"... and people said: Why should this stand out and be important?"

DISCOURSES OF DIFFERENCE:

A Study of How Secondary School Teachers and Administrators position sexual diversity in the context of school

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education Administration at Massey University, Palmerston North.

Cynthia Isabel Shaw

2000

ABSTRACT

This is a study of how New Zealand secondary school teachers and administrators (defined as senior managers and school trustees) position people and issues of sexual diversity in their schools. New Zealand and overseas studies have reported that gay, lesbian and bisexual young people and teachers experience damaging effects of heteronormative discursive practices that prevail in schools. While there are some successful overseas models for intervening in schools to make the environment safer for lesbian, gay and bisexual students and teachers, such as the Massachusetts Safe Schools Project (1993), no studies have investigated how New Zealand teachers and administrators think and feel about sexual diversities. Such information is important if change strategies in New Zealand schools are to be successful.

This study uses a feminist poststructural framework to explore this issue through identifying and analysing the discourses that are constraining and / or enabling teachers and administrators to address the discriminatory practices in their schools that affect lesbian, gay and bisexual students and teachers. A survey questionnaire, with some closed but mostly open questions was used in ten secondary schools of differing types in mainly urban settings. Among the more open questions, participants were also asked to respond to a set of 'Scenarios' as a means of gathering data for a discourse analysis.

The research identified that while liberal humanist discourses of individual rights were defining and limiting possibilities for professional interventions, 'othering' and minoritising discourses of homo/sexuality as essential difference were also leaving the privileged status of heterosexuality as unproblematised. A majority of the respondents perceived that gay, lesbian and bisexual students, but not teachers are adversely affected by heteronormative practices in their schools, and a majority believed their schools were not doing enough to address this issue. Increased visibility of sexual diversity in the curriculum was the most cited suggestion for action in their schools. Recommendations are made to capitalise on these findings and understandings so that sensible steps can be taken to intervene in the professional practices in schools to make school a safe and rewarding experience for all students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research would never have begun without the ground breaking research and commitment to bring about change in our schools of Kathleen Quinliven and Shane Town. Their involvement in the NZPPTA Safe Schools Taskforce brought about the idea and direction for this study. The on-going support and encouragement from Shane was very important. The completion of this report will, I hope, help maintain the important work he was doing and which Kathleen continues.

My special thanks also go to the Principals who allowed me access to their schools to carry out this research and to all who responded with such care and integrity.

My supervisors Marian Court and Associate Professor Janet Davies have been incredibly helpful, patient, and encouraging. Their unfailing supportiveness have helped ensure the task would be completed in the end! The clear headedness of these women has been much appreciated. Thank you both.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank personnel at Computer Services, especially Glennis Wallbutton for the data entry and Ted Drawneck for all those statistical tables and kind explanations!

At NZPPTA, my thanks to staff who have been helpful, particularly Bronwyn Cross, Andrew Kear, Kath Anderson, Sue Shone and Rob Willetts.

Colleagues at work have helped and encouraged in various ways, particularly Sue Money and Ginni Orr with health education materials.

Thanks go to my friends in the 'dead thesis society', Julia Parker and John Tetley. The support, the interest and the fun have been just the best.

The hours of editorial work and encouragement from my friend Robin Peace in these last few months has been invaluable, and hugely appreciated.

To the many others who have expressed interest along the way, that too was very important.

The most important acknowledgement is to Susanne. Without her staunch faith and support in the years this work was happening and in the years when it stopped happening, I doubt this thesis would have emerged.

