility of historical change through thought and action. Gramsci maintains that

> Critical understanding of self takes place...through a struggle of political 'hegemonies' and of opposing directions ...in order to arrive at the working out at a higher level of one's own conception of reality. Consciousness of being part of a particular hegemonic force...is the first stage towards a further progressive self-consciousness...(1971:333)

Gramsci maintains that change can come about through making critical education available to all. Such counter-hegemonic schools would have a curriculum that would "provide the basis for the subsequent development of an historical dialectical conception of the world, which understands movement and change...." (Gramsci,1971:34). Students would thus develop an understanding of the present as a result of struggles in the past. They would also be able to view themselves as being both shaped by history and shapers of history. Gramsci's emphasis on the active, creative learner sustains a view of schooling as a site for the production of knowledge and an interaction between the learner and teacher that is creative. This is the view articulated also by Freire who, like Gramsci, believed in the power of individuals to become critically aware of their own being in the world (Weiler,1988:17).

Conscientisation

Freire's work has been to develop a critical pedagogy that makes education meaningful and emancipatory. He did this through his work teaching illiterate peasants in Brazil, Chile and Guinea-Bissau. Freire taught literacy skills through a process of conscientisation whereby the peasants learned not only to read but also to develop a critical consciousness about what they read such that they understood their poverty and

the dominant forces that maintained it. It is through knowing, Freire contends, that all men and women in the world and within the world can transform the world and break out of the 'culture of silence' or the closed system that oppresses them (Freire,1985:44). Freire's central thesis is that individuals can come to know and transform their world by critically reading the word and the world (ibid).

According to Freire

> A critical reading of reality, whether it takes place in the literacy process or not, and associated above all with the clearly political practices of mobilising and organising constitutes an instrument of what Gramsci calls counter-hegemony (Freire & Macedo,1987:36).

Freire's critical literacy arises from a rejection of the concept of *banking* education, where students are assumed to be passive receivers of the teacher's knowledge, and based on the dialogical nature of teaching and learning. Freire centres the acquisition of literacy skills within the complex of unequal power relations. In this view education is inherently a political process and, as such, is universally political in nature (Freire,1985). Accordingly, education which is not transformatory is intimately involved with the reinvention of power. Freire argues that education can nevertheless also be a process through which people can recreate the power relationships in society.

However, critical awareness by itself is not sufficient for liberation but must also be accompanied by action to achieve real social change. It is at this point that Freire's theory is most open to critique for it carries with it an assumption that changing people's awareness will extend their ability to *act* to bring about change. A change in cognitive skills and knowledge of the world will not necessarily bring about change in the structuring processes that maintain relative power relationships. Freire does, however, take educational theory beyond the explanations of education as a means of social and cultural reproduction towards an understanding of emancipatory possibilities. Both Gramsci and Freire, through their application of the concepts of hegemony and conscientisation, offer possibilities for schools to be sites of emancipatory change. In

addition, their respective works also emphasise the process of cultural production and offer real strategies for change.

Critical educational theory, as Arnot notes, has increased awareness of the ideological influences involved in the selection and organization of school knowledge (Arnot,1993:5). Schools are not only actively involved in social reproduction but are also sites of cultural production. Socialist feminist analyses have revealed that schools are related to the wider society. Schools do not simply reproduce sex stereotypes but both reflect and act upon the social divisions characteristic of the wider society. In addition, schools are also sites of cultural production where individuals, collectively and separately, resist, acquiesce and contest the production of meaning and culture within the constraints of their class, race and gender positioning. This point is made more explicit when I examine contemporary research on gender and schooling in Chapter Three. Connell *et al's* study, in particular, reveals schools as social sites and emphasises the complex interactions between the family, the school and the labour market (1982).

The recognition that individuals do not passively accept the schooling process but rather, singly and collectively, actively negotiate, mediate, resist and acquiesce at particular junctures is central to my own study. I draw on a critical cultural production understanding that maintains that students actively negotiate the curriculum as they construct their own knowledge about themselves. In addition, my study is informed by the view of schooling as offering potential for change. However, although my study draws on critical cultural production theories it differs in its approach by focusing on and highlighting some of the processes involved in the development of domination rather than subordination.

Internationally, critical feminist educational studies have highlighted the effects of education on girls and women, and pointed to some of the ways in which schooling acts to uphold male hegemony in society. These studies have shown that schooling both promotes and naturalises male behavioural norms and values, both in the classroom and in its organisational structures. Within the school, the social attention given to male

'ways of being' helps to reproduce and confirm patterns of male dominance and female subordination. These, in turn, reflect and act to reproduce and confirm structures of domination and subordination that exist in the wider society.

Critical feminist research has primarily focused on the power of agency and subjectivity as necessary components of social transformative struggles (Lather,1991). What does this mean for research on masculinity? Is it only women, ethnic minorities or the poor who seek self-understanding and self-determination? Will the illumination of men's dominant subject positionings lead them to seek self-understanding and self-determination?

It is time that feminist researchers turned their attentions to some of the everyday lived experiences of boys and men through which they develop their sense of self as male, and which also serve to maintain and reinforce male dominance. The beliefs and behaviours characteristic of males are actually a product of the material conditions of their lives (Jones,1991a). The relational nature of gender means the focus must be on the dominant and not just the dominated. If theories and concepts of hegemony and conscientisation can be used in empowering subordinate groups, then they may also be used to disempower dominant groups. By 'disempower' I don't mean a kind of role-reversal where men become materially poor or are relegated to the private sphere. Rather, my hope is that through illuminating the processes by which male dominance is constructed, ways can be found to obviate the negative consequences of male power which has been used to devalue or disempower women. To reiterate Moore's point: in order to discover how we might construct ourselves differently, there is a need to deconstruct the gendered subject to discover how social characteristics associated with masculinity and femininity might be acquired (Moore,1988).

Can concepts of hegemony and conscientisation also be applied to the upper/middle classes? to white people? Will the illumination to the advantaged of their advantage make a difference to them? Do they consciously set themselves up into advantaged positions? Will reflective thought lead to action on their part as well? Are the oppressed the only ones who want a world based on human dignity and social justice?

And is this what they really want? Is not the focus on the oppressed as the medium for change just one more way of 'blaming-the-victim'?

To address these questions I have chosen to study high achieving, predominantly middle-class, pakeha boys. These are the boys to whom, as Connell (1989:295) points out, the school delivers social power in the form of access to higher education, entry to professions and a command of communication. I am interested in the ways in which this group produce their own meanings and culture within the classroom. Based on the feminist tenet that women's oppression has implications for everyone, I am particularly interested in the lived classroom realities of this developing 'dominant group' and the possibilities for change that may be discovered. My study of boys and the school curriculum draws on concepts of hegemony and critical consciousness to investigate and analyse both the possibilities available to the students and the ones they choose. Critical and socialist feminist analyses of schooling have decisively demonstrated the classed, gendered and raced nature of educational provision and the deep and multifarious involvement of the state in this educational provision. It is at the juncture of gender relations, schooling, individual subjectivity and change, that feminist post-structural theory offers further possibilities to capture the complex intricacies of the ways in which students negotiate and make sense of their schooling experience, in order to participate in the process of reproducing the social structure, that I have already discussed. As Davies points out

> Poststructuralist theory, with its roots in Freud, Marx and Foucault,
> provides a radical framework for understanding the relation between
> persons and their social world and for conceptualising social change
> (1989:xi).

For my study, poststructuralist feminist theory offers the conceptual tools of discourse, discursive practices, and subject positioning within and through discourse, through which I can discern the ways in which particular subject positions are offered to the boys through the school curriculum. Some subject positions they can take up if they so choose, other subject positions are alsmost essential for survival in a single-sex boys school. The usefulness of these conceptual tools for my own research is explained

further in Chapter Four. In the following section, I discuss critical discourse theory and what I mean by 'discourse', 'discursive practices', and 'subject position' and the ways in which these concepts are used in my own study.

CRITICAL DISCOURSE THEORY

Discourse is a concept that has emerged from theories of literary critique and critical literacy. It's use within these broad areas has been the subject of concerted debate and analysis and eventual application in a variety of ways (Belsey,1980). Within a materialist theory of language, discourse

> refers not only to the meaning of language, but also to the real effects
> of language-use, to the materiality of language. A discourse is a domain
> of language-use and therefore a domain of lived experience. It can be
> ideological because it can become an unconscious, taken-for-granted
> 'system of representations' that are *inscribed in* discourse rather than
> symbolised by it (Codd,1990:138).

Discourses vary in their material effects. They do not have equal power in the ways in which they constitute subjectivities nor in the distribution of material and symbolic resources (Gee,1990). Discourses compete with each other. Whose discourses become dominant in any setting is a manifestation of larger power relations. Dominant discourses are those which have become established as common-sense. As Luke argues

> the texts of everyday life involve overlapping discourses that are
> articulated, rearticulated, and, at times disarticulated in particular
> hegemonic interests (1996:20).[4]

For instance, the construction of knowledge in schools, through education and other discourses, constitutes part of the wider dominant discourses of society. Gee (1990,1993) and Luke's (1996) discussions of discourse enable me to identify five primary characteristics of 'discourse' as I use it in my study.

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[4] Luke (1996:13) defines 'text' as 'language in use'. It is through spoken and written texts that cultural representations and social relations and identities are articulated.

1. Discourses are ideological. They carry with them specific beliefs and attitudes about the distribution of material and symbolic resources. They also carry particular beliefs about the individual.

2. Dominant discourses are hegemonic. They are embedded in what Gramsci calls 'common sense' as I have discussed it earlier. Individuals may participate in a particular discourse, although in so doing they may collude in their own disadvantage.

3.Discourses are related to other discourses. These relations are relations of power. Dominant discourses uphold dominant power relations.

4. Discourses both produce and are produced by material practices.

5. Discourses constitutes individual subjectivity. They offer multiple and sometimes contradictory subject positions which an individual can accept, refuse or mediate in constructing their sense of self (Davies,1989; Saco,1992).

The understanding of the individual as constituted through discourses is based on Foucault's (1980) analysis of knowledge-power relations and the ways in which individuals internalise and negotiate dominant discourses in the process of constructing their psychological identity and hence subjectivity and thereby participate in their own self-regulation (Luke,1996). Poststructural theory views the individual as constituted through specific discourses. These are the discourses that define the parameters of a particular way of being in the world in a particular socio-economic context. A person can choose the extent to which he or she wishes to participate in that discourse by taking up or refusing to take up the subject position(s) offered within that discourse. Yet these choices are themselves influenced by negotiations of other discourses, and the different authority that they represent. As Davies makes clear, discourses and discursive practices emerge out of the social/material contexts of society. They are constituted out of the historical 'foundations' and practices (some of which I have discussed in this thesis) upon which a society is based. In other words, the structures and processes of the social world must always be

> recognised as having a material force, a capacity to constrain, to shape,
> to coerce, as well as to potentiate individual action. The processes
> whereby individuals take themselves up as persons are understood as
> ongoing processes. The individual is not so much a social construction

which results in some relatively fixed end product, but one who is constituted and reconstituted through a variety of discursive practices. It is the recognition of the ongoing nature of the constitution of self and the recognition of the nonunitary nature of self that makes poststructuralist theory different from social construction theory (Davies, 1989,xi).

The process of positioning oneself within multiple and contradictory discourses means that individuals can redefine and recreate their subjectivities to a limited extent within hegemonic discourses, and, if they are able to step outside hegemonic discourses and cultural forms to take up others, as they negotiate a changing social world. As Davies makes clear

> Individuals, through learning the discursive practices of a society, are able to position themselves within these practices in multiple ways, and to develop subjectivities both in concert with and in opposition to the ways in which others choose to position them. By focusing on the multiple subject positions that a person takes up and the often contradictory nature of those positionings, and by focusing on the fact that the social world is constantly being constituted through discursive practices in which individuals engage, we are able to see individuals not as the unitary beings that humanist theory would have them be, but as the complex, changing, contradictory creatures that we each experience ourselves to be, despite our best efforts at producing a unified, coherent and relatively static self (1989:xi)

 In order to clarify the way in which I use discourse in my study, I draw on Gee's work in linguistics and critical literacy (1990, 1993) and Luke's work in critical literacy and critical discourse analysis (1996).

Gee distinguishes between the structuralist view of 'language' as a culturally specific sign system through which individuals make sense of their world, and the poststructuralist view of language as constituting discourses which arise from social practices. In the structuralist view, an individual uses language as a sign system to

describe and explain the world. The meanings that people make of their world are no more than a product of the sign system and the way they use it. Poststructuralism, however, views meaning as grounded in the historical and social practices of groups of people. In particular, these historical and social practices are enmeshed in relations of power. Gee states that

> These [historically derived social] practices have often evolved in order
> to claim authority and privilege for one group against other groups. The
> sign system is a social and historical tool in terms of which groups of
> people carry out their desires and claim and contest power. It is not a
> disinterested reflection of an ahistorical and asocial reality (1993:282).

Gee calls the social and material practices through which meaning is constituted Discourses (with a capital 'D') (1990). In developing his theory of literacy, Gee maintains that the focus of literacy studies must be on *social practices* (1990). He argues that a particular Discourse carries with it a set of values and assumptions about the individual, the relations between individuals and the distribution of social goods. Discourses are closely associated with the distribution of social power and hierarchical structures in society (ibid).

I want now to use this understanding of discourse to discuss gender discourses as they have been theorised within poststructural feminism.

It is through the discourses of 'gender' that the subject positions of masculinity and femininity are offered. As I have already discussed, in New Zealand these have their origins in our 'gendered culture'. Poststructural feminism holds as central that this male-female dichotomy is not inevitable but rather one's sense of self as male or female is discursively constituted through multiple and contradictory discourses (Davies, 1993a). Gendered subjectivities are symbolic categories that emerge out of particular discourses (Saco,1992:24). The multiple subjectivities that comprise one's sense of self may often contradict and conflict. For example the subject positionings of father, worker, family provider have contradictions inherent in them which are resolved partly by dominant discourses which prioritise men's provider responsibilities, and hence their

paid employment, over their fathering responsibilities. Saco regards identity as a process which involves the constant negotiation and renegotiation of multiple subject positionings in which an individual has unequal investments (ibid:24). De Lauretis maintains that

> [W]hat makes one take up a [subject] position in a certain discourse rather than another is an "investment"...something between an emotional commitment and a vested interest, in the relative power (satisfaction, reward, pay-off) which that position promises (but does not necessarily fulfill) (1987:16).

Investment in a particular discourse also implies investment in a particular way of reading and understanding the things we experience (Saco,1992:35). Multiple subject positions and the differential investments in them mediate the particular subjectivities that we construct for ourselves and affect the particular subject positions we choose at any one time. As Weedon states

> How we live our lives as conscious thinking subjects, and how we give meaning to the material social relations under which we live and which structure our everyday lives, depends on the range and social power of existing discourses, our access to them and the political strength of the interests which they represent (1987:26).

Saco formulates an approach called masculinity-as-signs using aspects of psychoanalytic, textual and Marxist-influenced theories. Embedded in this approach is an assumption that film, television and other media help constitute gender differences rather than simply reflect or represent differences. Signs such as clothing and mannerisms indicate an individual as a gendered subject. This gendered subjectivity combines with subjectivities of race, class, sexual orientation, occupation, and personality traits to comprise a person's social identity. This identity is not based on a human essence, nor on anatomical features. Rather identity could be considered as a composite term signifying the multiple subjectivities that comprise one's sense of self.

In seeking to elucidate the role of the curriculum in the reproduction and/or transformation of contemporary relations between (and within) the sexes, I have extended Saco's media focused approach to include the ways in which the text (language in use) of the secondary school curriculum helps constitute gendered subjectivities. Subject positions that a boy takes up in particular social situations such as a classroom, "are actual relations jointly produced in the very act of conversing" (Davies and Harre,1990:55) or of reading or viewing. Thus subjectivity is both a product and a process of the dynamics of curriculum enactment. In order to understand how masculinity-as-signs is realised in curriculum enactment, I have chosen to investigate the discursive production of masculinity in a single-sex classroom and uncover the discourses that the secondary school curriculum upholds and the subject positions that these discourses construct, support, and invite fifth form boys to invest in.

Within poststructural educational analyses, "...texts, classrooms, and identities are read as discursive inscriptions on material bodies/ subjectivities" (Luke and Gore, 1992:4). The ways in which the boys include or exclude themselves and each other from particular discursive practices provides a useful analysis for an understanding of the developing male sense of self. These processes are not fixed, static and orderly but fragmented, inconsistent and contradictory. The central task of my study is investigating how the broader formations of discourse and power are manifest in everyday classroom life and the effects this has on the development of a fifth form boys' sense of self. It is in choosing at some level to take up a particular subject position and refusing certain discourses that possibilities for change can be generated.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have discussed the various strands of theorising in educational studies and in feminist analyses of education. In particular, I have identified key concepts that inform my own research project. These include Freire's concept of critical consciousness, or conscientisation; Gramsci's concept of hegemony, and Gee and Luke's understandings of the concept of discourse. Feminist theorising has acknowledged the importance of these concepts in varying degrees. Although each

different strand of feminist theory provides useful analyses of educational issues associated with gender equity, it is poststructural feminist theory that offers the possibility to integrate these concepts in order to uncover and move beyond "the incorrigibility of the male/female dualism" (Davies, 1989:x). By viewing the secondary school curriculum as text (language in use), I aim to investigate the discourses which are upheld through the curriculum. It is through these discourses, and others in other settings, that the fifth form boys in my study invest in particular subject positions in constructing their sense of self. This sense of self is intimately related to ideas about masculinity or what it means 'to be a man'. In the next chapter, I focus specifically on theorising about masculinity. Much of this work has been undertaken by male writers. As I discuss this has particular implications for the ways in which masculinity has been problematised.

Chapter Two

PROBLEMATISING MASCULINITY

Although research on men is as old as research itself, a focus on masculinity and men as gendered individuals is a relatively recent phenomenon (Morgan,1986; Coltrane, 1994). Within the popular press and much of the academic literature, the focus is primarily confessional or therapeutic with an emphasis on men's emotional and relating deficits. Solutions have centred around interventions which range from taking to the wild, isolating oneself from women and beating one's hairy chest (Bly,1990) to joining male consciousness-raising groups (Newcomb,1982) or to engaging in individual psychotherapy (Gaylin,1992). This work is fundamentally aimed at making men feel better about being men. It refuses to recognise the power relationships embedded in gender relations[1].

Academic studies concerning men and masculinity can be divided into three identifiable approaches; Men's Liberation, Men's Studies, and Critical Studies of Men. Although this classification is arbitrary, each of these approaches represents a particular response to feminist analyses of gendered power relations and the concomitant oppression and subordination of women by men. All three strands have their social and intellectual roots in feminism and feminist scholarship. However, each strand recognises and acknowledges the influence of feminism in different ways.

In the previous chapter, my discussion described and critiqued sex-role theory. I argued that this approach serves to uphold male dominance in both the personal and political spheres. In this chapter the pervasiveness of sex-role theory is demonstrated in my review and critique of the Men's Liberation and the Men's Studies literature. My discussion of the Critical studies of Men literature explores Connell's (1983,1987,1989,1995) work on hegemonic masculinity and Morgan's (1986,1992) work linking masculinity and social science research. This section has two particular

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[1]For an analysis of the politics of "Masculinity Therapy" see Connell(1995:206-211).

implications for my study. First, it shows that in a given era or social context, a particular version of masculinity becomes hegemonic. Second, the version of hegemonic masculinity in an academic setting mitigates against critical research on men and masculinities. The final section of this chapter is concerned with masculinity in New Zealand and our 'gendered culture' (James & Saville-Smith,1987). The discussion here explores the meanings of masculinity in New Zealand and the version of masculinity that is hegemonic.

MEN'S LIBERATION

The second wave of feminism began with the Woman's Liberation movement of the 1970s. Liberal feminists, such as Friedan (1974;1981) argued that women are denied their full humanity because they are socialised into the roles of wife and mother which restricts their participation in public life. In response, many male writers expressed concern at the emergence of feminist writing which articulated visions of liberation for women while naming men as oppressors. The 1970s onwards saw a proliferation of male writing which had as its fundamental premise that men as a group were oppressed in relation to women. In emulating liberal feminist insights into women's oppression, whereby women as a group are denied full participation in society because of their female sex-role, male writers such as Pleck (1976, 1981, 1984) and Franklin (1984) suggest that men too are victimized and imprisoned by their dysfunctional male sex-role. As Pleck makes clear

> After a period of intense interest in the female sex role in the social sciences and in the wider culture, the male sex role is now beginning to emerge as an important and legitimate complementary topic...recent publications...herald the beginning of a new body of writing which explicitly takes the perspective that the male role contains many constricting and limiting features from which men need to free themselves (Pleck,1976:155)

According to Pleck (1976,1981), the *content* of the male sex-role is problematic because it renders identity development difficult within the constraints imposed by the male sex-

role. It also causes men to have feelings of powerlessness in their intimate relationships with women.

In his analysis of the male sex-role, Pleck argues that there are two types of power that females have over males. First, females have *expressive power*. That is, men are only able to express their emotions vicariously, through women. This means that men are dependent on women to make them feel emotionally alive. As Pleck argues

> Many men have learned to depend on women to help them express their emotions, indeed to express their emotions for them. At an ultimate level, many men are unable to feel emotionally alive except through relationships with women....When women withhold and refuse to exercise this power for men's benefit, many men... feel *abject* and try harder to get women to play their traditional expressive role (Pleck,1981:421).

The second type of power Pleck identifies is *'masculinity-validating'* power. In this view, because men are dependent on women to make them feel masculine, women assume submissive roles in order to make the men feel good. Refusal by a woman to accept a submissive role is done in order to make a man feel bad. Thus, women can exert real power over men by determining whether the man concerned is allowed to feel masculine or not. in Pleck's words

> In traditional masculinity, to experience oneself as masculine requires that women play their prescribed role of doing things that make men feel masculine....As with women's expressive power, when women refuse to exercise their masculinity-validating power for men, many men feel lost and bereft and frantically attempt to force women back into their accustomed role (ibid:422)

Pleck uses this analysis to explain the psychological sources of men's need to dominate women. He maintains that these powers that women hold over men increased prior to the emergence of the women's liberation movement in the 1970s. Thus, "women asserting their right not to play these roles for men, has hit men with a special force"

(ibid:423). In Pleck's analysis, when men have learned to express their emotions themselves and validate themselves as persons, men will then be free of male fear, resentment and the need to control women. "Then men will be emotionally more free to negotiate the pragmatic realignment of power between the sexes that is underway in our society" (ibid).

Pleck and other men's liberation writers are arguing that men's oppression has parallels with women's oppression. In this view, both men and women are socialised into sex roles that constrain them from participating fully in society. Men's Liberation literature renders problematic the constraints of the male sex-role. The restrictions that the traditional male sex-role places on men are claimed to be the cause of many of men's health related problems. In an effort to adhere to the male sex-role, many men experience what Pleck refers to as "sex-role strain". As he states

> Because of sex roles, individuals are socialised to have personality characteristics that are dysfunctional. For women, these are dependency and achievement inhibitions; for men, aggression and emotional constriction (1981:134).

In Pleck's analysis, male sex-role strain results from men trying to adhere to a stereotypical image of masculinity when they too are the victims of particular power relations. According to Pleck, the build-up of sex-role strain led to the emergence of the women's and, more latterly, men's liberation movements as a means by which the sex-role strain could be understood, analysed and reduced. Pleck concludes his analysis with a research agenda for the future, arguing that there is a need for

> ...understanding the roots of the strain men experience, analysing men's aggression and their inability to find and express intimacy, and examining the burdens and conflicts arising from assigning men the role of family provider (ibid:160).

As with Pleck's analysis, Franklin (1984) also views the content of the male sex-role as problematic and hazardous to men's health. He advocates a change in the definition of masculinity. Franklin states

>With women continuing their struggle for human rights, with men broadening their latitudes of masculinity, and with more men as well as women constructing strategies designed to eliminate sex-role inequality in America, the male sex-role, while resistant to change, will undoubtedly undergo further changes toward sex-role equality (1984:213).

Change strategies are primarily aimed at modifying the male sex-role to benefit men. Masculinity is viewed by these writers as more than some checklist of personality traits; it actually creates real problems for men. The costs of masculinity are viewed as a consequence of women's power over men and of men's constricted sex-role. Both Pleck and Franklin argue that because men suffer from the costs of aspiring to a particular masculinity they therefore lack power. Just as the male sex-role is viewed as different from, but complementary to, the female sex-role, so too is men's oppression viewed as different from, but complementary to, women's oppression.

Pleck (1981) and Franklin's (1984) works are useful for my study because they typify much of the male writing founded in a Men's Liberation approach. The emphasis on male sex-role strain in Pleck's analysis, and on redefining masculinity in Franklin's analysis actually represents a reworking of what Connell (1987) describes as hegemonic masculinity. There is no recognition that the problems men face are the result of trying to maintain social power and advantage in relation to women and in relation to other men. The underlying assumption in the Men's Liberation literature is that limitations equals oppression.

Studies on men and masculinities over the past two decades have been stimulated by feminist research, scholarship and critique. The significance of this cannot be overemphasised. As Morgan points out

>In a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons, men became aware of, or were made aware of, their systematic involvement in gender inequalities, of the fact that talk about women's rights and the position

of women in society could not be cordoned off from consideration of men and their positions in society (1992:7).

This has implications, not only at the social and political level, but also for the ways in which men see their lives at the personal level. While attempting to write about men and masculinity in the same vein as early liberal feminists have written about women and femininity, male writers such as Pleck and Franklin are at the same time caught up in trying to circumvent the implications for themselves personally of their dominant social position as identified by these feminist analyses. Work such as Pleck's and Franklin's gives a clear message that work on masculinity cannot be left exclusively to men.

While being sympathetic to some aspects of the feminist movement there is still a denial that men systemically and personally benefit from women's oppression. While the power differential and real material advantages that masculinity entails are not ignored in the Men's Liberation literature, they are reworked into a theory that absolves men from responsibility for their power and advantage. Men's Liberation literature in its response to the women's liberation movement and liberal feminist gender analyses, makes its primary claim that the *content* of the male sex-role needs to be changed in order to ease the burden of masculinity.

MEN'S STUDIES

Men's Studies is as much a phenomenon of the 1980s as Women's Studies is of the 1970s. (Among the similarities are the roots that each of them has in social and intellectual movements of the *previous* decade, those roots, for men's studies, actually being in feminism and feminist scholarship) (Robinson,1992:439).

Men's Studies has been established as an academic discipline in direct response to feminist scholarship and the establishment of Women's Studies as a discipline within

the university. Men's Studies aims to demonstrate that most scholarship, contrary to popular belief, has not been about men at all. Rather, traditional scholarship, while regarding generic man as the human norm has in fact excluded specifically that which is unique to men as *men* (Brod,1987). As Brod states in justification of Men's Studies

> While *seemingly* about men, traditional scholarship's treatment of generic man as the human norm in fact systematically excludes from consideration what is unique to men *qua* men. The overgeneralization from male to generic human experience not only distorts our understanding of what, if anything, is truly generic to humanity but also precludes the study of masculinity as a *specific male* experience, rather than a universal paradigm for *human* experience. The most general definition of men's studies is that it is the study of masculinities and male experiences as specific and varying social-historical-cultural formations. Such studies situate masculinities as objects of study on a par with femininities, instead of elevating them to universal norms (ibid:2).

Brod continues his argument in support of men's studies by maintaining that the exposed and public world of men and masculinities has actually served to obscure and hide men and masculinities. According to Brod, men's studies is the inverse of women's studies; where women's studies seeks to establish the *objectivity* of women's experiences, men's studies seeks to establish the *subjectivity* of men's experiences (ibid). Brod argues that

> ...a feminist men's studies perspective must go beyond simply demonstrating, for example, "how male role constraints on emotional display inhibit and repress men" to show "how male emotional restraint also confers power on men, in large part by effectively withholding information about oneself" (ibid:8).

Brod highlights the politics of men's studies and expresses concern that men's studies does not neglect or shroud the "...questions of power raised by feminism" (ibid). It is this concern with questions of power that distinguishes Men's Studies from Men's

Liberation literature. Men's Studies exponents name themselves as feminist. They claim that men and the study of men are changing as a response to feminist research on gender. In an attempt to move beyond the Men's Liberation approach and its base of sex-role theory, Kimmel maintains that

> Men's Studies responds to the shifting social and intellectual contexts in
> the study of gender and attempts to treat masculinity not as the normative
> referent against which standards are assessed but as a problematic gender
> construct. (Kimmel,1987a:10)

Nonetheless, Kimmel is also caught up in the contradictions of being male and studying masculinity. These contradictions are demonstrated in Kimmel's edited anthology, *Changing Men: New Directions on Men and Masculinity* in which Kimmel (ibid) offers a range of research topics and methodologies concerned with men and masculinity. Some of the chapters in this work are still embedded in what Hearn (1989:674) refers to as "a most unfortunate kind of positivism". Fine's chapter on women moving into traditional male workplaces is one example (1987). According to Fine, his study found little evidence of men's hostility towards women but problems arise when women do not share the "informal work values" of men (ibid:132). Fine considers that none of the observed incidents of sexual touching, sexual teasing or sexual joking "can be truly defined as an advance or as harassment, but they represent a challenge to which female employees must respond if they are not to be thought cold and unfriendly" (ibid:141). That some women were able to learn the informal ways of interacting in a male-defined setting and adapt to them was considered by Fine to demonstrate that these behaviour patterns are learned and not rigid or unchanging. He concludes that "gender roles are socially emergent and grounded in behaviour" so that the "ability of women to become 'one of the boys' demonstrates that the styles of behaviour can be learned, and are not fixed or static" (ibid:145).

Underlying Fine's analysis is a functionalist paradigm in which differences are seen to serve particular functions that maintain the existing social order. The women are portrayed as adapting or needing to adapt to the social context. It is the women's adaptability that is problematised rather than the gendered power relations of the

workplace. The "informal work values" as defined by male workers are taken-for-granted as 'normal' by Fine and left unexamined in terms of the power they imply or mediate.

Fine's study ignores that the women and men working together are working in a field of unequal power relations, based on male dominance and female oppression. He views male dominated work worlds as a norm, disrupted by the presence of women workers. The influence of functionalism is made clear when Fine states

> Each sex, like different cultures, has its own standards for comfortable interaction...these represent the standard expectations. These forms of behaviour require little explanation or justification within the group - they are normative standards....The presence of female equals threatens to alter these standards, changing a relatively unambiguous setting into one fraught with moral ambiguity(1987:146).

Fine's analysis is clearly embedded in sex-role theory in which the male sex-role and the female sex-role represent two 'natural', distinct roles which can be socially learned. In order to avoid being 'disruptive' women working in male dominated settings must learn the informal rules of these settings. As Fine argues

> ...males have consensual informal arrangements; those women who can and do accept these normative standards may be treated well, whereas those who fail to accept these informal rules by choice or lack of experience are more likely to experience difficulties and discrimination (1987:132).

Neither the rules themselves, nor the social context are considered problematic by Fine. Although Men's Studies writers define themselves as feminists, Fine's work neglects the basic tenets of feminist theory - that gender relations are power relations. There is ample feminist and pro-feminist analyses which provide quite different accounts of the types of behaviour that Fine writes about. For example, radical feminist analyses have demonstrated that sexual harassment is another form of male power located in women's everyday lives. It is a form of 'intimate intrusion' which serves to keep women in and

out of line (Stanko,1985). Issues of maleness, femaleness, sexual power, economic power and social control coalesce within often mundane, seemingly ordinary, work situations (Stanko,1988).

The issue of gendered power relations can also be detected in Men's Studies uses of feminist literature and scholarship. For example, both Brod and Kimmel argue that Men's Studies must remain accountable to Women's Studies, both as intellectual discipline and course offering. Both writers make efforts to underline the predominant thesis that Men's Studies is complementary to Women's Studies based on feminist understandings. However, in common with most other male writers on men and masculinity they continue to 'silence' academic feminist scholarship by ignoring the wealth of literature written by women. As Hanmer observes about Men's Studies

> Too many books mention feminism, without citation, and move on in the
> usual way to cite another man whose work is as intellectually derivative
> of these origins as his own (Hanmer, 1990:23)

Feminist research is significantly ignored in much of the Men's Studies writings on masculinity while at the same time these writings are used, as Morgan states, to serve as "arenas for the competitive display of masculine skills" (Morgan,1986:105). Men's Studies exemplifies Morgan's arguments about the link between masculinities and social research (ibid). I examine these arguments in greater depth when I discuss Morgan's work in the next section on Critical Studies.

Male writers such as Pleck, Franklin, Brod and Kimmel, claim allegiance to feminist theory and then proceed to get what Moore (1988) calls "a bit of the other" by reworking accounts of women's oppression into accounts of men's oppression. Although Moore is referring to the 'capture' of feminism within postmodernism, a similar argument could be put forward regarding Men's Studies and its attempts to capture feminist theory. Male academics in Men's Studies provide limited or no analysis of their own privileged positions, either personally or in the academic world. Neither do they draw links between these male privileges and women's oppression. On the contrary, their work is aimed at 'proving' males are *equally* oppressed as females. This

is in spite of the vast body of evidence to the contrary that feminists have provided which links personal oppression to the real effects of material structures.

It is these analyses, under the rubric of Men's Studies, that provide an example within higher education of the ways in which men rework the pattern of power relations while at the same time maintaining the status quo of male privilege. Men's Studies' analyses are not so much to do with equalising gendered power relations so much as neutralising feminist critiques of men, and redefining the power differential between men and women. For example, Brod's definition of Men's Studies quoted earlier (1987a:2) seeks to redefine Women's Studies and treat women's reality as commensurate with the study of femininities (Hanmer, 1990). However, Women's Studies is not only concerned with identity politics but is also about the broader social structures which maintain women's invisible or subordinate positioning. Men's Studies is a response to Women's Studies and increasingly diverse feminist analyses. Some of the writing melds into the critical strand. However, within Men's Studies can be heard the voices of men who name themselves as feminists while providing accounts of Men's Studies that misrecognise, or deliberately subvert, the issue of power exposed by feminist scholarship. Men studying men and masculinities owe their understanding of gendered power relations and the institutionalisation of heterosexuality to feminist and gay scholarship. This needs to be acknowledged.

As Canaan and Griffin point out, it may be that Men's Studies is part of the problem rather than part of the solution (1990). My review of the Men's Studies literature highlights the need for feminist work by *women* to focus on men and masculinities. The contradictions and conflicts of men writing critically about men are problematic, as Hearn has pointed out. He rejects the term 'Men's Studies' because it appears politically 'neutral', it is open to 'capture' by men with no profeminist commitment, and it implies a false correlation with Women's Studies (1987). He states that the

> ...critique of men...is carried out by those who are part of [the] 'mass'
> which is subject to critique. [Furthermore], dominant
> theorising,...produced largely by men, is itself part of dominant practices

and constructions of men. Critique is thus in contradictory relation to, both part of and not part of, dominant theorising (Hearn,1987:13).

Men's Studies is, "*Mostly Boys' Own Papers*" (Hearn,1989). Hearn prefers to refer to the study of men and masculinities as 'critical studies of men'. He and other pro-feminist and gay affirmative men have begun to grasp more firmly the ramifications of feminist theory and practice for an understanding of masculinity. I will move on now to outline how critical studies of men has moved beyond the Men's Studies framework.

CRITICAL STUDIES OF MEN

In classifying work on men and masculinities into the 'critical studies' strand, I have followed Morgan's explanation. According to Morgan (1992), research is critical on three levels. Firstly, when it draws "...attention to practices which are often ignored, unobserved or obscured" (ibid:5). This is what I regard as the 'lifting the rock' stage and exposing what's going on underneath. Second, once particular practices are exposed, critical inquiry seeks to explain these practices in social or cultural terms rather than as phenomena of biology or individual psychology. The third level of critical studies is "the critical interplay between observer and observed as well as the interplay between actors and social structures" (ibid). As Morgan points out, this means for him that his position as a man writing about men and masculinities constitutes further conflicts and contradictions. Critical Studies of Men seek to make these conflicts and contradictions explicit.

Critical Studies of men and masculinities is a particularly prolific field of writing and research among contemporary scholars seeking to understand men and masculinities within a framework of power relations. Several writers are notable. Messner and Sabo draw on feminist theories to investigate the links between men, masculinities and sport (Sabo,1985; Messner & Sabo,1990; Messner,1987; 1992). Hearn focuses primarily, though not exclusively, on men and masculinities within public organisations (Hearn, 1987;1989;1992; Hearn & Parkin,1984;1987; Hearn *et al*,1989; Hearn & Morgan,1990; Collinson & Hearn,1994). Seidler is particularly concerned with

philosophical and theoretical issues surrounding power, masculinity and reason (Seidler,1989;1991;1992a;1992b;1994), while Connell has focused on masculinity within the sociology of education. In this section, I shall discuss the works of Connell (1983;1987;1989;1990;1992a;1992b;1995) and Morgan (1986;1992) as each are sociologists actively involved in the process of theorising about men and masculinities and theorising about this theorising.

Connell, writing as a sociologist of education, has, along with his associates, provided a critique of the historical treatment of the 'male sex role' and masculine identity (Carrigan *et al*, 1985). This work has given rise to the concepts of multiple masculinities and hegemonic masculinity. These two concepts have been taken up by other critical and poststructural writers on masculinity and have become incorporated into the contemporary discourse on masculinity (for example, Hanke,1990; Martino, 1995).

In a comprehensive appraisal of the literature surrounding masculinity, Carrigan *et al* maintain that the political meaning of writing about masculinity hinges primarily on its consideration of power (1985). These writers engage actively with issues of sexual politics and propose a 'new sociology of masculinity'. In order to do so, they adopt three particular standpoints. Firstly, they argue that an understanding of sexual power needs to come through an analysis *inside* the sex categories, particularly of the relations between heterosexual and homosexual men. Secondly, an analysis of masculinity needs to take into consideration other progressions in feminism, especially those that are concerned with the sexual division of labour, the sexual politics of workplaces and the connections between gender relations and class dynamics. And, thirdly, contemporary developments in social theory need to be utilised to circumvent past emphases on dichotomies of structure versus individual, and society versus the person. Such developments are directed towards understanding the significance of history in the production of social categories, on power as the ability to control the biological and psychological production of people, and on collective practice as both produced by and producing social structures (ibid:552).

Within this framework, an analysis of men's involvement in the 'sex-gender system' (Rubin,1975) posits masculinity not as a fixed entity but rather as a social and historical construction which can take multiple forms. In other words, expressions of masculinity change historically and are located within a particular social nexus where specific attributes, such as race, class, sexual orientation, age and so on, interact. These are, however, not simply diverse forms of masculinities, but are linked together through relations of power.