Cynthia Shaw
December 2000

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract ii
Acknowledgements iii
List of Tables xii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1

Background to the Research and the Researcher 3

What the Literature was Saying 5

Outlining the Thesis 8

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES 10

Introduction 10

Feminist Perspectives 11
Liberal feminism 15
Radical / cultural feminism 16
Socialist feminism 18
Hegemonic masculinity 19

Feminist Poststructuralism 21
Social construction of identity 22
Problems with social constructionist politics of difference 23
Beyond social constructionism 24
Deconstructing the unitary subject 24
Subjectivity as discursive effect 25
Discourse, subjectivity and power 29
Power, schools and the state 32

Summary 35

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW 37

Introduction 37

The Approach to the Literature Review 38
Discourses of essential identities 39
Alienation 39
Oppressed minorities 39
Liberal humanist discourses 40
Equal rights 40
Toleration of difference 40

School Experiences of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students 40
Discourses of essential identities 40
Alienation 40
Oppressed minorities 44

School Experiences of Lesbian and Gay Educators 46
Discourses of essential identities 46
Alienated teachers – identities in the closet 46
Positioning gay and lesbian teachers as an oppressed minority 49

Liberal Interventions – an Emphasis on Equal Rights 49

Attitudes to Homo / sexuality in Education Institutions – Psychological Discourses 52

Conclusions 55

CHAPTER FOUR: THE OFFICIAL LITERATURE 58

Introduction 58

Government Legislation 59
The Human Rights Act (1993) 59

Education Regulations 59
The national curriculum framework 60
The National Administration Guidelines 61
The health syllabus in the New Zealand curriculum 62

Classroom Resources 67

Conclusions 71

CHAPTER FIVE: THE METHODOLOGY 72

Introduction 72

The Research Questions 73

Method 73
Survey as methodology 74
Justifications for the methodology 77

Evolution of the Survey Instrument: Shifting Theoretical Perspectives 79
Issues in the original design 82
Attitude research 82
The focussing question 83
Access and acceptability of the research 85
Pilot testing – the trial school 85
The final instrument: some innovations to fit queer into straight 86

The Sample 89
Some technical and theoretical considerations 90
Selecting the school sample 91
Rate of response in the sample 94

Administration of the Instrument 96
Fronting up and speaking the unspeakable 97
Initial contacts with schools 97

Ethical Considerations 100
Informed consent 100
Minimising of harm 101
Truthfulness 101

Methods of Analysis 102
Statistical analysis 102
Discourse analysis 102

Conclusion and Evaluation 104

CHAPTER SIX: WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY? 107

Demographic characteristics 107
- School type 107
- Position of responsibility 108
- Curriculum / responsibility areas 109
- Length of service 110
- Age groups 111
- Sex 112
- Ethnicity 112
- Current relationships 113
- Sexual orientation 113

Summary 114

CHAPTER SEVEN: WHO HAS A PROBLEM? 115

Q1. Tacit Acceptance of Heterosexuality as 'Normal' - Harm for Students 115

Q2. Active Discrimination – Against Students 118

Q3. Tacit Acceptance of Heterosexuality as 'Normal' - Harm for Staff 121

Q4. Active Discrimination – Against Staff? 124

Summary 125

CHAPTER EIGHT: ARE SCHOOLS DEALING WITH HETEROSEXIST DISCRIMINATION? 127

Q1. Measures to Address the Needs of Students and Staff? 127

Q2. How Adequately is the School Addressing Needs? 129

Q3. Training and Staff Development? 130

Q4. Knowledge About Legislation or Policies 131

Summary 132

CHAPTER NINE: DISCOURSES AT WORK 133

Scenario 1 – Quantitative Analysis 134

Scenario 1 – Discourse Analysis 135
School discipline 136
Individual / equal rights 138

Scenario 2 – Quantitative Analysis 142

Scenario 2 – Discourse Analysis 144
Individual rights 144
Heroic individualism 145
Authorised (versus subjugated) knowledges 146

Scenario 3 – Quantitative Analysis 147

Scenario 3 – Discourse Analysis 148
Heteronormative phatic communion 149
Heroic individualism 151
Il/legitimate sexualities 151

Scenario 4 – Quantitative Analysis 152

Scenario 4 – Discourse Analysis 153
Equal / civil rights
Competing discourses of professional practice 154

Scenario 5 – Quantitative Analysis 156

Scenario 5 – Discourse Analysis 157
Alienated identities 157
Il/legitimate school knowledge 159