Drawing on an analysis of Gay Liberation politics, Carrigan *et al* formulate the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' as a particular form of masculinity to which others - notably, young and effeminate as well as homosexual men -are subordinated (ibid:587). The history of homosexuality leads to a view of masculinity as being constantly constructed within an evolving structure of sexual power relations. As Carrigan *et al* state

> ...this construction [is] a social struggle going on in a complex
> ideological and political field, in which there is a continuing process of
> mobilization, marginalization, contestation, resistance, and subordination
> (1985:589).

Hegemonic masculinity is a public form of heterosexual masculinity that has gained ascendency over other, subordinated, masculinities and over women (Connell,1987). In Connell's analysis it is not a fixed entity but culturally and historically produced, varying according to the social context of the time. Its primary pervasive theme which appears to endure over time is its subordination of women and other masculinities, particularly homosexuality. For Carrigan *et al* (1985), the common central theme of hegemonic masculinity is the maintenance of men's domination and women's subordination in both public and private spheres.

The public image of hegemonic masculinity is not necessarily what powerful men are but what they *could* be, thus motivating large numbers of men in support of the concept and sustaining the power of those who aspire to such a masculinity (Connell,1987). As

Connell explains, the concept of hegemony has been borrowed from Gramsci's (1971) analyses of class relations in Italy and means

> ...a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond brute power into the organisation of private life and cultural processes. Ascendancy of one group of men over another achieved at the point of a gun, or by threats of unemployment, is not hegemony. Ascendancy which is embedded in religious doctrine and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of housing, welfare/taxation policies and so forth, is (Connell,1987:184).

In Connell's analysis, hegemonic masculinity is promoted through social structures such as the division of labour, power relations, and the social organisation of sexuality and attraction. As well as being embedded in the workings of the state and other social institutions, hegemonic masculinity is also psychological, that is, embedded in the personality of the individual male. Hegemonic masculinity is, however, not just about the construction of personal identities but is cardinal to the institutionalisation of gendered power relations.

The "play of social forces" does not result in alternatives being eradicated but rather subordinated or marginalised. Hegemony is achieved through consent rather than force though it is not incompatible with physical coercion. As Connell points out the connection between hegemonic masculinity and patriarchal violence is close though by no means simple. However, the hegemony of a particular form of masculinity is never total. It is constantly being negotiated, enforced, contradicted, resisted and appropriated. As Connell argues

> Relations of hegemony reflect and produce a social dynamic: struggles for resources and power, processes of exclusion and incorporation, splitting and reconstitution of gender forms. To analyze this dynamic is to explore the crisis tendencies of the gender order as a whole (1992,736).

Within this dynamic Connell maintains that the relations between heterosexual and homosexual men are central.

> The experiences and practices of homosexual men... are important for understanding contemporary gender dynamics and the possibilities for change. Research on masculinity must explore how gender operates for those men most vehemently defined as unmasculine: how masculinity is constructed for them, how homosexual and heterosexual masculinities interact, and how homosexual men experience and respond to change in the gender order" (ibid:737).

In his study of the life histories of eight men who have sex with other men, Connell (ibid) investigates these men's encounters with conventional masculinity, the contradictions of sexuality and identity, and the potential for change in the gender order that their social practice implies. Connell's study demonstrates that homosexuality is not necessarily a negation of masculinity and an embracing of the feminine. Rather, homosexual men, while being oppressed in western societies, are not definitively excluded from masculinity.

Although homosexual men choose a man as their sex-object, they do not necessarily position themselves as feminine nor do they necessarily feel a need to emphasise their homosexuality or their masculinity. Their sex-object choice is also the choice of "embodied-masculinity" (ibid). That is, the socially and culturally constructed meanings of masculinity are integral to their sense of self and their relations with other men. "Both object-choice and personality are formed within a framework of masculinity" (ibid:748).

This exemplifies the way in which masculinity is not an essential characteristic that a man brings to each and every situation but rather what he *does*. In Connell's study, some of the men were openly gay, others were married and living as heterosexual men. Any particular man did not necessarily *do* masculinity the same way in each and every social situation. That is, the masculine self that a man presents in one situation may not be the same masculine self that is presented in another situation. There is a continuing

process of negotiation taking place. This negotiation may be more significant for marginalised or subordinated masculinities, but may also be integral to hegemonic masculinity in order to maintain its hegemony.

Connell's work emphasises the importance of investigating the nature of masculinity from *within* the sex category. As Lyttleton points out

An analysis of masculinity that does not deal with the contradiction of
power imbalances that exist between men themselves will be limited and
biased, and its limits and biases will be concealed under the blanket of
shared male privilege (cited in Kaufman, 1987:104)

This was one reason for my decision to undertake my research in a single-sex boys school. I wanted to investigate what went on among and between boys and how their lived experiences in the classroom influenced their sense of self. How do males *do* masculinity in a single-sex classroom?

Connell's work emphasises that the shifting nature of the dominant masculinity has not lead to a change in the power relations inherent in gender relations but rather has sought to reframe and update the characteristics associated with 'hegemonic masculinity'. As Hanke (1990), in his analysis of the North American television programme *thirtysomething* warns, new images of masculinity should not necessarily be taken as evidence of the displacement of dominant discourses of gender. Rather they can be viewed as representing an attempt to modify elements within the discourse of hegemonic masculinity without explicitly addressing questions of power enabled by that discourse. Such modifications serve to recapture hegemonic masculinity by making it more able to accommodate counterhegemonic discourse, such as feminist and gay/lesbian positions. The attempt by Men's Liberation and Men's Studies exponents to 'capture' feminist work on gender and women's oppression and reframe it within a discourse of male oppression and male experience is one example of a theoretical attempt to modernise hegemonic masculinity. Middleton maintains that

The problem when men reflect upon themselves, without self-deception,
is that they use the same intellectual methods that once justified men's

power. Most men, however supportive of feminism, still find the political and personal barriers to the development of an emancipatory discourse on masculinity insurmountable (1992:7)

In a critical analysis of theorising and the process of theorising itself, Morgan argues that men and masculinities cannot be critically investigated without also investigating the links between masculinity and the production of knowledge, especially in academia (Morgan,1986:1992). The epistemological basis of knowledge and the academic modes of its production are issues central to Morgan's analysis. As Morgan argues

If men have been involved in a construction of a world that is simultaneously a world of and for men and a world which allows men to disappear into an undifferentiated humanity, how can these self-same men subject this world to critical enquiry? And if they do engage in this kind of enquiry is there not the danger that this will become another construction, part of the continuous outpouring of men into a man-made world? (1992:2).

While the content of sociological research has changed over the previous two decades, the means by which such enquiry is undertaken and legitimated have changed relatively little. Exclusions and marginalisations within social research have a material basis, grounded in what Morgan refers to as the "social relations of academic production" (ibid:162).

By the social relations of academic production I mean not simply the gender composition of teaching or research staffs and academic hierarchies, but also the differences between lecturers and students, full-time staff and temporary staff, directors of research projects and short-term researchers, staff and secretaries, staff and cleaners and so on. I also refer to even more hidden sets of relationships which are often consequential for academic production: relations with spouses, lovers, children and kin (ibid).

The institutions such as universities, polytechnics, and research organisations in which most social research is undertaken are predominantly male dominated and male staffed. The 'knowledge' that is constructed in these institutions has historically shaped and been shaped by wider social structures and practices. Men studying men (or women) is not complementary or parallel to women studying women (or men). Morgan argues that the gendered power relations that permeate the social relations of academic production mean that men's accounts must always be suspect (ibid). Traditional social research has rendered masculinity-as-power invisible. Thus, Men's Liberation and Men's Studies research become confessions or alibis for a hegemonic masculinity. The outcome is that the material and cultural base of gendered power relations is obscured and reproduced. Therefore, as Morgan maintains

> ...the developing of new ways of exploring men and masculinity cannot
> take place apart from a continuing critique of the institution within which
> the gendered knowledge is produced. (ibid:186).

Emerging from Critical Studies of men and masculinities is a theoretical framework in which masculinities are understood to be multiple, but hierarchical, and subject to change. A particular dominant form of masculinity is upheld through hegemonic practices. Although the content of hegemonic masculinity changes, its dominant position relative to other masculinities and to women is still maintained. As well as investigating the way power is articulated through gender relations, critical male writers also argue that the connection between masculinity and social science needs to be interrogated rather than assumed to be neutral and unproblematic (Morgan,1986;1992).

MASCULINITY IN NEW ZEALAND

Writing and research on masculinity in New Zealand although sparse, has followed similar patterns to the international literature. Within the popular literature there are a few self-help books such as Newcomb's *Men, Sexuality & Change* (1982) which recognises the need for men to become more emotionally literate. There are narrative collections such as King's *One of the Boys* (1988) which emphasises the diversity and lived personal experience of growing up male in New Zealand society. There are

psychological books such as Smith's *Will the Real Mr New Zealand Please Stand up?* (1990) which aims to find the common psychological denominator(s) in New Zealand men.

Within the academic literature a focus on men and masculinities is even more uncommon. Two works stand out: Phillip's (1987) historical analysis of the New Zealand pakeha male stereotype and James and Saville-Smith's (1989) analysis of New Zealand's 'gendered culture'. I draw on both these works in order to help construct a picture of hegemonic masculinity in New Zealand.

In his analysis of the frontier experience of nineteenth century New Zealand, Phillips (1987) identifies two quite distinct constructions of masculinity; the 'man alone' and the 'family man'. These have arisen at different historical junctures in response to particular social and economic crises. The pakeha population in the mid nineteenth century was predominantly young unattached males. The 'man alone' was the itinerant frontier pakeha male whose work was land-based, mobile, and geographically remote.

> One thinks of the goldminers and later the gumdiggers; the organised
> groups of soldiers or navvies and roadbuilders; the scattered gatherings
> of bushmen, or farmhands inhabiting the "men's quarters' of backblock
> stations (Phillips,1980:221).

Qualities necessary for survival in these contexts involved physical strength, courage, independence and ingenuity. According to Phillips (1987) exploiting physical resources, such as the land and gold, led to a respect for strenuous muscular performance. The isolative nature of much of the frontier man's work meant that he needed versatile 'do-it-yourself' abilities in order to make the many items that would not otherwise be readily available. In addition the temporary and migratory nature of frontier work meant that men had to become adept at 'roughing it'. They often had to endure real physical hardship. Taken together these characteristics mean that the frontier male valued physical strength, versatility in manual skills, and the ability to withstand hard physical conditions. This in turn led to a derogation of those things that their frontier

existence denied them, such as intellectual learning, specialised skills, and domestic comforts (ibid).

In Phillip's analysis, the frontier male's survival, both physical and psychological, rested on the distinctive male communities that developed. Mateship was a significant feature of the itinerant frontier male's life. Relationships between men were, however, seldom enduring and mates were interchangeable. The comradeship, loyalty and dependence that men gained from each other were founded on practices that excluded others, particularly women. Coarse swearing, for instance, is interpreted by Phillips as signifying contempt for the female world of manners. He maintains that

> The scorn of women cemented the bonds of mateship and reinforced its
> exclusive nature (Phillips,1987:36).

The association of women with emotions and nature meant that men collectively sought to master both their emotional expression and nature. This had implications for the way in which the frontier male was able to divorce himself from the realities associated with the colonisation of the indigenous people. As Phillips points out

> Pakehas elevated the conquest of the land (from the Maori) so they did
> not have to think about the conquest of the people (ibid:39).

At the heart of the leisure activities of these male communities was the pub. The frontier male with his arduous and isolative work sought comfort and companionship in the pub. Before the end of the nineteenth century, there was one pub for every 357 New Zealanders (Phillips,1980:221). Alcohol consumption became for these men an integral part of their respite from hard work. More usually it took the form of a drinking spree lasting from anywhere between one day to possibly two weeks until the pay cheque ran out. It is within this nucleus of male mateship, hard yakker and booze that the 'man alone' as a distinguishable aspect of New Zealand male culture could be identified.

The Pakeha 'man-alone' valued courage, strength, and adaptive skills. He was physically active and unemotional. The repression of emotions meant that he did not

consider the feelings of others, particularly women, nor the implications that his work exploiting the land had for Maori people. Of far more consequence, however, the 'man-alone' also learned to disregard and denigrate those who were excluded from his world.

According to Phillips, the 'man alone' was an ambivalent figure in the eyes of the propertied gentry. For, although needed to help exploit the land, the single, itinerant male with his fierce independence and hard drinking ways was viewed as a threat to the establishment of law and order. As Phillips points out

> Traditional male culture was an affront to the society's respectability, its
> civic order, and its capitalist efficiency (1980:225).

The 'man alone' became a figure of suspicion amongst the rising middle class. What may have been tolerable in isolated rural male communities was not acceptable within the expanding towns and cities.

> Urban employers did not want workers who drank, or gambled, or were
> inclined to drift on. Traditional male culture was an affront to the
> society's respectability, its civic order, and its capitalist efficiency (ibid).

In response to the exigencies of political crises concerning the care of women and children and the increasing influence of capitalist trade, a new construction of masculinity was needed. The family, long the "cornerstone of social order", took on a special significance in colonial New Zealand (Phillips,1987:221). It upheld the image of a settled civilised society while promoting a respectable alternative to the 'man alone' culture. Through the Cult of Domesticity, the increasing sexual division of labour and state policies, men were encouraged to make marriage and family responsibilities the pivot of their private lives. The 'family man' represented a man who was settled in his life style. He had regular employment, supported a family in a responsible manner and was able to control his drinking habits (ibid)

However, the conflict and contradictions between the 'man alone' and the 'family man' set up particular tensions between the two constructions of masculinity. Men were not quite so eager to give up the freedom and mateship they experienced as part of the 'man

alone' male culture. Furthermore, the urbanisation of male employment raised fears that men were becoming effeminised. No longer able to prove their masculinity through hard yakker, or excess alcohol consumption, men needed new ways to demonstrate their masculinity. As Phillips says

> Fences of sexual segregation were erected at home... The jobs that were acceptable [at home] were those that generally involved heavy physical work or mechanical skills - outside tasks which allowed him to relive the fantasy of the pioneering life (ibid:243).

In addition the continuing significance of alcohol consumption for male identity cannot be ignored. As Phillips maintains of post-war New Zealand

> Drinking in the pub became a central test of male identity for many New Zealand men. To drink in vast quantities was to be 'one of the boys', not to drink was to be a 'wet blanket' (ibid:78)

This historical legacy of the remnants of heavy alcohol consumption is evidenced in the alcohol statistics presented in my introductory chapter. Despite changes in drinking patterns over the last century, alcohol consumption is still a central tenet in the construction of masculinity in New Zealand. As also are the 'cult of domesticity' and the tensions created between the mateship of the 'man alone' and the mating of the 'family man. These are some of the aspects of our society that James and Saville-Smith take up in their critical analysis of social inequalities in contemporary New Zealand (1989).

Building on Phillip's (1987) analysis, James and Saville-Smith identify Aotearoa/New Zealand as a 'gendered culture'. By this they mean

> ...a culture in which the intimate and structural expressions of social life are divided according to gender. Notions of masculinity and femininity are a pervasive metaphor which shape not merely relations between the sexes, but are integral to the systematic maintenance of other structures of inequality as well. Inequalities of sex, race and class in New Zealand

are tied together by and expressed at a cultural level through the
organisation of gender relations (ibid:7).

In other words, underpinning the major structural inequalities of race, class and sex are
concepts of masculinity and femininity which act to shape the ways in which these
inequalities are manifested both on a personal level and as collective practice. As James
and Saville-Smith argue

...a gendered culture is one in which masculinity and femininity
structure, express and make sense of, at a popular level, the conflicts,
interests, and inequalities which are integral to society (ibid:11).

Illustrating their argument with an analysis of Ball's *The Dog's Tail Tale (1986)*, James
and Saville-Smith identify two separate and distinct cultures; the male culture and the
female culture.   These two cultures work together to uphold other structures of
inequality, notably race and class. Mateship (the relations men have with each other)
forms the basis of the male culture. It is under constant jeopardy by females, either
through providing civilising home comforts or by sexual attraction. As James and
Saville-Smith state

..the masculine world of hard yakker, play, and mates is constantly
under threat from the 'soft' options and attractions which are represented
and provided by women(ibid:9).

Through presenting male culture as egalitarian, mateship serves to mask inequalities of
race and class. According to James and Saville-Smith, male culture in contemporary
New Zealand is still located in the themes of the 'man alone' and the 'family man'.
Men's superiority in areas of competition, ambition and paid employment limits
women's participation in these areas. Similarly, men's family obligations are limited
to being breadwinner and family provider, with women being responsible for day to day
domestic life. Male mateship is pursued outside the home in clubs of various sorts such
as working men's, business men's, and sports. The pub and alcohol consumption
remain a central feature of male culture in New Zealand.

Many of the practices of contemporary masculinity are articulated through ritualised behaviour, much of which is centred around risk-taking. One example of this is the potent combination of cars, speed and alcohol consumption through which young men in particular test their passage into manhood. In addition, male mateship behaviour, which is expressed in particular rituals at all social levels, may also involve a combination of risk and violence. This is evidenced in particular initiation rites in university hostels and in physical games such as 'argy-bargy' where a male runs the risk of being knocked to the ground by the group. It is within rugby, however, that many aspects of the male culture have come together: physicality, violence, strength, risk, and virility. More recently, it appears that the male prestige and heroism traditionally associated with rugby has been taken over by a particular business masculinity which, combined with the arduous physical toil involved in yachting, aims to conquer nature and the country's opponents.

It is these kind of practices which help constitute the male culture. However, the male culture is a social construct with social consequences. In James and Saville-Smith's analysis

> In New Zealand, a certain type of masculinity and femininity structures
> the practices and symbols of society, and in doing so, throws up real and
> immediate social problems: domestic and sexual abuse; impoverishment;
> human wastage on the roads; alcohol abuse; and psychiatric illness. All
> are associated with the dynamics of male and female cultures in New
> Zealand (ibid:14).

The gender patterns embedded in such social problems are evidenced in my statistical analysis of the "disturbing social trends" identified in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (1993). The social and economic costs of the gendered culture fall on both men and women but more heavily on some than on others. As James and Saville-Smith explain

> Women obviously bear many of its costs: sexual abuse and violence,
> impoverishment and having to deal with the effects of others' alcohol
> and drug abuse. Working-class and Polynesian men are also

disproportionately affected by the adverse consequences of alcohol abuse, violence, and the public sanctions placed on the aspects of male culture which are deemed to be anti-social. Nevertheless, even those who bear many of its costs act, frequently quite consciously and purposively, to maintain at least the symbols of a gendered culture (1989:74).

In order to elucidate why the gendered culture is maintained even by those who benefit least or are clearly disadvantaged, James and Saville-Smith examine the biologically essentialist basis of the gendered culture and the ways in which this can be used to support and uphold dominant interest groups (ibid).

By defining social differences between men and women as *natural* cultural tendencies rather than socially constructed, the gendered culture views males and females as naturally suited to their respective social roles (ibid). Distinctions between the male culture and the female culture and the ways in which they interact to support each other can thus be viewed as immutable and necessary for smooth functioning of society. It is through the prism of the separate and distinct male and female cultures that other inequalities come to be accepted and upheld. As James and Saville-Smith (ibid) argue, the male culture with its ethic of mateship presumes a common interest and hence equality between men of different social classes and races.

Phillip's (1987) and James and Saville-Smith's (1989) analyses provide pictures of particular masculinities that could be said to be hegemonic in New Zealand. Although these pictures are taken from different viewpoints and from different eras they have certain similarities. Hard yakker, independence and the mateship of male domains such as the pub and sports are key features. They also seem to be linked to the New Zealand male stereotype that Williams' and Best's study describes. Their study, undertaken through a functionalist perspective, showed that the New Zealand male stereotype was high on autonomy, dominance, achievement, exhibition and aggression; and low on nurturance, succorance, abasement and deference (Williams and Best, 1990a). The male-female difference in the psychological needs analysis was particularly marked. For the

dominance need the male-female difference was the highest of the thirty countries studied.

A recent a newspaper report about middle-class, white male adolescents who are creating problems on the North Shore in Auckland provides a telling illustration of our gendered culture. Police met with the troublesome boys to find out what they actually wanted

> They say they want to have a place where they can drink what they want, have as many girls as they can and do whatever they want with them... (Sunday Star-Times,29 Oct 1995:A6).

The construction of a particular masculinity and the development of an individual male sense of self is not a straightforward process. Conflicts and contradictions between the 'man alone' and the 'family man' need to be negotiated and mediated on both a personal and collective level. Within contemporary New Zealand, other aspects such as the social and economic restructuring evident in the past decade, as well as the influence of feminism also play a part.

CONCLUSION

As I emphasised in my introductory chapter, it is feminism that has rendered masculinity problematic. In particular, feminist theory has exposed the ubiquity of gendered power relations in Western societies. With this in mind, writing by men about men, in both the popular and academic literature, needs to be linked to its origins as responses to the challenges that feminism presents to men, both personally and politically. My discussion in this chapter demonstrates that these challenges present particular dilemmas for men who seek to theorise masculinity. As Clatterbaugh (1992:169) points out, for men, the 'man question' in feminist theory is immediately translated into the 'self' question. This has implications for the ways that male theorists seek to understand or explain power relations between men and women.

Although some of the Men's Liberation writers claim they are part of a progressive men's movement, their analysis of power is limited by the epistemological constraints of sex-role theory. Both the Men's Liberation and the Men's Studies literature are predominantly located within a functionalist paradigm. This has implications for the changes in gender relations that these writers advocate. Both exemplify the reworking of male hegemony as male theorists attempt to 'capture' feminist theory and reshape it into a 'masculinist theory' that masks the gendered power relations exposed in feminist theories. This is evident in the work of Pleck (1981) and Franklin (1984), whose work I discussed as examples of the Men's Liberation literature, and Brod (1987) and Kimmel (1987a) whose work I classify within the Men's Studies literature. Hanmer explains that in gender studies

> There are two fundamental issues that in reality are never separate; the
> first is the political meaning of studies on men and women, and the
> second is the theoretical project (Hanmer,1990:24).

Men's Liberation and Men's Studies literature tends to be confined to the theoretical project, possibly as a means of avoiding the personal/political project. Literature within the Critical studies of Men genre aims to take both projects seriously.

This third approach to the study of men and masculinities, 'Critical studies of Men' (Hearn,1989), takes a pro-feminist and gay affirmative approach and acknowledges power as central in gender relations. The recognition of multiple 'masculinities' in recent research is further evidence of the relational nature of gender. It is through the structure of gender relations and other social structures, such as class and ethnicity, that different masculinities are constructed in relation to other masculinities and to femininities (Connell,1992:736) In modern social formations certain constructions of masculinity are hegemonic, while others are subordinated or marginalised (Connell, 1987). Hegemonic masculinity depends not only on the repression of women or the 'feminine' but also on the repression of homosexual desire. As well as investigating the way power is articulated through gender relations, critical male writers also argue that the connection between masculinity and social science needs to be interrogated rather than assumed to be neutral and unproblematic (Morgan,1986;1992).

Gender relations are not static. Nor are they separate from other social structuring processes. Drawing on Phillips' (1987) historical analysis, James and Saville-Smith (1989) have shown that within New Zealand's gendered culture relations between male and female form the motif through which inequalities of race, class and sex differences are articulated. Their work has also been particularly significant in identifying the complex ways in which the male and female cultures are implicated in our society's most pressing social problems. Further work is needed in order to understand how the hegemony of New Zealand's male culture is reproduced and produced.

It is evident that a body of literature on men/masculinity/masculinities, as a broad response to feminist scholarship on women, now exists. However, as Hearn (1989) points out, within this genre there are definite tensions between different traditions and different theoretical sites. Hearn argues for further studies but also warns of the need to be wary of how they are approached and completed and with what consequences. There is a need for scholarship on the critique of men and masculinities. Yet it is important that through such scholarship the interests of women and the institutional growth of women's studies are advanced, and not directly or indirectly checked. There is also a clear need for both men and women to be involved in further critical studies of men and masculinities.

My research investigates the discursive practices within curriculum enactment that serve to uphold the form of masculinity which is hegemonic in New Zealand. Most men have an 'investment' as defined by de Lauretis (1987:16) in these discursive practices. That is, hegemonic masculinity promises (but does not necessarily fulfil) relative power (satisfaction, reward, payoff) to most men. As Connell emphasises most men benefit from women's subordination within gendered power relations. In the next chapter, I examine critical research on gender issues in education, with a particular emphasis on research concerning boys.

Chapter Three

CRITICAL THEORISING:
GENDER AND EDUCATION

In this chapter I discuss three areas of critical feminist and profeminist analyses of gender issues and education. The first section examines research in schools and classrooms which demonstrates overwhelmingly the classed, raced, and gendered nature of the school curriculum. The second section in this chapter consists of research carried out specifically with males. Askew & Ross's (1988) study is one of the first feminist works to focus on boys in single-sex settings. I discuss this in detail because it provides a rare account of the everyday classroom and school practices through which males construct their sense of self. My third focus is on feminist analyses of educational policy and state initiatives concerning gender equity. This puts my research project and the area of our indigenous masculinity and education into a historical and social context.

CRITICAL RESEARCH ON GENDER RELATIONS
IN SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS

Work undertaken in Australian schools by Connell *et al* was initially concerned with the extent to which the schooling system disabled working-class families (Connell *et al*,1982). Through analysing the relationship between families, schooling and class inequality, these researchers were struck by the significance of the relations between the sexes. As they argue

> ...the school's relation to gender is not only one of reflecting patterns of
> separation between male and female; the school is also deeply implicated
> in the production of masculinity and femininity (1982:93).

This gender analysis moves beyond traditional conceptions of unequal opportunities for girls and the way schools reproduce the subordination of women. Connell *et al* maintain that

Relations between the sexes are not just a matter of distinctions leading to inequalities. They are also relations of power. When we talk about gender we are talking about the ways in which social relations get organized in the interests of some groups, over-riding the interests of others. Nor do schools just reproduce sex stereotypes or confirm girls in a subordinate position. They do that some of the time; but they also subvert conventions and restructure gender relations. It is not a little of one and a little of the other. We have to see the schools as involved, to a degree, in the very constitution of gender relations (1982:173-174).

The activities that the school undertakes which are clearly directed towards this end are named by Connell *et al* as "masculinising and feminising practices" (ibid:93). These practices vary between 'ruling-class' schools and 'working-class' schools, yet, most importantly, there is no straightforward relationship between class and masculinity. The tensions and contradictions that both working-class and ruling-class boys experience, as they construct their own masculinity out of their family's and school's masculinising practices, means that a diversity of masculinities are constructed. According to Connell *et al*, the schools do not eliminate this diversity but seek instead to contain it within a hierarchy of patterns of masculinity. As they argue

...one of the most striking things about the relationship between the ruling-class boys' school and the production of masculinity is a sort of synchronisation of the activity of home, school, and individual, so that the school is the locus of what is usually a mutually-supporting set of family, school and peer practices. The production of a specific kind of masculinity, and the process of class formation, are virtually the one and the same. In the working-class school, on the contrary, the production of the dominant form of masculinity is achieved in and through *resistance* to the school. And at least one subordinate form of masculinity, competitive achievement, requires a break with class practices in its constitution (ibid:98).

The links between gender and schooling are not fixed but interact with class relations and change historically. Moreover, both class and gender dynamics comprise systematic relations of power which "...exert pressures, produce reactions, intensify contradictions and generate change" (ibid:180). This means, for instance, that the construction of a particular form of masculinity takes place within a particular economic context. In today's economic climate a working class boy, for example, constructs his masculinity against a backdrop of economic uncertainty with an envisaged future as a worker in a traditional male job, providing for a family, or with an envisaged future of long term unemployment. His ruling class counterpart, however, can look forward to a more assured economic future. The organisation of a ruling class school effectively produces a particular kind of masculinity needed in the competitive business world; "...motivated to compete, strong in the sense of one's own abilities, able to dominate others and to face down opponents in situations of conflict" (ibid:73).

This work by Connell and his associates provides important background to my own study. It highlights the social and historical construction of masculinities and the significance of the school in this process. As I argued in the introductory chapter, much of the work on schooling and gender has focused on girls and their subordinate positioning within educational provision. The recognition that the construction of masculinity is also problematic within educational provision is an important shift from the focus on 'femininity' and girls as the problem.

Connell *et al* also provide an analysis of the ways in which ruling-class experiences and interests are embedded in what they call the "hegemonic curriculum" (ibid:120). A central feature of the 'hegemonic curriculum' is the organisation of learning as individual competition. This acts to legitimate ruling-class interests and fragment and disorganise working-class needs and experience. This, in turn, reinforces the hegemony of competition, academic knowledge and the ideology of individual ability which are all characteristics of class-based educational inequality. In addition, and as these researchers make clear in a later publication,

> ...the academic curriculum itself, the core of knowledge that the
> secondary school offers, is connected to the power relations of gender

in the larger society...expresses a relation between knowledge and
language that arises mainly from hegemonic masculinity (Kessler *et
al*,1985:43).

Connell *et al* conclude that secondary schooling, organised around a competitive
academic curriculum, is "part and paradigm of the operation of class hegemony in
Australian life" (1982:126). It is also deeply implicated in the construction of
hegemonic masculinity. The links between class hegemony and hegemonic masculinity
are also uncovered in my own study. This is a them to which I return in Chapter Six.

Within New Zealand, the work by Alton-Lee and her associates provides the most
recent analysis of the race and gender effects of the school curriculum (Alton-Lee &
Nuthall,1990;1991;1992; Alton-Lee,Densem & Nuthall,1991; Alton-Lee and
Densem,1992; Alton-Lee, Nuthall & Patrick,1993). In an empirical investigation of
Spender's (1981) claim regarding sexism in the curriculum, Alton-Lee and Densem
(1992) exposed the androcentrism and eurocentrism of the primary school curriculum
in New Zealand. This analysis is based on an extensive, research project concerning
children's learning in primary school classrooms (Alton-Lee & Nuthall,1991). Alton-
Lee and Densem maintain that the curriculum is critical to the process by which many
girls and boys come to accept the subordination and invisibility of women and, by
inference, the concomitant domination and visibility of men as a normal part of social
relations. Achievement within an androcentric and eurocentric curriculum means
systematically undermining one's gender if female, and one's ethnic group if non-white
(Alton-Lee *et al*,1993). As Alton-Lee and Densem maintain

> For children, the consequences of identifying with, or distancing from,
> a curriculum that undermines the cultural or gender group to which they
> belong are critical. If that identification or rejection has consequences
> for achievement, success and/or wellbeing, what price is paid for failure
> or achievement in the school system? (1992:209).

For girls who achieve within such a curriculum the negative consequences of success have not been well understood. Alton-Lee and Densem's research highlights some of the issues involved in measuring the success of equity programmes. They state

> If we measure an outcome by achievement then girls may be doing very well compared to the boys.... But what are they achieving? A male heritage? A perspective wherein the absence of women is usual? A derisory attitude towards women as 'other'? In effect they gain an education that not only undervalues their gender but also secures their participation in constructing and maintaining patriarchy (ibid:209).

In this view, the more girls achieve, the more they collude in their own oppression. Alton-Lee *et al* ask, pertinently, What are the implications of the systematic denigration of women and ethnic minorities as an integral part of schooling? Do these processes support an ethos of violence and abuse by men? (1991:111).

Alton-Lee *et al's* (1993) data analysis discovered both overt and covert forms of racial and sexual abuse in connection with curriculum content. Moveover, this occurred even when the lesson was directed towards increasing understanding and tolerance of differences. Significantly, given today's climate of so called political correctness and an espousal of equity, the racial abuse identified in this study was hidden from both the teacher and the trained research observers in the classroom, whereas the sexual abuse was overt and unchallenged by the (male) teacher. In addition, Alton-Lee and Densem's analysis of curriculum enactment and gender, demonstrates that the curriculum embodies the conception of an ungendered subject. 'People' was often used by the teacher and understood by the students as another word for 'men'. Female students in identifying themselves with the white male discourse were forced into a masculine subject position in order to achieve.

Alton-Lee & Nuthall's (1990;1991;1992) work has particular significance for my own research. First, they pioneer a new data gathering technique, which I have emulated in my own study and which will be discussed further in Chapter Four. Second, they demonstrate that curriculum knowledge is not passively received but rather constructed

by children as they endeavour to make sense of the enacted curriculum not only within the lived culture of the classroom but also within their own frames of reference associated with their race, class and gender positioning. 'New' knowledge is constructed around pre-existing knowledge gained through the individual's past experiences. Even when this previous knowledge is inaccurate or 'untrue' the child can nevertheless continue to believe in its accuracy or truth. Curriculum knowledge is reinterpreted to 'fit' with the pre-existing knowledge. This model of curriculum enactment has important implications for 'learning' about oneself as male or female and for change strategies such as a 'gender-inclusive' curricula. This is a point on which I elaborate in my discussion of the results from my own study.

Two aspects of Alton-Lee & Nuthall's work are extended by Nairn (1994) who investigated the gendered nature of the geography curriculum in a mixed sixth form classroom. The first aspect concerns the perception of gender-neutral persons as referring to males. The second includes strategies for change using women-focused material. Nairn found that a greater proportion of students considered a gender-unspecified subject to be male. Nairn asks

> If gender-unspecified and supposedly gender-inclusive terms such as
> *people* and *geographer* are more likely to mean *men*, what happens when
> gender-specific terms such as *women* and *men* are used?
> (Nairn, 1994:20).

By using a series of intervention strategies, Nairn sought to investigate how change might be brought about in a secondary school classroom. The complexity of curriculum enactment means that embedded concepts of gender and race need to be deconstructed before new transformative material can be utilised. However, even then there needs to be a serious analysis of the nature of the new material to ensure that it does in fact portray new images. As part of constructing knowledge, students will themselves turn new images into knowledge that supports old ideas. As Nairn points out

> It is important that women-focused content presents women as agents in
> their worlds, who make decisions; if it does not do this, it feeds the

myth that all women passively accept their 'fate' of powerlessness (Nairn,1994:142).

In Nairn's study, female students showed increased readiness to integrate new images of women, in contrast to the male students who were more likely to interpret women's actions as representing weakness. The perception by male students of girls and women as powerless and to be pitied contributes to and becomes part of the evaluative climate and the lived peer culture of the classroom (Nairn,1994:156). This happens through the use of the public verbal space in the classroom. Nairn's study shows that the public verbal space of this sixth form classroom was significantly gendered. Talking in public was primarily a male preserve and, as Alton-Lee *et al's* work confirms, within a classroom, whoever talks aloud shapes the curriculum content through which students generate knowledge constructs as they engage in the process of meaning making (Alton-Lee *et al*,1993). This means that it is the interests, thoughts and ideas of vocal boys which constitute the 'lived culture' of the classroom.

Of further significance to my study, Nairn's work signposted that male and female students have different modes of regulation operating in the classroom situation. By investigating the quiet and vocal students Nairn found that quiet female students had developed an internal mode of regulating their public classroom participation. On the other hand, the most vocal male student in this study externalised the responsibility for his *excessive* participation to the teacher who, he felt, should 'limit' him more. In addition, quiet male students were less willing than quiet female students to 'open up' during interview. This indicates that there are different factors operating to 'silence' male students than those that silence female students. One of the challenges, then, of a "gender-inclusive" curriculum is not only to find ways of encouraging quiet female students to participate publicly, but also to encourage vocal male students to be silent more often, effectively and appropriately (Nairn, 1994:153).

CRITICAL THEORISING OF MASCULINITY
AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Askew and Ross (1988) included the task of studying boys in all-boy settings in their extensive study of boys and sexism in education. Their data was compiled over a two year period from classroom observations in a British single-sex boys' school; from boys-only groups in co-ed schools; from extensive discussions with individual teachers; and from in-service workshops and conferences on working with boys.

These researchers observed an on-going powerplay underlying most interactions between boys. The boys were in a continuing process of positioning themselves in relation to others in such a way as to enhance their status and prestige according to stereotypical ideas about masculinity. Askew and Ross found that the competitive nature of boys' interactions functions at both explicit and implicit levels and underlies not only their interpersonal interactions but also the ways in which they approach learning situations and their performance in learning situations. Most significantly competition formed a basis for boys' self-esteem. In developing their sense of self the boys must show not only that they possess certain qualities such as bravery, strength and heterosexuality but also that they are superior in these to other boys. In these studies, the boys were already manifesting some of the characteristics of what Carrigan *et al*(1985) define as 'hegemonic masculinity'.

Among these boys, the 'competitive dynamic' identified by Askew and Ross was central to the development of a male sense of self. This 'competitive dynamic' carries with it, however, a vulnerability and a reluctance to trust and support each other. The boys in Askew and Ross' study were observed to be guarded towards each other, particularly in their verbal interactions. Talk was more likely to centre around impersonal subjects and the boys were very reluctant to discuss their own behaviour, feelings or lives with each other. Even when guided towards collaborative activities in the classroom the boys' talk was often either utilitarian or unrelated to the task. Sharing experiences through talk seemed to be something the boys in Askew and Ross's study were not particularly skilled or comfortable with. In the classroom, talk was more likely to be

in the form of 'put downs' or challenges to each other. As my discussion in Chapters Six and Seven shows, my work supports these findings.

Askew and Ross' observations indicate that verbal abuse among boys was so common as to constitute 'normal' speech. Much of the content of this abusive speech was homophobic. According to Connell, homophobia serves not only to oppress homosexual men but also to reinforce 'norms' of masculinity based on the denial or negation of the 'feminine' (Connell, 1987). Segal (1990) takes this understanding further by pointing out the close link between homophobia and misogyny. She states

> ...although the persecution of homosexuals is most commonly the act of
> men against a minority of other men, it is also the forced repression of
> the 'feminine' in all men. It is a way of keeping men separated from
> women, and keeping women subordinate to men (1990:16).

For the boys in Askew and Ross' study, blatant homophobia meant that their heterosexual masculine sense of self continually had to be demonstrated and defended publicly.

Another key theme that Askew and Ross analysed was male aggression. Over an extended period of school observations a significantly high proportion of boys exhibited aggressive behaviour *at some time or other* (1988:10). The boys engaged in much more non-verbal, aggressive or physical communication. This physicality was even used in apparently 'friendly' ways such as a punch on the arm as a way of saying 'hello'. Bullying in schools by boys was shown to be a chronic problem. Askew and Ross maintain that physical strength and aggression are so firmly entrenched in the stereotypical masculine image that bullying becomes a major way in which boys can assert their masculinity. Accordingly, bullying also reflects the power structures both within the school itself and within the wider society. As Askew and Ross note

> The need to confirm aspects of 'masculinity' which involve competitive
> definitions of strength and power (and perhaps especially exacerbated in
> the strong male ethos of the boys' schools) must be recognised as an

element involved in attempts to explain the extent of violence by boys in schools (ibid:39).