Summary 161

CHAPTER TEN: CONSTRAINTS, POSSIBILITIES 163

Q. 1: School Barriers to Addressing Heterosexist Bias 163
Community factors 166
Staff factors 166
Not school role 167
Resource constraints 168
School culture and leadership 168
Student factors 169

Q. 2: Desirable and Possible Courses of Action School Could Take 169

Curriculum support 172
Not school role 172
Go gently / just EEO 173
Staff action / education 173
Policy development 174
Support bisexual, lesbian and gay students and staff 174
Educate the community 174
Re-educate the unions 174

Q.3: Personal Barriers to Addressing Heterosexist Bias 175

Personal constraints 176
Lack of support from others 177
Against my beliefs 178
No constraints 179
Not my role 179

Q.4: Desirable and Possible Courses of Action Individuals Could Take 179

Curriculum change 182
Working directly with students 182
Offer leadership 182
Educate myself 183
Just EEO / apply fairness 183
Oppose action 183

Summary of Responses to Research Question – Perceived Constraints and Possibilities for Taking Anti-discriminatory Action 184

CHAPTER ELEVEN: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS 185

1. Perceptions of Discrimination

The Students 185

Minoritising discourses 186
What is 'normal'? 188
Subjugated knowledge 189
Homophobic harassment 191

The Staff 193

2. What are Schools Doing?

Dealing with harassment 197
Staff development 198
Curriculum 199

3. Perceived Constraints and Possibilities for Action

Constraints on Schools 200
Schools in the education market place 200
Staff attitudes 202
Resources 202

Possibilities for School Action 203
Curriculum support 203
Teacher development 205
Policies 207
Support groups 207
No action – gently does it 208

Constraints on Individuals 209
Personal constraints 209
Lack of support from others 209
Against my beliefs 211

Possibilities for Individual Action 211
Curriculum intervention 212
Working with students / offering leadership 212
Oppose action 213

4. Discursive practices that position sexualities

Equal rights 214
Professionalism – competing discourses 217
Homophobic harassment as a matter of 'discipline' 218
The inclusive curriculum 219

Summary of Findings 220

CHAPTER TWELVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Limitations of the Study 224

Conclusions 228

Recommendations 230
Recommendations for Schools 230
Recommendations for teacher education 232
Recommendations for further research 232

REFERENCES 235

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The Original Research Design 246
The original research questions – designed to replicate Sears' research 246
The first draft of the survey instrument 247

Appendix 2. Sampling Plan 251

Appendix 3. Introduction to survey in school staff rooms 252

Appendix 4. Sample Letters to Principals of Participating Schools
A. Letter to trial school 253
B. Letter of introduction (preceded by phone call) 254
C. Letter of thanks 255

Appendix 5. Some Reactions to and Reflections on the Survey Instrument 256

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
6.1: Source of respondents according to school type	108
6.2: Status Position in the School	109
6.3: Curriculum or responsibility areas	109
6.4: Distribution of subject areas in Renwick Study (1993)	110
6.4: Years of service	111
6.5: Ages of respondents	111
6.6: Sex of respondents	112
6.7: Ethnicity of respondents	112
6.8: Sexual orientation	113
7.1: Are students harmed/ disadvantaged by heterosexuality being seen as 'normal'?	116
7.2: Is there active discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual students?	119
7.3: Are any staff are disadvantaged or harmed by a tacit acceptance of heterosexuality as normal?	121
7.4: Belief there is active discrimination against gay, lesbian or bisexual staff	124
7.5: Summary of responses	125
8.1: Teachers' beliefs that specific measures are in place	128
8.2: Teachers opinions about how adequately needs are met	129
8.3 – Teachers' participation in training or staff development	130
8.4: Knowledge of legislative or policy requirements to address issues for gay,lesbian and bisexual students in schools.	132
10.1: School constraints to addressing heterosexist bias – first mentioned responses	164
10.2: School constraints to addressing heterosexist bias - second mentioned responses	165
10.3: School constraints to addressing heterosexist bias – third mentioned responses	165
10.4: Possible school action –first mentioned responses	170
10.5: Possible school action -second mentioned responses	171
10.6: Possible school action – third mentioned responses	171
10.7: Personal constraints to addressing heterosexist bias – first mentions	176
10.8: Personal constraints to addressing heterosexist bias – second mentions	176
10.9: Possible personal action – first mentioned responses	180

10.10: Possible personal action – second mentioned responses 181

10.11: Possible personal action –third mentioned responses 181

CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

How far is diversity celebrated in schools?