Boys were also observed to have difficulty in listening to each other. Often they simply did not bother to listen or else would greet each other's comments with contradiction, comparison, derision or direct challenge. This observation is echoed in Alton-Lee's experience with a male university student who 'participated' in her class by looking out the window whenever any one else was talking. In such a way he conveyed the impression that other people and their ideas were not of value (Alton-Lee,1994:35).

Askew and Ross's analysis of boys and sexism in education links significant aspects of the knowledge available to boys in schools, particularly boys in single-sex schools, with the images of masculinity that such knowledge reinforces. Although Askew and Ross felt that boys' schools were no worse than girls' or co-ed schools in relation to the sexist books and subjects available, in boys' schools there was particular lack of understanding from teachers as to the need for change. After all, it could be argued, when girls are absent from the school population why bother about girls' and women's inclusion in subject matter or resources?

Askew and Ross argue that pressure on boys to conform to predominant masculine stereotypes not only perpetuates negative stereotypes of girls but also perpetuates the competitiveness, aggression and violence concomitant with being male, thereby upholding whole sets of relations associated with gender and power. Furthermore, these researchers argue that school itself fosters an individualistic and competitive approach to learning, with children being measured and assessed against one another. These are features regarded as 'typically' male as opposed to supportive cooperative behaviour which is 'typically' female. Askew and Ross illuminate the possible links between school organisation, policies on discipline and teaching methods, and the gender behaviour and relations they uncovered. Their position is supported by Connell who states

> By institutionalising academic failure via competitive grading and
> streaming, the school forces differentiation on boys. But masculinity is

organised - on the macro scale - around social power. Social power in terms of access to higher education, entry to professions, command of communication, is being delivered by the school system to boys who are academic 'successes'. The reaction of the 'failed' is likely to be a claim to other sources of power, even other definitions of masculinity. Sporting prowess, physical aggression, sexual conquest may do (1989:295).

It is here that I see a link between characteristics of masculinity and the "disturbing social trends" noted in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*. That is, sexual conquest and teenage pregnancy; physical aggression and violent crime. Mayes maintains

> A masculine ideal which allows competition and aggressive individualism
> may take its toll. The alternative status sought by the boys who fail in
> the system may result in an aggressively "macho" stance, dangerous to
> themselves and others (1986:29).

My own study shows, however, that it is not just 'failed' boys who are "macho."

According to Connell, schooling's most powerful influences on the construction of masculinity are indirect rather than direct. It is the practices of streaming and failure, the authority and discipline patterns, the academic curriculum and the hierarchy of knowledge that constitute what Connell refers to as the "hidden curriculum of sexual politics" (1989:300) and which are more powerful than the overt curriculum on masculinity formation. This means that change is unlikely to come about through use of the overt curriculum and the "equal opportunity" rationale which is primarily targeted at girls. As Connell makes clear

> Given the importance of the mainstream curriculum and selection process
> in the shaping of masculinities, it would be self-defeating to locate
> programmes in an extra-curricular slot such as 'sex education' (or its
> euphemisms, 'personal development', etc). As Yates(1983) argues,
> those concerned with counter-sexist education must be concerned with
> mainstream curriculum and school organisation. A new programme

should be an effort 'across the curriculum', much as language development is now conceived. Thus a school trying to examine and reflect on masculinity with its pupils will do so in relation to sport, in relation to science, in relation to art and literature, in relation to personal interaction in the peer group and between teachers and pupils, and in relation to the school's own institutional practices (e.g. examining, streaming, administrative authority) (1989:301).

Instituting such changes would mean incorporating, across the curriculum, a critical analysis of power as it appertains to race, class and gender divisions in society. As such it would involve counter-hegemonic initiatives that are likely to be hotly contested by those groups whose interests are served so well by the present curriculum and school organisation. Connell (1989) suggests two specific problems regarding problematising masculinity and the curriculum that need resolution. Firstly, finding an appropriate rationale for curriculum design. Previous programmes such as compensatory education or equal opportunities programmes are not translatable for the privileged sex. Secondly, such programmes need to foster a sense of agency rather than a sense of hopelessness or guilt at the enormity of the task of reconstructing gender relations.

Although, Connell is over-optimistic regarding the possibility of change, his collective works on masculinity, education and masculinity & education have significantly influenced my own study. Connell's work emphasizes significant links between the secondary school curriculum and the construction of boys' sense of self. Moreover, this work highlights the complexity of these links and their class-based nature. As Mac an Ghail makes clear

> Contemporary modes of masculinity are highly complex and contradictory, displaying power, violence, competition, a sense of identity and social support (1994:51).

Mac an Ghail, like Askew & Ross (1988) and Connell (1989), substantiates the centrality of the official curriculum in presenting diverse forms of masculinity that the students can take up. Crucial to the construction of these masculinities is the

institutional demarcation of the 'academic' and 'non-academic' curricula. This "hierarchically ordered curriculum" constitutes not only different forms of knowledge but also different forms of teacher-student social relations (Mac an Ghail,1994:52). Curriculum reforms brings in a new stratification of the curriculum system which results in new definitions of 'success' and 'failure' and new versions of masculinity.

The changing and diverse nature of masculinity cannot, however, be understood simply as individual choice. This is the point that Connell makes when he suggests that the construction of masculinities is a collective practice operating at "the level of the institution and the organisation of peer group relations" (1989:295). Mac an Ghail (1994) views male peer-group networks as constituting an institutional infrastructure. He maintains that it is within peer-group networks that boys can develop social and discursive practices associated with the construction of particular masculinities. As Mac an Ghail argues, within peer-group networks

> ...young male students learnt the heterosexual codes that marked the rite
> of passage into manhood (ibid:53).

Mac an Ghail's work shows that these heterosexual codes distinguish different forms of masculinity and develop in particular schooling contexts in relation to and opposing one another. For example, academic achieving working-class males who are attracted to drama are likely to be considered by some teachers and students as 'effeminate'. These boys, therefore, assert their heterosexuality by mocking and displacing predominant institutionalised gendered perceptions by, for example, "camping it up" (ibid:61). Yet, despite this challenge to the heterosexual base of masculinity, these boys still resort to essentialist understandings of gender differences between males and females.

Mac an Ghail's study demonstrates also how working-class boys who achieve academically must make a break with class-based conceptions of masculinity. This means they need to reinforce the mental/manual labour division and align themselves with 'mental' production. This process served to distance the academic achieving working-class boys from their working class peers who embraced manual labour. Yet,

while acceptance of the academic curriculum may facilitate social mobility for some male working-class students, these students do not possess the cultural capital of their middle-class peers. This necessarily sets up tensions between the working-class principles and practices on which they draw, and the cultural capital of their middle-class peers. Accordingly, boys' investment in a particular form of masculinity can be seen as a complex of tensions, contradictions and negotiations of predominant class-based conceptions of masculinity and femininity.

Mac an Ghail identifies the differentiated formal curriculum as a primary means through which differentiated peer-group masculine subjectivities were shaped. However, it is crucial to understand that the school is acting in the interplay of other influences. As Mac an Ghail points out

> It is important to stress that it is the interplay of a number of factors -
> involving family/kinship relationships, peer networks, media
> representation, and school and workplace experience - that provides a
> filter through which masculinities are culturally produced and reproduced
> (ibid:75).

Mac an Ghail's work is important for my own study because it not only problematises masculinity but does so within other power relations notably race and class. In particular, his work is centrally concerned with the construction of masculine subjectivities. Drawing on post-structuralism theories, Mac an Ghail identifies particular discursive practices linked to hegemonic conceptions of masculinity. His findings show that masculine subjectivity is significantly linked to contradictory forms of compulsory heterosexuality, misogyny and homophobia. According to Mac an Ghail, heterosexual boys are engaged in two simultaneous practices; policing external relations by distorting portrayals of the 'other'; notably women and homosexuals, and policing internal relations by rejecting femininity and homosexuality from within themselves (ibid:90).

Within the secondary school peer-group culture, learning to voice women as 'other' acts to normalise a way of being male in which sexual desire is detached from tenderness for a person and indeed from interest in female company except for the purposes of sex.

The effect is to establish a norm that equates masculinity with domination in male-female relationships. The effect is also to highlight the taboos against homosexual affiliation. As I noted earlier, homophobia serves to support compulsory heterosexuality, while at the same time operating as a constraint that keeps heterosexual people of both sexes within the boundaries of traditional masculinity and femininity.

While primarily being interested in focusing on sex/gender identity formation and its intersection with the social relations of class, 'race' and ethnicity, Mac an Ghail was struck by the significance of white English ethnicity in the construction of masculinity. As he points out, at school policy level there is an implicit assumption that white racism is a homogenous social phenomenon. Equal opportunity policies that focus on coloured ethnic minorities tend to render invisible white ethnicity. In exploring the problematic nature of white ethnicity, Mac an Ghail reveals the contradictions and tensions that class, race and gender positioning pose for males of white English ethnicity.

SUMMARY

My discussion of the literature on gender and education, thus far, has identified three major issues. First, in a coeducational setting, males play a significant part in determining 'what counts as knowledge' in the classroom and also how that knowledge is transmitted. Given this power base, it is inevitable that male interests become paramount in curriculum content and transmission. In a single-sex setting, class and ethnicity become more salient with the curriculum organised around white, ruling-class boys' interests. Second, conceptions of masculinity are class and race specific. Students entering a classroom have already taken up particular subject positions (for example, masculine, white, heterosexual, fifth formers, and top streamed). In taking up a particular masculine subject position at any one time, boys must negotiate the effects of class and race positioning as well as dominant conceptions of gender relations. According to Davies (1989) male/female dualism is a fundamental characteristic of these gendered subjectivities. The ubiquity of a dichotomous sex/gender system means that a boy's sense of self as male is generated in relation to a female self.

Third, data from Alton-Lee *et al*'s (1991) research provides compelling evidence that students construct views of reality out of the material and cultural contexts of their lives. Knowledge acquisition in classrooms is explained as a developmental process in which pupils generate specific knowledge constructs as they encounter curriculum content and participate in classroom activities (Alton-Lee and Nuthall, 1991). This means that the boys in my own study generate knowledge constructs through curriculum enactment about what it means to be a man in New Zealand today. These knowledge constructs will be grounded on their previous knowledge of hegemonic masculinity gained through their web of social relations comprising their family, the media, peer group, social class, ethnic group, school structure and organisation, and their envisaged future as 'achievers'. The knowledge constructs will develop through the secondary school curriculum as the students 'choose' at some level what they accept or reject from these sources in constructing their sense of self.

Recent curriculum reforms in this country, especially the concept of a 'gender-inclusive' curriculum need to draw on the findings from critical research on gender in schools. The reasons that they do not do so are discussed in the concluding section of this chapter where I critically examine gender and education policy.

GENDER AND EDUCATION POLICY

As I discussed in the introductory chapter, recent curriculum reforms in New Zealand seek to address the problem of sexism in the curriculum by including the concept of a 'gender-inclusive' curriculum. This has been defined as a curriculum "which acknowledges and includes the educational needs and experiences of girls equally with boys, both in its content, and in the language, methods, approaches, and practices of teaching." (Ministry of Education,1993a:1). As part of its commitment to equity in education the Ministry Of Education was to prepare a policy blueprint for a gender-inclusive curriculum, followed by an action plan in 1994. The action plan was to "provide teachers with strategies for their curriculum planning, and for evaluating their classroom programmes" (Cochrane cited in Rivers,1993). To date, none of these things have happened. There has been no further published information available for teachers

or parents about the gender-inclusive curriculum. Although policy documents such as *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* offer a rhetoric which acknowledges gender as an issue in schools, and although there is a structure in place which would enable feminist and pro-feminist teachers to have a 'voice' in developing a gender-inclusive curriculum, there have been no contracts let for either policy development or teacher development regarding gender-inclusive curricula. Neither have there been resources, facilitation or teacher support available. In effect, there has been no practical support for those teachers who seek to implement change, even in a small way.

This lack of action on the part of the present administration is scarcely surprising given its historical failure to resource and implement previous non-sexist initiatives. Some of the origins of this can be found through the critical examination of educational policy discourse and its underlying assumptions about the individual, the social world, and the state.

Feminist analyses have clearly demonstrated that the state constitutes a significant part of the web of social relations which uphold particular conceptions of masculinity and femininity (Cox & James,1987; Franzway *et al*,1989; Middleton,1990). Franzway *et al* argue that the state in both its structure and functions is inextricably enmeshed in gendered power relations. In particular,

> The state is culturally marked as masculine and functions largely as an
> institutionalisation of the power of men, especially heterosexual men
> (1989:41).

Men's interests are sustained most potently by the state through its supposedly 'impersonal' processes and assumed 'objectivity' (ibid). The upholding of men's interests is, however, not a straightforward process. Although the state is not neutral in the area of sexual politics, neither is it a monolithic entity. As Franzway *et al* point out the state is

> ...the product of specific, historically located social processes. Quite
> specifically, the shape of the state is the outcome of particular social
> struggles (ibid:35).

The state is constituted through ongoing struggles between different social forces. It represents a multiplicity of interests and must mediate the contradictions and conflicts that opposing interests generate in order to legitimate its power. This, however, is by no means a simplistic process. Rather the state is involved in complex interventions and negotiations, at times actively promoting traditional gender relations which uphold male power, and at other times advancing feminist demands which seek to undermine male power (ibid).

These struggles are exemplified in three major philosophical shifts which have underpinned educational provision in this country; namely classical liberalism, social-democratic liberalism and neo-liberalism. Liberalism has been the primary foundation of New Zealand's social and economic organisation since colonial times. O'Neill points out that

> In classical liberal theory, individuals were conceptualised neither as 'moral wholes' nor as part of a larger social whole, but as the private owners of their own 'essence' and accordingly their own social and economic fortunes (1992a:37).

Using *his* 'rational' self an individual would thus be able to achieve *his* place in the social order. Classical liberal theory masks the genderedness of the rational individual although the concept of the individual was decidedly androcentric and ethnocentric. As Middleton states

> Together with savages (non-Europeans), the indigent (unpropertied classes), and the insane, women were perceived as irrational creatures of passion, who could therefore justifiably be denied the rights of citizenship (such as the rights to own property or to vote) (1990:69).

The harsh effects of market relations embedded in classical liberalism were exacerbated by the Depression of the thirties. Social-democratic liberalism with the principles of Keynesian state welfarism was ushered in with the first Labour government in 1935. In the settlement underlying this, individuals were considered to have basic citizenship rights, regardless of their social position (O'Neill,1992a). Keynesian social democracy

aimed to temper the effects of the 'free-market' and set up a compromise between capital and labour. This 'historical compromise' meant that

> Workers abandoned calls for socialist reconstruction and demands for
> structural change, and accepted government policies and the bargaining
> and welfare mechanisms that the state set up for them (ibid:39).

The reconception of social relations and individual human rights under capitalism was, however, rigidly gendered. The public/private split of male and female spheres was quite explicit and regarded as 'natural'. O'Neill's analysis of educational policy and provision has shown that historically this split has been premised on, and indeed embodied within the hegemony of particular cultural conceptions of masculinity and femininity which were historically reinforced through educational provision (1990; 1992a; 1992b; 1992c; 1993). The school curriculum has played a cardinal role in the production and reproduction of the traditional gender divisions underlying our 'gendered culture'. As O'Neill states

> From its inception educational provision in New Zealand was based on
> an overriding assumption that along with its pedagogical functions,
> education would prepare boys for the public world of waged labour
> and/or public and private decision making and prepare most girls for a
> life to be lived predominantly within the private realm of domesticity,
> moral guardianship, unwaged labour, childbearing and rearing
> (O'Neill,1992b:74)

The taken-for-granted assumptions about gender were both shaped by, and helped shape, state policies in education, school structure and function, and classroom dynamics. The state (which is culturally marked as masculine) played and still plays a dynamic role in facilitating social class reproduction via the education system. That is

> ...the teaching practices, the organisational procedures, the subjects
> offered to boys and girls, the behaviours, interests and attitudes tolerated
> and cultivated in the school, as well as the expectations about school
> success or failure imparted by parents and teachers, were all based on

particular conceptions of masculinity and femininity and the appropriate place of men and women in society. School practices and the formal and hidden curriculum all contributed to the production and reproduction of gender relations and had real material effects in shaping the career/life trajectories of individual male and female pupils (O'Neill,1992b:93).

As gendered subjects, students are not passive in this process. They too negotiate, contest, acquiesce and resist at particular sites, the predominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity. They do so, however, within the boundaries furnished by their particular family, race and class backgrounds. As O'Neill points out

> People are active class, race, and gender located humans who employ
> particular cultural resources and practices which have their origin in the
> power relations which structure the society in which they live (1990:89).

When applied to contemporary schooling, O'Neill's analysis may help explain the "disturbing social trends" identified in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*. What happens when the economic climate renders the public world of waged labour out of reach for significant numbers of young men? Do they then try to construct a version of masculinity linked to alcohol or drugs or violence? Why do so many young women place themselves at risk of an early entry into the world of childbearing and childrearing? Is the career of motherhood reinforced by schools as a 'natural' choice?

As I discussed earlier, the state is deeply implicated in the institutionalisation of power relations, particularly gendered power relations. State initiatives in educational provision cannot be isolated from the social and historical power struggles from which they emanate (O'Neill, 1992a). O'Neill's analysis of educational policies and reforms demonstrates how the state has historically been actively involved in perpetuating predominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity. This has been achieved through its role in educational provision and has pervaded every facet of education. It has, nevertheless, been a contradictory process. Within the bounds of Keynesian welfarism the state has espoused policies of equal opportunity based on elimination of 'sexism' and sex-role stereotyping. It has also, however, worked to create and sustain gendered

power relations through policy which upholds biologically essentialist conceptions of masculinity and femininity and the 'naturalness' of separate spheres.

Neo-liberal economics and social policies were implemented in response to the increasing demands of the welfare state and the decreasing ability of the economic structure to meet those demands. O'Neill states that neo-liberalism

> ...embodies a commitment to the market in preference to the state as a
> means of allocating resources. There is an emphasis on individual and
> corporate freedom as a key to economic progress and social well-being
> and a reduced role for the state in the economy and civil society
> (1995a:3).

In neo-liberalism the individual's right to own private property is hegemonic. Thus education becomes a commodity (a private good) that individuals can 'acquire 'for their own benefit. The type of education available and the cost will be determined by a free-market governed by individual 'choice'. This "marketisation of education" (O'Neill,ibid:2) has resulted in a new "educational settlement" (Grace,1990:170). As O'Neill argues

> The provision of market choice has meant that equity is to be achieved
> on an individualised basis by people choosing to pursue it in the
> educational market place. It is assumed that market pressures on
> educational institutions will make them perform efficiently (1995b:2).

Under this new settlement, schools are assumed to be equally well resourced in order to compete efficiently (as measured by school qualifications and Educational Review Office reports) with each other. Therefore, differences between schools are those determined by local community needs or by their different levels of 'efficiency'. Those schools that cannot compete efficiently in a free market will have to close. However, schools are in reality placed in a wide variety of community settings. Many communities, especially in the poorer, rural areas, do not have the same access to teaching, administrative or financial resources that schools in middle-class urban areas

have. Neither do they have the resources *on their own* to increase their existing level of resources.

There is also an assumption that all students, irrespective of race, social class, or gender, are equally well placed to exercise their freedom of choice in utilising their educational opportunities. This assumption is based on the myth of meritocracy in which qualifications are equally available to all students through a combination of ability and effort. Furthermore, each individual student, or their family, will be able to 'know' which school will provide the teaching that will most efficiently assist their acquisition of credentials. As O'Neill points out

> Inextricably linked to the supposed ability to exercise choice in any market place is a conception of the human as a rational market individual (ibid:4).

Extensive research done both internationally and nationally demonstrates that educational attainment is a function of race, class and gender positioning (Bourdieu, 1974; Arnot & Weiner,1987; Willis,1977; Connell *et al*,1982; O'Neill,1990; Nash, 1993; Lauder & Hughes,1990; Middleton,1988) not of individual choice in a free market.

Recent curriculum reforms are situated in neo-liberal philosophy and ideologies. They represent not only the response of the New Right aimed at the restoration of class relations in favour of the property-owning classes but also constitute part of state regulation of gender relations. In a critique of the assumptions underlying recent educational reforms, O'Neill states

> The intellectual paucity of neo-liberal, free market ideologies and the asocial conception of possessive individualism, which have guided and legitimated educational change in Aotearoa/New Zealand is starkly revealed when a gender analysis is applied to them (1995a:5).

Whereas Keynesian welfarism openly acknowledged and upheld the public/private split, neo-liberalism discursively constructs a non-gendered individual. O'Neill maintains that

the recent neo-liberal policies and structural changes within education, while clouded by supposedly gender-neutral 'market-speak', are actually highly gendered and highly classed. They are based on and embody a conception of the individual that she terms *rational-market-man* (O'Neill,1995a:3). This individual is able to help structure the social and economic world through making rational autonomous choices in a competitive, free-market. To 'choose' not to compete in the paid labour market in order to bear and rear children is viewed as 'irrational' as it precludes the individual from competing in the market and acquiring material resources. That it is *women* who bear and rear children is not acknowledged. Neither is it acknowledged that women's unpaid work is central to capitalism and the economy. As O'Neill states

> [neo-liberal] discourse (as opposed to that of social democratic liberalism) overtly downgrades the role of childbearing, domesticity and unpaid labour through its linkages to irrationality. Non-commercial transactions cannot be accounted for, neither can the realities of interdependence and dependence, even though these features of social relations are relied upon to sustain the public realm of the market (ibid:6).

The conception of the individual as rational and autonomous and concerned with the pursuit of self-interest (*rational-market-man*) upholds the dominance of the ruling class, that is, those who control the economic, social and political resources. In New Zealand this group is predominantly white, male, middle/upper class, able-bodied, middle-aged and heterosexual (Bunkle and Lynch,1992). As O'Neill points out, these assumptions about the individual cannot account for the individual as

> anything other than self seeking. They cannot acknowledge differing family/whanau resource bases or networks, nor can they acknowledge the real effects of the dominance and subordination underlying capitalist social relations (O'Neill,1993:55).

The focus on the individual deflects attention from the operation and effects of social structures and thus serves the interests of those already advantaged. Structural constraints and the ways individuals actively negotiate their social and material worlds

are totally ignored in recent educational policy and curriculum reforms. Yet, the school curriculum and the particular conceptions of masculinity and femininity which are embedded in it are part of wider social struggles in which the state is actively involved. Recent educational reforms are a reflection of the political tensions inherent in crises of legitimation (Codd and Gordon, 1990; Nash, 1989) and are linked to the change from Keynesian welfarism to neo-liberalism. These tensions result from the contradictions of the state's attempt to legitimate its political power with competing interest groups. These competing interests are those associated with accumulation of capital, and those associated with equity issues in education.

The Policy Division of the Ministry of Education has taken cognisance of calls for equity in educational provision and hence *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* attempts to marry new right market driven ideologies to discourses embracing 'gender-inclusiveness', biculturalism, the Treaty of Waitangi, and community involvement. It is through this discourse embracing principles of social equity that the state seeks to legitimate its educational policies. At the same time these policies uphold the social and economic processes which reproduce a society divided by race, class and gender.

State regulation of gender embedded in educational changes over the past decade represents in part a reworking of male hegemony. Feminist educational politics cannot be ignored. The state must therefore counter or co-opt feminist demands which run contrary to the dominant interests of men which the state acts to uphold. This social struggle is exemplified in curriculum reforms which have involved the tightening of control by central government, while devolving responsibility to local boards of trustees and schools; the limited nature of consultation with teachers and teacher organisations; the centralised design and control of the curriculum; and the notions of what constitutes teaching, learning and assessment (Nash, 1989; Hearn, 1992; Codd & Gordon, 1990). In addition, the policy discourse of 'non-sexism' in education has changed to one of 'gender inclusiveness'. This language of embracement rather than critique has four specific consequences that are integral to my study.

First, there is a continued focus in policy documents and school practices on "girls as the problem, on women and girls as other" (Yates, 1993:181) rather than on schooling as the problem. By representing girls and women as universal classifications, differences among girls and women are marginalised, while differences between females and males are universalised. The problem, then, becomes reframed to involve 'girl-friendly' concepts and "acknowledging the needs and experiences of girls and boys equally" (O'Rourke, cited in Sturrock,1993). As I have argued, the emphasis in neo-liberal policies, is on individuals and 'choice' rather than on schooling as the problem.

Second, gender and race are posited as identical, but separate, categories. This oversimplifies the complex nature of both gender and race and their intersections. It carries an underlying assumption that educational issues concerned with gender can be treated the same as issues concerned with race. Yet, this is contradicted by the acceptance of racial pluralism (multiculturalism) and the rejection of gender or sexual pluralism.

Third, unequal educational outcomes are considered to be based on differences among students, rather than constituted by structural and cultural processes rooted in hierarchical systems of status and power. This maintains the focus for change on student-centred learning practices and individual achievement rather than recognising that campaigns for social change must include the structure as well as the nature and content of education.

Fourth, and most significant for my study, state policy discourse lets masculinity off the hook. "Gender-inclusive" means female-inclusive. The nature of masculinity and its physical, social and emotional expressions remain invisible and not subject to scrutiny. There is no acknowledgement of the ways in which boys and men are implicated in the gendered nature of educational provision. Yet, feminist research, despite its focus on girls and women in educational provision, reveals much about the nature of adolescent masculinity and the ambiguity of male youth in facing a class-divided education system (Arnot,1993). While young women are being encouraged and supported to demonstrate increasing confidence, young men must struggle to define

their male sense of self in the uncertain context of retrenchment of the state and a reconstituted labour market with its concomitant structural unemployment, and an increasingly violent world.

CONCLUSION

The studies which I have discussed in the first two sections of this chapter provide clear evidence of the pervasiveness of class and race specific gendered power relations in a variety of educational contexts. In particular, these studies have exposed the androcentrism and eurocentrism of the school curriculum and the specific masculinising practices of schools which act to uphold hegemonic masculinity. These processes need to be recognised, though, as more than the outcome of specific teaching or learning strategies. Rather they are the result of educational policies and practices in which the state has actively been involved and which promote particular cultural conceptions of masculinity and femininity. Recent educational policy and curriculum reforms have not drawn on the extensive critical feminist scholarship on education. Rather, they are founded on neo-liberal economic ideologies which, while supposedly gender neutral, are in fact blatantly gendered and classed. Hegemonic masculinity is promoted and embodied in the discursive form of *rational-market-man*. This conception of the individual upholds the interests of white, ruling class males. It is this group that I have chosen to study in my own investigation of the secondary school curriculum.

The policy discourse of 'gender-inclusiveness' and its contradictions with the conception of the individual as *rational-market-man* ignores the complexity and pervasiveness of gendered power relations. *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* provides neither a single definitive explanation, nor a framework for change. It constitutes a sophisticated form of cultural hegemony aimed at upholding the gendered power structures and divisions which underlie capitalist social relations. These gendered power relations, as the critical literature on gender and education demonstrates, are premised on male domination and female subordination and embodied in hegemonic masculinity.

Chapter Four

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

All this shifting, all this de-centring and disestablishing of fundamental categories gets dizzying. It is not easy to sort out the seduction of the 'glamour of high theory' (JanMohamed and Lloyd,1987:7) from what is useful for those of us concerned with what it means to do educational research. This time of openness, however, seems ripe for making generative advances in the ways we conceptualise our purposes and practices (Lather,1989:8).

Lather is referring to the plethora of competing and often contradictory views of what it means to do science in a world where knowledge is socially constructed and where what Lyotard (1984) calls the 'grand narratives of legitimation' are no longer credible. How then does a postgraduate student presently decide what constitutes scholarly educational research? This is the dilemma which I, like Lather, work through in this chapter.

In keeping within a philosophy of openness in inquiry, I have used a generative methodology (Alton-Lee and Nuthall,1992) in order to critically reflect on the research process and the assumptions that guide it. This chapter not only describes the methods and designs used in my project, but also the decision-making processes as they affected this study. I adopt a process of critical self-reflection throughout. In the first part of this chapter, I discuss the underlying assumptions and beliefs that inform my project. In particular, this section is concerned with the methodological legacies, the 'evaluative climate', ethical considerations, and the choice of methods and research tools. I then pose the research questions and specific aims. Following this, the eight phases of the research process are discussed in detail, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses.

METHODOLOGICAL LEGACIES

Scientific discourses have historically promoted particular conceptions of truth, rationality and scientific discovery. Arising from seventeenth century Enlightenment beliefs of rationality based on the mind/body split, positivist science emphasises empirical observation, neutrality, measurement, prediction and control. Although scientific positivism has been exposed as a pervasive hegemonic ideology (Giroux,1981, O'Neill,1992b) and feminists challenge the notion of what counts as scientific - arguing that what is supposedly devoid of values actually reflected such values, an ideal of scholarship as transcending the perspective of any one human being or group has nevertheless persisted as at least one highly powerful ideal (Nicholson,1990:2). As O'Neill warns

> The influence of positivism lies not only in the breadth of its applications as a research method, but more essentially in its hegemony as a pervasive cultural ethos. Its power should not be underestimated in education; in either its analysis or praxis (Giroux,1981). Nor can we ignore its primacy in the social sciences, for this has continually been rendered problematic by critical and feminist theorists ...(1992b:77).

Yet the significance of this is lost if the connection between masculinity and scientific discourse is ignored. Ideas of what counts as scientific actually reflect the values of masculinity at a particular point in history (Nicholson, 1990:5). Claims of "rational", "neutral" and "objective' within science as universally applicable have been valid only for men of a particular culture, class and race (Middleton:1990). Furthermore, as Stanley and Wise point out, "This "masculinist world view" is so endemic, is so much advanced as the only 'scientific' way of interpreting social reality, that very few people are aware that it is a social construct and a part of sexism" (Stanley & Wise,1983:36). The unconsciousness of this world view is so pervasive that it is assumed not only to be the correct one but also the only one possible (O'Neill,1992b). These are points on which Morgan (1992) argues substantially and which I discuss further in Chapter Two.

With these legacies, formulating an appropriate research design and maintaining integrity with feminist principles is by no means a straightforward procedure. As Morgan argues, undertaking feminist research within the university milieu requires an interrogation of the ways in which taken-for-granted notions of 'men' and 'masculinity' shape what counts as scientific knowledge (Morgan, 1986:105). Morgan argues further that the dominance both numerically and politically of men in academic life has generated a culture which can be identified in some of its manifestations as a 'masculine' culture (ibid). This 'masculine' culture which is rarely recognised or articulated as such, combines with other aspects of academic life in very complex ways. This in turn influences the processes by which research topics and models are negotiated.

The contradictions and conflicts that the legacies of positivist science and the 'masculine' university culture create for me as a novice feminist researcher are highlighted throughout this chapter. I have sought to use methodological approaches that maintain an openness about the research process and the influences of the masculine university culture and my feminist theoretical position. Yet at the same time I have been acutely aware of the 'evaluative climate' of postgraduate research.

THE EVALUATIVE CLIMATE

According to Doyle "academic work in classrooms is embedded in an accountability structure defined by Becker,Geer and Hughes (1968) as an exchange of performance for grades" (Doyle,1983:181). Doyle argues that "grades" does not refer simply to marks on report cards, but also to a variety of forms of public recognition in the classroom. Particular processes surrounding both public and private recognition of a student's performance constitute an "evaluative climate" which connects academic tasks to a reward structure (ibid:182).

Doyle's analysis undertaken in relation to primary and secondary school classrooms provides a helpful understanding of some of the processes at work in the classroom in which I carried out the observations and recordings for this study. It was clear through my classroom observations that judgements about student performance in the classrooms are frequent. Apart from the more formal structure of evaluation and assessment carried out by the teacher, there also operated an informal, but no less rigid or severe, peer evaluation process. An incorrect or nebulous response to a question from the teacher was often met with jeers from the other boys. Negotiating both the formal and informal evaluative climate carries with it a degree of ambiguity and risk.

Doyle defines ambiguity as "the extent to which a precise answer can be defined in advance or a precise formula for generating an answer is available" (ibid:183). Risk is defined as "the stringency of the evaluative criteria a teacher uses and the likelihood that these criteria can be met on a given occasion" (ibid). As Doyle points out, "because academic tasks in classrooms are embedded in an evaluation system they are accomplished under conditions of ambiguity and risk for boys" (ibid). Doyle's analysis of the evaluative climate provides a means by which to interpret the marked distinctions between the mathematics and english curricula and classroom dynamics in my study.

Doyle's analysis also provides a means of understanding the "evaluative climate" of postgraduate research. Balancing the ambiguity and risk of the evaluative climate of postgraduate research underpins much of the decision-making throughout my study. My study is a research project. It is also a graded piece of work. Doyle's concepts of ambiguity and risk are particularly useful in highlighting some of the influences at work in graded social science research. It could be argued that all research is graded in one way or another. Peer or colleague approval, acceptance by a particular journal for publication, and presenting findings to a seminar are all evaluative to some extent. However, postgraduate research aimed at acquiring qualifications is directly associated with a grading process and also has significant direct links to future academic opportunities. These are some of the implicit considerations that affect the way my research project is structured.

One of the strategies I have adopted to manage the ambiguity and risk inherent in my postgraduate research project is to adhere to particular traditional paradigms in some aspects of my research. An example of this is the way I have drawn on Williams and Best's (1990a,1990b) and Kalin and Tilby's (1978) works. Although I reject the positivist assumption that complex social behaviours, such as masculinity, can be reduced to discrete entities and thus measured, I have chosen to use quantitative data collection methods which have arisen from the positivist paradigm. Within the evaluative climate of graded academic work and the masculine culture of the university, the use of quantitative, survey methods has specific advantages related to safety and risk. As one postgraduate colleague commented, "quantifying is safe", that is, 'safe' in the sense of the hegemonic ascendency of quantitative data being equated with 'rational', 'objective' measures of positivism. Although there is growing acceptance of qualitative research, my use of qualitative research and my feminist theoretical position does, however, carry with it an element of risk. Negotiating the evaluative climate is, however, only one aspect influencing the choices I made, as I explain in the next section.

QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

Although the debate about the usefulness and/or appropriateness of using quantitative methods in feminist research is ongoing (Jayaratne and Stewart,1991), I have decided to use a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Both these methods can be used effectively in ways which are compatible with feminist values and goals. The historical associations between quantitative research, positivist science and masculinity (Morgan,1986), and the ways these have upheld the dominance of androcentric knowledge, does not mitigate against the usefulness of quantitative methods in feminist research. Indeed, feminist arguments against the use of quantitative research often essentialise male/female differences and claim that women are better suited to qualitative methods while men are better suited to quantitative methods (Davis,1985; Scheuneman,1986). My choice of research methods is based on the argument that "feminism.... should remain open to, adopt, adapt, modify and use, interesting and useful ideas from any and every source" (Stanley and Wise,1983:18). Additionally, the use of quantitative methods can be justified within feminist research as

[constituting] a rejection of the identification of "hard" and "male" with quantification, recognising that how research is set up and conducted, the questions it seeks to explore, and the uses its results are put to, can all provide good feminist reasons for quantification (Stanley,1993:260).

I also want to develop a research project that provides empirical evidence acceptable to the 'malestream' university culture and policy makers, although Stanley would argue that this reason carries with it an assumption that the malestream is worth joining (ibid). My use of survey method is not aimed at joining the malestream but rather at providing evidence in a language readily recognisable to the malestream. If that language is "numbers" then I shall speak it, in part at least. Because, although Lather, rather optimistically I think, states that "we seem somehow in the midst of a shift away from a view of knowledge as disinterested and toward a conceptualisation of knowledge as constructed, contested, incessantly perspectival and polyphonic" (Lather,1991:xx) I am acutely aware that this shift is often ignored by many academics, practitioners and policy-makers, or their involvement in such a shift represents part of an attempt to rework their hegemonic positioning.

Feminist theory is a political strategy that "needs to use whatever means are available to it, whether these are 'patriarchal' or not" (Gross,1986:197). The use of both quantitative and qualitative research tools in my project enables the weaknesses of either method to be counterbalanced by the strengths of the other. For example, gender patterns can be identified through quantitative analysis, yet qualitative methods enable a richness and depth of data to be obtained.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study has the approval of the Human Ethics Committee, Massey University. Specific rights relating to this project are: the right to not take part; the right to not answer any particular question; the right to turn off the individual microphone at any time; the right to ask any further questions at any time; the right to confidentiality; the right to be free from harm; the right to a summary of the findings. These ethical concerns are described in detail throughout the phases of the research process. In this section, I shall outline the procedures I used to ensure these rights.

Access to Participants.

As the main participants were secondary school boys, access was negotiated through the school in the first instance, and then the parents or guardians and boys. In all matters of consent and access to boys I was guided by the Principal and Board of Trustees and their own ethical requirements.

Informed Consent.

Consent to speak with the teacher and the boys about the research was obtained through the School Principal. The teachers were then approached and all aspects of the proposed research discussed with them. I next spoke to the potential participating boys about the research. They were informed in general terms about what the objectives of the research were; what data collection methods would be used; what mechanisms were in place to ensure confidentiality; and the use to which the research was likely to be put. They were provided with copies of the 'Information Sheet for Parents' and the 'Information Sheet for Students' which they could take home and discuss with their parents or caregivers. Appropriate consent forms were available for all potential student participants and their parents (Appendix A).

I emphasised to the principal, the teachers and the boys that they or their school would not necessarily benefit directly from my study. The main benefit would accrue from the data that might help teachers in their work as well as for future policy development.

Confidentiality and Anonymity.

Participants were assured that their names and the name of their school would not be used or be identifiable in any but a very general way. In addition they were given the opportunity to try out the recording microphones and practise using the pause button so that they could select out conversations or comments that they did not want recorded. To preserve the anonymity of the case study boys all participants were instructed to consider their microphones active at all times although they were told that not all microphones would be recording all the time. They were able to turn them off at any time if they wished to say something without it being recorded. The teacher was unaware of the case study boys' identities.

Potential harm to participants.

None envisaged.

Participants right to decline.

This was emphasised in the Informed Consent session prior to the commencement of data collection. It was also reemphasised at intervals throughout the research period. I could not offer the boys the right to withdraw from the classroom during the research process. This would have contravened the 'rules of order' that operate in an educational environment. The principal was prepared to arrange an alternative classroom for those boys who chose not to participate in the study. This enabled me to assure the boys that their participation was quite voluntary. Additionally, the boys had the right to refuse to answer any particular question, and were given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the individual microphones and the on/off switch.