> And people said, "Why should this stand out and be Important?"

In the context of state secondary schooling in New Zealand, there is a popular and even official discourse[1] around the notion of 'celebrating diversity'. Yet there is a category of diversity which is persistently excluded in such 'celebrations'. This is the category of sexual orientation. To be openly lesbian, gay, transgendered, or bisexual is not only excluded in our schools as an aspect of human diversity to be celebrated, it is not even safe (Quinlivan, 1994; Rose, 1993; Stapp, 1991; Taylor, 1989; Town, 1998; Vincent & Ballard, 1997).

Since the Human Rights Amendment Act was passed in 1994, it has been illegal to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of his or her sexual orientation. Furthermore, in the year preceding that legislation, an AGB McNair survey indicated that 86 per cent of the population of New Zealand believed that people should not be discriminated against on the grounds of sexual orientation (Town, 1998, p.12). This thesis will show, however, how 'not discriminating against' is conceived in minimalist, passive terms. There seems to be little understanding of or concern about how 'heterosexism'[2] structures

[1]Discourse in this thesis uses the meaning that derives from Michel Foucault. Discourse is not simply and naively expressive language, but collections of statements that become "ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and the relations between them" (Weedon, 1996, p.105). Competing discourses represent struggles over meaning, which are also discursive struggles over subjectivity, over ways that it is possible to 'be'. In Chapter 8, I also use a particular form of discourse analysis to examine some of the data collected for this thesis. In this analysis I use McNaughton's (1997) approach, which is also premised on the concept of discursive practice sourced to Foucault.

[2] Heterosexism, a parallel concept to sexism, is the usually unconscious assumption of heterosexuality and the institutions, values, practices etc that belong to heterosexuality. Such an assumption is often exclusionary and discriminatory of non-heterosexual people, just as gender discrimination arises from sexist assumptions and practices.

social practices and institutions, in the way 'sexism' is now accepted as a common understanding. There appears to be little concern about the levels of homophobic verbal and physical abuse openly used in our communities and in our schools, even by very young children.[3] Certainly, there seems to be no question of raising any problems with discourses that assume the 'naturalness' of hetero-sexuality let alone of dominant views of what it means to be male and female, masculine and feminine.

Notwithstanding the immanent and insistent publicity of heterosex that permeates the New Zealand cultural landscape, 'sex' is held to be a private matter when it comes to an examination of how sexuality is constructed and positioned in our society. A sudden silence descends. When individuals act to break that silence, through contesting the ways that heterosexuality and homosexuality are discursively positioned in our schools, then loud indignation is expressed by extremists who are given voice and attention by the media in New Zealand.

A body of research (see page 5 and Chapter 3) now exists which tells us about the ways this heteronormative[4] environment in New Zealand and overseas schools is experienced by people who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, or who are questioning their sexual orientation and / or other aspects of their sexuality (most adolescents come into the latter category). The research describes their experiences as alienating, and /or hostile, and / or uncomfortable at the very least. According to the literature, this is true for students and for teachers.

> The young men reported that schools either officially maintained a silence about sexuality in general and homosexuality in

[3] A rare exception in the media is the recent article in *Next Magazine* (Cropp, 2001) and the 1993 *Listener* article "Gay and Dead" (Rose, 1993).

[4] 'Heteronormativity' is the way heterosexuality "... is always already there within all mental categories. It has sneaked into dialectical thought as its main category." (Wittig, in Warner, 1993, p.xxi). Or as Warner puts it, " ... heterosexual culture's exclusive ability to interpret itself as society ... as the very model of inter-gender relations " (Warner, 1993, p.xxi). Although a fundamental concept within queer theory, it is not exclusive to queer theory. It describes a social phenomenon which lies at the heart of this current inquiry and of the survey instrument used.