Arrangements for participants to receive information.

As part of my feminist commitment I ensured that both teacher and student participants had the opportunity to talk with me about the preliminary findings. I discussed the research experience and the findings with the whole class and the english teacher. The boys took the opportunity to ask me further questions about my analysis. Both teachers were invited to discuss the results with me but chose not to. They were sent a written summary of the findings after completion of the study. The boys were also sent a written summary of the findings (Appendix D).

Use of the information.

Primarily the research was carried out as part of the requirements for a Masterate programme. Hence the research has been written up in full and is available through the university library under the usual borrowing and photocopying conditions. It is also intended that the research provide significant new knowledge in relation to current curriculum reforms in New Zealand. It is thus envisaged that various aspects of the research will be made available to a wider audience of educational practitioners, theorists and policy-makers through established educational journals.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Five specific research questions were formulated.

1. What subject positions does the secondary school curriculum construct, support and invite fifth form boys to take up?

2. What are the connections between a fifth form boy's sense of self and these subject positions?

3. How do these link with conceptions of masculinity that are predominant in New Zealand society?

4. What links do they have with the "disturbing social trends" identified in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*?

5. How might a gender-inclusive curriculum take note of these relationships?

In order to investigate these questions I developed eight specific aims.

Research Aims

1. To find out what *ideas* the fifth form boys in my study have about gender relations in New Zealand society.

2. To find out what characteristics these fifth form boys select to describe themselves.

3. To find out what characteristics these fifth form boys select to describe men in New Zealand society.

4. To find out what representations of males and females are made in the mathematics and english secondary school curriculum

5. To investigate curriculum enactment and the subject positions that the secondary school curriculum constructs, supports and invites fifth form boys to take up.

6. To find out what the connections are between a fifth form boy's sense of self and these subject positions?

7. To develop strategies, based on these findings, that could be used in a 'gender-inclusive' curriculum.

Using a generative methodology means that the research questions and aims themselves generate the means by which the answers could be discovered. It also means that data

collected at one stage of the research informs the data collection of the next stage. These aspects of my study will become clearer as I discuss each of the research phases in turn.

RESEARCH PHASES

The research process is divided into eight phases.

I. CONSULTATION AND TRIALLING

In the developmental process of my research project I spoke with two secondary school principals. One was in a single-sex boys college, the other was in a co-educational secondary school. Both principals helped me work through the research process in advance and address possible difficulties that I might encounter. In addition, I also invited a disparate group, including one of the principals, to complete the four questionnaires. It was in this stage of questionnaire development that I discovered the difficulty that boys might have in describing men. The school principal commented on how awful she felt at circling many negative qualities, although she perceived them as descriptive of men. One sixteen year old male trialist stopped part way into the men description questionnaire, stating it was boring. I sensed he also felt uncomfortable with the adjectives he was choosing. From this trial, I determined the order of the questionnaires so that the men descriptive questionnaire came last.

I also faced the reality of male adolescents' non-conformist, rule-breaking behaviour. The first action one trialist did was to change the code at the top of his questionnaire. This meant that I was awake to the need to note the code in two different places on the questionnaires. I also reinforced to the boys in the Informed Consent session, the importance of coding and leaving the code intact.

During this phase I also consulted with Adrienne Alton-Lee at Victoria University. Adrienne was most helpful in sharing some of the difficulties and delights of her own research which I was aiming to emulate in some ways. In regard to the ethical considerations related to the individual microphone recordings, Adrienne emphasised

the often violent and unethical character of the classroom/peer culture. She maintained there was a real need to investigate the dynamics of that culture and what it was doing to some of its members. The 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu, 1991) of the classroom was evident during the classroom observation and recording sessions of my study. This was also highlighted in my interviews with five of the boys which I discuss in Chapter Six.

One of Adrienne's recommendations was to form a partnership with a teacher and work together throughout the research process. Although I contacted several teachers personally, I was unable to find any who were prepared to commit time or energy to my project. I was left then with the option of negotiating entry directly with a school.

II. NEGOTIATION OF ENTRY

I wrote in the first instance to the principal of the boys' secondary school closest to where I wanted to carry out my research. I followed up my letter with a phone call two weeks later and arranged to send further information to the principal who had expressed an interest in helping with the research. A package containing the information sheets, consent forms and the four questionnaires was then sent out for the principal to consider. He was also given information about the recording stage and what would be required from the school.

At this stage of the project it was decided that boys in a fifth form accelerant class would be approached to participate in the study. Initially, I planned to use a fourth form class. I considered fourth form to be a time when the boys have settled into secondary school but are not yet under pressure from external examinations. However, a top streamed fifth form class was recommended by the Principal on the basis of the literacy skills needed to complete the questionnaires. It is also possible that this particular class was a class which represented the school well. That is the boys were described as a 'good class'. To me this indicated that they worked well, achieved well and behaved well.

I had originally thought that I would use english and science as the subjects for curriculum analysis because these two subjects already had their curriculum statements finalised and they were being implemented in schools. Mathematics was still in its draft

form. On the recommendation of the principal, I changed the focus to english and mathematics lessons as the boys were together in each of these subjects. The principal was most helpful to me in this regard.

III. INFORMED CONSENT

Following the discussion with the school principal, I met with Miss Mathews[1], an english teacher and Mr Thomas, a mathematics teacher at the school. As both these teachers had been informed by the principal about the study I emphasised to them that their participation was voluntary and they should not feel coerced into participating at all. They were both given all the information about the study, including a specific information sheet for teachers. I met again with both teachers, after they had read the information, to discuss any issues they might have about the study and their participation in it. Both were happy to participate but only at a minimal level. This was primarily due to the extremely busy schedules under which both teachers operated. Unfortunately, I was thus unable to develop a teacher/researcher partnership although both teachers were extremely helpful in a practical sense throughout the study.

Mr Thomas expressed concern about Questionnaire Two and its apparent bias towards females as the subjects of the statements. At this time, the principal also requested that the information sheet to parents and boys should explicitly state that some of the statements in Questionnaire Two were related to sexuality. Both these concerns were accommodated in the fine-tuning process of the study.

My next task was to meet with the potential participating boys and discuss the research with them. I arranged to have a half mathematics period talking with the boys. During this talk I introduced myself and explained that I was carrying out research as part of my university studies. I described the research topic and the process by which I aimed to investigate the topic. I emphasised that I was not there to tell them what to do but rather to ask for their help with my research project. I explained what I wanted them to do as part of my research. I also emphasised the importance of confidentiality and the means by which I would ensure that anything they told me either in the

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[1] To safeguard anonymity, I have used pseudonyms for all participants.

questionnaires or in the classroom recordings would remain confidential. I described the purpose of coding the questionnaires and changing names and other identifying characteristics in all my written work.

This was a particularly stimulating stage of the research. The boys were very interested and asked relevant questions about my work. They also were able to give me some further suggestions for ensuring the data remained confidential. For example, one student suggested that the questionnaires could be shredded after I had finished with them. It became apparent to me why that particular class was chosen by the principal.

The boys were given parental and student information sheets and consent forms to take home. When these were returned, all boys and their parents had agreed to participate. One student had emphasised that he did not want to wear a live individual microphone, although a dummy one was fine. As it turned out, this particular student was absent during the questionnaire administration session and subsequently not included in any of the data.

IV. DATA COLLECTION

STAGE ONE : SURVEY

The aims of this stage of the project were

1. To establish basic biographical data regarding the thirty fifth form boys who participated in the study.
2. To find out what *ideas* these fifth form boys have about gender relations in New Zealand society.
3. To find out what characteristics these fifth form boys select to describe themselves.
4. To find out what characteristics these fifth form boys select to describe men in New Zealand society.

For each of these purposes a questionnaire was formulated (Appendix B). The four questionnaires provided a profile of each student as well as the class in general.

Information gained from these questionnaires was used to select two case study boys for the next stage of the study.

Questionnaire One

This questionnaire was designed to obtain a basic biographical profile of each of the participating boys plus a generalised profile of this fifth form high achieving class. In particular, I sought to discover the family structure and the class location of the families to which the boys belonged. As I have emphasised in chapters two and three, the school acts in a field of other social forces such as the family and the labour market. A substantial body of literature exists that highlights the significance of the family in the reproduction of power relations (Connell *et al*, 1982; Bourdieu, 1974; Nash, 1993). This biographical questionnaire was designed to uncover three primary aspects of a boy's family life: family composition and the economic contributions of males and females to the household; class location as perceived by the boys themselves; and expected future class location.

Questionnaire Two

This questionnaire was designed to identify the boys' beliefs about gender relations. It was adapted from the Sex-Role Ideology (SRI) questionnaire developed in Canada by Kalin and Tilby(1978)[2]. Sex-Role Ideology is defined as normative or prescriptive beliefs concerning the nature of appropriate role relationships between men and women (ibid). These belief systems are sometimes explicit and specific and at other times implicit and general (Williams & Best, 1992b). Traditional ideologies hold that men are more important than women and that it is proper for men to exercise control and dominance over women. Modern ideologies represent a more egalitarian viewpoint in which women and men are viewed as being of equal importance and reject the idea that

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[2]Validation of the Kalin scale was carried out through the "known groups" method with feminist groups and traditional groups which emphasised conservative family and home values (Kalin & Tilby, 1978). In addition the SRI had been factor analyzed by Milo, Badger and Coggins (1983) who differentiated two principal factors: one was interpreted as measuring accord with general goals and values of feminist ideology; the other reflected agreement with the model of a traditional patriarchal sex-role division. All items of the Kalin scale had been found to correlate significantly with total score and thus the total score could be considered as an overall index of sex-role ideology along a male-dominant (traditional) to egalitarian (modern) dimension.

one should be generally dominant over the other. This is more usually considered to be a feminist or pro-feminist position.

Kalin and Tilby's SRI scale comprised 30 declarative statements about relations between men and women. I have adapted the Kalin SRI scale and rewritten the statements to be more relevant to contemporary New Zealand society. I have used these statements to identify the boys' beliefs about gender relations. The general categories remain the same as in Kalin and Tilby's study, namely; work roles of men and women; parental responsibilities of men and women; personal relationships between men and women, friendship, courtship, and sexual; special role of women and 'pedestal' concept; motherhood, abortion, and homosexuality.

Each statement expresses either a traditional (male dominant) or a modern (egalitarian/pro-feminist) view. Fifteen are slanted towards a traditional view, and fifteen are slanted towards a modern view. Traditional and modern statements are alternated evenly throughout the questionnaire. In response to concerns from the participating male mathematics teacher about possible bias, I have reframed some statements to ensure that males and females are equally represented as subjects of the statements. Over the thirty statements, fifteen have a male mentioned first, usually the subject of the sentence, and fifteen have a female mentioned first. This has had the effect of actually changing the viewpoint expressed. For example, in order to make the male the subject of the statement I have changed the statement "Being a mother is the most important thing a woman could do" to read "Being a father is the most important thing a man could do". This has changed the actual focus of the question, especially as 'a father' has different meanings than 'a mother'. Overall, these changes appeared to have no significant influence on my findings.

Each participant was asked to express strong or slight agreement or disagreement with each of the statements. Scoring of the traditional items was reversed so that a high total score indicates an egalitarian view. Scored in this manner the possible range of mean scores was from 1.0 (most traditional) to 6.0(most modern).

Questionnaires Three and Four

For these two questionnaires I adapted The Adjective Check List[3] (ACL) developed by Gough and Heilbrun (1965,1980). The ACL consists of a diverse item pool containing both favourable and unfavourable characteristics. The single word format of the ACL also means that it is easily administered and scored. In addition it has an established research history where it has been used for a multiplicity of purposes.

Williams and Best (1990a) used the ACL in a cross-cultural study of sex-trait stereotypes. A sex-trait stereotype is defined as a constellation of psychological traits which form part of a belief system about what men and women are like. Williams and Best aimed to identify the beliefs commonly held in many cultures about the characteristics associated with men and women and to examine these sex-trait stereotypes for cross-cultural similarities and differences.

Using a "relative judgement" method, approximately 100 male and female university students in 30 countries were asked to rate each of the 300 ACL items according to the extent to which the item was more characteristic of men than of women in their own culture. An index that reflected the degree to which a given item was "male-associated" or female-associated" was devised. The degree of male loading was represented by an M% score and computed for each of the 300 characteristics for each of the countries. A *high M% score* means that the item was much *more frequently associated with men* than with women in that country and indicates that the characteristic is considered to be stereotypically male. It does not mean that item would necessarily be used to characterise a high proportion of men in that society. A low M% score indicates that the characteristic is more frequently associated with women than men in that country and carries a low male stereotype loading.

The New Zealand phase of Williams and Best's study was undertaken in 1977 at Waikato University with male and female second-year students. Using the New Zealand M% scores, I formulated a sex-focused ACL comprised of 50 items which over 75%

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[3] Copyright courtesy of Sage Publications, Newbury Park, USA.

of the New Zealand respondents considered to be more characteristic of men than women in New Zealand society (M% > 67%), and 50 items which over 75% of the same respondents considered to be more characteristic of women than men (M% < 33%); 100 items in total (Appendix C). These items form the basis for Questionnaire Three and Questionnaire Four. It must be noted, however, that my research was a generation later, my participants approximately 5 years younger, and their task different.

M% scores obtained from Williams and Best's sex-stereotype project provide a continuous index of the degree to which a given trait is associated with one sex or another in New Zealand. In this way, it is possible to establish the extent to which the self-descriptions and men descriptions are weighted towards male-associated characteristics. This method avoids the bipolarity of masculinity and femininity, as I explain later. The boys were free to choose from an equal number of high M% (male-associated) and low M% (female-associated) characteristics. They did not know that the characteristics had particular scores attached to them.

Each of the ACL items also has a variety of other scores attached to it. These scores have been derived from North American studies. As I discuss in the next chapter, I found the favourability score from the affective meaning state scores taken form these studies useful in my analysis of questionnaires three and four. The favourability scores have been shown to have specific implications in self-description research (Williams and Best, 1990b). Williams and Best's 1982 study indicated that the male participants aimed to develop more stereotypically male characteristics than they perceived they had at present. An assumption in my study is that the boys aim to be like men in their society. That is, they aim to develop those characteristics by which they describe men.

Questionnaire Three aimed to identify those characteristics that the boys would choose to describe themselves. The boys were asked to circle those characteristics which could be used to describe themselves and to cross out words they did not understand. I considered that circling and crossing out would involve active participation thus encouraging the boys to think about the characteristics they selected.

Questionnaire Four aimed to identify those characteristics that the boys would choose to describe men. The boys' task was to circle those characteristics that could be used to describe men in New Zealand society. They were also invited to add their own words at the end of each of these questionnaires.

Strengths and Weaknesses

1.   Limitation of ACL Items.

Words are not neutral. They carry with them historically specific meanings, values and assumptions (Weedon,1987). The characteristics presented in the ACL assume a shared meaning of these particular adjectives. These meanings do not necessarily reflect or express a given social reality. For example, 'aggressive' means something different when describing men than when describing women, as does 'assertive'. These different meanings are not given 'voice' within a questionnaire survey such as this. They are in fact subsumed beneath a quantitative measure. This is one reason why I chose to use a combination of data collection tools.

2.   Measurement of Abstract Concepts.

Connell (1987:174) argues that scalar research (such as the ACL masculinity/femininity scale and SRI scale) is part of the domestication of sexual politics in the name of science. I would argue that he is right *within certain limitations*. The masculinity/ femininity scale taken from Williams and Best's study involves a drastic reification of the process of self-expression or accounting for oneself. However,the problem may not be the 'measure' itself but rather the underlying assumptions about its veracity, the subsequent uses to which it could be put, and the inferences made from it. My intention was not to measure masculinity or femininity as if they were quantifiable 'facts' but rather to use the measurement scales as a broad identification of trends reflective of gendered power relations. Similarly, my adaptation of the SRI scale enabled me to identify distinctive patterns of beliefs about gender relations held by the boys in my study .

3.   Confounding Self-Description with Self-Esteem.

LeVerrier (1987) demonstrated that the probability of an ACL item being chosen as self-descriptive is an increasing linear function of its favourability score. Williams and Best (1990a) maintain that this effect appears to be lessened when participants are able to select both high and low male-associated items which are both positively and negatively valued. The sex-focused questionnaire that I developed and used aimed to obviate this problem. Each of the items has a favourability score attached to it so it is possible to see if favourable high and low male-associated items are selected. This is an issue which I develop further in my discussion of results in chapter five.

4.   Bipolarity.

Most measures of masculinity and femininity assume that they are mutually exclusive categories positioned at different poles along a single dimension. The sex-focused ACL that I used contains an equal number of both high and low male associated items. This means that the participants can select as many high or low male-associated items as they wish. The scoring system reflects the extent to which a participant selects *stereotypical* male items. It does not measure their *'masculinity'* against opposite *'feminine'* characteristics but rather the extent to which they ascribe to themselves, and to men, stereotypical male characteristics.

5.   Gender as a relational Concept.

The sex-focused ACL used is based on New Zealand data whereby participants were asked to select items they considered to be more frequently associated with males rather than females, or more frequently associated with females than males in our society. Hence, the M% score reflects a relation between the two sexes in New Zealand. For example, 'active' has an M% score of 74 which indicates that 'active' was much more frequently considered to be descriptive of men rather than women. It does not mean that 'active' would necessarily be used to characterise a high proportion of men in New Zealand. Similarly. affectionate has an M% score of 8 attached to it. This means that 'affectionate' is more often associated with females than males. It does not mean that 'affectionate' would necessarily be used to characterise a high number of females in New Zealand.

6.   Survey Method

The strengths and weaknesses of survey method generally are also applicable to my own study. For example, questionnaire surveys can provide general, broad-based information from a large number of participants. Written questionnaires by themselves do not, however, provide the depth of data needed to adequately investigate complex social issues such as gender positioning. The questionnaires in my study did provide valuable information which I could draw on in the second stage of my project.

I found, also, that the use of tools such as questionnaires meant that my project was readily nameable by the school principal, with whom I negotiated access, as a survey. It was a type of research with which he was familiar and I am sure that was an important factor in consenting to my research within his school. Had I chosen to use only research methods that are not so widely known, such as case study or discourse analysis, I may have had greater difficulty gaining access to a school. Although this was an unintended effect it did facilitate my research.

7.   Using Established Data Collection Tools.

Both the ACL and SRI were established research tools which had been used and validated by experienced researchers. I adapted them to answer specific research questions and they were useful in this regard. In hindsight I would have liked to have taken more risks and developed my own questionnaires founded on specifically New Zealand themes associated with masculinity and our 'gendered culture' as identified by James and Saville-Smith (1988).

V. CLASSROOM FAMILIARISATION

Prior to undertaking the classroom recording stage of the study, I spent three periods in a mathematics class with the boys. The intention was that I would be able to fine-tune my observation categories and method while at the same time the boys would become used to my presence in the classroom. During this time, I drew a map of each desk and the name of each student sitting there. I worked out my observation categories

and trialled the ease with which I could observe and note student behaviour. I also had a practice run with familiarising myself, the teacher and the boys with the recording equipment in the room and with the individual microphones being worn.

This stage was a most useful aspect of refining the research process. In particular, it enabled me to get to know some of the boys and identify those who I would like to use as my case study boys. I observed those boys who were most vocal in the class and those who were very quiet. In addition, the mathematics teacher willingly chatted with me about various boys and their backgrounds. All of this information enabled me to choose two quite different boys for my study.

VI. DATA COLLECTION

STAGE TWO : CASE STUDY

Aims of this stage of the project
1. To find out what representations of males and females are made in the mathematics and english secondary school curriculum
2. To investigate curriculum enactment and the subject positions that the secondary school curriculum constructs, supports and invites fifth form boys to take up.
3. To find out what the connections are between a fifth form boy's sense of self and these subject positions.

The purpose at this stage was to gather data that would highlight curriculum enactment, particularly as it related to knowledge about people. I wanted to gather empirical evidence regarding the gendered curriculum and investigate the ways in which two case-study boys negotiated and mediated the curriculum experience in developing their sense of self. The research design for this stage of the study is an adaptation of the design used by Alton-Lee and Nuthall (1992) in their *Understanding Learning and Teaching Project*. This involves case study with multiple data gathering techniques in the classroom. In this way a great deal of detailed information about the classroom experience can be collected. While case study enables depth of data to be collected, triangulation between different sets of data increases the trustworthiness of the data.

Selection of Case Study Boys

The two boys that I chose for this stage of the study were selected on the basis of the information they gave on the questionnaires, as well as the observations I made during the familiarisation phase of the study. They are similar in some respects and yet different in others. Both boys are Pakeha fifth form boys in a high achieving/accelerant class attending a single-sex secondary school in the South Island. They come from different socio-economic and family backgrounds. They varied in their beliefs about gender relations (Questionnaire Two) yet had similar M% scores in their self-descriptions (Questionnaire Three). Their M% scores in their men-descriptions (Questionnaire Four) were diverse.

Audio Recording

For this part of the study I carried out individual and classroom recordings and observations. I recorded and observed a total of seven english lessons and three mathematics lessons. In order to minimise the unsettling effect of setting up the recording equipment, I tried to get the equipment set up prior to the boys coming into the classroom. This was not always possible.

Two roof microphones were positioned from beams and recorded all boys' and teachers' public talk. In addition, boys wore individual microphones around their necks. Eighteen individual microphones were available and all of the thirty boys who had permission to participate in the study also had the opportunity to wear a microphone at some stage during the recording sessions. Only the microphones worn by the case study boys were active. Both these boys wore active remote microphones recording private utterances during eight periods of classroom instruction. A timer on the recording equipment recorded a beep every thirty seconds so that the utterance data could be matched with classroom observations.

Strengths and Weaknesses

1.   Technical 'hitches'

Quality of audio recordings relies heavily on the technical equipment and expertise available. Although a technician accompanied me on most sessions, there were times when he was unavailable and despite my familiarity with the equipment, connecting it up was not as straightforward as I had envisaged it would be. On two occasions the more technically minded of the boys helped with the setting up of the equipment. On one such occasion one of the individual microphones did not record. In addition, the roof microphones took a particular type of battery which was unobtainable. This negated some of the classroom recordings in which the batteries were flat.

2.   Maintaining Anonymity of Case Study Boys.

This class of boys is a particularly bright class. They knew that not all microphones were alive and that only two were recording. Several innovative boys tried to discover who was being recorded. For example, I changed the batteries of the live individual microphones each session. I observed some boys checking to see whether the batteries had been changed. I also observed some boys watching the sound levels displayed on the recording equipment and checking to see if the levels moved when a particular student talked. Following this observation, I moved the equipment so that the recording levels were concealed. I am unsure how much longer I could have continued recording without the identity of the case study boys being discovered.

3.   Instructional Unit

Ideally, I would have liked to have followed the boys through an entire instructional unit in both english and mathematics. However, time and resource constraints mitigated against this. It was not until the middle of the second term that I gained access to the school and began discussions with the teachers. At that stage of my project I had no choice about the instructional units I would record. It would have been advantageous to plan ahead and discuss with the teachers involved the units they were covering in that year. In english, for instance, the class had just completed a unit on the novel using Tessa Duder's *Alex* (1988). This would have been an excellent opportunity to study a women-focused unit in a single-sex boys school.

4. Private utterances

Through the use of individual microphones, the boys' private utterances were able to be recorded and linked with classroom observations and classroom recordings. As Alton-Lee *et al* comment

> Utterance data can be a rich source of information about the ways in which children experience and negotiate the instructional, social, and cultural contexts of the classroom. ...Children's utterances, when triangulated with other data, can illuminate the hidden cognitive and cultural processes that mediate their learning and well-being (1993:52).

Alton-Lee & Nuthall (1992) found this data gathering technique increased the validity of their collated data as well as providing data that was not available by other means such as trained observers.

Classroom Observation

As observer I sat at the back of the room and noted on prepared sheets the following behaviours for each student; listening, working quietly, asking for help, tentative hand raises, talking to peer, asking peer for help, helping peer, public call out, teacher nomination, teacher/student talk, teacher reprimand, class response, and class laughter. Each case study student's behaviour and responses every thirty seconds throughout the instructional unit was classified according to these categories. The thirty second beep on the audio recordings was matched with the thirty second behaviour observation. It was thus possible to find out what each case study student was doing and saying every thirty seconds.

Sitting at the rear of the classroom meant that I was unable to see the boys facial expressions. However, my intention was to be as unobtrusive as possible in order to minimise the influence of an observer in the classroom. Some boys were more readily able to 'forget' my presence than others. However, there did seem to be times when the self-consciousness of the boys at being observed was accentuated. For example, the boys were observed using the microphones as walkie-talkies and watching to see if I

noticed. Utterance data also picked up Nathan asking his friend if I was watching and commenting that he felt "stink".

Strengths and Weaknesses

1.   Emergence

One of the strengths of observation lies in what Adler & Adler (1994) call *emergence*. This refers to the researcher's ability to construct theories that generate categories and deduce the connections between them. As the observation continues the researcher can change or adapt their theories or categories in response to the changing knowledge they gain about the participants. Observation thus offers a flexibility to generate new insights into old realities (ibid). In my study, non-participant observation enabled me to get a 'feel' for the dynamics of curriculum enactment and boys' sense of self in a way that questionnaires or recordings alone could not do.

2.   Typical Setting

Another strength of observation is that the participants are not taken out of their usual setting. It is thus possible to investigate behaviour in the setting in which it typically occurs. This has significant advantages over other more contrived data collection tools. Behaviour is able to be observed as it occurs spontaneously and in a particular social context.

3.   Credibility

When combined with other data collection tools, observation increases the credibility of the data (Adler & Adler, 1994). One of the overall strengths of my study is the use of several different research methods and data collection tools. The triangulation of different kinds of data enabled links to be traced between the official curriculum and the unofficial world of student interactions (Alton-Lee & Nuthall, 1991). In addition, the use of both quantitative and qualitative data and triangulation of the data enables a more full-bodied analysis of the process of constructing a male sense of self within curriculum enactment.

4.   Observation Categories

These covered a wide range of behaviours that I had observed during the familiarisation phase. Recording them every thirty seconds was not necessary or particularly useful. Reducing behaviours every thirty seconds into categories actually served to distract from close, detailed observation. One of the case study boys spent most of the time listening or working quietly. The other boy spent a lot of time talking, calling out, and generally interacting within the classroom. In hindsight it would have been more useful to have adopted a qualitative approach and taken detailed notes of each student's behaviour within the classroom.

Questionnaire Five

In order to find out what the boys themselves would like in the way of feedback, I asked them to complete a fifth questionnaire at the end of the classroom recording and observation phase. I also asked them to indicate whether they would be willing to be interviewed if I chose to extend the research.

Student Interviews

In this phase of the study I wanted to investigate in greater depth the boys' own perceptions of males and females within the curriculum. I was also interested in the boys' understandings of the 'disturbing social trends' identified in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*. Five boys, including the two case study boys, were interviewed. The boys were selected on the basis of their questionnaire responses, their observed behaviour in the classroom, and their willingness to be interviewed. These interviews were semi-structured in that I had prepared a set of open-ended questions. The main themes of these interviews were; the student's experience of the research process; their experience of mathematics and english; future occupation; sense of self; men; curriculum changes; and gender relations.

At the beginning of each interview I ensured that the boys had their parents' permission to be interviewed. I also reiterated confidentiality. In this regard I emphasised that I could not guarantee confidentiality if they, themselves, told others they were one of the boys interviewed. As I found out at the feedback session, some boys did reveal that they were interviewed, whereas others were able to maintain that confidence.

Strengths and Weaknesses

1.   Indepth Data

Interviews offer a depth of data not available by any other means. Through these interviews I was able to meet one-to-one with a student in a place of their choosing and discuss at length many issues pertinent to my study. It was an excellent means by which to get to know some of the boys and learn about their own perceptions of the curriculum and their sense of self.

2.   Home

When asking the boys if they would meet with me for an interview, they were given the option of choosing where they would like to talk to me. All five boys preferred that I visit them at home for this. Although, home visits was not my original intention, I did find this an excellent opportunity to observe them in their home environment. This further enhanced the data I had already gathered.

VII. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Quantitative.

Descriptive statistics using SPSSX were calculated for the questionnaires.
Five english lessons were transcribed. Notes were taken regarding the three mathematics lessons but transcriptions were not done due to the very limited use of people in the curriculum. Using transcriptions of the recorded english lessons, every human mention was detailed. These were classified according to whether the mention was of a male, a female, a student or a gender neutral term. This provided basic information regarding the number and types of mentions about people in the curriculum.

Qualitative.

Initially I set out to replicate Alton-Lee & Densem's (1992) gender analysis of the curriculum but found that the focus in my study was different. Alton-Lee & Densem's gender analysis involved identifying every human mention and classifying it according to gender, whether male, female or unspecified. For the purposes of my data analysis

I chose four categories of gender, namely: male; female; gender neutral and references to the students themselves. Separating the students into a category of their own meant that the subject positions available to the boys could be more readily identified.

Alton-Lee & Densem also detailed the role of each human mentioned, whether it was a child or adult, and the source of the mention: for example, whether the mention was made by the teacher, pupil, book and so on (ibid:201). I omitted the distinctions between child and adult, and the source of the mention. Although there is not explicit mention by Alton-Lee & Densem of the way in which these details were noted it appears that the data was hand collected and collated. The role was most probably in the context of 'wife', 'mother', 'king' and so on. My study has taken this simple analysis a stage further.

Alton-Lee and Nuthall's study focused on the overt curriculum and actual 'knowledge' that the teacher aimed to teach. In contrast, my study focused more on the 'hidden curriculum' and unintentional teaching and learning. I decided, therefore, to use discourse analysis as a means of investigating not only what subject positions the curriculum provides but also those that are specifically aimed at the boys and those that they actually take up.

My focus is on the subject positions rather than the roles of the persons mentioned. As I argued in Chapter One, role is a problematic concept which has been used historically within sociology and the wider society to perpetuate social divisions, particularly gender divisions, and the concomitant power relations. Moreover, I found that when I carried out a content analysis of the human mentions my coding system became more and more complex as the contradictions and conflicts of a person's position became more evident. A person can be mentioned several times and yet be positioned in different ways.

In order to clarify the usefulness for gender analyses of poststructural theory and concepts such as subject position and discourse analysis, I provide here an example of text. My analysis of the following excerpt makes explicit the way in which I developed my analytical process.

By way of introduction to the unit on *MacBeth* (Shakespeare,1967), Ms Mathews highlights features of a shakespearean tragedy using *King Lear* as an example.

1   In King Lear we see a king who asks his three daughters which one
2   loves him best, and the only one that answers him truthfully is the one
3   that he banishes from the kingdom and that becomes his major downfall
4   which is that he doesn't want to hear the truth. He wants to hear people
5   saying how wonderful he is. She loves him in her way but he doesn't see
6   it as such and as a result the two other sisters decide to gang up on him.
7   The only one, Cordelia, is the one he banishes and she is the only one
8   that can save him and that is what the whole tragedy is about. The
9   tragedy of King Lear. The same with MacBeth, something that there is
10   a tragic flaw they talk about, tragic flaw in the personality. It might be
11   that they talk too much. It might be that you can't forgive people. It
12   might be that you're selfish. Okay, they're all flaws something that will
13   be a problem for you and you create problems for other people in that
14   way.

As this excerpt demonstrates, 'King' is not simply a universal category which describes this person's 'role'. In Ms Mathews explanation, King Lear is described as a father who wanted to be loved by his daughters(2), and yet used his powerful position to banish the daughter who was truthful(3). King Lear is also portrayed as a man with a basic flaw in his personality(4) and it is this flaw that brings about his downfall(3).

Cordelia, King Lear's daughter, is portrayed in typically female terms. She is positioned in relation to a dominant father on whose benevolence she is dependent. She also "loves him in her way"(5). However, Cordelia is also positioned as strong (she stands up to him), having power (she's the only one that can save him), and uncompromising (she tells the truth despite the consequences). These contradictions cannot be understood within the role of 'daughter'.

Of further interest in this excerpt is the way in which the boys come to be positioned. It is in the linking of King Lear with MacBeth and then including the boys in this linking that the curriculum can be seen to be offering subject positions to these fifth

form boys. The boys are offered the possibility (might,11) to be unforgiving, or selfish(12), and thus cause problems for themselves or others(13).

It could be argued that 'you' is intended as a generic term and does not refer specifically to the boys. However, Ms Mathews clearly changed direction from talking about 'they' to talking about 'you'. This is a particular pedagogical strategy designed to include the boys and to maintain their interest by relating the curriculum material to them personally. If Ms Mathews had used the less colloquial and more grammatically correct 'one' the boys would have soon lost interest as their sense of exclusion grew. When a person or group is being spoken to and the generic 'you' is used, the listeners more usually take it to include themselves. It is on this basis that I decided to regard 'you' as referring to the boys themselves.

My analysis of this excerpt helped to refine further analysis of the curriculum. The dilemma of trying to objectively code the changing and contradictory roles of King Lear and Cordelia in a content analysis proved too difficult with any measure of reliability or validity. I thus decided on a simple count of human mentions, and a more detailed analysis of specific excerpts of text.

My discourse analysis involved a careful and thorough reading of the curriculum transcriptions in order to discern discursive patterns of meaning, contradictions and inconsistencies. I selected particular excerpts from the transcriptions where gender was highlighted in some way and examined the ways in which gender relations were organised through the discourse. As I argued in Chapter One, discourse analysis presents a way of understanding the processes by which the boys position themselves within particular discursive practices. In addition, the ways in which the boys include or exclude themselves and each other from particular discursive practices provides a useful analysis for an understanding of the developing male sense of self. These processes are not fixed, static and orderly but fragmented, inconsistent and contradictory. This type of discourse analysis derives from poststructuralism in which legitimation and credibility are the responsibility of the researcher rather than established through set criteria. Moreover, my reading of a particular text is not an authoritative reading but rather one of multiple possible readings.

VIII. PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

Feedback Session

Two months after completing the classroom recording stage, I again met with the boys to give them the preliminary findings of my research. In this feedback session I provided a summary of the questionnaire responses and the preliminary findings from the classroom recordings, observations and interviews.

At the commencement of this meeting I emphasised yet again the importance of confidentiality. The boys were encouraged to ask questions about the research and my interpretation of the data. I also asked them for suggestions as to other ways in which I could have investigated the research questions.

All boys and teachers who participated in this study have been sent a written summary of the main findings (Appendix D).

PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE THIS STUDY

> [Consciousness] is the entirety of what we know and do and how we
> know and do it. And so it must be, visibly rather than invisibly, not only
> the focus of feminist research, but also the medium through which *all*
> research is conducted (Stanley & Wise,1983:189).

Three principles guide the analysis and presentation of my research; integrity, dependability and coherence.

Integrity

Much feminist work on research and science has highlighted the vulnerability of women as research subjects and the ways they have been used and misused in the name of science (Stanley & Wise,1983; Harding,1987; Lather,1991). The significance of this feminist work for research on men and masculinities is less clear. However, I have taken note of Stanley and Wise's concern that

> The researched are vulnerable in the sense that their lives, feelings,
> understandings, become grist to the research mill and may appear, in

goodness knows what mangled form, at the end of the research process. And, whatever mangled form it is, its form is unlikely to be subject to control by them (1983:180).

My consciousness of the power relationships between the researcher and the researched has led to two particular strategies on my part. Where possible I have valued the boys' own perspectives and own words. Thus there is a greater proportion of written space given to the qualitative rather than the quantitative data. I have also sought to maintain the boys' integrity through an empathetic analysis of the data. Even when the data presents an unfavourable picture of the boys' behaviour, I have tried, through relating it to relevant research and analyses, to put the behaviour in an historical and social context rather than read it as individual deviance from some prescriptive norm which focuses blame on the boy.

Dependability

Dependability is ascertained by examining the methodologic and analytic "decision trails" created by the researcher during the course of the project itself (Hall & Stevens,1991:19). In reporting on my own study, I have systematically documented the decision-making processes that have shaped the ways the data was collected, analysed and reported. As I have emphasised previously, the use of multiple and diverse data sources and data gathering techniques intensifies the dependability of my study.

Coherence

In my view, coherence is represented by the clarification of the links between each phase of the research process. I have in mind a map where coloured string connects two points. Coherence is the coloured string. In presenting the results I have linked them to the original research questions and aims. I have clarified these links by including the discussion with the results and examining how the results actually answered the research questions or fulfilled the research aims.

CONCLUSION

This chapter is a detailed presentation of the process of my research project and the 'decision trails' that have influenced the methods and design used. At all stages of the project I have endeavoured to uphold the integrity of my feminist standpoint. I have done this primarily by adopting a process of critical self- reflection throughout. I have also sought at all times to consider the participating teachers and boys a subjects rather than objects in my study. Nevertheless this is not without some contradictions and conflicts. In the next chapter, I present and discuss the results from stage one (survey) and the quantitative gender analysis of the english curriculum. This provides a broad overview of this particular fifth form class of boys and the english curriculum. I also introduce Michael and Nathan, the two case study boys, and the english and mathematics classrooms.

Chapter Five

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
FIFTH FORM BOYS

This chapter discusses the results from Stage One of my project. I introduce the two case-study boys, Michael and Nathan, and the english and mathematics classrooms. Combined with the quantitative analysis of the human mentions in the english curriculum, these results provide a generalised background of these fifth form boys and their ideas about themselves and gender relations. This picture is refined and made more specific in Chapter Six where I discuss the results and analysis of the curriculum transcripts and the interviews.

BIOGRAPHIC DATA

Research Aim

To establish basic biographical data regarding the 30 fifth form boys who participated in the study.

As I noted in Chapter Four, thirty of a possible thirty-one boys completed the four questionnaires. In all questionnaires, N equals 30. However, not all boys answered all questions so sometimes N does not add up to 30.

Results from Questionnaire One

Age   19 boys are 15

           11 boys are 16

Ethnicity   25   NZ European

             1   Maori

             2   Asian

             2   Unknown

Preferred Occupation

7	SES 1
9	SES 2
4	SES 3
10	Unknown

Twenty of these boys have a clear idea of a future occupation and are primarily aiming for the professional/business sectors of the labour market.

Most of the boys are in two parent families with both parents working. However, when I interviewed five of the boys over the August school holidays I met four of the mothers but none of the fathers. The one mother I did not meet was on a sports trip with her younger son. Even though these mothers were in paid employment, their work was structured around the family's needs rather than around their own careers. The fathers were noticeably absent from the home during the day, and hence did not participate significantly in the everyday family and domestic responsibilities.

The number of males in the households ranged from 1 to 6, and ages ranged from 7 to 54. There was only one boy who was the only male in his household.

The number of females in the household ranged from 1 to 5, and ages ranged from 3 to 84. There were twelve boys who had only one female in their household.

Although it was difficult from the information I gained to gauge what the socioeconomic status (SES) of each of the people working might be and although not all of the boys answered the section on occupation, from the responses given it was evident that most of the men employed were in SES categories, 1(2), 2(10), and 3(9). I also worked out that for those who are in part-time jobs, either males or females, the work was more likely to be in the lower earning sectors of the labour market. The

females working were in general likely to be earning less than the males in the family. Typical examples of parental occupations are; father - accountant, mother - part time teacher; father - police officer, mother - bank teller; father - manager, mother - senior clerical worker.

The main income earner was generally male(24) with only 3 boys coming from families in which a female was the main income earner. Only one boy specifically volunteered the information that both parents were working equally and he could not tell who was the main income earner. This could have been an option available in the questionnaire. In general the main income earner was in the SES categories 1(3),2(8), and 3(10).

Most of the boys identified themselves as middle class, 8 as upper middle class and 4 as working class. This matches with the other information regarding paid employment and household income.

A picture thus emerges of a typical boy in this class. He will be 15 or 16 and NZ European. He will live in a traditional two parent family where both parents work but the father is the main income earner. Although the mother may be well educated and have a good job she will most likely work part-time and be primary caregiver for the children and husband. Most of the families in which the boys live are relatively well off. The majority of the boys want to get jobs that are in the top socio-economic range. My guess is that all of them will continue with education past secondary school level. This is a fairly traditional picture of a boy who comes from a business or professional family and seeks to establish himself in the same range. And, as the research on families' social reproduction strategies demonstrates, coming from this group, he most likely will (Nash,1993).

GENDER RELATIONS

Research Aim

To find out what ideas these fifth form boys have about gender relations in New Zealand society.

Results from Questionnaire Two

Fifteen of the statements were slanted in a conservative (male dominant) way and 15 were slanted in an egalitarian (profeminist) way. These were then scored on a scale of 1 to 6 with 1 being most traditional (male dominant) and 6 being most modern (profeminist) perspective. Overall mean from all boys and all statements is 3.74. This indicates a slight leaning towards egalitarianism overall. It is possible that in selecting their responses the boys were aware on one level what the appropriate egalitarian response should be and possibly though that was what I would want. As one boy commented, he just put down the most **obvious** response.

The four statements which received the most egalitarian responses

> A woman should be as free as a man in the things she chooses to do.
>   Mean 5.70

> Men and women should have the same sexual freedom.
>   Mean 5.66

> A married man's paid work is as important as his wife's paid work.
>   Mean 5.56

> A married woman should be able to have men as friends.
>   Mean 5.43

Although these statements represent profeminist views and, in theory, serve to facilitate equality between the sexes, they also have a common thread whereby they are all aspects of gender relations in which both men and women benefit. Of particular interest these four statements mention both men and women. They also had the lowest Standard Deviation (SD) suggesting that there was significant agreement amongst the boys.

146

The four statements which received the most traditional responses

> It's perfectly normal for a woman to enjoy looking after children and doing housework.
>
> > Mean 1.71

> It's important for a mother to teach her daughter what it means to be a girl.
>
> > Mean 1.87

> Motherhood is something that every child should be taught to respect and honour.
>
> > Mean 2.04

> A woman shouldn't change her name when she marries.
> > Mean 2.30

The common thread with these four statements is that they all have the effect of placing women in a second-class position primarily based in the home. They also only mention females (women, mother, daughter, girl) or children.

During one of the interviews the first of these statements was discussed with a boy, Jeff, and his mother. Both Jeff and his mother agreed with the statement. The mother saw nothing incongruous with this statement and her own situation during the early childrearing years. This woman was a farmer and lived and worked on the farm. She thus worked in a non-traditional occupation, was able to earn an income, to have her children with her at work, and to work relatively flexible hours when her children were younger. From this discussion, it was evident to me that Jeff's mother had not experienced the usual pattern of 'mother-at-home-with-young-children' accompanied by the low status and income which our society attaches to fulltime mothering of young children. It is also apparent that the way the statement is phrased does not necessarily draw this out.

During the feedback session with the boys one of them questioned the interpretation of this statement as 'traditional'. He could not understand, and I was not able to explain properly, how the concept of 'perfectly normal' acts in a prescriptive way rather than suggesting that housework and childcare is one of many options available to women.

The concept of what is normal is one aspect that appears to need deconstruction in a manner that is relevant to the boys themselves.

My reflections on this incident led me to formulate a comparable situation through which the boys might understand the prescriptive assumptions that underlie the concept of 'normal'. For instance, "It's perfectly normal for fifth form boys to enjoy playing rugby". While some boys in the class would certainly agree, others would not. This could have led the way into a discussion about the ways in which rugby in particular, and sport in general, serves as a signifier of normality for fifth form boys, especially those in a single-sex school. It is "liminal spaces" (Lather,1991:2) such as these that offer opportunities to deconstruct common-sense knowledge.

The four statements which received the highest standard deviations (that is, the most diverse views)

> If a man found out his best friend was gay he would still want to be his friend.
>> Mean 3.87;   SD 2.20

> In legal matters the husband should represent the family.
>> Mean 3.79   SD 2.18

> A woman should be able to decide whether to continue an unplanned pregnancy or not.
>> Mean 4.40   SD 2.14

> In a family the woman should do the inside housework and the man should do the heavier outsider jobs.
>> Mean 4.43   SD 2.08.

The mean for each of these statements has a tendency towards egalitarianism yet they obviously have provoked quite diverse responses. The statement regarding homosexuality was the most contentious. One boy actually wrote on his paper that he strongly disagreed and found it disgusting.

The diversity of responses would suggest that while some boys are taking on board women- and gay-liberation claims, others still adhere strongly to traditional beliefs. In

particular these statements show a diversity of opinions on homosexuality, patriarchal families, women's right to abortion, and the sexual division of labour in the home.

This diversity of attitudes concerning gendered power relations is also significantly evident in the curriculum enactment stage of my research. Questionnaire Two covered a limited amount of information concerning a wide range of gender relations. In Chapter Six a greater depth of information about a small range of gender relations within the curriculum is discussed.

SELF DESCRIPTIONS

Research Aim

To find out what characteristics these fifth form boys select to describe themselves.

Questionnaire 3

The mean M% for the whole class and for each case-study boy was not only similar but also clustered around the 50% mark (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1	Self-Descriptions	
	Mean M%	Mean Favourability
Class	52	563
Nathan	54	593
Michael	54	551

As the ACL was sex-focused, with fifty items having M% scores above 67% and fifty items having M% scores below 34%, the boys had to select a significant number of low M% (that is, adjectives associated with the female stereotype) in order to get this Mean. Thus most of the boys chose a roughly equal number of adjectives that were high stereotypical male and low stereotypical male. Overall, the adjectives they used to describe themselves were wide ranging. Table 5.2 shows those adjectives that were selected by half or more of the boys. The least stereotypical male score was 39%, and the most stereotypical male score was 71%. I included both these boys in my interviews.

Table 5.2	Adjectives Selected by 15(50%) or More of the Boys to Describe Themselves		
Adjective	**Responses** **N=30**	**M%**	**Favourability**
considerate	25	30	636
appreciative	24	17	618
independent	23	86	612
active	23	74	629
easy-going	23	77	604
realistic	23	74	601
reasonable	23	70	614
logical	22	75	599
understanding	21	29	638
adventurous	20	96	615
ambitious	20	93	599
confident	20	85	601
kind	20	25	645
humorous	19	79	619
trusting	19	33	620
energetic	18	76	616
warm	18	16	640
forgiving	17	30	632
individualistic	17	73	609
outgoing	17	71	627
pleasant	17	30	619
self-confident	17	84	595
sensitive	17	12	592
enterprising	16	79	604
inventive	16	83	594
modest	16	30	569
nervous	16	20	408
talkative	16	23	512
aggressive	15	95	504
dependent	15	15	463
gentle	15	19	635
wise	15	73	630

As explained in Chapter Four, these figures are compounded by the self-esteem factor. The boys also generally tended to view themselves in a favourable light compared with their descriptions of men. The mean favourability of the class was 563 with a score over 500 representing high favourability as calculated by Williams and Best (1990a).

This indicates that in this questionnaire the boys tended to select more favourable items.[1]

Because of the influence of self-esteem it is difficult to compare this data with that of the male stereotype identified by Williams and Best (ibid). However, the boys' self-descriptions were in general more male-associated than that of the participants in Williams and Best's study (1990b).

Although the score is a numerical score I do not intend to treat complex concepts such as maleness (masculinity) or femaleness (femininity) as if they are things that can be measured. What I wanted to find out was what the patterns might be. In general the results followed a normal curve, which means that there is considerable diversity amongst the boys as to how they described themselves although most of them are clustered around the middle range.

Of these thirty-three items, fifteen have low M% scores and eighteen have high M%scores. An examination of individual responses shows some interesting contradictions. For example, some of the boys selected both 'aggressive' and 'gentle' to describe themselves. Other contradictions include the selection of both 'dependent' and 'independent'; 'tough' and 'sensitive'; 'unemotional' and 'temperamental'; 'hard-hearted' and 'affectionate'. Contradictions, such as these, illustrate the complexity of sense of self and can be best understood through the poststructuralist concept of subject positioning. It is quite possible that a boy is able to position himself, or be positioned, as 'dependent' at one time and 'independent ' at another.

None of the boys described themselves as disorderly, meek, unambitious or unkind.

Only a few boys added further characteristics not in the sex-focused ACL. These included - friendly, generous, culturally sensitive, and practical. One boy wrote

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[1] The influence of favourability becomes clearer when the self-descriptions are compared with the men descriptions.

'schizophrenic' and 'very changeable'. This boy had also selected 'temperamental',and 'changeable'. I wondered if he was either having me on or asking for help.

MEN DESCRIPTIONS

Research Aim

To find out what characteristics these fifth form boys select to describe men in New Zealand society.

Questionnaire Four

This questionnaire presented difficulties for some of the boys. After starting the questionnaire, they questioned the task. This could have been due to a non-specific discomfort as experienced by two of the trialists. Or the boys may have been indicating resistance to universal categorisation, especially of men. This questioning suggests another "liminal space" in which concepts such as stereotypes, subject positions and discursive practices could be explored. This was not possible at the time, nor would it have been appropriate within this research project.

I redefined the task slightly by suggesting that they think about men in New Zealand and select adjectives according to that, or that they think of a particular man and select accordingly. This did not wholly satisfy some of the boys. One boy circled every item on the questionnaire. This had the effect of changing the results slightly, in that no item was not selected. However, some quite clear patterns emerged.

A comparison of these scores with the self-descriptions reveals some interesting aspects. Table 5.3 shows that the class in general, and Michael in particular, selected adjectives with a higher male-associated loading when describing men than in their self-descriptions. Nathan's Mean M% stayed the same for both tasks although the favourability of the men-description items dropped noticeably, as it did for the class in general. Michael, although selecting higher male-associated items for the men-description, maintained the same favourability rating as in his self-description.

Table 5.3	Men Descriptions	
	Mean M%	Mean Favourability
Class	63	523
Nathan	54	519
Michael	70	552

Of the thirty-nine items that 50% or more of the boys selected as descriptive of men, thirty-four were high male associated items (Table 5.4)

Table 5.4	Adjectives Selected by 15 (50%) or More of the Boys to Describe Men		
Adjective	Responses N=30	M%	Favourability
active	28	74	629
confident	27	85	601
dominant	26	92	462
aggressive	26	95	504
adventurous	25	96	615
strong	25	72	601
courageous	24	80	608
tough	24	98	520
masculine	23	97	576
ambitious	22	93	599
arrogant	22	93	376
energetic	22	76	616
humorous	21	79	619
independent	21	80	612
show-off	21	76	384
noisy	20	70	399
opportunistic	20	76	535
outgoing	20	71	627
logical	19	75	599
opiniated	19	78	469
pleasure-seeking	19	69	559
self-confident	19	84	595
daring	18	92	547
dependent	18	15	463
lazy	18	77	372
talkative	18	23	512
assertive	17	84	541

excitable	16	18	527
kind	16	25	645
realistic	16	74	601
reasonable	16	70	614
wise	16	73	630
easy-going	15	77	604
egoistical	15	86	389
enterprising	15	79	604
imaginative	15	30	574
individualistic	15	73	609
progressive	15	82	575
reckless	15	82	382

Using the data from these two questionnaires, I sought to identify three particular patterns: those characteristics that 50% or more of the boys selected to describe both themselves and men (Table 5.5); those characteristics that 50% or more of the boys selected to describe themselves but not men (Table 5.6); and those characteristics that 50% or more of the boys selected to describe men but not themselves (Table 5.7).

Table 5.5   Adjectives selected by 15 (50%) or more of the
             boys to describe both men and themselves

Adjective	Self-Descriptions Responses,N=30	Men Descriptions Responses,N=30	M%	Favourability
easygoing	23	15	77	604
active	23	28	74	629
independent	23	21	86	612
realistic	23	16	74	601
reasonable	23	16	70	614
adventurous	20	25	96	615
logical	22	19	75	599
ambitious	20	22	93	599
humorous	19	21	79	619
kind	20	16	25	645
confident	20	27	85	601
energetic	18	22	76	616
outgoing	17	20	71	627
individualistic	17	15	73	609
talkative	16	18	23	512
wise	15	16	73	630
aggressive	15	26	95	504
self-confident	17	19	84	595
enterprising	16	15	79	604
dependent	15	18	15	463

<u>Table 5.7</u>   <u>Adjectives selected by 15 (50%) or more of the</u>
                         <u>boys to describe men but not themselves</u>

Adjective	M%	Favourability	Men	(Self)
courageous	80	608	24	(8)
daring	92	547	18	(12)
lazy	77	372	18	(9)
masculine	97	576	23	(4)
noisy	70	399	20	(6)
opiniated	78	469	19	(3)
opportunistic	76	535	20	(14)
pleasure-seeking	69	559	19	(13)
progressive	82	575	15	(10)
reckless	82	382	15	(3)
show-off	76	384	21	(3)
strong	72	601	25	(10)
tough	98	520	24	(8)

The results from these four questionnaires provide a general overview of this class of fifth form boys. Some broad patterns are evident although it is not possible to draw from these any definitive interpretations. The ACL items serve as broad descriptors of the boys' perceptions of themselves and of men. In general, the boys viewed themselves favourably in comparison to their descriptions of men, selecting more high female-associated items in their self-descriptions. They attributed more anti-social, risk-taking characteristics to men than to themselves. Characteristics associated with hegemonic masculinity in New Zealand are clearly evident in their men descriptions, and to a lesser extent in their self-descriptions.

The differences between the boys' descriptions of themselves and their descriptions of men suggests two possibilities. Do the differences indicate a generational *shift* in

156

masculinity? That is, will these fifth form boys *do* masculinity differently from the New Zealand men that they describe? Or, do the differences indicate a change that the boys must go through in order to beome men? Will these boys gradually discourage themselves and each other from displaying those characteristics by which they describe themselves and not men (Table 5.6), and encourage themselves and each other to manifest those characteristics by which they describe men and not themselves (Table 5.7)? That is, will these fifth form boys "put away their childish things" and do away with the female-associated, prosocial behaviours evident in their self descriptions and take up the male-associated, risk-taking behaviours evident in their men descriptions? The answers to these questions hold significant personal implications for these particular boys as well as social implications for the wider New Zealand society. In Chapter Six these questions are considered again in my analysis of the secondary school curriculum. For now, I want to introduce the two case-study boys, Michael and Nathan.

MICHAEL

Michael was fifteen and New Zealand European. I selected him as one of the case study boys because of his quietness in class and because he was in a single parent family. He lived with his widowed mother and younger brother and sister. Michael's father had died suddenly of a heart attack five years ago. His mother worked part-time as a telephonist. Michael described himself as coming from a working class family. His envisaged future occupation is as an architectural draughtsman.

In the mathematics classroom, Michael was quiet. He frequently appeared bored especially while the teacher was explaining a new concept. In response to the maths teacher's questions, Michael would mutter correct answers to himself but seldom volunteered them publicly. In the english classroom, Michael was quiet but tended to volunteer answers occasionally, possibly because he sat near the front and could interact more readily with the teacher that way. Recordings of his classroom utterances consisted almost entirely of sighs.

One particularly strong reaction came when Ms Mathews, the english teacher, was advising the boys on study and exam strategies. After several particularly heavy sighs, Michael uttered an anguished lament, "God, I hope it all works out. It scares me". This

indicated an awareness of the extreme importance of exam marks to a working-class boy with "not such an assured economic future" (Connell,1989).

NATHAN

Nathan was fifteen and New Zealand European. He lived with both his parents and two older sisters. His father was manager of a very successful mail-order business and his mother was a secondary school teacher. Nathan described himself as coming from an upper/middle class family. His envisaged future is as a tennis professional. During the August holidays, when I interviewed him, Nathan had just returned from a holiday in Fiji with his family.

In class, Nathan was very vocal, to the extent that, Mr Thomas, the mathematics teacher often commented on it but in such a manner that Nathan was encouraged rather than discouraged from calling out. He had a very 'matey' kind of relationship with the male maths teacher. His relationship with the female english teacher was quite different. Nathan exhibited difficulty in accepting her authority in the classroom, or in acknowledging her greater knowledge base. He challenged the grade she had given him for a piece of work. Although Ms Mathews discussed how her assessment was formulated, Nathan refused to accept her mark as an indication of the worth of his work. He expressed his belief that she had discriminated against him and referred back to it several times over the time I was recording.

THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Ms Mathews was in her twenties. This was her third year teaching at this school. She left at the end of the year and went overseas. Ms Mathews admitted she was "sick of it" but did not elaborate on whether the school or teaching was the issue. Her approach in class was very relaxed and open with the boys, the more vocal of whom took advantage of it to undermine her authority.

The classroom was a prefabricated building situated on the outskirts of the school. It was cramped and difficult to heat adequately. The desks were in pairs and squashed into rows with little space between. On the walls were a collection of thirty-one posters and

photos. An analysis of these showed them to be overwhelmingly about males in action. Five were action photos of the army; mechanical engineers, artillery, military police, army special service,and transport driver. Thirteen sports posters showed action, for example windsurfing, swimming and rock-climbing. There were only four posters that pictured women. Among a display of six New Zealand writers, were pictures of Katherine Mansfield, Patricia Grace and Lauris Edmond. The other woman pictured was in a large poster at the front of the room advertising Hawaii. It was a half-face of an attractive woman. These women were all pictured in passive face-only poses.

The boys were commencing a study of Shakespeare's play *MacBeth*. Their previous unit had been a New Zealand novel *Alex* in which various social issues including sex stereotypes were opened for debate and discussion. They thus had a heightened awareness of some gender issues when I did my study.

According to Doyle's analysis of the evaluative climate of the classroom (1983:183), english is a risky class. The work is significantly comprised of personal perceptions, interpretations and understandings. There are no obviously 'right' answers. English requires more personal expressive involvement from the boys. It thus has a high degree of ambiguity and risk attached to it.

THE MATHEMATICS CLASSROOM

Mr Thompson was middle-aged. He had many years teaching experience and had developed a dominant position in the classroom premised on a veneer of male camaraderie over male authority.

The classroom was on the second floor of a classroom block in the centre of the school. It was sunny and relatively spacious. The desks were arranged separately, facing the front, in single file. Mr Thomas could readily move between any two desks when offering help to the boys in their work. The walls were decorated with a 151 various posters. One hundred and twenty of these were photocopied or handwritten A4 size with mathematics problems and solutions on them. There were also seven large mathematics posters, the most notable being one that said "Maths multiplies the chances to succeed".

The boys were doing a unit on circle geometry. Mathematics is a very task oriented subject, dealing with objective criteria. There are clear rules and guidelines to follow and obvious 'right' answers. Mathematics requires no personal disclosure in association with the task. There is reduced ambiguity or risk associated with participating in the public verbal space of the mathematics classroom. In this fifth form mathematics classroom, wrong answers were likely to be met with jeers or laughter, but there did not seem to be quite the same personal investment in contributing a numerical answer, even when that answer was wrong.

Gender relations permeated the mathematics classroom not just as the invisibility of females, but an invisibility of humans in general. As Willis points out

> ...it is a 'male' interpretation of mathematics that produces a curriculum
> which is 'de-peopled' in that contexts and concepts are for the most part
> presented ahistorically and unproblematically... Male defined mathematics,
> like male defined morality, is about absolutes, about 'taken for granted'
> reality upon which students are to operate, about similarities rather than
> differences, about problem solving rather than problem posing (Willis,
> 1988:196).

In addition, the boys were positioned *constantly* as high achievers for whom achievement in mathematics would provide success. The slogan on the wall ("Maths multiplies the chances to succeed") was lived out in the classroom. As Willis argues, in our society, mathematics carries with it a "meritocratic prestige as an intellectual discipline" (ibid:198). This was evident in the ways in which mathematics was linked to the boys' achievement prospects. The boys were positioned as an elite group and mathematics was presented as an elite subject. Connell points out that

> The dry sciences of academic abstraction are a particular institutionalisation
> of masculinity (1989:298).

There is a strong connection between the academic abstraction of mathematics and the power of administrative and professional careers. In Connell's analysis this is not an indivudalised power but rather

> ... it is the organised collective power embodied in large institutions like
> companies, the State and property markets, the power which delivers

economic and cultural advantage to the relatively small number of people who can operate its machinery. A man who can command this power has no need for riding leathers and engine noise to assert masculinity. His masculinity is asserted and amplified on an immensely greater scale by society itself (ibid).

In the mathematics classroom, Michael was very quiet and did not call out. He requested help from the teacher when there was something he did not understand. He would hold his hand up and wait until Mr Thomas responded.

Nathan was a talkative student. When requesting help from Mr Thomas, he would raise his hand but when he was not responded to straight away he would give up waiting for attention and call out. Seeking help in the approved manner by raising his hand did not result in a response quick enough for Nathan. It thus appeared as if Nathan was responded to only when he called out.

Whenever he had the opportunity, Nathan turned to talk to his friend behind him. He often sought help from his peers and gave help also. Mr Thomas often commented publicly on Nathan's talkative nature. Even when we were packing away the recording equipment, Mr Thomas jokingly told Nathan that the recorder was still going because Nathan was still talking. In mathematics, the attention given to Nathan was a direct consequence of Nathan being a talkative person. For example, Nathan was 'volunteered' by Mr Thomas to help with carrying recording equipment.

CURRICULUM ANALYSIS QUANTITATIVE DATA

Research Aim

To find out what representations of males and females are made in the mathematics and english secondary school curriculum.

A total of three mathematics lessons and seven english lessons were recorded. I transcribed five english lessons and carried out a summary analysis using the NUD.IST computer package. I also selected excerpts for discourse analysis. Two english lessons were not suitable for transcribing as the recordings were not complete. Mathematics

lessons were not transcribed because there were so few human mentions. I took notes from these recordings instead.

Using NUD.IST, each of the five transcribed english lessons was searched for mentions of males, females, gender neutral terms and references to the boys. These results are in Table 5.8. Within NUD.IST, text units comprise one line of text and each mention is only counted once for each line. For example, if "you' is used three times in one text unit (line) it is only counted once. This does affect the overall counts of human mentions but does not significantly alter the relative percentages.

Males

Text search for 'he' or 'his' or 'him' or 'man' or 'men' or 'male'

ENGLISH 1

25 text units out of 362, = 6.9%

ENGLISH 2

84 text units out of 528, = 16%

ENGLISH 3

99 text units out of 902, = 11%

ENGLISH 4

23 text units out of 527, = 4.4%

ENGLISH 5

66 text units out of 598, = 11%

Results of text search for 'he' or 'his' or 'him' or 'man' or 'men' or 'male':

Total number of text units found = 297

The online documents with finds have a total of 2917 text units, so text units found in these documents = 10%.

Females

Text search for 'she' or 'her' or 'hers' or 'woman' or 'girl' or 'women' or 'girls' or 'female'

ENGLISH 1

11 text units out of 362, = 3.0%

ENGLISH 2

20 text units out of 528, = 3.8%

ENGLISH 3

13 text units out of 902, = 1.4%

ENGLISH 4

13 text units out of 527, = 2.5%

ENGLISH 5

10 text units out of 598, = 1.7%

Results of text search for 'she' or 'her' or 'hers' or 'woman' or 'girl' or 'women' or 'girls' or 'female'

Total number of text units found = 67

The online documents with finds have a total of 2917 text units, so text units found in these documents = 2.3%.

Gender Neutral Terms

Text search for 'they' or 'them' or 'people' or 'humans'

ENGLISH 1

38 text units out of 362, = 10%

ENGLISH 2

47 text units out of 528, = 8.9%

ENGLISH 3

52 text units out of 902, = 5.8%

ENGLISH 4

33 text units out of 527, = 6.3%

ENGLISH 5

32 text units out of 598, = 5.4%

Results of text search for 'they' or 'them' or 'people' or 'humans'

Total number of text units found = 202

The online documents with finds have a total of 2917 text units, so text units found in these documents = 6.9%.

Student Inclusive

Text search for 'you' or 'your' or 'yours' or 'you're'

ENGLISH 1

68 text units out of 362, = 19%

ENGLISH 2

68 text units out of 528, = 13%

ENGLISH 3

82 text units out of 902, = 9.1%

ENGLISH 4

180 text units out of 527, = 34%

ENGLISH 5

112 text units out of 598, = 19%

Results of text search for 'you' or 'your' or 'yours' or 'you're'

Total number of text units found = 510

The online documents with finds have a total of 2917 text units, so text units found in these documents = 17%.

Table 5.8   Human Mentions in English Curriculum

English Lesson	Text Units Total	Males		Females		Gender Neutral		Student References	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	362	25	6.9	11	3	29	8	68	19
2	528	84	16	20	3.8	43	8.1	68	13
3	902	99	11	13	1.4	43	4.8	82	9.1
4	527	23	4.4	13	2.5	27	5.1	180	34
5	598	66	11	10	1.7	22	3.7	112	19
total text units	2917		10%		2.3%		5.6%		17%

As this quantitative analysis shows, in my study, females were mentioned significantly less than males. The gap between these figures becomes even more significant when consideration is given to the evidence from Alton-Lee & Nuthall (1991) and Nairn (1994) that supposedly gender-neutral terms are also perceived as being about males. Of particular interest is the significant number of references to the boys themselves. Seventeen percent of text units contain a reference to the boys. This includes not only the public talk but also the private utterances of Nathan and Michael.

CONCLUSION

As this quantitative analysis shows, in my study, females were mentioned significantly less than males. The gap between these figures becomes even more significant when consideration is given to the evidence from Alton-Lee & Nuthall (1991) and Nairn (1994) that supposedly gender-neutral terms are also perceived as being about males. Of particular interest is the significant number of references to the boys themselves. Seventeen percent of text units contain a reference to the boys. This includes not only the public talk but also the private utterances of Nathan and Michael.

As I have already mentioned, there were clear distinctions between the mathematics and english curricula. English gave plenty of time for interaction, personal expression and people-centred talk. On the other hand, mathematics was very object centred, task-oriented, and rule-governed rather than interpretive. Both units that the boys studied during my research lacked relevance to their daily lives. There were no obvious links between either circle geometry or *MacBeth*, and yet the boys engaged more rigorously with abstract vectors, tangents and circles. This can be directly related to the different perceived ambiguity and personal risk associated with mathematics and english.

In the next chapter I undertake a detailed analysis of the text of the secondary school english curriculum. The ways in which Michael and Nathan invest in the discourses permeating curriculum enactment are analysed and discussed. This detail is further enhanced by my analysis of the interviews with both Michael and Nathan as well as three other boys from the class.

Chapter Six

NEGOTIATING THE CURRICULUM: THE DISCURSIVE EMBODIMENT OF GENDER

Alton-Lee and Densem (1992:202) found that

> The [primary school] curriculum largely excluded women; where they were included, they were almost invariably marginalised in relation to men or portrayed in pejorative ways.

The results from my study support this finding and yet a detailed analysis shows that the subject positions men and women adopt are not straightforward but often contradictory and changing.

Although males may be central actors in the curriculum, they are not always powerfully or positively portrayed. Similarly, females may be mentioned significantly less and yet their positions are not necessarily powerless or pejorative. They are frequently contradictory, encompassing certain powerful and powerless dimensions. The power relations between male and female subject positions, however, is a recurring factor. In my study, women were always mentioned in relation to men, for example, the witches in *Macbeth*, Lady MacBeth, the Nun in *Measure for Measure*, and King Lear's daughter. *Alex* was an exception. It is through discourse analysis that these positions and contradictions are made evident.

In this chapter I provide a detailed discourse analysis of particular excerpts from the english curriculum transcripts and the private utterances of Nathan and Michael. Nathan participated significantly in the public verbal space of the classroom. He was thus included in the "lived culture" of the classroom significantly more. The implications of this become clearer in my discussion of the classroom discourses and the interviews with five of the boys.

CURRICULUM ANALYSIS

Research Questions

1. What subject positions does the secondary school curriculum construct, support and invite fifth form boys to take up?

2. What are the connections between a fifth form boy's sense of self and these subject positions?

3. How do these link with conceptions of masculinity that are predominant in New Zealand society?

Research Aims

1. To find out what representations of males and females are made in the Maths and English secondary school curriculum

2. To investigate curriculum enactment and the subject positions that the secondary school curriculum constructs, supports and invites fifth form boys to take up.

3. To find out what the connections are between a fifth form boy's sense of self and these subject positions.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

I have grouped excerpts of the curriculum transcripts according to specific discursive themes; avoidance of female subject positions, centrality of males, reinforcement of hegemonic masculinity, and voicing of women as 'other'. These are part of the discursive construction of a male sense of self. They are also part of dominant discourses which construct hegemonic masculinity. In the transcriptions I have used particular symbols to indicate aspects of the discourse; ... represents where talk has been interrupted; [ ] indicates behaviour of the speaker; ( ) indicates a private utterance by case study student. The line number of the text referred to in my discussion is shown in brackets.

Avoidance of Female Subject Positions

The class is about to start reading MacBeth aloud. Ms Mathews is organising the students into the particular roles that the play involves.

1	Teacher:	Okay we need some characters. Do we have some witches in
2		here.
3	Nathan:	Jules, Darral.
4	Class:	Laughter [various names yelled out]
5	Teacher:	Don't you call on other people if you're not willing to do it
6		yourself. Are you willing to do it yourself?
7	Nathan:	I'll be the ??? I'll be the main man.
8	Teacher:	Right so we have first witch is Alec, second witch? Second
9		witch, someone who can do a witches voice.
10	Jules:	You Miss...
11	Class:	laughter
12	Jules:	...Marilyn.
13	Teacher:	Right male volunteers? Thanks Bob you can be second witch,
14		and Bruce you can do third witch. The king. Who would like to
15		do King Duncan? John? Malcolm? Right Henry, Malcolm.
16		Captain, who has a small role here to do, John would you do the
17		captain please.

Witches are clearly perceived as female characters. Nathan suggests two students who he thinks would suit the roles(3). There is general laughter in the class as insults are traded by suggesting that particular students should be witches(4). The boys are thus practising the belief that femininity is inferior, marginalised and also freakish. Nathan asserts his desire to be the main man(7) and not a witch. A student calls out the names of the only two females in the room (the teacher and the researcher) as suitable for witches' roles(10,12). The boys' laughter throughout this episode suggests that they are aware, on some level, of what is going on. The teacher also recognises the gender implications and consequently specifically asks for male volunteers(13). There is not the same hilarity or jostling for positions with the assignation of male characters.

This scenario is played out again at the next english lesson when students are once more needed to take on the roles of witches.

1	Teacher:	Right back to the witches again we started this scene but we
2		didn't get very far...
3	Student:	Its my turn
4	Teacher:	...so lets have that wonderful voice from Alec, and Bruce and
5		Bob. Unless we have some more witches, anyone else would like
6		to try to be a witch?
7	Student:	You have a go.
8	Student:	I don't feel like it.
9	Jules:	Marilyn
10	Teacher:	Any volunteers?
11	Student:	Jules.
12	Jules:	Marilyn.
13	Teacher:	Jules if you ...you can be one of the witches right Jules you are
14		the third witch.
15	Teacher:	Enter the three witches.

Jules has been calling out that the female researcher could be a witch. Another student suggests Jules as a likely witch. Finally the teacher nominates Jules to take a witch's role, almost as penalty for calling out so much.

Centrality of Males

During english, Ms Mathews discusses Shakespearean tragedy as part of the introduction to *MacBeth*. She writes a few notes on the board which students are told to copy down. Ms Mathews then explains what the notes mean.

1	Teacher:	Okay, what this means, number two, the characters are
2		represented as themselves they are authors of their, of their
3		proper woe. They bring about their own downfall through
4		something. Through their own actions lead to their downfall.

5	Jules:	What about women, sir, I mean miss.
6	Class:	laughter.
7	Teacher:	Women, again you will see that there is some tragedy for the
8		women in this play. Lots of male characters, of course, are the
9		central ones especially in the tragedies. There are some important
10		women characters, but again it's a sign of the times really that
11		women are second class citizens. Not like today...
12	Class:	Jeering, calling out [in a way that implies disagreement]
13	Teacher:	...so we can actually see that very clearly in this play. In
14		*Measure for Measure*, it's a story about a nun, a woman who's
15		about to become a nun, called a novice, and she holds out for
16		ages and she's about to become a nun, is involved in all this
17		intrigue and she starts to realise what the world is really made up
18		of. And the main character in the action is the Duke, the Duke
19		Vincentie of Vienna, and he actually leaves the situation, leaves
20		the town and disguises himself as a friar because he wants to see
21		how Angelo, who's the guy he's put in charge, takes over, how
22		he deals with the situation whether he's a good character to be a
23		leader or not. So the Duke sort of skulks around the city in
24		disguise as a friar and everybody tells him everything and he sees
25		the way that people see him and anyway at the end of this play
26		the Duke and the Nun get married, and all it is at the end the
27		Nun gets married after everything that she has gone through. Its
28		all to do with sex before marriage. The whole thing is about a
29		law has been made that you can't have sex before you're
30		married. And two people break it. Everyone's breaking it, this
31		law, of course, but two people in particular break the rule and
32		the woman has a baby and he gets thrown in prison and is about
33		to be beheaded and this is the Nun's brother, okay, so she has to
34		go about trying to save him. And she gets herself tangled in the
35		plot as well and Angelo who's the new ruler, and is quite corrupt

36		says that if you sleep with me than I'll let your brother go. and
37		being a Nun of course, that was breaking her vows...
38	Michael:	(Celibacy)
39	Nathan:	Like Maria
40	Class:	general chatter about television characters
41	Teacher:	...okay, We're not talking about Shortland St. The thing is what
42		I was talking about in this play, the end of it is not really
43		resolved because after everything that she's gone through
44		suddenly the Duke says, Oh well, if you'll have me will you
45		marry me? And she goes 'Yes" [in a little voice] and that's the
46		end.
47	Jules:	How did she go?
48	Class:	laughter
49	Nathan:	How did she go, Miss?

In lines 1 to 4 there are nine gender-neutral human mentions which are considered to refer to males by Jules, who asked the question (and made a gender slip in the process) "What about women,sir, I mean ,Miss?"(5). Jules is obviously aware that males are central characters. He is drawing on a previous English unit (the novel *Alex*) when sex stereotypes was one of the themes discussed in class. He is also attempting to subvert or divert Ms Mathews from her intended teaching direction. This is a common strategy of Jules in this class.

Ms Mathews takes up the invitation to focus on the importance of women characters, explaining that the emphasis on male characters as central is a sign of Shakespearean times when women were considered second-class citizens(10,11). When Ms Mathews suggests that it is different today, she is met with loud jeering and laughter that implies obvious disagreement from the students(12). In this way, these boys are expressing a belief that women are still second-class citizens today. They are also reasserting their own powerfulness in relation to both the female teacher and to women in general.

Using the nun in *Measure For Measure* as an example of an important woman character in a Shakespearean play, Ms Mathews describes the nun as a novice who "holds out"(15), gets involved in a whole lot of intrigue and begins to understand what the world is made of(17). This implies that the nun has led a relatively sheltered life, has difficulty about making a decision and the intrigue helps her to grow up. None of these positions presents the nun in a particularly strong light. In addition, as the teacher continues in her explanation of this play, she positions the male characters as central and important again. It is male characters who are "in the action"(18), "in charge"(21), "leader", "duke" and so on. As Alton-Lee *et al* (1993) have pointed out, even when women are the topic, the discussion often reverts to men.

The nun, who Michael associates with celibacy(38), finally capitulates to a 'normal' woman's role as subordinate wife. After realising "...what the world is really made up of"(17) she gives up her religious orientation to marry the Duke(26,27,45). Her acceptance of the Duke's proposal relegates the nun to a subordinate little-girl position. This is particularly emphasised by Ms Mathews as she says "yes" in a little-girl voice(45). In positioning the nun as a little-girl through acting out the nun's "yes", Ms Mathews also positions herself as a little-girl. The same student who initiated the discussion on women characters, asks Ms Mathews to repeat/reinforce the little-girl position when he calls out, "How did she go?"(47). The resulting laughter indicates that the students are aware *on some level* of the underlying gendered power dynamics.

Throughout the teacher's speech, which aimed at emphasising women characters(7-46), there are a 18 mentions of females, 24 mentions of males, 2 gender neutral, and 3 gender neutral but assumed to be heterosexual couples. Despite the teacher and boys being aware of the dominance of males in the curriculum, and the teacher endeavouring to redress this, males remain central. It is not surprising then that the boys describe men as active, confident, dominant, aggressive, adventurous, strong, courageous, tough and so on (see Table 5.4,p152).

Although Ms Mathews is trying to find ways in which women are presented in central and strong roles, the uncritical presentation of the nun's story leads back to reinforcing

the feminine stereotype via submissive sexuality. The nun must still find her (powerful) man in order to save her brother from execution and herself from a life of celibacy (which is assumed to be a problem). Texts can be read in multiple ways and yet the sub-text upholds the inevitability of the male/female dualism and the compulsory heterosexual coupling which underpins it (Davies,1993a). Moreover, it reinforces the idea that the fulfilment of women is only to be found in relation to a man. The boys are not simply being presented with particular versions and cultural concepts for being female or being male. They are also being presented with the *relations* between these different versions. As Moi explains

> ...each opposition can be analyzed as a hierarchy where the 'feminine'
> side is always seen as the negative, powerless instance...Western
> philosophy and literary thought are and always have been caught up in
> the endless series of hierarchical oppositions that always in the end come
> back to the fundamental 'couple' of the male/female (1987:104).