> particular, or provided minimal information which resulted in confirming the minority status of sexualities other than heterosexuality.
> (Town, 1998, p.117)

Based on their findings, these writers have a range of practical suggestions for schools to create safe learning and teaching environments, free from fear, harassment, or the need to live dual lives and other reported consequences of homonegative school communities. And yet, with some notable exceptions, there seems to be some invisible wall preventing the implementation of these or other proactive interventions that would help make a reality of the anti-discrimination laws in our schools. This is the research problem that gave rise to this thesis.

Background to the Research and the Researcher

Briefly, I will position myself as the researcher and writer of this investigation. As Alison Jones has written, social inquiry in an earlier, positivist tradition claimed that, " 'I' as the researcher should not be in the text on the grounds that 'I' represents subjectivity and bias, the enemies of truth" (Jones, 1992, p.18). Newer traditions, however, point out that "our accounts of the world *can only be* constructions, made up from the language, meanings and ideas historically available to us, the 'I'. The old distant voice of the objective observer/writer is seen as a fiction ..." (ibid, p.18).[5]

I had begun teaching in 1970 and taught in a range of secondary schools. In 1994, the year this research was first formulated, I was a regional representative on the National Executive of the New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association (NZPPTA). I had been an activist within the Association for about 15 years at that stage. I had also been involved with national developments in curriculum and assessment as well as other educational

[5] This is discussed more fully as a theoretical position in Chapter 2.

leadership activities over the years, including a commitment to feminist and bicultural issues.

While on the National Executive of the NZPPTA, I was asked to help in a group to resolve an issue whereby a member had made a complaint (NZPPTA, 1993) to the Association over the way the union had responded to an incident in the member's school concerning a 'gay support group' for the students. Apart from the way the teacher himself had been invidiously positioned by the Principal in this saga, the Principal had issued a letter to parents explaining his veto of the proposed group and of the offer by GLEE (Gays and Lesbians Everywhere in Education) to provide resource support to such a group. The Principal's letter assured parents that the school counsellors were trained and able to deal with any issues concerning gay or lesbian students. However it used language that spoke of dangers of 'recruitment' and 'promotion of the gay lifestyle' – the language of homophobia. Furthermore, and this was the basis of the complaint to the NZPPTA, the Principals' Council and the President of the NZPPTA publicly supported the position the Principal had taken. Yet at the Annual Conference of 1986 the Association had adopted a series of recommendations concerning the 'rights of lesbian and homosexual teachers' that included commitments to work towards the end of discrimination and of heterosexism in the school workplace (NZPPTA, 1986). The complainant and his supporters believed that the Association had acted against its own policy in supporting the Principal's position in this case.

In the process of negotiating a satisfactory outcome to the situation, the Association agreed in 1994 to establish a 'Safe Schools Taskforce', charged with taking up the 1986 Conference recommendations to "produce an information and discussion paper on heterosexism" and to "review progress in removing discrimination against lesbian and homosexual teachers" (NZPPTA, 1986, p.4). The Women's Officer, Bronwyn Cross, convened this taskforce which included myself and Vern Tile representing the Executive, a gay teacher active in the Association in Auckland and involved in the original 'Issues' paper, and two academic researchers in the field of gay and lesbian issues in education, Kathleen Quinlivan and Shane Town.

This group met several times in the period 1994 -1995 and set itself a task to educate the membership on issues of heterosexism and homophobia and also to help resource the profession to deal with these issues in schools. The research Kathleen and Shane had undertaken, their knowledge of the wider literature, and their understanding of the issues were critical in informing the group of possible ways forward. For me, it was in the context of thinking about the literature concerning gay, lesbian and bisexual students and teachers in education in terms of New Zealand secondary schools, and of possibilities for changing attitudes and practices, that a gap in the literature emerged.