This is demonstrated twice in the above excerpt. First when the boys negate the female teacher's assertion that women are not second-class citizens today. Second, when the boys attempt to position the female teacher as weak and powerless by asking for a repeat of the little-girl voice "yes". The obviousness of this strategy is understood by the students at some level, as evidenced by the general laughter that ensued.

In order to move beyond this male/female dualism towards the possibility of multiple subjectivities it is not sufficient to simply present different versions of being female or being male. As Davies emphasises

> More important than the text itself,...are the skills that the reader must
> have access to in order to engage both in critical readings of texts that
> create and sustain the male/female dualism, and in readings of liberating
> texts which make those liberating meanings accessible (1993a:148).

The discursive practices of the boys show that they are aware at some level of gender dynamics and they use these dynamics to assert themselves in dominant positions. Yet

neither they nor the teacher have the skills or insight[1] to either articulate their collusion in maintaining gendered power relations nor to examine ways in which these relations may limit their own possibilities. Moreover, the setting and time does not even allow for it.

Although, language is still assumed to be innocent and descriptive, rather than coercive, discursive constructions, poststructuralist theory has exposed the coercive nature of words. As Davies makes clear

> The stranglehold of humanist and enlightenment discourses on the nature of personhood necessarily loosen their grip once they are seen as discursive constructions rather than the transparent forms of words they are claimed to be, forms of words which made possible, we are persuaded to believe, descriptions of 'real' selves. The *innocence* of language as transparent medium for describing the real world is undone through poststructural theory, revealing a rich mosaic of meaning and structure through which we speak ourselves and are spoken into existence (ibid:148).

For those teachers, such as Ms Mathews, who try to encourage non-sexist beliefs and practices in their classrooms, yet are enmeshed in humanist and enlightenment 'rational' models, the classroom experience can be very confusing. The tensions and contradictions that arise cannot be resolved through understandings which are still grounded in dualistic and hierarchical conceptions of maleness and femaleness. As the following excerpt demonstrates.

1	Nathan:	Are you talking about in here?
2	Teacher:	No this is *Measure for Measure*.
3	Nathan:	Why don't we do that one?
4	Class:	Laughter
5	Teacher:	It's a seventh form one

---

[1] I use 'insight' here to mean the ability to make linkages between everyday practices and the wider social and historical context in which they are enmeshed.

6	Student:	Oh can we do it anyway. Can we do it
7	Nathan:	Do we get to watch the video?
8	Class:	General uproar loud noisy
9	Teacher:	Quiet, let's get back to the one.. Number 1. A Shakespearean
10		tragedy concerns a story of exceptional calamity leading to a
11		death of a man of high estate, So. A ..person, of high
12		estate,they are ruler of some sort.
13	Nathan:	Is it always a man?
14	Jules:	Oh we've just asked that, Nathan
15	Teacher:	Not necessarily a man but he is the central character, the
16		protagonist.

The discussion of *Measure For Measure* contains quite open sexual talk which interests the boys. They want to study it or at least see the video (3,6,7). This initiates a general uproar after which Ms Mathews, once again, reverts to emphasising the centrality of male characters(11,12). Nathan recognises the way males are positioned as important characters and attempts to divert the teacher again(13). He is silenced by the same student who initiated the successful diversion earlier(14). Ms Mathews continues with her emphasis on males as central(15) and women as "extra parts".

17	Teacher:	So you can see from the characters that you've got Duncan the
18		King of Scotland, Malcolm and Donald who are his sons. You'll
19		have time to practise it in a minute, run through it. But at the
20		moment we'll just read through these characters. Um, so
21		Malcolm and Donalbain they are his sons, then Macbeth, later
22		Glamis later Cawdor and later King of Scotland. So at the
23		moment he is Thane of Glamis which is like a lord, Lord of
24		Glamis. Banquo, MacDuff, Lennox, Ross, and Angus are all
25		thanes. They're all lords of Scotland. And further down we have
26		Fleance who's Banquo's son, Seaward, young Seaward, Seatton,
27		son of MacDuff and there's a few other extra parts, the captain...
28	student:	Lady Macbeth.

29   Teacher: ...who's at sea, then Lady Macbeth, Lady MacDuff and
30   gentlewomen and the witches. Right, so lets have a look, Act I,
31   Scene I.

The male characters are described as lords or sons of lords. The female characters are "extra parts"(27,29), passed over with no further description or explanation given. Women can thus be seen as marginal to the 'real' actors.

Ms Mathews may not intend to position herself, the students, nor the actors in the play in the ways that I have read them. Ms Mathews, like the students, and myself, both produces and is produced in and through the "regulated and polymorphous discourses" to which we have access (Davies, 1993a:157). The significance of this is explained well by Davies

> ...if the language used in classroom text and talk is treated as transparent, it is more likely to become the [students' and teacher's] language through which they fashion the world and themselves. If the metaphors, images and storylines through which characters are created are not themselves understood as constitutive, the [students and teacher] cannot turn a critical gaze on that constitutive process . As readers they must either comply, taking up as their own the discourses through which they take themselves to be describing real selves in real worlds, or they can engage in some form of resistance. If they comply, they collaborate in the process through which they are interpellated into the existing social structures, learning to hail themselves as they are hailed. If they resist, they open up a different set of possibilities. But the resistances that are currently available to students in school are largely self-defeating...(ibid)

As my forthcoming discussion on the interviews with the boys will show, the students do resist at certain junctures. Some develop quite specific strategies to obviate the negative consequences of hegemonic discourses in which they do not want to fully

participate. These resistances are not necessarily self-defeating but quite specific survival mechanisms.

Reinforcement of Hegemonic Masculinity

The next excerpt is a detailed analysis of Mr Dixon, the drama teacher, talking to the class about drama as an option in the sixth form. Sixth form drama was a new option in the current year and the class was apparently made up of relatively low achievers and behavioural problems. In this excerpt the drama teacher is talking to the students in an effort to encourage them to consider drama for sixth form. He is obviously wanting high achieving students to include drama as one of their options. Mr Dixon is trying to upgrade the image of drama as a subject and the sixth form drama class in particular.

1	Drama T:	Could I have your attention for a minute, fellas. I realise you are
2		really keen to get on with Macbeth, but, um...
3	Nathan:	(yes, we are actually)
4	Drama T:	...just take the focus away for a moment, and be very careful
5		what you say into those things because the reason why you've got
6		them around your neck is to report back what I say. Um...
7	Nathan:	(Mr Dixon, piece of...)
8	Drama T:	... hopefully, to break down a few ideas that you may have,
9		preconceptions about drama...
10	Nathan:	(Oh)laughs
11	Drama T:	...Unfortunately for many of you, rugby is a very, very
12		important part of your life, and because we don't run around in
13		white shorts and long socks there's something slightly strange
14		about us. But believe me, that's not the case. I'm about as fond
15		of rugby as I am of anything. And, we're not all just poofters...
16	Nathan:	laughs
17	Drama T:	...And I'ld like to say to you, that many people believe that you
18		guys in streamed classes are a little bit that way inclined. Or you
19		guys up at boarding house, Bob [to boarding student], they're a
20		little bit that way inclined...

21	Class:	laughter
22	Drama T:	... so people in glass houses ought to be very, very careful I
23		think...
24	Nathan:	(Throw stones)
25	Drama T:	...Um, one of the reasons we've got an image problem I believe
26		is the nature of the class this year...and while there is an
27		enormous amount of interest in the junior school, and I'm
28		fighting people off every day who want to start some sort of
29		junior drama class, it's the interest isn't there at the senior level
30		because most of us have formed our opinions by this stage, and
31		you've decided that drama is for queers and weirdos and that
32		we're a little bit loose and wear our underwear around our head
33		and you're not wearing it proper.
34	Class:	Laughter
35	Nathan:	laughs

Several interesting themes are evident in this excerpt. To begin with, Mr Dixon is trying to establish a 'matey' relationship with the boys. He uses the term 'fellas'(1) to refer to the boys and makes a jokey comment about the microphones they are wearing. He then draws on predominant conceptions of masculinity in order to breakdown some of their preconceptions about drama(11-15). These preconceptions read something like this: Mr Dixon is a drama teacher; real men do not like drama; therefore Mr Dixon is not a real man. Breaking down these preconceptions starts with Mr Dixon stating he likes rugby as much as anything, including drama(15). This reads as: real men like rugby; Mr Dixon likes rugby; therefore Mr Dixon is a real man; therefore real men like drama. In claiming affiliation with the boys through a shared fondness of rugby, Mr Dixon is aligning himself with a very popular form of masculinity in New Zealand. In so doing he also distances himself from any kind of homosexual masculinity and thus sets up a heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy within masculinity.

This highlights another preconception about drama and masculinity. Drama people are not all "just poofters", and neither are boys in streamed classes, or boys in the boarding

hostel. In highlighting the perceived links between homosexuality and drama, Mr Dixon also highlights the links that hegemonic masculinity has with physical as opposed to intellectual skills, and with heterosexual living arrangements as opposed to single sex hostels.

Part of the masculinizing practices of schools is actively constructing gendered subjectivities through providing a setting in which one kind or another of masculinity becomes hegemonic. Mr Dixon is defining a version of hegemonic masculinity encompassing rugby and excluding homosexuality. He wants drama to be part of the masculinity that is hegemonic. My discussion in Chapter Two emphasised that hegemonic masculinity depends not only on the repression of women or the 'feminine' but also on the repression of homosexual desire (Connell,1987). Confronting the boys with their homophobic preconceptions of drama, Mr Dixon reinforces compulsory heterosexuality as the 'norm'. Mac an Ghail's study, which I discussed in Chapter Three, showed that heterosexual male students were engaged in two simultaneous practices; policing external relations by distorting portrayals of the 'other'; notably women and homosexuals, and policing internal relations by rejecting femininity and homosexuality from within themselves (1994:90).

Mr Dixon's talk demonstrates this well. Homosexual behaviour (and drama) is distorted to mean wearing "underwear around our head"(31-33). By illuminating the possible links between intellect and homosexuality(17-20), Mr Dixon is also encouraging the boys to reject homosexuality from within themselves. This is not a straightforward process as Mr Dixon positions himself, and drama, in contradictory ways. He begins by aligning himself with a hegemonic masculinity. At the end of this excerpt he jumps between including and excluding himself from the boys: "*most of us* have formed our opinions"(30), "*you've* decided that drama is for queers and weirdos"(31), "*we're* a little bit loose and wear our underwear around our head"(32), and *you're* not wearing it proper(33).

In the following excerpt, these high achieving boys are encouraged to consider drama as an option next year. Mr Dixon 'packages' drama to represent a subject that will

have real material, utilitarian benefits for the boys. In so doing he emphasises frequently the above average intellectual ability of these boys, and their presumed future in paid employment. He is careful to include both a working-class occupation (ditch digger) and a professional occupation (heart surgeon,9). Yet, class dynamics are an underlying theme. Throughout his talk, Mr Dixon frequently emphasises the boys' expected futures in the professional class. In addition, Mr Dixon also uses homosexual desire in a titillating way to foster interest in drama (26-28). This strategy is not lost on Nathan or the class (29,31).

1	Drama T:	What I'm going to do is try and give you a bit of a run down on
2		how drama can probably help you guys... ...it's for guys who
3		lack self-confidence, it's also for those who really want to
4		develop themselves, and who are able, here's the chance to do it,
5		get away from the books and actually, I've got the knowledge up
6		there, but I know how to express it, and I'm confident expressing
7		it. Doesn't matter how intelligent you are if you can't express
8		your ideas, your confidence, no-one's going to even listen to you.
9		When you go for a job, whether it be a heart-surgeon or digging
10		a ditch, the job, the interview process will be exactly the same.
11		... they talk to you. They bounce questions off you, they look
12		at your body language, the way you hold yourself, how
13		comfortable you are. Are you trustworthy, reliable, and they're
14		just reading you, that's all, the way you hold yourself, the things
15		you say, how confident you are. Do you look them in the eye?
16		That's what they judge you on, ...And it's the same if you go to
17		someone to ... a doctor, you don't go and say well hey, can you
18		pull out your university grades please, your med school reports,
19		so I can see whether I trust you with my body. How do you
20		judge it? ...When you go to your accountant,... does that person
21		make you feel comfortable? Alright, presentation is the key to
22		everything that you do? Not what's up there. That comes
23		second. And I think everyone needs to think about that, we get

24		a little bit buried sometimes in the academic side of things.
25		Now, it's true, drama is a lot of fun, and there's a lot of practical
26		things, but that doesn't mean it's a PE course, as we know them
27		around here, it's not all running around with your underwear on
28		your head, although there's a certain amount of that...
29	Nathan:	(Yea, you wish).
30	Drama T:	...Um, we...
31	Class:	laughter
32	Drama T:	...Okay. The sorts of things that we do involve, the practical
33		stuff in particular involves building your self-confidence,
34		speaking ability, your use of body language, developing
35		characters. We put on a major production,... The whole idea of
36		putting together a drama class is that their major goal is
37		productional, in which they're involved in doing everything.
38		Building a set, painting the set, organising the lights the sound
39		and doing the acting as well. And it's a huge job and there's an
40		enormous sense of satisfaction involved in doing that. Now you
41		get to do that in class time, if, your class is a good one. We go
42		and see a lot of live productions. ... A balance of probably about
43		60 /40 in favour of written to practical stuff that you do and its
44		a pretty healthy balance. I like it like that. For you guys, what
45		I've decided to do next year and that's why I'm targeting the
46		streamed classes, ...I want people who are motivated, who are
47		going to put on a great show, who are going to develop an awful
48		lot of personal qualities about themselves. And so what I am
49		doing is hand-picking the class. And I've got five guys in there
50		at the moment...
51	Class:	laughter
52	Drama T:	... it doesn't sound like a lot, but then we're only looking for 16,
53		or 17 total, I'm not interested in more than that, ok. I'm after
54		in many respects I suppose what you would call an elite group,
55		and that these guys are 100% motivated, ...Because it is going to

56		be a handpicked, elite group, who want to get something very,
57		very successful achieved. ...When you think about your options,
58		... I think it's better suited for guys who have got a bit of
59		ability...

Mr Dixon continues to emphasise the advantages of drama as an option, especially for the "guys who have got a bit of ability". He outlines the course content and the possible subjects that drama could lead to in the seventh form. He also emphasises the importance of developing personal skills such as self-confidence and the ability to "put a mask on" when meeting a variety of people at work.

1	Drama T:	...life in many respects is playing roles, it's putting the mask on
2		so that being able to relate to people who are full of themselves,
3		or have a lot of money, pretentious people, it is about relating to
4		people, right at the bottom, that you're not really in touch with,
5		who don't have a lot of money. It's being able to relate to every
6		single person that you come across, by being able to put a mask
7		on. And that's how you get successful, that's how you get
8		ahead, regardless of what business you do. ...It's not the grades
9		that you get, it's what people think of you, and your ability to
10		relate to them. If, all of that little speech, has made you think
11		twice about your options, and I hope for one and two of your it
12		has, because I didn't, I run this course because I think it's a nice
13		out, it's not, it's harder than teaching English, it's not something
14		that you run away and write about, it's something that you've got
15		to learn who you are, and what you're capable of doing, and
16		make sure that you extend your personal boundaries, not just
17		your book. Ok?
18	Students:	How do we get assessed?
19	Drama T:	There's two exams, there's a mid-term exam and a end of year
20		exam. There is a two-hour one in mid-term, and three-hour at
21		the end of the year. You have five written formal reviews of the

22		productions that you go and see, and of those, I think they're
23	.	about 4% each rated to your final grade,... We've got practical
24		assessment, there's 30 marks of the 250 come from weekly
25		practical stuff, that you do in class, and that's from being part of
26		theatre sports teams and being able to do that well, putting on a
27		live major production here at the school, makes 40 out of 250
28		marks. So a lot of the practical work goes to your final mark...
29		Ok, thanks very much for your time.
30	Nathan:	(Out come the earplugs).
31	Class:	general chatter
32	Nathan:	So who's doing drama guys? Thanks Andrew.[in response to a
33		student saying yes]

I have chosen this segment of curriculum because it demonstrates in a condensed version many of the key issues associated with masculinizing practices in the school. As well as confronting the boys' assumed preconceptions linking drama and homosexuality, and thus linking heterosexuality with 'real' masculinity, Mr Dixon also uses class relations to encourage the boys. He links drama to future occupations and life experiences by emphasising the personal skills that can be learned through drama. These skills include relating well to people and presenting oneself in a good light. Examples used in this strategy are a job interview and visiting a doctor or accountant. The boys are positioned as the job-seeker going to the interview and as the client visiting the doctor or accountant. Mr Dixon then switches to position the boys as the doctor who needs to present himself properly. "Presentation is the key to everything you do"(21,22).

Success is thus defined as not only a matter of good grades but also the ability to relate well to a wide range of people such as the pretentious wealthy or the very poor(3-5). It is evident that the boys are not positioned in either of these socio-economic categories. There is an expectation that the very poor will not be a group with whom the boys will really be in touch(4-5), other than in a professional capacity. They are thus positioned as professional/middle-class, but not pretentious. Excluding the boys

from the 'pretentious wealthy' group carries with it an underlying assumption that the boys will have earned their presumed future position by their ability and effort.

By emphasising often the boys' position within the school as high achievers and persons of intellectual ability, Mr Dixon sets up a challenge for the boys to be 'selected' to participate in drama next year. This group will be a "hand picked", "elite" group. I am reminded again of Connell's point to which I referred in Chapter Three

> ...masculinity is organised - on the macro scale - around social power.
> Social power in terms of access to higher education, entry to professions,
> command of communication, is being delivered by the school system to
> boys who are academic 'successes' (1989:295).

The boys are also being positioned as *rational-market-men* (O'Neill,1995a:3). The ways in which the boys are positioned in Mr Dixon's speech demonstrate the ways in which these high-achieving fifth form boys are being schooled to become rational-market-men. In their fifth form year, these boys are positioned as educational consumers in a competitive market environment. They can use their rational abilities to 'choose' from various sixth form options, of which drama is one. These options are in competition with each other to capture the boys' patronage. Mr Dixon is actively marketing Drama as a subject that will have real material and utilitarian advantages for an individual boy's future. The boy's choice will be a rational one based on perceived advantages that drama offers him. In order to capture the boys' consumer power, Mr Dixon emphasises that academic subjects are really only secondary to drama. Several times he stresses that intellect is secondary to the ability to relate to people.

The advantages of drama are presented in a very utilitarian and functional way. Drama is presented as a means by which the individual boy can gain social power. The advantages are underpinned by an assumption of heterosexual masculinity embodied in the concept of *rational-market-man*. There is no mention of the creativity, cooperative teamwork, personal expressiveness or sheer pleasure that drama might also provide. These non-rational elements are subsumed beneath a rhetoric associating them with "poofters" and "queers", and hence to be denigrated.

The subject position of *rational-market-man* is taken up by one of the boys when he asks how the course is assessed(18,p181). For these high achieving boys, assessment is a crucial issue. Mr Dixon must assure the boys that assessment is as structured as in other, more accepted, academic subjects. The hierarchy of curriculum subjects is evident in this discourse. As I discussed in Chapter Three, Connell *et al* maintain that ruling-class experiences and interests are embedded in what they call the "hegemonic curriculum" (1982:120). A central feature of the 'hegemonic curriculum' is the domination of academic subjects, organised around learning as individual competition, and the marginalisation of other kinds of knowledge, such as that learned through drama. Mr Dixon's speech highlights the hegemony of individual competition, academic knowledge and the ideology of individual ability. These are all characteristics of class-based educational inequality and are significantly implicated in the construction of hegemonic masculinity.

Voicing women as 'other'

These excerpts are concerned with the way MacBeth and Lady MacBeth are portrayed. They provide an insight into the ways in which the curriculum positions men and women in contradictory ways. However, the relative power position of men is upheld. This can be seen in the comparison of the characters of MacBeth and Lady MacBeth.

Excerpt 1

Teacher: So what have we got about Macbeth? What do we know about Macbeth already? ...

Student: That he's a soldier.

Teacher: Good, that he's a soldier.

Student: He's pretty good at what he does.

Teacher: Ok, he's a good fighter. But we will learn more. The thing is what they are doing is they're building up this picture of Macbeth for us until he actually comes on stage and you see him.

Excerpt 2

Teacher: ...and Macbeth who is a brave solider, who stood-out and they talk about his fight in particular with Macdonwald, who was one of the rebels, um, saying how brave and powerful, what a good guy he is, good leader, good fighter, that sort of thing.

Excerpt 3

Teacher: Yea, we're building up this image of Macbeth, we don't actually see him until scene three, we don't actually see him to that stage with the witches, and up to this stage we've got this build-up, we've all heard about this amazing guy called MacBeth, and he's such a good fighter, warrior and he's about to become the Thane of Cawdor, and so he's honoured, because of his ability to fight and his bravery.

Excerpt 4

Teacher: ... and Macbeth is told by the witches that he is a brave soldier and the king makes him the Thane of Cawdor to honour him, his bravery ...

Excerpt 5

Teacher: And Bellona's bridegroom we just read, top of page 56, is Macbeth, fit husband for the goddess of war, so Bellona was obviously the goddess of war.

Excerpt 6

Teacher's Notes from the blackboard.

There is a dramatic build-up for Macbeth before he makes his appearance on stage. We, through the words of others, learn that MacBeth is a brave soldier, an inspiring leader and a brilliant general. MacBeth meets the witches and is told he will become Thane of Cawdor and "king thereafter'. In his first soliloquy, he reveals the struggle going

on in his mind. He also reveals the idea of Duncan's murder. Thus MacBeth's ambition is revealed.

The teacher has consistently emphasised the strength and bravery of MacBeth himself. Now a different picture begins to show.

Excerpt 7

Teacher: Ok, it's something to do with that, the fact is that he doesn't want to see what his hand is doing. His hand has to kill, ok, plunge the knife in whatever, but he is scared to look at what he's going to do, he hasn't got any control over what he is going to do, um, ok, so, his black and deep desires, so he doesn't want anybody to see his deepest desires. It says "yet let that be which the eye fears, when it is done to see". Right now, how did Lady Macbeth come across in that production that went on? Jules?

After so much emphasis placed on Macbeth's bravery and strength of character, the boys are now presented with MacBeth as someone who is scared, has no control, who hides his deep desires yet cannot resist them. There is no link made with the previous picture of MacBeth and the one now emerging. Instead Lady MacBeth is presented.

Excerpt 8

Jules: Trying to .... he's going to become king, she's trying to manipulate him so that she can get what she wants.

Student: And she's quite wicked and driven.

Teacher: So you think that the ambition is hers as well. Who was the strongest of the two?

Student: Lady Macbeth.

Teacher: Obviously. The way that she was brought across to that really sexy sort of.

Student: Slut.

Teacher: Yea, it is almost that, she really brought that out, that she was the manipulator and there was the sort of the sexual thing there, that she had to lead him on a bit, she's leading him on to get him to do what she wanted him to do, she was controlling him. ... Okay, this is a modern version, but it's still the same ideas, but I think that Lady Macbeth is the evil, as you say, she drives him towards his ambition, he's not really all that strong. He wants that, he wants to become King, ok, she's the driving force behind him, she is the one that pushes him into that.

Lady MacBeth is not presented as Bellona, the goddess of war, although her husband is Bellona's bridegroom (excerpt 5). Rather, she is presented, like the witches, as freakish with unnatural powers. She is manipulative, wicked and driven, ambitious, and obviously stronger than this great soldier, MacBeth, who so much has been told about. She is also a sexual being and uses this to control MacBeth.

MacBeth, however, has already stated his desire to murder Duncan and become king, yet prefers not to acknowledge this openly. He suppresses his feelings and separates them from his actions. The contradictory positions of both MacBeth and Lady MacBeth are not brought out into the open and discussed. They could have been linked with the previous unit on *Alex* and the stereotypes discussed during that unit. They could have also paved the way for a discussion on the non-unitary nature of men and women. Instead, stereotypical and yet contradictory pictures of men and women are reinforced. The man is strong and brave and in control of his emotions. Yet he is susceptible to what Pleck (1981) refers to as a woman's "expressive power" and hence dependent on a woman to express, in this case, his secret ambition to be king. The woman, through her emotions and sexuality, is able to exert"expressive power" over the man and can manipulate him to achieve her own ambitions.

I want now to discuss some excerpts from Nathan's personal utterances. Links can be seen with the way MacBeth (men) and Lady MacBeth (women) are presented.

Excerpt 9

Nathan:	I saw Trudy today and she had on a.. she looked great eh, she had on a scarf, homespun, track pants...
Student:	[answering back..inaudible]
Nathan:	Did I say he did when... No I said I saw Trudy.
Student:	[Answers Nathan]
Nathan:	Oh I could say I saw your sister, didn't say that I liked her.
Student:	[mumbles an answer to Nathan]
Nathan:	Laughter [hums a ditty] ...Elle McPherson doesn't love Alec
Student:	general chatter
Nathan:	What...[hums again] Miss Mathews is a fat slut, laughter

Nathan shares with another student his pleasure at seeing a great looking girl. He has taken note of what she was wearing. In response to other students' comments, Nathan then clarifies that although he has shared his sighting of Trudy, that does not mean that he likes her. He continues by singing a little ditty that tells Alec that he is not loved by another good looking women (Elle McPherson). Nathan then turns his attention to another attractive woman, the english teacher, and describes her as unattractive (fat) and sexual (slut).

In the space of a few minutes, the women mentioned in this excerpt, like Lady MacBeth, have evolved from being a goddess (she looked great), to being unloving, and finally to being unattractive and a "slut". This is part of the discursive practices in which adolescent males are learning to voice women as 'other'.

Excerpt 10

Nathan and Brent are good friends and sit beside each other in English. They are working on answering some questions from the blackboard.

Nathan:	...of the Captain's report?

Brent:	He said a report that, saying that, um how brave Macbeth was, with the fight against the rebels.
Nathan:	Rebellions.
Brent:	I think.
Nathan:	Oh, mate, my folders come undone, what a prick. Sarah's the biggest dick out, I've just realised. Brent, listen to my worries. Thanks for your support Brent. Brent. Did you just hear what I said? No, I said, I made Sarah pregnant.

In amongst trivial chatter, Nathan confides a major worry to his friend, who is obviously not expecting such confidences. Nathan expresses himself in such a way, that it is Sarah who is at fault (Sarah's the biggest dick out), even though Nathan is active in the process (I made Sarah pregnant). Like MacBeth, Nathan is separating his feelings from his actions and thus absolving himself from responsibility for those actions. The fault lies with the sexuality of the Lady.

This excerpt was followed by an interruption from another student and a general discussion revolved around who was being recorded. The subject of Sarah's pregnancy did not come up again. During my interview with Nathan, I provided an opportunity for him to bring up the topic, but he did not.

Excerpt 11

Ms Mathews is giving study and examination hints to the boys.

1	Teacher:	Try to say some things about a common topic say do *Alex*. Say
2		its the themes of Alex. What are the themes of Alex? Paul
3		which one?
4	Paul:	Alcohol abuse
5	Michael:	Sighs
6	Teacher:	social thing, social problems, what else?
7	Student:	Women matters
8	Teacher:	Women, the role of women in that time.

9	Michael:	Adolescence
10	Teacher:	Okay, adolescence
11	Student:	Rivalry
12	Teacher:	Rivalry, think of all the things you do for your seminars
13	Student:	Stereotypes
14	Michael:	(Sexual molestation)
15	Teacher:	What else have we got, friendship
16	Student:	Relationships
17	Nathan:	(Fucking)
18	Teacher:	...Okay, there's a few. Now what you do from there lets say you
19		are trying to learn those, trying to think, if I get a question about
20		themes or I can discuss one of the themes.

Through his reading of *Alex*, Michael has recognised the links between sex stereotypes and their power relations embodied in "sexual molestation"(14). For Nathan, the heterosexual friendship and relationships in *Alex* are linked with "fucking" (17). Neither of these comments are publicly shared.

As these excerpts clearly demonstrate, learning to voice women as 'Other' is a complex process involving the overt curriculum and the boys' own lived experiences. The ways in which both MacBeth and Lady Macbeth are uncritically portrayed significantly mirror the ways in which Nathan positions himself in relation to women. As I discussed in Chapter Three, and as Nathan's last comment demonstrates, learning to voice women as 'other', in an adolescent male peer group culture, acts to normalise a way of being male in which sexual desire is distanced from intimate emotions indeed from interest in female company except for the purposes of sex. This in turn acts to establish a norm that equates masculinity with domination in male-female relationships. Voicing women as 'other' also acts to denigrate female-associated behaviours and characteristics. This serves to keep subordinated masculinities marginalised and emphasises the taboos against homosexual affiliation. As I argued earlier, homophobia serves to support compulsory heterosexuality, while at the same time operating as a

constraint that keeps heterosexual people of both sexes within the boundaries of traditional masculinity and femininity.

BECOMING A MAN

In Chapter Five I asked if the differences between the boys' self-descriptions and their men-descriptions indicated a generational shift in masculinity or did they indicate a change through which the boys must go in order to become men. My analysis and discussion of the curriculum excerpts in this chapter suggest strongly that these fifth form boys must negotiate a secondary school curriculum in which 'becoming a man' depends on creating a hierarchy of negation of others. The discursive practices uncovered in this english classroom portray a hierarchy that is not only concerned with voicing women as 'other' but also involves a negation of masculinities which are related to social class and sexual orientation. The english secondary school curriculum in my study actively supports and reinforces the hegemony of the proverbial white, middle-class, heterosexual male image. It is within this secondary school curriculum that these fifth form boys develop a sense of self as male.

'Becoming a man' means that a fifth form boy must prove to himself and to others that he possesses identifiably male characteristics, such as active, adventurous, confident, and independent. "I'll be the main man", says Nathan (p167) as he strives through his participation in the public verbal space of the classroom to position himself in powerful ways in relation to others in his class. "God, I hope it all works out. It scares me", says Michael (p157) as he strives through school achievement to position himself in powerful ways in the future labour market.

The secondary school curriculum actively encourages these boys to manifest most of those characteristics by which they describe men and not themselves (Table 5.7, p 155). Through the portrayal of men as central characters, the secondary school curriculum encourages the boys to view themselves as central characters both in the classroom and in their future expectations of achievement and social class position. The boys also

encourage themselves and each other in this process. They do so, not by supporting each other, but by actively discouraging any public deviation from culturally prescribed 'norms' of masculinity and displaying publicly the male-associated, risk-taking behaviours evident in their men descriptions. This is a theme which I explore further in my interviews with some of the boys.

For these fifth form boys, becoming a man also means demonstrating that one is not becoming a woman. This is dependent on negating those characteristics which are perceived as belonging to the category: female. It means that these fifth form boys must "put away their childish things" and not display the female-associated, prosocial behaviours evident in their self descriptions. This negation needs to take place both externally, to prove to others, and internally, to prove to oneself, that one belongs to that category: male. The binary oppositions of male/female are, however, also constitutive of power relations. Within gender relations premised on male dominance and female oppression, becoming a man means learning to position oneself in powerful ways in relation to women and other men. In the secondary school curriculum, this process is carried out through discursive practices that negate 'typical' female characteristics, and amplify 'typical' male characteristics.

In 'becoming a man' these fifth form boys are encouraged through the secondary school curriculum to develop skills and attributes associated with anti-social behaviour and are discouraged from developing skills and attributes associated with pro-social behaviour. Within non-hegemonic forms of masculinity, 'becoming a man' is a process of conflict, contestation and contradiction. These boys must not only negotiate male/female dualism but also must further negotiate the heterosexual/ homosexual dichotomy that hegemonic masculinity upholds. The effects of this were made clear to me when I interviewed five quite different boys. I discuss these interviews in the next section.

INTERVIEWS

This stage of the research brought together the multiple and disparate strands of fifth form boys' sense of self and curriculum enactment. Through the interview process I aimed to tease out the complexity of curriculum enactment and boy's sense of self. I also wanted to find possible spaces from which change could be initiated.

Five boys were interviewed. These included Nathan and Michael, the two case study boys. The other three, Jeff, Jules and Craig, were selected according to their responses to the questionnaires and their observed behaviour in the classroom. Four of the five students came from relatively affluent households. Two had been to Fiji for their holidays. All their mothers worked but only so far that it did not interfere with their family responsibilities.

The main topics of these interviews were; the boys' experience of the research process; their experience of Mathematics and English; future occupation; sense of self; men; curriculum changes; and gender relations. In this section I provide profiles of the five boys who were interviewed and discuss the key themes which emerged.

Jeff

Jeff was the most expressive of the students interviewed and showed the lowest M% score in the class on his self-description. That means that Jeff described himself in very non-stereotypical male terms. He also described himself as upper/middle class and listed his father's occupation as 'council director' and his mother's occupation as 'farmer'. Jeff states his planned occupation as 'economist' but when talking with him he expressed a very lively interest in being an archeologist.

In regards to english, Jeff, "Absolutely love[s] it. I used to be reasonable in third form, excelled in fourth form, and love it in fifth form". Jeff felt that he was too mature for the class. He considered himself a very serious person and sets high standards for himself. Jeff stated that he has a very extensive vocabulary and enjoys expressing himself. The other boys hassle him when he does well.

194

Jeff reads "heaps of books" and notes the centrality of males as dominant characters in books. He linked this predominance of male dominant figures to women's oppression and the increase in violent crime which Jeff reframed to mean domestic violence. Jeff stated that society should "get rid of the macho image", that men "have the right to be sensitive and caring" and that "women have the right to be forward and bold". The novel *Alex* was the first book that Jeff had encountered that challenged stereotypes and portrayed a woman's point of view.

Jeff was having trouble with maths. He stated that

> I was top student in the third and fourth forms, but am having trouble in
> the fifth form working out concepts. I've had a big drop in my marks".

Jeff was beginning to feel negative about Maths and during the holidays was studying hard in order to get his grade back into the 70s or 80s where he felt it should be.

Jeff described the school as being very disciplined. He stated that the school has the highest drop-out rate at university because the boys have not learned the skills necessary to work in a relatively undisciplined environment. Jeff is able to articulate well the subject divisions that the school acts to uphold.

> Arts, english, music, and languages are not a priority. Science and maths
> are top priority. And, Rugby, Rugby, Rugby."

Part of the reality of Jeff's school life is comprised of humiliation and mockery resulting from his failure to adhere to a stereotypical gendered subjectivity. Jeff has devised particular strategies to deal with this. Silence and keeping to himself are two such strategies. He also intended to take drama the following year as he felt this would improve his self-confidence. Mr Dixon's speech did bear fruit!

During our interview, we talked about a lot of issues and Jeff said that he was really pleased to be able to talk freely with someone about things that are interesting and/or important to him. It is not something that he has a lot of opportunity to do in a non-threatening environment. Jeff stated that there was no way he would talk easily and so

freely to any of the boys in his class. He would never, for instance, talk about his love of classical music and opera to the other boys in his class. When Jeff admitted to his classmates that he does not drink (alcohol) he was asked if he was a woman. He stated that he feels alienated from his class. "Although they are all intelligent, some seem very immature".

I mentioned Jeff briefly in Chapter Five regarding our discussion on Questionnaire Two. Although Jeff describes himself non-stereotypically, and appears to recognise profeminist views, his understanding of social life is based significantly on his own experiences. This limits his understanding of his own (alienated) positioning and the social forces that create and sustain it. On the contrary, his own experiences act to reinforce particular stereotypes.

Jeff has recently experienced his parents' separation. However, just as his mother's early childrearing experiences were different from many other women's, so too was the separation. The family farm was subdivided and Jeff's mother built a new home on her part which was just down the drive from Jeff's father's home (the previous family home). The children could choose with whom they wanted to live and yet maintain close daily contact with the other parent. Jeff, at sixteen, was the youngest of four children and chose to live with his mother. Jeff's mother continued with her farming business as per usual.

In discussing social issues, Jeff drew on his experience of "coming from a broken home" to justify his limited acceptance and understanding of the real difficulties that many people who 'come from a broken home' experience. He was not able to recognise that his experience was atypical and that, for him, change had been minimal. For Jeff nothing had changed materially at all and, in his view, those who came from broken homes and had problems only had themselves to blame.

During my reflections on my interview with Jeff, I was reminded of Connell's (1992) study in which he argued that a marginalised masculinity (homosexual masculinity) is not necessarily a negation of masculinity and an embracing of the feminine. In relation

to Jeff, this could be interpreted as meaning that although Jeff experiences marginalisation and adheres to a non-hegemonic form of masculinity, he still believes in the basic male/female dualism and the inherent power relations which serve to advantage men over women. In contradiction to his stated wish for change in the male and female stereotypes, Jeff is also significantly motivated to support the public image of hegemonic masculinity. In spite of his marginalisation, Jeff benefits from hegemonic masculinity because of his class, race and sex location.

The contradictions between wanting things to be different, with both men and women having more ways of being in the world, and Jeff's own family experiences must be mediated by Jeff as he develops his sense of self. This mediation process is constrained, however, by Jeff's limited critical awareness of power relations. His dominant ethnic and social class positioning both protects and reinforces Jeff's subordinated and marginalised male sense of self.

Jules

Jules had the highest M% score in the self-description questionnaire. He also had the most traditional (sexist) responses in the gender relations questionnaire. Jules described himself as upper/middle class. His father is a bank manager and his mother works as a bank teller. He stated his planned occupation as 'professional sportsman'.

Although Jules was one of the most noticeable boys in the class, I did not choose him as a case-study boy for two reasons. First, Jules was quite sure he would be 'selected' and even assumed throughout the recording sessions that he was one of the boys being recorded. If I had recorded Jules I am certain that his private utterances would have been purposeful and significantly influenced by the research rather than spontaneous. This would have affected the trustworthiness of my study.

Second, during my familiarisation period in the classroom, Jules' 'showman' status in the class made his investment in hegemonic masculinity obvious. He enjoyed the attention that his neck covered in 'love-bites' caused. I did not want my study to add

to those by male researchers where graphic articulation of misogyny and homophobia serves to celebrate these divisive and oppressive structures (Aggleton,1990).

Throughout the observation and recording stage of my study, I noted that on different occasions in the English classroom Jules would ask Ms Mathews a personal question such as "Have you ever been skiing, Miss?" This question resulted in several boys teasing the teacher about going skiing. On another occasion, Ms Mathews had mentioned that she would not be at the school next year. Jules picked up on this and the following discussion resulted.

Jules:	Miss where are you going to go?
Teacher:	I'm going overseas.
Jules:	The big OE. Where to? Are you going to England? Thailand? Are you going to come back? Yes. Alright. Who you going with Miss?
Teacher:	Just some friends.
Student:	Are you going to teach? Or just trip?
Jules:	Have you given them sufficient notice that you're going to leave?