What the Literature Was Saying

There was a small body of New Zealand research (O'Brien, 1988; Quinlivan, 1994; Stapp, 1991; Taylor, 1989; Town, 1998) that generally echoed findings from overseas writers (Khayatt, 1994; Mac An Ghail, 1991; Massachusetts Governor's Report, 1993; Sears, 1991; Trenchard and Warren, 1987; Uribe and Harbeck, 1992) that secondary schools do not provide safe and supportive learning environments for young people who identify (or are identified) as lesbian, bisexual or gay. Another body of literature from overseas also reported varying degrees of hostility in heterosexist and homophobic working environments for gay, lesbian or bisexual teachers (Griffin, 1992; Khayatt, 1992; Squirrell, 1989; Woods and Harbeck, 1992). Anecdotal evidence suggested a similar situation prevailed in New Zealand schools (for example, the complaint that led to the establishment of the Safe Schools Taskforce).

Of the literature describing school interventions to redress the educational and social inequalities of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth, two schemes in the United States looked like promising models. These were firstly, the work based on the Massachusetts Governor's Commission Report "Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth" (1993) and the "Project 10" based on Fairfax High

School in Los Angeles, described by Uribe and Harbeck (1992). These are outlined in Chapter 3.

Both Kathleen Quinlivan and Shane Town were proposing to undertake action research projects that would investigate ways of implementing change strategies in New Zealand schools. What was also unknown, however, in New Zealand, was the nature of teacher and administrator's, (ie senior managers and trustees), attitudes to issues of sexuality. The literature on teacher development (Fullan, 1993; Joyce & Showers, 1995) shows that challenging teacher behaviours meets deep seated 'emotional' investment in the status quo. Thus it seemed that some understanding of teacher and administrator beliefs, attitudes and perceptions would be an important prerequisite to any attempts to introduce change. In brief, beyond a generalised belief that 'heterosexism and homophobia' existed out there in schools, the effects of which had been documented by Quinlivan (1995); Stapp (1991); Taylor (1989) and Town (1998)[6], *'just what needs intervention'* was unknown. It was this unknown that formed the research problem which I undertook to investigate.

It was appropriate, in my view, that such an investigation should occur with the support and encouragement of the secondary teachers' professional association, the NZPPTA, whose first two constitutional objects are to "advance the cause of education generally ... and to uphold and maintain the just claims of members individually and collectively" (NZPPTA, 1995, p.7). The Safe Schools Taskforce group agreed that it would be a useful contribution if my university research project was directed to the gap in the literature that I had identified, so that some understanding of teacher attitudes was gained as a first step to professional development in the issues. Although the research itself developed independently of the NZPPTA[7], I remained in close touch with Shane Town throughout the development and administration of the survey instrument.

---

[6] Town gathered his data in 1993, was writing it up as an M.Ed in 1994 and eventually as a PhD, completed in 1998.

[7] See acknowledgements, however, for the practical support given to the reproduction of the questionnaire and printing of labels for the return envelopes.

It should be noted here, that as my understanding of the issues deepened as a result of the data that was collected, my reflections on that data and my theoretical thinking about it, so has the framing of the problem shifted. Originally conceived as a 'study of attitudes', the theoretical framing of the issues and the method used to discuss the emerging 'data', became a feminist poststructural analysis of discursive power and subjectivity.

Yet this thesis remains an investigation of how teachers and administrators 'position' sexuality in the context of school. The purpose of the thesis remains, also, that an understanding of this positioning should inform actions taken within the profession to bring about positive change in the arena of sexual politics in schools. For, as this study will argue, the politics certainly exist, to the current detriment not only of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth and teachers, but of all who work and learn in schools, and their families,

The focussing research question, derived from the research problem, became:

> *What are the perceived personal / professional and social / political constraints and possibilities, that prevent or enable school administrators and teachers to address discrimination against non-heterosexual students, staff and other members of the school community?*

I would also like to state, at this point, that 'I' the researcher, do not position myself as 'outside' what is being investigated (Jones,1992, p.19). I, too, am a teacher and administrator in a school that does little more than most and perhaps less than some, to address the issues in this investigation. Thus, this research is as much about what constrains / enables my own professional leadership in this issue as it is about any of my colleagues 'out there'. At times, in the writing of this paper, I have used the 'personal voice', particularly when writing about the research process. At other times, I have used the more impersonal, 'scholarly' language usual in research reports, when it seemed both intrusive and unnecessary to have the 'I' up front in the text.