There is an assumption in the last question that Ms Mathews, herself, would not know what her obligations to her employer were. These questions also seek relatively personal information from Ms Mathews. Jules also asked me similar questions. On the second occasion, when he asked what I had eaten for lunch, I answered his question but also inquired after his own lunchtime eating habits. Jules became embarrassed and quite evasive. He also never asked me a similar personal question again. Jules' strategy was to take an apparent personal interest in the females' personal lives by requesting information from them and yet would not reciprocate by sharing similar information about himself.

This observation contrasts with Jules' stated enjoyment of english. "I like writing, expressing myself, getting involved". As evidenced in the recording transcripts, Jules featured often in the public verbal space of the classroom. Although Jules'

contributions in english showed an eagerness to interpret and understand, this was limited by the unavailability to him of critical analytical skills. Although he recognised that males and females are portrayed differently in the curriculum with "males usually above females" and women "still second class citizens" Jules was blind to the structural constraints that maintain these stereotypes. He felt that it is "up to the individual to change".

Craig

Craig was neither a particularly quiet nor vocal boy. In the classroom I observed that he was friendly and personable, participating appropriately. Craig's parents both work; his father is a sales representative, and his mother part-time is a legal secretary. He described himself as middle class.

Craig's comments on learning were typical of the five boys. He liked self-directed learning in class because the teacher is available for help if necessary. Although Craig likes working on his own, he does not like self-directed learning when he comes across a problem that needs help and none is available. Maths is Craig's best subject. According to Craig, one of the "good" things about maths is being able to check your own work and get your answers right. Craig admitted to feeling frustrated when he could not figure something out.

English is Craig's "second to worst subject". Craig felt that english was a bad name for the subject as it was more to do with literature rather than language. He felt that he had a "bad imagination" and "hates to make things up" such as when required to write stories. "If I know what I'm talking about it's good".

Craig was being encouraged to become a lawyer by his parents, particularly his mother who saw the clear material advantages that such a profession offered. Craig was rather ambivalent about the prospect but had not formed any alternatives of his own. He expressed an interest in being a courtroom lawyer as he felt he could speak well in public. This ability, combined with his liking of objective 'facts' and getting things

'right', means that Craig's choice of courtroom lawyer will probably be a good one for him.

Craig had originally decided to go straight from fifth to seventh form but was having second thoughts. Echoing Jeff's concern, Craig felt that the highly structured character of 'Boys High' where "you get pushed a lot" mitigates against success at university where "you have to push yourself" .

During our discussion of various social issues, Craig, like the other boys whom I interviewed, was limited in his understanding by both his lack of critical thinking skills and his "bad imagination". He related the issues solely to his own experiences, and was unable to place those experiences in a wider social or historical context. He interpreted the portrayals of males and females in the English curriculum to fit with his own family experiences. For instance, according to Craig, *Alex* portrayed women as studious and hardworking. Craig felt that was the norm as his sister was also studious and hardworking.

Contradictions were very evident in Craig's understandings of gender relations. "Somebody has to look after the kids, and I think the mother is better at it". Alongside this very traditional response Craig stated

> Everyone should be given equal opportunities. It's up to that person in
> particular what they want to do. There's no restrictions on how far they
> can go with jobs, whatever.

Craig's mother joined in the discussion on equal opportunity when she stated, "Equal opportunity doesn't really apply". Craig countered with the argument that, "A lot more women are getting into power". His mother responded by saying, "They don't necessarily have anyone's interests in mind than their own". This interchange took place against a backdrop of Craig's mother coming home from her job in the law firm and making lunch for her sixteen year old son (Craig). Both Craig and his mother claimed that he could and usually did make his own lunch.

In a continuing discussion of gender relations Craig stated

> I think, that something that is bad in this society is that most men don't
> have a lot to do with their children. I think a lot of men should spend
> more time with their kids at home.

Unprompted, Craig did not reconcile this view with his earlier statement on mothers
being better at looking after children. However, when this contradiction was pointed
out to him, he was able to acknowledge it and develop further ideas from it.

The complex and contradictory conditions that Craig must mediate in developing his
sense of self are clearly evident in these comments. Gender relations are not fixed or
static. Their changing and shifting nature opens up possibilities for transformative and
emancipatory change.

Nathan

Nathan was not particularly surprised when I told him that he was one of the boys being
recorded. He and his friends, with whom he sat in class, had already worked out that
one of them was most likely being recorded.

Nathan was already showing signs of investing in a hegemonic masculinity necessary
for high-powered business competition -"motivated to compete, strong in the sense of
one's own abilities, able to dominate others and to face down opponents in situations
of conflict" (Connell *et al,*1982:73). Nathan's father was manager of a large business.
Nathan would most likely go into management also, although he planned on being a
'tennis pro'. Nathan's mother was a secondary school teacher. He described himself as
upper/middle class.

Competitive sports played a large part in Nathan's life. He belonged to a gym where
he had recently injured his back during a workout. Nathan's relationships with the other
boys in the classroom were based on trying to uphold a dominant position. He
communicated with his closest friend by hitting him (in a friendly way) on the arm.
Nathan used his greater material resources, such as access to his home computer, as a

means to get his own way. This was all done in a congenial way yet the power relations were quite evident.

I observed in the english classroom that he had difficulty in listening to anyone else. Nathan was constantly talking either privately or publicly. When the lesson involved reading *MacBeth* out loud with different boys taking the parts, Nathan was bored if he was not directly (and preferably powerfully/publicly) involved. This was the only time he sighed while being recorded. He also read the play out loud to himself while others were reading their part to the class.

Although Nathan actively participated in the english classroom, his participation was less likely to be contributing to the teacher-led discussion and more likely to be attempting to subvert it in some way. He participated on his terms and not the teacher's. In his interview Nathan stated "I dread english". It is probable that those boys, such as Nathan, who have difficulty in personal expressiveness will also have difficulty in participating appropriately in the public verbal space of the english classroom.

In the maths classroom, Nathan also liked to be an active public participant. He stated of maths, "It's my best mark. I like numbers, figures, problem solving..." In contrast to the english classroom, Nathan's participation here was based on learning and achieving. He also admitted, however, that he was scared of the consequences with male teachers whom he regarded as more strict than female teachers.

In our discussion of social issues, Nathan considered adolescent suicide to be related to girlfriend and drug problems rather than the stress of school work. He viewed alcohol and drug abuse as part of the "macho thing". Of teenage pregnancy he simply stated, "They're dumb". Throughout the interview Nathan was hesitant about 'opening up' about himself and his opinions. He needed prompting and gave short, basic responses on which he chose not to elaborate.

Michael

Michael was surprised at being one of the case-study boys. He felt that he was too quiet for anyone to be interested in him. He described himself as working class. His mother worked part-time as a telephonist.

Michael did not enjoy english. "Can we change the subject please?". He claimed that he has real problems with sentence construction and spelling. This consequently made examinations particularly difficult as he is unable to check and rewrite work as he usually does. In subjects such as english and economics, "I really bum out, but the technical stuff I'm really good at - maths, science, tech drawing, graphics and design..." Maths is Michael's "favourite subject". He liked the way he was beginning to be able to apply what he learned in maths to real life situations.

When interviewed, Michael characterised a "competitive achievement" masculinity as identified by Kessler *et al* (1985:42). This is one subordinate form of masculinity which requires a break with working-class practices in its constitution. It is organised around themes of rationality and responsibility. Michael, while studying six school certificate subjects, was also taking night classes at the local polytechnic. He was doing the third stage of a four stage course on computer aided draughting. In his sixth form year Michael planned to study a construction paper extramurally from Victoria University. This would count towards his qualification to become an architectural draughtsman. During his school holidays Michael often worked voluntarily for an architect. His most recent achievement was drawing up plans for a new wing on a prison complex.

In order to finance his studies, Michael works. He earns approximately two thousand dollars a year delivering circulars and newspapers every night. In addition, Michael plays a musical instrument and earns extra money by busking. During the August holidays, when I interviewed him, Michael was studying four hours a day in preparation for school examinations and then school certificate. He was also seriously considering changing schools for his sixth form year. His reasons were quite pragmatic.

At 'Boys High' physical education is compulsory at sixth form level. This means that of the six subjects Michael was taking for School Certificate only five could be taken in the sixth form. He had approached coeducational secondary school in the area and was intending to visit and look at his options there for the following year. Michael has chosen a non-physical path toward masculinity. He is, however, very active, hard-working and *rational* in this process.

> I'm thinking of changing schools next year. We are an accelerated class. You have to be bright for that...They're making sixth form phys ed compulsory, yet that cuts out our chemistry or biology. I've visited another school and phys ed isn't compulsory.

Michael recognises the contradictory logic of the schooling system which insists on the higher streamed class taking six School Certificate subjects yet limiting their sixth form subjects to five plus phys ed. At the same time the bright sixth form boys are encouraged to take Bursary exams which are normally taken in the seventh form. Michael lacks the critical analytical skills which would help him place these contradictions in a social context and recognise the underlying power relations.

Compulsory physical education for sixth form boys is one of the masculinizing practices of 'Boys High'. Whitson (1990:24) suggests that

> assertiveness and confidence, as ways of relating to others, become embodied through the development of strength and skill and through prevailing over opponents in competitive situations.

The process of "becoming a man" thus includes learning to project a physical presence that speaks of latent power. Connell argues that it is through physical activities, such as sports, that young men learn to use their bodies in powerful, space-occupying ways.

> The combination of force and skill that is involved in playing well at games like football, cricket and baseball, and which is central even in highly individualized sports like surfing, becomes a strongly cathected aspect of an adolescent boy's life. Though rejected by some...prowess

204

of this kind becomes a means of judging one's degree of masculinity (Connell,1987:85).

Connell argues that the competitive and physical dynamics of sport are particularly important for adolescent males because other forms of recognised masculine power (based on earning power, adult sexual relations, or fatherhood) are some way off. It is not by chance, however, that physical education is compulsory at 'Boys High' and that "rugby, rugby, rugby" (Jeff,p194) is a high priority.

All of the boys interviewed stated that they felt odd about describing themselves, even when it was only selecting certain adjectives. Michael commented

> People don't usually describe themselves. I might think I'm an okay
> person but someone else might think I'm arrogant.

Michael suggested that modesty, self-esteem and self-confidence all played a part in how someone would describe themselves. He suggested that it would be better to get some one else to describe them. For example, the task could be changed to "select those adjectives that you think someone who knew you well would use to describe you". This, however, would enable the boys to distance themselves from themselves and hence avoid self-reflection. It would also place the responsibility for the description elsewhere.

In our discussion on gender relations, Michael offered many original ideas and opinions about a variety of topics. He had obviously thought through many social issues in some depth. He was candidly pro-feminist in his views. He felt that all of the questions in Questionnaire Two could have been answered with "it depends".

> It depends on the context. For instance, if a woman is paid for work in
> the home, who is going to pay?

On the topic of teenage pregnancy, Michael had this to say

> My mum has drummed it into me so many times that if I got a girl
> pregnant it would be my fault. Mum thinks it would be hers as well. I

heard from mum, it's not drummed into us all that well at school. Health education, we're informed about different contraception methods but not actually encouraged to say "no". People don't always realise they have choices...if the girl decides to go through with it and have it, I would be coughing up for the rest of my life until they are sixteen. If it was costed out over sixteen years then it would be more real in some ways...if you get married and establish a stable relationship with another women, that kid would still be wanting to visit you... could create difficulties...

Michael said he had watched a programme on television about couples, some married and some not. He realised the tiredness attached to fulltime caring for a dependent baby and the unhappiness that can cause. It was obvious that Michael had talked over issues such as these in a relatively open manner with his mother. He was also aware of the increase in adolescent suicide "because it's always on the radio". Like the other boys interviewed, Michael linked the increase in adolescent suicide with the stress of exams and pressure to achieve. "We're told anything under eighty is a failure". In contrast to the other boys, however, Michael was able to look past his own immediate situation and recognise that unemployment also caused stress.

...few jobs around...on the dole...not able to get a job. You would lose your heart after a while, being rejected for jobs all the time.

Quietly self-confident ("I like myself the way I am"), Michael has established his own agenda. He not only knows where he is going, but he has also already started on the path to further education and vocational qualifications. His busy life leaves little time for friendships outside of the band in which he plays. His friends in school consist of a few boys who are not the "in" group in the class. They are the ones who get the lower marks and get hassled by their classmates as a result. As for friendships with girls, Michael expressed a belief that single-sex education mitigates against not only meeting girls but also learning how to get along with them. "I wouldn't know how to approach a girl now".

FIFTH FORM BOYS' SENSE OF SELF

These five interviews highlight the ways in which each boy negotiated the discourses embedded in the secondary school curriculum in developing his own distinct version of masculinity and male sense of self within the boundaries furnished by his white-ethnicity and social class positioning. The diversity and multiplicity of masculinities constructed through this process were evident in these five interviews, and yet, as I discussed in Chapter Three, the diversity within masculinity cannot be understood simply as individual choice. The construction of masculinities is a collective practice operating at "the level of the institution and the organisation of peer group relations" (Connell, 1989:295). It is also part of wider social structures and practices.

The english curriculum in this single-sex boys school actually worked to curb this diversity and shape it into a hierarchy of masculinities. This hierarchy of masculinities is also linked to a hierarchy of academic knowledge and a hierarchy of class relations. In my study, this occurred even though this class of fifth form boys was a relatively homogenous group. They constituted a high streamed class, came from predominantly middle/upper social class backgrounds, and were significantly aiming for the professional sector of the labour market.

The hierarchy of masculinities was exhibited most clearly in the use of the public verbal space of the classroom. Both Nathan and Jules significantly dominated the public verbal space of the classroom. It was here that Jules and Nathan were learning and practising behaviours associated with hegemonic masculinity. They were actively involved in controlling the classroom culture in a way that focused on their interests and needs. In order to do so, they needed to take more risks in the evaluative climate of the classroom. Both Nathan and Jules regularly attempted to undermine the female teacher's authority and knowledge base by diverting the lesson content and personalising questions and comments. Similar behaviours were not evident in the mathematics classroom with a male teacher.

During my interviews, both Nathan and Jules attempted to control the interviews by either contributing very little or by articulating predominant stereotypical ideas about gender relations and other social inequalities as 'facts' with no supportive evidence or discussion. Their attitudes reflected entrenched 'common-sense' ideas which they adopted and expressed in a superficial manner. Both boys were limited in their ability or *desire* to think particularly deeply about the social issues which I discussed with them. They had further difficulties in their ability to consider new information and modify existing ideas accordingly.

Investing in a hegemonic masculinity, and participating disproportionately in the public verbal space of the classroom, means that the versions of masculinity that Nathan and Jules were constructing became a predominant feature of the curriculum experience for the other boys. It was the ideas and attitudes of Nathan and Jules that became incorporated into the lived curriculum. As Arnot points out in relation to coeducational schools

> Coping with absent fathers who are positioned and controlled by their work within the public sphere, experiencing contradictory class and racially specific versions of masculinity, male pupils were shown to respond by colonizing the world of secondary schools. They set, through their actions and their public forms of resistance, the terms under which female pupils defined their identities...(1993:199)

In my study, it was those boys *who were investing in a hegemonic masculinity* (Nathan and Jules) who set, through their use of the public verbal space of the classroom, the context in which other boys (Michael, Craig and Jeff) developed their sense of self. In her analysis of teachers' comments on single-sex boys' classrooms, Spender (1982) found that boys created an inferior group of boys who were defined as 'other'. This 'out group' of boys were perceived as less masculine and/or more feminine than the 'manly' image to which most boys aspired. It was towards these boys that physical and verbal abuse was likely to be directed. Although, I observed no physical violence nor did any of the boys interviewed mention physical violence, it was clear from my

observations and from the interviews that a significant amount of 'symbolic violence' was perpetrated.

Jeff and Michael belonged to different 'out groups' in the classroom. The alienation that ensued significantly influenced the construction of their sense of self. Michael and Jeff constructed their sense of self aware of the promises that hegemonic masculinity holds out for adolescent boys and yet also aware that these promises needed to be reached by them through means other than vocal and physical competition. They did so through the use of specific, privatised strategies which included serious study , "competitive achievement" (Kessler *et al*,1985:42), and low risk-taking behaviour both in the classroom and in their choice of friends. In particular, they kept quiet in the classroom, chose friends who were also in the "out group", and did not talk much about themselves to the other boys. Furthermore, Michael and Jeff were each spending approximately four hours a day during the holidays studying.

Craig negotiated the curriculum primarily by silently supporting the hegemonic masculinity it upholds. He did not dominate the public verbal space of the classroom in the way that Jules and Nathan did, but participated readily according to the rules of order of classroom life. He thus had to continually mediate a balance between taking risks and being marginalised to an 'out group'. In order to do this Craig needed to develop particular strategies. These involved being able to carefully weigh up the risks associated with participation or non-participation. He needed to make split second decisions about such matters as whether to jeer, call out or laugh at events in the classroom. He thus developed a keen sense of timing and the ability to quickly assess a situation.

As I discussed in Chapter One, a boy takes up a particular subject position on the basis of the relative investment that a position offers him. To reiterate what de Lauretis says

> [W]hat makes one take up a [subject] position in a certain discourse rather than another is an "investment"...something between an emotional commitment and a vested interest, in the relative power (satisfaction,

reward, pay-off) which that position promises (but does not necessarily fulfil) (1987:16).

In order to negotiate the "investment" in different subject positions, Craig had to develop and use a keen awareness of the nuances of the discursive practices of the classroom. As Connell points out, "the 'hidden curriculum' of sexual politics is more powerful than the explicit curriculum" (1989:300). It is skills developed in this context of the "hidden curriculum of sexual politics" which will benefit Craig in his future career as a courtroom lawyer.

In my interviews with Jeff and Michael, and to a lesser extent, Craig, I noted that they reflected on their ideas and opinions in a quiet thoughtful manner. Prior to the interviews, Michael and Jeff had already thought significantly about the issues I discussed with them. They were willing to share their opinions and support them with reasoned discussion. When faced with contradictions in their arguments they were able to listen and incorporate new information into their discussion. Their opinions did show some insight into various social issues. Michael was significantly profeminist in his ideas and Jeff was significantly non-stereotypically male. Craig, as I have already discussed, developed a middle road.

Michael and Jeff, who were constructing non-hegemonic masculinities, had to negotiate a lived curriculum which was significantly implicated in promoting hegemonic masculinity. Interestingly, this process of negotiation, premised on low risk-taking behaviour, enabled Michael and Jeff to develop more prosocial behaviours and understandings of other's views than either Nathan or Jules. In contrast, Nathan and Jules, who 'risked' the public verbal space of the classroom, were unable or unwilling to 'risk' personal disclosures, reasoned discussion or differences of opinions. Moreover, their risk-taking behaviour in the classroom was also evident in their lives outside school. Nathan and Jules were engaged in other risk-taking behaviours such as sports and unsafe sexual practices. Nathan had injured his back while working out at the gym. He also was sexually active and yet did not take responsibility for contraception.

Although there were individual differences, each of the five boys saw himself as a central character actively shaping his own life. In this they were actively and overtly supported by the school structure and curriculum and their homes. Each of the five boys interviewed had a clear idea of what he wanted to do as a future occupation and how he would get there. Each boy was constructing his masculinity around the centrality of further education and a long-term career, not just a 'good job'. Nathan, Michael, Jeff, Jules and Craig were all intending to go to university. Their proposed study plans were directed towards specific vocations. All the boys were pressured by the high expectations which their families and the school placed on them. There was a lot of emphasis in their lives on achieving intellectually and gaining qualifications. The boys accepted this as necessary in order to 'get on' in the world. They acknowledged only indirectly the stress that these expectations caused.

Each boy also anticipated that, within the next twenty years, he would be married, have children, own his own home and be earning well in a good job. Their visions of their future selves very much fitted with hegemonic conceptions of masculinity; heterosexual, family man in paid employment. For these boys, the combining of professional employment with family commitments was not seen as problematic. Indeed, their ideals about their futures significantly mirrored the expectations and assumptions that underlie state discourse. The model of *rational-market-man* upheld by the new right agenda carries with it an underlying assumption of heterosexuality and dependence on a wife to support and nurture him in the private sphere, although this is not acknowledged explicitly. As O'Neill points out, " Market models implicitly assume the legitimacy of this traditionally gendered structure [of the nuclear family]" (1993:65).

In general, the boys were oblivious to the structural influences on their lives and envisaged futures. Of the five boys, Michael was the most insightful and showed evidence of having thought about equity and social issues in a thoughtful way. Michael was also the only one interviewed who described himself as working-class and also lived in a single parent family headed by his mother. What Craig referred to as his "bad imagination" represented a kind of "naive literacy" (Lankshear,1989) which, while not necessarily limiting the mechanical reading and writing ability of these boys, did

seriously limit what they were able and *chose* to *think* and *imagine*. Their lack of 'sociological imagination' (Mills,1959) rendered them unable to make linkages between 'personal troubles' and 'public issues' (ibid). These boys, in their positions of relative privilege and power, were naively literate in the sense that they were unable to understand the link between their own privileged position and the wider historical, sociopolitical context. Moreover, those boys, such as Michael and Jeff, who were investing in non-hegemonic forms of masculinity were unable to see the contradictory ways in which the structures and practices which uphold hegemonic masculinity both constrained and benefitted them.

SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS FROM MY STUDY

My study substantiates much of the previous work on masculinity in schools by Connell *et al* (1982), Askew & Ross (1988), Connell (1989) and Mac an Ghail (1994). As I discussed in Chapter Three, this previous research has shown that there is a "competitive dynamic" constantly being played out amongst boys as they seek to position themselves in ways that enhance their prestige and status within the school according to hegemonic ideas about masculinity. In my study, this competitive dynamic was most evident in the public verbal space of the classroom. It was the boys who dominated this space who controlled the lived culture of the classroom. These boys also invested heavily in hegemonic masculinity. There were clear links between a boy's investment in hegemonic masculinity, his participation in the public verbal space of the classroom, his risk-taking behaviour (both in and out of school), his insight[2] into social issues, and his development of anti- or pro-social behaviours.

In the single-sex school, in which I carried out my study, the relations of class and ethnicity are also salient. The school structure, streaming practices, subject hierarchy, subject choice and even the pictures on the walls, all promoted and upheld hegemonic versions of masculinity concomitant with white ethnicity and ruling-class boys' interests.

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[2] See (1).

My study showed that, in a single-sex boys school, a particular version of masculinity is constructed and sustained through the secondary school curriculum. This version of masculinity is presently hegemonic in New Zealand society. It incorporates characteristics, such as competitiveness, individualism, rationality, dominance, confidence, strength, and courage which are some of the characteristics selected by the boys to describe men (Table 5.4) Moreover, this hegemonic masculinity is currently embodied in the concept of *rational-market-man*. In my study, it was the fifth form boys (Nathan and Jules), who invested most in this version of masculinity, whose interests dominated the lived curriculum. Those boys who wanted to invest in other (non-hegemonic) versions of masculinity thus had to negotiate the contradictions in a curriculum that upheld their white ethnicity and ruling class interests and yet denigrated their gender interests in constructing their sense of self. The knowledge constructs that these boys subsequently developed about masculinity and gender relations were necessarily contradictory and conflicting. White ethnicity and ruling class interests are embodied in hegemonic masculinity and yet non-hegemonic masculinities are marginalised. Yet, as Connell makes clear

> The collective project of oppression is materialized not only in individual
> actions but in the building up, sustaining and defence of an institutional
> order that generates inequalities impersonally (1987:215).

Gendered power relations are sustained not only by Nathan's private, sexually abusive comments about the female english teacher (p188), nor simply in his denigration of Sarah for getting pregnant, it is also sustained by Craig's and Jules' beliefs that it's "up to the individual to change" (p198) "It's up to that person in particular what they want to do" (p199), and by Michael's "competitive achievement" ethic, and Jeff's continuing belief in the male/female dualism. These beliefs and attitudes are, however, enmeshed in other discourses and are a constitutive part of the institutionalised collective practices evident at 'Boys High" . These practices include streaming, which sorts the intellectual achievers into a class of their own, thus isolating them from other social contexts. These boys are then continually told that they are boys with "ability" and an "elite group" (p181). These structures and practices continually serve to position the boys as central, choosing agents who, through ability and effort, will gain social power

concomitant with a middle/upper class, white ethnicity and hegemonic masculinity subject positioning.

In spite of the contradictions, alienation and 'symbolic violence' inherent in the structures and practices at 'Boys High', the five boys whom I interviewed, all envisaged futures that were in line with the 'stories' they had been told about themselves and which they had constructed as their own. Those boys investing in a hegemonic masculinity were validated and affirmed in their investment. Those boys who sought other versions of masculinity still, through their social class, white ethnicity, and sex positioning, benefitted from upholding hegemonic masculinity as a collective practice.

Two findings from my study have particular implications for strategies for change. First, limited opportunities were afforded by the secondary school curriculum for the boys to develop critical reflexive skills. As I mentioned earlier, the boys were unable to put themselves in the wider social picture. They ,in effect, gained an education founded on what Macedo calls "literacy for stupidification" and taught through the "pedagogy of big lies" (1993). Second, those boys whose sense of self is in conflict with hegemonic masculinity experience little support for their different ways of being in the world. The tensions, conflicts, contradictions and complexities that arise from these issues as each boy constructs his sense of self suggests potential for change. In the next and final chapter I discuss the implications of my study for change and propose strategies which could be used specifically for the boys in my own study.

Chapter Seven

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE:
DEVELOPING CRITICAL GENDER AWARENESS

> ...taking a cool look around the political scenery of the industrial
> capitalist world, we must conclude that the project of transforming
> masculinity has almost no political weight at all - no leverage on public
> policy, no organizational resources, no popular base and no presence in
> mass culture (Connell,1995:241).

In this chapter I propose specific classroom and school based strategies aimed at
"transforming masculinity". These, however, have been formulated to take account
of a political climate in which millions of dollars have been spent on curriculum change
yet the salience of gender in our economic and social worlds has been ignored. In spite
of the Ministry of Education's promises of a 'gender-inclusive' curriculum and that this
would also focus on boys (Cochrane, cited in Rivers, 1993) and in spite of the social
and economic consequences of dominant versions of masculinity which are evidenced
in the "disturbing social trends" identified in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*
(Ministry of Education, 1993) nothing has been done. As my own study clearly shows,
masculinities are problematic. The secondary school curriculum is actively involved in
producing and reproducing particular hegemonic versions of masculinity which are class
and race specific and which are constitutive of wider social structures and practices and
are significantly implicated in social problems.

In the first part of this chapter I discuss recent curriculum changes and what a 'gender-
inclusive' curriculum might mean. I move on to propose a rationale for gender-inclusive
strategies focusing on boys . I then discuss specific change strategies under three
critical pedagogical principles which I have drawn from Shor's (1992) work on
transforming curriculum. Although Shor's emphasis, like much of the critical
scholarship, is on empowering 'failing' students, the same principles could also be
applied to achieving students. I do not propose a comprehensive framework or
blueprint for a gender-inclusive curriculum. The aim of my strategies is to encourage
the boys to develop critical reflexive skills and foster a 'sociological imagination'
(Mills,1959) and 'critical gender awareness'[1].

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[1] I have adapted this term from "Critical Language Awareness" as proposed by Clark *et al* (1990 &
1991).

CURRICULUM CHANGES

As Densem and Leahy state, "Notions of 'equality' and 'equality of opportunity' are well accepted democratic values of our society" (1993:3). To date, gender issues in educational provision have been embedded in equal opportunity discourse. As I have already discussed, this has focused on 'sex-role stereotypes' and 'girls' as the problems. Underlying this focus is the assumption that the achievement of equality with boys is desirable and the central goal. In other words, in order for girls to get on they simply need to be more like boys. However, as I discussed in the introductory chapter, the gender patterns in the statistical profiles of the "disturbing social trends" indicate some clear problems with contemporary versions of masculinity. Is this really what we want girls to be equal to?

Furthermore, my discussion in Chapter Three showed that achieving academically within an androcentric, eurocentric curriculum means that girls also 'achieve' a world view in which the subordination of women is 'normal'. As Alton-Lee and Densem make clear

> In effect they gain an education that not only undervalues their gender
> but also secures their participation in constructing and maintaining
> patriarchy (1992:209).

The boys in my study were representative of the white middle- class males that the androcentric, eurocentric curriculum has been shown to serve so well. Yet, along with their school achievement, the boys in my study, like the achieving girls to whom Alton-Lee and Densem refer, also achieve a world view in which their participation in constructing and maintaining patriarchy is taken-for-granted as 'normal'. And yet, for the boys in my study, this process is not quite as simplistic, straightforward or benign as it seems.

My study demonstrated that gendered power relations are a real problem, *in a single-sex boys school*. Those boys who tried to renegotiate the discourses of gender, were 'policed' by other boys who actively worked at upholding a particular hegemonic masculinity. This version of masculinity incorporated many of the characteristics which contribute to risk-taking behaviour such as that which I discussed in the introductory chapter. It is also the version of masculinity that is much valued in the competitive business market where some of these boys will go[2]. Most importantly, it is a hegemonic

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[2] White collar crime is the extreme expression of this version of masculinity.

masculinity constructed around male dominance and female subordination. *This is where the focus for curriculum change regarding gender should be.*

As defined in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*, a gender-inclusive curriculum is simply another way of framing an equal opportunity programme focusing on girls. It takes for granted the binary opposition of 'male' and 'female' and aims to cater for the girls' 'femaleness' equally with the boys' 'maleness'. Equal opportunity discourse has nothing to contribute to a programme focused on boys, especially the boys in my own study.

For the purposes of formulating gender-inclusive strategies which move beyond the male/female dualism and which would include a focus on boys, I have found Kenway and Modra's discussion of a gender -inclusive curriculum useful. They state that

> curricula should include and value the range and experiences of girls and women, while at the same time recognising that the definitions of masculinity and femininity which are formed and promoted in school curricula should encompass a wide range of possibilities which make girls and boys not only "equally human" (Blackburn,1982) but equally free in the public and the private sphere (1992:142).

However, gender is a relational concept. It is refers to power relations between males and females. These are not simply personal expressions. Although gender is subjectively experienced, it is also negotiated through the parameters of social class and ethnicity. In addition, gender is constitutive of social and economic structures and practices. Gender is about gendered power relations. This needs to be made explicit. If gender is to be taken seriously in curriculum changes (and there is nothing, apart from political rhetoric, to indicate that it will be) a 'gender-inclusive' curriculum should really be termed a 'gendered power relations-inclusive' curriculum. This is the understanding I used in formulating my strategies for change.

A 'gendered power relations--inclusive' curriculum must enable students of both sexes to view themselves as both shaped by and shapers of predominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity. One of the main findings from my own study was that these high achieving fifth form boys had limited critical awareness and had developed what Lankshear calls a "naïve literacy" (1989). That is they were unable to make linkages between their own raced, classed and gendered social positioning and the wider historical, sociopolitical context. Therefore, my formulation of gender-inclusive strategies offers an inclusive vision of human experience based on critical inquiry into

oneself and the social context and the development of a "sociological imagination" (Mills, 1959) and a "critical gender awareness". It is founded significantly on Gramsci's argument that "Consciousness of being part of a particular hegemonic force...is the first stage towards a further progressive self-consciousness"...(1971:333). The boys from my study would therefore be encouraged to develop an understanding of the present as a result of struggles in the past. They would also be encouraged to view themselves as being both shaped by history and shapers of history, that is, they would be encouraged to develop a historical consciousness.

The strategies I suggest in this chapter are based on my understanding of potential interventions as being limited by the structural and practical constraints that I have discussed throughout this thesis. These include a lack of commitment from the state, limited recognition from teachers in single-sex boys' schools of the need for interventions, limited skills that teachers have for undertaking interventions, limited support from the school administration and school community in general, and resistance from the boys concerned, especially those boys who are investing in a hegemonic masculinity. These constraints give strong messages to the boys about the importance of gender. Nevertheless, my study has shown that there are spaces from which interventions can be initiated. Most of the boys in my study, particularly those I interviewed, were not opposed to the idea of equality for women. Their questionnaire responses and their comments in the interviews showed that many supported it. Their difficulty, as Kessler *et al* (1985) found in their study, was seeing how it related to them in practice. Therefore developing a rationale for change is an important beginning.

RATIONALE FOR CHANGE

As I discussed in Chapter Three, Connell (1989) identifies two problems concerning curriculum development focusing on boys. First of all there has to be an appropriate rationale. Second, change strategies need to foster a sense of agency rather than a sense of hopelessness or guilt. My study has highlighted three key areas which could be used as a rationale for change focusing on boys.

The development of critical awareness and self-reflexive skills will enhance the boys' performance in their future personal and professional lives.

The boys in my study, despite their intellectual ability, lacked critical awareness of the social and material conditions of their own lives. They believed everyone had the same

opportunities as they had, and it was up to the individual how they used the opportunities. By developing critical reflexive skills, the boys would learn to view their immediate situation as part of a wider social picture. The ability to take a wide view would encourage innovative and creative solutions to future issues in both their personal and professional lives. It could be argued that in today's competitive, enterprise-focused labour market it is just these sort of skills which give a competitive edge.

Energy going into upholding regimes of gender detracts from the energy available for learning.

In the classroom in my study considerable time and energy was directed towards the policing of gender relations by both the teachers and the students. Interactions in the public verbal space of the classroom were necessarily laboured, calculated and cautious. Some boys were actively involved in ensuring that other boys conformed to behaviour patterns commensurate with a particular version of masculinity. This 'policing' restricted other boys' willingness to interact in the public verbal space of the classroom. All boys were constantly negotiating the personal risks involved in participating in the public verbal space of the classroom. This limited the freedom with which any particular boy could express ideas, voice opinions, offer suggestions, communicate ideas, articulate theories, discuss viewpoints, verbalise beliefs, share thoughts, make guesses, practice persuasion, and articulate feelings. While the intensive work of policing masculinity is going on, other learning is inhibited. This is an area that could be strategically worked on by teachers.

The influence of feminism means that the boys must learn new ways of relating to women.

Feminist politics over the previous three decades have facilitated the entry of white, middle class women into careers in the public sphere. It is these women, in the same social class and ethnic group as the boys, who have been noticeably advantaged and influenced by feminism. This is the group of women with whom these boys will be interacting in both the private and public spheres. These women will have very different expectations of careers and marriage than their own mothers. Unlike their fathers, the boys will not be able to rely on traditional conceptions of masculinity and femininity to legitimate their male power. They must learn new ways of thinking about and interacting with women. Failure to do so will have significant consequences in both their personal and professional lives.

CRITICAL PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

My experience of teaching in cultural safety in nursing and midwifery degree programmes, where the curricula are explicitly founded on critical social theory, and my experience of reading the theorising of the transformatory curriculum, critical literacy and critical pedagogy[3] have significantly informed the strategies I suggest in this chapter. I have drawn on Shor's (1992) work on the transformatory curriculum and have located my proposed strategies under three of his pedagogical principles. My strategies have been specifically designed to be part of a gradual process of change. However, change does not necessarily occur in a predictable, linear fashion. Although, I have classified particular strategies under broad headings, the strategies suggested could be used in a number of possible combinations.

Critical pedagogy is "situated in the conditions and cultures of the students so that their language, themes, understandings, levels of development and needs are the starting points (ibid:88)".

Knowing the Boys.

These strategies have been formulated for curriculum change quite specifically in relation to the group of fifth form boys who participated in my study. These boys were a high achieving accelerant fifth form class in an urban single-sex school. Working effectively with a group of boys requires a knowledge of the specific strengths and constraints that a group bring with them. In my study, the fifth form boys had above average intellectual ability, were highly motivated to achieve, keen to learn, and had an abiding interest in any topic related to sex, gender, or females. Boys at this level of intellectual ability are extremely interested in discussing many sides of complex issues. Moreover, as my curriculum analysis showed, they are particularly interested in anything of a sexual nature. Gender relations would be an excellent topic on its own. They were, however, constrained in significant ways. There was an obvious reluctance to express feelings in the public verbal space of the classroom. This was so for those boys who were investing in hegemonic masculinity (and who thus dominated the public verbal space of the classroom) and also for those boys who were investing in non-hegemonic masculinity (for whom the public verbal space of the classroom carried the risk of public ridicule and marginalisation). The diversity of masculinities meant that some boys were more interested and receptive than others to serious discussions on gender relations.

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[3] For example, Schuster & Van Dyne (1984); Freire & Macedo(1987); Alton-Lee & Densem(1992); and Shor(1992).

"[C]ritical consciousness of self, received knowledge, and society is a goal, in a learning experience which questions the status quo" (ibid:87).

Identifying Gender

One of the major drawbacks to change within schools is that often a problem is unrecognised as such. Many teachers and schools, especially in today's competitive environment, do not want to acknowledge or are simply unaware that gendered power relations are a problem (Watson,1988; Connell,1989; Middleton,1990). Indeed, this denial is particularly evident in single-sex boys' schools where the relative invisibility of women, certainly of female students, means that gender is simply not recognised as a problem (Askew & Ross,1988). Additionally, both men and women teachers have achieved well within an androcentric, eurocentric curriculum and usually live within the bounds of traditional gender assumptions. They have inculcated many of the values in such a system. Achievement necessitates upholding some of the assumptions inherent in a patriarchal society (Alton-Lee & Densem,1992).

Identifying Gender is a strategy of illuminating gender as an issue and uncovering the ways in which teachers, students and the school, itself, contribute to gendered power relations. Connell (1989) maintains that it is the 'hidden curriculum' in sexual politics which is more influential than the explicit curriculum. What a school is prepared to acknowledge under 'equal opportunity' is less important than that which stays unacknowledged. As Connell states

> A change of awareness, a bringing-to-light, must happen before the full
> spectrum of the school's influence can even be debated (1989:300).

Identifying Gender as a strategy is designed to 'bring to the light' the assumptions, practices and structures that uphold gendered power relations. Part of this process is becoming informed about other gender programmes in schools that could be used to facilitate change[4]. Teaching and learning must be continually reassessed in light of current research on gender and education. As Alton-Lee and Nuthall (1989) discovered, what *appears* to be going on in the classroom, and what the teacher *intends* to happen, is not necessarily the same. Within this overall strategy, I have identified two specific areas from which to initiate change. I have called these areas 'fact finding', and 'teacher self-awareness'.

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[4] Many and varied gender programmes have already been proposed and/or used internationally and nationally, for example, Sadker & Sadker(1982), Schuster & Van Dyne(1984), Klein(1985), New Zealand Department of Education(1989), Taylor(1989), ACT Department of Education(1990), Alton-Lee & Densem(1992), Davies(1993b), Martino(1995), Gender Equity Taskforce(1996).

Fact Finding.