Outlining the Thesis

After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 explains why a poststructural analysis of subjectivity and of discursive relations of power is the most productive way of viewing 'what happens' for heterosexual and non-heterosexual people in school in terms of individual and institutional practices around sexuality issues. Chapter 2 also provides a theoretical framework for a critique of the discourses that are shown in Chapter 3 to dominate the literature.

Chapter 3 critically reviews the literature that relates to the positioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual students and educators, mainly in secondary schools, in New Zealand and overseas. It is noted that certain discourses emerge that position and locate non-heterosexual subjects as stigmatised 'others'. It is argued that, even where the literature sets out to critique prevailing heterosexism, the focus remains on gay, lesbian, and bisexual students and educators as the locus of the 'problem'. Chapter 4 examines some of the discourses encoded in official and semi-official texts that relate to ways sexuality is positioned in New Zealand secondary schools. This will include government legislation, regulation, curriculum documents and some curriculum related teaching resources.

Chapter 5 describes the methodology used in this investigation. Initially conceived as a survey of attitudes, the proposal was to use standardised instruments and structured questions (along the lines used by Sears (1992) in the United States) to investigate attitudes of teacher trainees and of guidance counsellors. To accommodate my shifting theoretical perspectives, I changed the instrument design to enable the gathering of more 'qualitative' data that could be used to analyse the discourses and discursive practices of teachers and administrators regarding issues of hetero/homo-sexuality. The questionnaire thus includes an innovative attempt to get responses that are descriptively 'thick' enough for this type of analysis. Teachers, Senior Managers and Trustees from ten schools took part in the survey, forming a stratified sample of secondary teachers and administrators in New Zealand.

Chapters 6, 7, 9 and 10 report results of the questionnaire in mainly quantitative terms. In particular, Chapter 6 reports on the demographic profile of the respondents who returned the 124 questionnaires that were analysed. Chapter 7 investigates the nature and degree of discrimination the respondents believed existed in their schools against bisexual, lesbian and gay students and staff. Most respondents believe students, but not staff, are affected by heteronormative practices. Chapter 8 reports what the respondents believed their schools were doing to address any such discrimination. It is here, and in the following chapter, that a dominant discourse of 'equal rights' emerges. Chapter 9 explores, through a discourse analysis, what actions the respondents believed they, personally / professionally should or would take in a range of situations where sexual orientation was at issue. Chapter 10 reports what the teachers and administrators thought were the constraints and possibilities for their schools to 'address heterosexist bias'. Of course, some disputed that such a bias existed outside of the researcher's own fancies![8]

Chapter 11 discusses the results reported in the previous chapters. Emerging discourses are discussed in an attempt to uncover the struggles over meaning, knowledge, and subjectivity that have resulted in the material effects reported in the literature about how gay, lesbian and bisexual people experience school as students and educators.

Finally, in Chapter 12, the implications of the results of this study are identified and recommendations are made for action in schools, teacher education, and recommendations are made for future policy and research.

It is my hope that this research will help teachers and administrators reflect on the ways that affirming diversity might become a reality for *all* who work together in our school communities.

[8] See appendix 6 and discussion of comments on the research design in Chapters 2 and 4.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

and theoretical journeys

> Sexuality will no longer be a form of behaviour with precise prohibitions but rather a kind of danger that lingers...the threat looming over all social bonds ... decriminalised only to reappear as a danger, and a universal one at that.
>
> - Foucault, 1980, pp.41-42

> Certainly we are presently witnessing an unparalleled struggle between values and identities forged within the sexual categories of the late nineteenth century, and rival values and identities that have emerged in the twentieth century. This struggle is waged with special ferocity in those areas of social life where sexual identity is most contested, of which education is perhaps the most significant.
>
> - Watney, 1991, p.393

Introduction

This chapter sets out the primary theoretical perspective from which the data are discussed, which is feminist post-structuralism. At the same time, this and other theoretical and conceptual and methodological issues arising from the research are problematised and discussed.