This first stage involves an initial fact-finding exercise to identify gendered power relations. Fact finding could be used by teachers to encourage other teachers to recognise gender as a problem. It could be used by teachers to encourage the boys to view gender as having some relevance to their lives. Sometimes simple and dramatic facts are effective in highlighting gender as an issue. For example, evidence of the gendered human mentions in the public verbal space of the classroom is not difficult to discover, as my NUD.IST analysis of the curriculum showed. An analysis of language (he/she) and the contexts in which males and females are portrayed can also alert teachers and students to the gendered nature of curriculum content.

More detailed information could be gained through the use of the same questionnaires that I used in my study. Questionnaire Two, which highlighted the contradictory beliefs that the boys had about gender relations in New Zealand, could be used as a basis for small group discussions about gender relations, either among the boys themselves or among teachers. Many of the boys in my study were unaware of how their responses contradicted each other. Those that I interviewed were generally able to recognise the contradictions and some welcomed the opportunity to discuss them. Similarly, Questionnaires Three and Four could be used as a basis for discussion about gender stereotypes and the concept of multiple masculinities.

Teacher Self-Awareness.

Teachers working for change need an understanding of their own gendered sense of self and the ways in which it has helped or hindered their inculcation into a professional occupation. We must learn to recognise, and critically reflect on, the assumptions, attitudes and values that underpin our own teaching practices. In what ways might our own teaching practices serve to uphold particular gendered power relations and particular versions of masculinity. Teachers could examine schools, classrooms and curricular material for the hidden assumptions/messages about gender that are given, for example, the posters on walls. What about using posters that portray women in positive, active ways and men in ways more usually associated with women? If one of the aims of the New Zealand Curriculum is to relate learning to the wider world (Ministry of Education,1993:7), what taken-for-granted assumptions do teachers as educators hold regarding appropriate futures for boys or for girls, and how is this further influenced by a boy or girl's social class or ethnic grouping? Becoming critically self-aware would give teachers the opportunity to explore approaches to teaching that work towards alleviating 'symbolic violence' (Bourdieu,1991) in the classroom.

Critical Self-reflection

Data from Alton-Lee and Nuthall's (1991) research provides compelling evidence that students construct views of reality within the material and cultural contexts of their lives. In accordance with a constructivist view of learning, a boy must begin with his existing conceptions and experiences. Students learn by building on their existing knowledge base, therefore deconstructing one's gendered sense of self is a necessary prerequisite to presenting new images and possibilities about gender. This knowledge can then be built on in order to understand the diversity and multiplicity of gendered subjectivities.

Critical self-reflection is systematically denied in hegemonic masculinity. This was most evident to me in my interviews with Jules and Nathan, neither of whom was able to reflect, even when prompted, on their own social and material practices. This strategy aims to facilitate a critical inquiry into oneself in order to develop understanding of the material reality of one's own life, especially the class, race, and gender assumptions underlying everyday practices. Here an opportunity is available for boys to study their own families' social situatedness and place it in a context of wider social relations, particularly race, class and gender structures. This is an 'across the curriculum' strategy which could be undertaken in economics, history, geography, mathematics, english, physical education, and so on. Cross-cultural analyses are an essential part of this strategy. As Grant and Sleeter (1985) have demonstrated attending to race, class and gender as separate issues leads to an oversimplification of equity issues and may perpetuate bias. This strategy makes explicit a boy's class, gender and ethnic grouping as one of many rather than the only one.

Teachers could exploit the gaps and contradictions that are inherent in discursive practices, for example, use questioning as a strategy that shifts the focus to student behaviour. "Why are you laughing?, as a response to the boys' laughter when Ms Mathews stated that women were second-class citizens in Shakespeare's time, "not like today". Being critically self conscious would enable a boy to develop a critical awareness of received school knowledge which in turn would lead into developing a critical awareness of society. The development of this critical consciousness is a prerequisite to questioning the status quo.

Critical pedagogy aims "for democratic social change and cultural diversity in school and society; against regressive ideologies like racism and sexism, which are challenged in ways appropriate to the age of the students, the subject matter, and the political climate at the institution and in the community (ibid: 87)."

Policy Development

Given the current political climate with its emphasis on the marketisation of education and the ways in which white, ruling class boys and men materially benefit from this structure, it is improbable that a school, such as 'Boys High' would want to put any time or effort into consulting with the community or developing a gender-inclusive school policy. However, "Identifying Gender" may have illuminated some gender issues, such as male violence, which the school may want to address. Additionally, the move towards change could be instigated by an informed group of teachers or students. *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* makes reference to schools designing their own programmes to meet the learning needs of their students. Contracts have been let for School Based Curriculum Development facilitation and support. These avenues could be drawn on to assist teachers concerned with change.

A 'Gender Policy Across the Curriculum' could emulate the ways in which 'Language Policy Across the Curriculum' (Marland,1977; Maybin,1985; Newman, 1988; McPherson & Corson, 1989; Corson,1990) has been organised. Policy-making at school level would be a means to engage teachers, students and the community with addressing gender problems at the school. It would outline what these problems are and how the school could address them. Developing and implementing a gender policy across the curriculum would require a big commitment on the part of a school. It would mean establishing community consultation procedures, democratic decision-making processes, and rethinking current practices. It would involve radical departures from 'commonsense' ideas about gender and schooling. It would require critically examining gendered assumptions and attitudes that underpin current structures and processes within the school. It would require an understanding of the different ways in which boys *experience* the curriculum, and the influence of social class and ethnic grouping on this. It would need to take cognisance of the different ways in which students learn and that what they appear to be learning is not necessarily what they are learning. Most significantly, a 'Gender Policy Across the Curriculum' would recognise the asymmetry of gendered power relations in society and seek to interrupt this imbalance.

Including Diversity and Multiplicity

This is the strategy in which experiences of girls and women and non-hegemonic boys and men are included in curriculum. This could be as basic as avoiding gender neutral terms which are likely to be perceived as being about men only, and explicitly stating 'men and women' rather than 'people'. In mathematics this could entail using girls as well as boys (the students) in mathematical examples, or relating the objective to the subjective in ways that both offer and support multiple subject positions for the boys.

Teachers could challenge stereotypical conceptions of gender through the use of specific topics. For example using curricular resources which present males and females in non-stereotypical ways. Ms Mathews use of *Alex* as a novel to study is one example. For those boys it was the first time they had been presented with information about girls and women that differed from stereotypes. This created an increased awareness of gender stereotyping and its implications for women.

Similarly, Martino (1995) uses textual analysis of a particular short story in order to deconstruct dominant discourses and assumptions about what it means to be a man, thus opening up the possibility for boys to feel safe in positioning themselves in non-hegemonic ways. Martino maintains that such a strategy opens up counter-hegemonic spaces which challenge the male/female dualism thus constituting new discursive spaces to allow for other identities for women and men to be constructed and affirmed.

Inclusion of groups, previously invisible or marginalised, confronts a world view that many boys take for granted as normal and 'common-sense'. Tensions are created when women are mentioned as autonomous individuals rather than in relation to men. Difficulties may also arise when focusing on some 'notable' member of another group. This could lead the boys to further undervalue the status of those who are not so 'notable'. Nairn points out that

> It is important that women-focused content presents women as agents in
> their worlds, who make decisions; if it does not do this, it feeds the
> myth that all women passively accept their 'fate' of powerlessness
> (Nairn, 1994:142).

This strategy challenges the hegemony of the unitary nature of stereotypical conceptions of masculinity and femininity. This may result in various forms of resistance. The content may be perceived as trivial and a waste of time leading perhaps to further denigration of girls and women and subordinated masculinities. This resistance has been

analysed by Schuster and Van Dyne (1984) as arising from a residual fear of loss of subject matter and methodology without a compensating gain. This is exemplified in the drama teacher's speech about the benefits of drama where he allays the boys' concern that taking drama will mitigate against high grades or result in loss of masculinity. Teachers could provide opportunities for all boys to participate in activities and learning situations which are more usually associated with girls, for example, personal expression, cooperative learning situations, group projects, and joint presentations.

The boys in my study may be particularly resistant to the challenges of this strategy. They have been educated in and enjoyed significant benefits attached to the 'hegemonic curriculum'. Their families also enjoy the benefits of particular hegemonic arrangements. These high achieving boys, despite the diversity of masculinities that they are constructing, also stand to gain clear benefits from hegemonic masculinity. As Carrigan *et al* (1985) suggest, breaking out of gender "roles" is much more than a matter of breaking with conventional thinking; it threatens interconnected structures of power that ultimately can affect men and women everywhere.

However, the boys' ability to grasp complex ideas and their intense interest in matters associated with sexuality are positive aspects that could be drawn on to alleviate resistance. Some boys were especially interested in discussing gender issues and were also interested in 'being fair'. Teachers could seize opportunities so that instead of answering the question "but what about women?", ask the boys themselves to answer. "Well, what about women?" This could open the way to the boys, themselves, discussing the positioning of women in both Shakespearean times and contemporary society. Additionally, such questions could be built into the lesson plan. Teachers could also aim to create a non-threatening classroom environment, based on mutuality and cooperation, in which all students feel able to participate publicly. Practices such as 'turn-taking' could be explicitly introduced so that all boys participate in the public verbal space of the classroom. The over-participation by boys like Nathan and Jules could be exposed for what it is and explicitly limited.

Critical Gender Awareness

The aim of this strategy is to uncover the ideologies which underpin and uphold gendered power relations and the salience of class and ethnicity in these relations. This strategy provides the opportunity for the boys to critically understand the positioning of various social groups, the structural relations of capitalism, colonisation, and patriarchy, and the ways in which stereotypical ideas about men and women have arisen

historically to serve particular interest groups. It is also an opportunity to provide real knowledge about how New Zealand's socio-political and economic systems work and the ways in which gender divisions are an integral part of it. What happens, for instance, to the media view of married women in the labour market when there is high unemployment amongst school leavers? Where do their own mothers fit in? What is the concept of 'equal pay' about? Who is the 'community' to which hospital patients are discharged for care? What do the Accident Compensation Corporation statistics (footnoted in my introductory chapter) tell us about gender in our society? What do newspaper and television advertisements tell us is appropriate for men and women? What are the social consequences of privatisation of state assets, for example Telecom? What is the difference between the Right and the Left in political terms? What assumptions about men and women are policies based on? In what ways has technology produced and reproduced gender divisions? Where are men positioned advertising in the media? To what are the advertisers appealing? These are some of the many questions which would provide useful knowledge to students while at the same time enabling them to understand some of the 'public issues' which influence their own lives.

This strategy is an 'across the curriculum' approach which would highlight gender relations as in issue in all core subjects rather than being subsumed within 'Health Education' or 'Social Studies'. For example, brewing beer may be one way to study the fermentation process within the science curriculum, yet the subject of beer could also be explored in relation to "Who drinks beer?", "Why do they drink beer?", What are the effects of beer drinking?", "What are the costs of beer drinking?", "Who pays?", "How does the media portray beer?", "What is the media saying about brewing beer in science lessons?". Similar questions could be asked in relation to sport, economics, technology, drama, foreign languages, and so on. Teachers could highlight the underlying gender assumptions at classroom and school level whenever the opportunity arises. Why, for instance, was it necessary for Mr Dixon to 'market' drama to these boys? Why was physical education compulsory at sixth form level? Critical gender awareness would thus become an integral part of the *overt* curriculum. It would be used as a basis to "bring to the light" the gendered assumptions which have historically been an integral part of the hidden curriculum. This strategy exposes and questions the hegemony of gendered power relations at every opportunity and in every subject area.

Evaluating the Strategies

Gendered power relations are structural relations. They are a constitutive part of new Zealand's capitalist mode of production, our particular race and ethnic divisions and our 'gendered culture'. Schools do not simply reflect these structural relations. They also contribute to the production and reproduction of these relations. This they do relatively well. However, schools are also sites from which change can be organised and implemented. The strategies which I suggest here represent a small part of the process of change. Within the context of our present educational structure they are revolutionary strategies. Change, however, is a largely an evolutionary process. How then could teachers evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies presented here?

Traditional evaluation methods will simply not do, embedded as they are in the very power relations we seek to change. The effectiveness of learning must be reflected in changed practices. In my study the most obvious classroom practices that were in need of change were the use of the public verbal space of the classroom and the 'policing' practices such as ridicule and jeering. The most obvious school practices were the subject choices available to the boys in the sixth form, with physical education being compulsory and drama optional. The most obvious teaching practices were the choice of texts used in the english classroom, the absence of human mentions in the mathematics classroom and the assumed neutrality and impersonal objectivity of these practices. The effectiveness, or otherwise, of my proposed strategies could thus be evaluated according to the extent to which these practices are changed.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have formulated specific teaching strategies aimed at fostering critical self-reflexive skills, a 'sociological imagination' and a 'critical gender awareness'. These strategies have originated from my own study with high achieving fifth form boys in a single-sex school. They are therefore quite specific strategies and provide neither a comprehensive framework nor a blueprint for a gender-inclusive curriculum. These strategies are based, however, on an awareness that many teachers, male and female, may want to work towards change but are relatively unsupported in this. Consequently, teachers can choose from these suggested strategies according to their own self-awareness and the particular structural constraints experienced within their own schools. I recommend evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies according to the extent to which they bring about change in classroom, school and teaching practices.

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION

> ...definitions of masculinity are deeply enmeshed in the history of institutions and of economic structures. Masculinity is not just an idea in the head, or a personal identity. It is also extended in the world, merged in organised social relations (Connell,1995:29).

This study has problematised masculinities. It has demonstrated the multiplicity and diversity of fifth form boys' sense of self, even as it is constructed within the bounds of a hegemonic masculinity, white ethnicity and class privilege. In particular, I have demonstrated how masculinities were discursively constructed through the secondary school curriculum. It was in the everyday discursive practices in the classroom that multiple and diverse discourses of masculinity vied for hegemonic status as the boys negotiated the messages about 'being a man' with which the school, society and their families presented them. The discursive practices in the english classroom served to bring a socially and historically contingent hegemonic masculinity into material reality.

Hegemonic masculinities are an embodiment of male power. They are centrally constructed around men's domination and women's subordination and are produced and reproduced in and by all the social structures and practices which celebrate and acclaim them (Connell,1995). My study showed that a particular hegemonic masculinity was institutionalised in educational policy, school structures and practices, and curriculum content. It was enforced by 'symbolic violence', ridicule and marginalisation in the daily lives of boys in a single-sex school. It was a heterosexual masculinity characterised by dominating talk, refusing to listen to others, physical prowess on the sportsfield, ongoing competitive displays, and denigration of those who do not invest in this version of masculinity (This includes girls and women and boys and men who invest in other versions of masculinity). In my study these features were most obvious in the use of the public verbal space of the classroom. It was here that significant

'policing' of masculinities was undertaken by some boys who were investing in this hegemonic masculinity.

The construction of a male sense of self and the taking up of a particular masculine subject position is, however, not simply an individual project nor a straightforward process. The high achieving boys in my study were being actively invited through the secondary school curriculum to invest in a hegemonic masculinity which promised clear material benefits to all the boys. However, some boys wanted to negotiate and reconstruct that discourse of masculinity. They sought to invest in versions of masculinity which could incorporate more sensitive, creative and caring characteristics, while at the same time holding onto the aspects of the hegemonic masculinity from which they materially benefitted. Unfortunately, these boys, received little, or no, support for their alternative ways of being in the world. On the contrary, they were frequently marginalised and alienated. Their sense of self was therefore privatised and protected.

The heavy investment by the school and some boys in this hegemonic masculinity, and the structures and processes that regulated it, restricted the potential of all the boys, most especially those boys who wanted to renegotiate the discourse of hegemonic masculinity. The secondary school curriculum did not provide the opportunity for these boys to learn the cognitive skills necessary to develop a critical gender awareness. They were thus unable to critically reflect on their own sense of self and the structures and practices that helped construct it. Nevertheless, the tensions and contradictions that each boy had to negotiate in constructing his sense of self opened up potential spaces from which transformatory action could be initiated. It is these spaces that teachers and students must draw on in order to work towards changing the socially destructive nature of our gendered culture.

These tensions and contradictions are actually part of an ongoing, complex interplay between the discourses of the family, the school, the labour market and the state. The construction of a male sense of self, and the school's involvement in it, must be understood as part of the wider social and historical context in which the school is enmeshed. The school is constituted by, and also helps constitute, this wider social context. Research into masculinity in this country must recognise the gendered power relations that underpin the structure and practices of our gendered culture.

Appendix A

INFORMATION SHEET FOR STUDENTS

Who is the researcher?   Marilyn Stephens is carrying out this research as part of the requirements for her postgraduate study at Massey University.   Her work is supervised by experienced university lecturers, Anne-Marie O'Neill and Judith Loveridge.

Where can she be contacted?   Marilyn can be contacted at Massey University by phoning 3569099   ext.7363, or by writing to her at the Education Faculty, Massey University.

What is the study about?   The study has been designed to find out more about the way adolescent boys learn at school. In particular the study tries to find out how the knowledge about people that is presented in the classroom might influence the way in which you learn about yourself. The specific aims are:

1. To find out how adolescent boys describe themselves and New Zealand men.

2. To find out what ideas adolescent boys have about men and women in New Zealand society.

3. To find out how people, both men and women, are portrayed within the classroom.

4. To look at these findings and the ways in which the boys might develop their understanding of themselves.

5. To link these ideas with some of the ideas about economic and social changes that are mentioned in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework*.

What are you being asked to do? There will be four questionnaires which you will be asked to fill out. These have been described for you when I spoke to you in class. The first questionnaire asks for basic information about the people living in the your household. For example the numbers, ages and work of males and females. The second questionnaire relates to ideas that you have about men and women. Some of these questions deal with issues of sexuality. It is your opinion that I am interested in. There are no right or wrong answers and I am not wanting to influence your opinion in any

way. The third questionnaire asks you to select adjectives that describe yourself. The fourth questionnaire asks you to choose adjectives that describe men. Each questionnaire has instructions with it.

There will also be recordings taken during two English and two Maths lessons. At these times you will be asked to wear an individual microphone around your neck. You will be able to turn the microphone off at any time should you wish to say something that you don't want recorded. There will also be a microphone in the classroom which will record all the public classroom discussions and I will be sitting in the classroom observing and taking notes of what I sees and hear.

During the classroom lessons you and the teacher will be expected to carry on your work as you would normally when no recordings are being done.

How much time will be involved? The Informed Consent session, in which the research is discussed with the participants, will take approximately 40 minutes. You have already participated in this. The questionnaires will take approximately one hour to complete. There is limited writing involved as the questionnaires have been designed to be answered easily. The classroom recording sessions will not take up much of your time. There will be a few minutes at the beginning and end of each lesson when the microphones will need to be handed out and returned. If you wish to discuss the research with me after it has been completed you will probably need an hour.

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:
* refuse to answer any particular question
* ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation
* Provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential to the researcher. All information is collected anonymously, and it will not be possible to identify you in any reports that are prepared from the study
* be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS

Who is the researcher?   Marilyn Stephens is carrying out this research as part of the requirements for her postgraduate study at Massey University.   Her work is supervised by experienced university lecturers, Anne-Marie O'Neill and Judith Loveridge.

Where can she be contacted?   You can contact Marilyn at Massey University by phoning 3569099 ext.7363, or by writing to her at the Education Faculty, Massey University.

What is the study about?   The study has been designed to find out more about the way adolescent boys learn at school. In particular the study tries to find out how the knowledge about people that is presented in the classroom might influence the way in which adolescent boys learn about themselves. The specific aims are:

1. To find out how adolescent boys describe themselves and New Zealand men.

2. To find out what ideas adolescent boys have about men and women in New Zealand society.

3. To find out how people, both men and women, are portrayed within the classroom.

4. To look at these findings and the ways in which adolescent boys might develop their understanding of themselves.

5. To link these ideas with some of the ideas about economic and social changes that are mentioned in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework.*

What will the participants have to do?   There will be four questionnaires which they will be asked to fill out. The first questionnaire asks for basic information about the people living in the student's household. For example the numbers, ages and work of males and females. The second questionnaire relates to ideas that the students have about men and women. Some of these questions deal with issues of sexuality. It is the students opinions that are of interest. There are no right or wrong answers and there is no intention to influence their opinions in any way. The third questionnaire asks the students to select adjectives that describe themselves. The fourth questionnaire asks the

students to choose adjectives that describe men. These questionnaires have been described to the boys when Marilyn spoke to them in class.

There will also be recordings taken during two English and two Maths lessons. At these times the students will be asked to wear individual microphones around their necks. They will be able to turn the microphones off at any time should they wish to say something that they don't want recorded. There will also be a microphone in the classroom which will record all the public classroom discussions and Marilyn will be sitting in the classroom observing and taking notes. During the classroom lessons the students and the teacher will be expected to carry on their work as they would normally when no recordings are being done.

How much time will be involved?   The Informed Consent session, in which the research is discussed with the participants, will take approximately 40 minutes. The boys have already been involved in this. The questionnaires will take approximately one hour to complete. There is limited writing involved as the questionnaires have been designed to be answered easily. The classroom recording sessions will not take up much of the participants time. There will be a few minutes at the beginning and end of each lesson when the microphones will need to be handed out and returned.   Those participants who wish to discuss the research with Marilyn after it has been completed will probably need an hour.

If your son takes part in the study, he has the right to:
* refuse to answer any particular question
* ask any further questions about the study that occurs to him during his participation
* Provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential to the researcher.   All information is collected anonymously, and it will not be possible to identify your son in any reports that are prepared from the study
* be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION
Male Students' Sense of Self and the Secondary School Curriculum
Student Consent Form

This study has the approval of Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to decline to answer any particular question in the study. I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that it is completely confidential.

I agree to participate in the following stages of this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. (Please circle the letters next to the areas in which you are prepared to participate.)

A. I agree to participate in filling out the four questionnaires. I understand that it is my opinion that is important and that there will be no attempt made to influence my opinion in any way.

B. I agree to be in the classroom while observations and recordings are carried out.

C. I agree to wear an individual microphone during four periods of classroom instruction. I understand that not all microphones are 'live' but they should be treated as 'live' at all times. I also understand that I can turn the microphone off at any time when I don't want something I say to be recorded.

D. I agree to participate in all stages of this study.

Signed:_____

Name:_____

Date:_____

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION
Male Students' Sense of Self and the Secondary School Curriculum
Parents' Consent Form

This study has the approval of Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

I have read the Information Sheet for this study. I understand that my son has had the details of the study explained to him and he has had the opportunity to ask questions about the study. I also understand that my son is free to decline to answer any particular question in the study.

I agree that he can provide information to the researcher on the understanding that it is completely confidential.

I agree to my son participating in the following stages of this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet. (Please circle the letters next to the areas in which your son can participate.)

A. I agree that my son may participate by filling out the four questionnaires. I understand that it is his opinion that is important and that there will be no attempt made to influence his opinion in any way.

B. I agree that my son may be in the classroom while observations and recordings are carried out.

C. I agree that my son may wear an individual microphone during four periods of classroom instruction. I understand that my son is aware that not all microphones are 'live' but they should be treated as 'live' at all times. I also understand that my son can turn the microphone off at any time when he doesn't want something he says to be recorded.

D. I agree that my son may participate in all stages of this study.

Signed:_____

Name:_____

Date:_____

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the way in which secondary school boys learn about themselves.

I am wanting to get a general view of secondary school boys. I am interested in your opinions on some things as a member of this group, rather than in you as an individual. **Because of this the questionnaires have a code rather than your name.**

In this part of the study, there are four tasks to be completed. First, you will be asked to provide a few details about yourself. Following this, you will be asked your opinion about a number of questions relating to women and men. You will then be asked to look at a large group of adjectives and to choose those which you think describe you. Finally, you will be asked to look at the same group of adjectives and choose those that you think describe men. All this information is confidential.

When I give the signal, please open the booklet to the first page, read the instructions, and begin work. You may work through the book at your own pace. When you are finished, please close your booklet and remain seated.

Please turn to the next page and begin work.

FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire provides basic information about yourself.
All information is confidential and cannot be used to identify you personally.

Age:

To which ethnic group do you feel you belong:

Planned Occupation:

Number of males in your household:

What are their ages (approximately):

What is their paid work (if any):

Number of females in your household:

What are their ages (approximately):

What is their paid work (if any):

Age, sex and occupation of main income earner:

Do you regard your family as: working class

upper/middle class

Middle class

upper/middle class

SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE

A number of statements are listed on the next few pages. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers.

I am interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. Read each statement carefully.

2. Circle one word of each pair on the line below which best describes your opinion. Circle either AGREE or DISAGREE, and then circle either STRONGLY or SLIGHTLY to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

3. Circle UNDECIDED if you are undecided.

First impressions are usually the best. Read each statement, decide if you agree or disagree and the strength of your opinion, and then mark the appropriate alternative.

Read the items carefully, but work as rapidly as you can. Try to give your opinion on every statement.

If you find the response alternatives given do not adequately indicate your opinion, use the one which is **closest** to the way you feel.

All answers are confidential.

1.   In legal matters the husband should represent the family.

     AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

2.   A wife's home and work activities should fit in with her husband's position.

     AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

3.   A woman should be as free as a man in the things she chooses to do.

     AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

4.   It's important for a mother to teach her daughter what it means to be a girl.

     AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

5. A married woman should be able to have men as friends.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

6. Women and men can and should do the same sort of work.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

7. It's okay for a woman to swear the same way a man does.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

8. Being a mother is the most important thing a woman could do.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

9. In a family the woman should do the inside housework and the man should do the heavier outside jobs.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

10. A normal man would be put off by a woman making a romantic approach to him even when he may be attracted to her.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

11. A woman shouldn't change her name when she marries.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

12. Women should be paid for their work as mothers and homemakers.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

13. A woman's physical appearance is not as important as her personality or abilities.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

14. Motherhood is something that every child should be taught to respect and honour.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

15. A woman should value the way men look at her as she walks down the street.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

16. It's okay for a woman to have a relationship with a younger man.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

17. A married woman's paid work is just as important as her husband's paid work.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

18. A father's two main responsibilities are to provide for his children financially and to discipline them when necessary.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

19. A woman should take care with her looks because it affects what people think of her husband.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

20. It's perfectly normal for a woman to enjoy looking after children and doing housework.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

21. A man who finds out his best friend is gay should still want to be his friend.

    AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

22. Child-care facilities should be readily available to all families so that mothers get a break from their children.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

23. Women should be allowed the same sexual freedom as men.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

24. A man's work is too important for him to have to be busy with household tasks.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

25. How a woman looks at work is no more important than how a man looks.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

26. A woman should be able to decide whether to continue an unplanned pregnancy or not.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

27. Looking after the home and family should be the main responsibility of a mother with young children.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

28. For the good of the family, a wife should be prepared to do whatever her husband wants.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

29. A husband's career is more important than his wife's   career.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDED

30. Women should no longer expect special courtesies such as being offered a seat on a bus.

   AGREE/DISAGREE   STRONGLY/SLIGHTLY   UNDECIDE

THIRD QUESTIONNAIRE

On the following pages you will find 100 adjectives which are sometimes used to describe people.

1. Circle those words that you think describe you.

2. Leave blank those words that you think **don't** describe you.

3. Put a line through any words that you don't understand the meaning of.

Do not worry about double-ups, contradictions and so forth. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective.

All information is confidential and your name will not be used.

active	adventurous	affectionate
aggressive	ambitious	anxious
appreciative	arrogant	assertive
attractive	changeable	charming
complicated	confident	confused
considerate	courageous	daring
dependent	disorderly	distractible
dominant	dreamy	easy-going
egoistical	emotional	energetic
enterprising	excitable	fault-finding
fearful	flirtatious	forgiving
frank	fussy	gentle
handsome	hard-headed	hard-hearted
humorous	imaginative	independent
individualistic	industrious	inventive
kind	lazy	logical
masculine	meek	mild
modest	nagging	nervous
noisy	obnoxious	opiniated
opportunistic	outgoing	outspoken
peaceable	pleasant	pleasure-seeking

progressive	rational	realistic
reasonable	reckless	resourceful
robust	self-confident	self-denying
sensitive	sentimental	sexy
show-off	shy	snobbish
soft-hearted	strong	submissive
sulky	superstitious	sympathetic
tallkative	temperamental	timid
touchy	tough	trusting
unambitious	understanding	unemotional
unexcitable	unkind	unscrupulous
unstable	warm	weak
wise		

Write down any characteristics not already mentioned that you feel could be used to describe yourself.

FOURTH QUESTIONNAIRE

On the following pages you will find 100 adjectives which are sometimes used to describe people.

1. Circle those that you think describe men.

2. Leave blank those words that you think **don't** describe men.

3. Put a line through any words you do not understand.

Do not worry about double-ups, contradictions and so forth. Work quickly and do not spend too much time on any one adjective.

Do not be concerned as to whether the adjectives which you check to describe men are the same or different from the adjectives you circled earlier to describe yourself.

All information is confidential and your name will not be used.

active	adventurous	affectionate
aggressive	ambitious	anxious
appreciative	arrogant	assertive
attractive	changeable	charming
complicated	confident	confused
considerate	courageous	daring
dependent	disorderly	distractible
dominant	dreamy	easy-going
egoistical	emotional	energetic
enterprising	excitable	fault-finding
fearful	flirtatious	forgiving
frank	fussy	gentle
handsome	hard-headed	hard-hearted
humorous	imaginative	independent
individualistic	industrious	inventive
kind	lazy	logical

masculine	meek	mild
modest	nagging	nervous
noisy	obnoxious	opiniated
opportunistic	outgoing	outspoken
peaceable	pleasant	pleasure-seeking
progressive	rational	realistic
reasonable	reckless	resourceful
robust	self-confident	self-denying
sensitive	sentimental	sexy
show-off	shy	snobbish
soft-hearted	strong	submissive
sulky	superstitious	sympathetic
tallkative	temperamental	timid
touchy	tough	trusting
unambitious	understanding	unemotional
unexcitable	unkind	unscrupulous
unstable	warm	weak
wise		

Write down any characteristics not already mentioned that you feel could be used to describe yourself.

Appendix C

SEX-FOCUSED ACL WITH M% SCORES
AND FAVOURABILITY SCORES[1]

CHARACTERISTIC	M%	FAV
active	74	651
adventurous	96	694
affectionate	8	611
aggressive	95	504
ambitious	93	599
anxious	14	452
appreciative	17	618
arrogant	93	376
assertive	84	541
attractive	7	620
changeable	20	521
charming	27	610
complicated	20	484
confident	85	601
confused	21	426
considerate	30	636
courageous	80	608
daring	92	547
dependent	15	463
disorderly	71	396
distractible	32	436
dominant	92	462
dreamy	21	483
easy-going	77	604
egoistical	86	389
emotional	5	508
energetic	76	616
enterprising	79	604
excitable	18	527
fault-finding	29	379
fearful	28	420
flirtatious	22	437
forgiving	30	632
frank	71	596
fussy	12	401
gentle	19	635
handsome	94	606
hard-headed	87	412
hard-hearted	85	372
humorous	79	619
imaginative	30	574
independent	86	612

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[1] Reprinted by permission of Sage Publications, Inc.

individualistic	73	609
industrious	72	624
inventive	83	603
kind	25	645
lazy	77	372
logical	75	599
masculine	97	576
meek	26	449
mild	32	485
modest	30	569
nagging	6	344
nervous	20	408
noisy	70	399
obnoxious	78	337
opiniated	78	469
opportunistic	76	535
outgoing	71	627
outspoken	74	518
peaceable	30	620
pleasant	30	619
pleasure-seeking	69	559
progressive	82	575
rational	77	591
realistic	74	601
reasonable	70	614
reckless	82	382
resourceful	69	611
robust	76	559
self-confident	84	595
self-denying	33	494
sensitive	12	592
sentimental	7	563
sexy	6	594
show-off	76	384
shy	31	474
snobbish	25	532
soft-hearted	26	567
strong	72	601
submissive	25	447
sulky	25	386
superstitious	30	430
sympathetic	30	603
talkative	23	512
temperamental	31	425
timid	24	444
touchy	30	402
tough	98	520
trusting	33	620
unambitious	27	388
understanding	29	638
unemotional	83	418

unexcitable	81	417
unkind	69	349
unscrupulous	88	388
unstable	21	385
warm	16	640
weak	21	393
wise	73	630

Appendix D

Individual letters have been sent to the school principal and the teachers who participated in my study. This is a copy of the letter sent individually to the fifth form boys who participated. It was further individualised when sent to the case study boys and the boys whom I interviewed.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
SENT TO STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Dear   ,

In 1994 your class at Palmerston North Boys High School participated in research that I was conducting as part of my Masters programme at Massey University. Remember the microphones in the class?

I enjoyed meeting you and sitting in on your classes. It was interesting for me to see how you, as boys, viewed yourselves. My own studies have shown me that we make ourselves as men and women and there are options as to how we do that. I learned more about that by observing your class and seeing how the curriculum presented particular ideas about men and women as individuals and how they relate to each other.

I have already met with you and the class and shared with you some of what I found out in the questionnaires and recording sessions. This letter gives you written feedback of the results of my research. I hope you find it interesting.

Questionnaires

Thirty boys completed the questionnaires. The results from these four questionnaires provided a general overview of the class.

Questionnaire One enabled me to paint a **very general** picture of your households. A typical boy in the class was 15 or 16 and NZ European. He lived in a traditional two parent family where both parents worked but the father was the main income earner. The mother most probably worked part-time and was primary caregiver for the children and her husband. Most of the families were relatively well off. The majority

of the boys in the class wanted to get jobs that are in the professional/ business sector. Most of the boys identified themselves as middle class, 8 as upper middle class and 4 as working class. This matched with the other information about paid employment and household income.

Questionnaire Two was concerned with the opinions that the class had about relationships between men and women. Although there were quite contradictory responses, overall the class thought men and women should be treated equally.

Questionnaire Three was concerned with self-descriptions. Most of the class chose a roughly equal number of adjectives that were high stereotypical male and low stereotypical male when they described themselves. They also chose items that were more favourable. Individual responses showed some interesting contradictions. For example, some of the boys selected both 'aggressive' and 'gentle' to describe themselves. Other contradictions included the selection of both 'dependent' and 'independent'; 'tough' and 'sensitive'; 'unemotional' and 'temperamental'; 'hard-hearted' and 'affectionate'. Contradictions, such as these, illustrate the complex nature of a boy's 'sense of self'. None of the class described themselves as disorderly, meek, unambitious or unkind. Only a few boys added further characteristics not in the questionnaire. These included - friendly, generous, culturally sensitive, and practical.

Questionnaire Four was similar to Questionnaire Three but the task was to describe men. This presented difficulties for some of the class. One boy circled every item on the questionnaire. This had the effect of changing the results slightly, in that no item was not selected. However, some quite clear patterns emerged. The items chosen were generally very stereotypically male and less favourable than in the self-descriptions.

In general, the class viewed themselves favourably in comparison to their descriptions of men. They attributed more anti-social, risk-taking characteristics to men than to themselves. The differences between the boys' descriptions of themselves and their descriptions of men suggests two possibilities. Will the class be different as men than the men they described? Or will the class change as they grow in order to become more like the men they described?

Classroom Observations and Recordings

A total of three mathematics lessons and seven english lessons were recorded. I transcribed five english lessons and carried out a summary analysis using a computer programme. I also selected excerpts for discourse analysis. Two english lessons were not suitable for transcribing as the recordings were not complete. Mathematics lessons were not transcribed because there were so few human mentions. I took notes from these recordings instead.

Each of the five transcribed english lessons was searched for mentions of males, females, gender neutral terms and references to the boys. These results are in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8	Human Mentions in English Curriculum								

English Lesson	Text Units Total	Males		Females		Gender Neutral		Student References	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	362	25	6.9	11	3	29	8	68	19
2	528	84	16	20	3.8	43	8.1	68	13
3	902	99	11	13	1.4	43	4.8	82	9.1
4	527	23	4.4	13	2.5	27	5.1	180	34
5	598	66	11	10	1.7	22	3.7	112	19
total text units	**2917**		**10%**		**2.3%**		**5.6%**		**17%**

As this quantitative analysis shows, in my study, females were mentioned significantly less than males. The gap between these figures becomes even more significant because previous research has shown that supposedly gender-neutral terms are actually perceived as being about males. Of particular interest is the significant number of references to the boys themselves. Seventeen percent of text units contain a reference to the boys.

My analysis of the curriculum supports previous work which has shown that there is a "competitive dynamic" constantly being played out amongst the boys as they seek to position themselves in ways that enhance their prestige and status according to dominant ideas about 'being male'. In my study, this competition was most evident in the public verbal space of the classroom. It was the boys who dominated this space who also controlled the type of environment in which your learning took place. There were clear links between a boy choosing a dominant, stereotypical male sense of self, his participation in the public verbal space of the classroom, his risk-taking behaviour (both in and out of school), his insight into social issues, and his development of anti- or pro-social behaviours.

I found that a particular version of 'being a man' was constructed and upheld through the secondary school curriculum. This version of 'being a man' is presently prevalent in New Zealand society. It incorporates characteristics, such as competitiveness, individualism, assumed rationality, dominance, confidence, strength, and courage which are some of the characteristics selected by the boys to describe men. However, not all boys in the class displayed these characteristics. Some boys wanted to 'be a man' in other ways, such as enjoying opera, being able to talk about personal ambitions or hopes without fear of ridicule, discussing topical issues from a variety of viewpoints, or showing a caring, sensitive side as a normal part of 'being a man'.

There were lots of aspects about 'Boys High' that also contributed to ideas about what it is to be a man. For instance, the way the school is organised, the gender ratio of the teaching staff, streaming practices, the valuing of some subjects as opposed to others in the curriculum, and even the pictures on the walls, all promoted and upheld predominant ideas of what a man is. Social class and ethnicity were also important in these ideas.

I found out two really important things from my study. One is that the boys in the class had limited opportunities to develop critical reflective skills. This means that they were generally unable to see themselves as part of a wider social picture. Second, those boys whose sense of self was different from predominant ideas about 'being a man' often experienced ridicule and felt alienated and marginalised because of their different ways of being in the world. Some boys put a lot of energy into 'policing' other boys'

behaviours so that the other boys did not feel they could express ideas which would make them seem different from what a man 'should' be. While energy was going into 'policing' it was not going into learning. And those boys who wanted to be different were not supported to develop their full potential.

These discoveries can be used to develop curriculum which would help all boys to learn to their full potential. I appreciate very much that you helped me to find these things out. Thank you. I hope they will be used to improve schooling for other boys.

If either you or your parents want to read the full study you can access it throough Massey University library, or though the Department of Policy Studies in Education at Massey University.

Yours sincerely,

Marilyn Stephens

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