The central theme of the discussion that follows is the way discursively constructed subjectivities have been construed in terms of 'identity'; firstly by individuals and communities of self-identifying gay, lesbian and bisexual people (and other diverse sexual orientations), secondly by 'straight' society and individuals including school workers, and thirdly, by some of the scholarly literature. Discourses of identity as "instruments of regulatory regimes" (Butler, 1991) are discussed within a post-structural analysis of subjectivity and of power.

The theoretical bases of discourses that will be discussed in the literature review in the next chapter are identified. The political implications of these theoretical approaches are analysed in relation to what is / is not possible to activate within secondary schools as key institutions of the state-society (see pp.31ff) in New Zealand. The argument is foreshadowed that the most useful theoretical frame for analysing the way diversity of sexual orientation is positioned in schools, is through feminist, post-structuralism. Feminist poststructuralism can produce an analysis of power to frame 'what is going on here', which does not lose sight of the central feminist concerns with the gendered nature of power, yet does not encounter the pitfalls of universalism and the unitary subject as in earlier feminisms. It will be argued further on in this thesis that this theoretical perspective offers the best opportunity for thinking about ways that people in schools can break out from the discourses that construct constraining and (for some) demoralising subject positions that both queer and heterosexual people find themselves in, within, and perhaps beyond, their school communities.

Feminist Perspective

This study is situated in a feminist, rather than a 'queer' post-structuralism for the following reasons: the author's own political and theoretical background, the foundational contribution of critical feminist scholarship to social issues, and the centrality of gender in the discursive struggles over hetero/homosexuality. I will elaborate briefly on each of these reasons at this point and they will recur as the theoretical argument develops through this chapter.

The problem researched in this study is not necessarily, nor solely, nor compellingly to be viewed *primarily* as a feminist problem. Having been accustomed, however, to bring a feminist analysis to historical scholarship and to the curricula and teaching of history in schools, I certainly was predisposed to see

the problematic of gender relations as critical, if not central, in this study. Queer theory also takes gender relations as the central category of analysis and I have drawn on some writers from this tradition (e.g. Seidman, 1993; Watney, 1991; Creed, 1994; Butler, 1991; 1995). The main focus of queer theory is with deconstructing gender, per se, rather than with the feminist political concern of how women are positioned as a social group. The view argued in this thesis, however, is that heterosexism and heteronormative discourses are primarily about maintaining what Robert Connell (1995) calls hegemonic masculinities, and also about maintaining the overall social dominance of men (see Connell, 1995, 74-81). Although this study is about how women and men, gay, lesbian and heterosexual, are positioned in schools through the discourses of teachers and administrators, the underlying understanding is that the relations of power inherent in these discourses are essentially about patriarchal relations of power[1].

Another reason for taking a feminist approach is the role that feminist scholarship has taken in investigating socially critical issues and in critically exploring methodological and epistemological understandings. And although a radical lesbian feminist perspective has been rejected for this study,[2] lesbian feminists, along with feminists of colour, have often been at the forefront of this critical theorising, especially the critique of spurious scholastic neutrality. An erroneous 'commonsense' belief exists that research can be neutral and the more the authorship is hidden, the more neutral it is. The 'commonsense' status of the latter was illustrated early on in this study. One of the schools approached to take part in this study faxed a response from the principal declining to be involved as she "feels from reading the questionnaire that it is biased." A number of responses to the questionnaire used in this study reiterated this view of what constitutes 'correct' approaches to scholarly research. (See Appendix 5).

[1] Patriarchy, here however, is not understood in the sense of universal structures and ideologies as in radical and socialist feminist theorising. I explain how I use the concept further on.

[2] Because of the essentialising of identity which is inherent in radical /radical lesbian feminist positions – see argument development developed in this chapter.

This positivist view of science and social science that facts are neutral and 'out there' to be discovered 'objectively' by a "rational, asexual, disinterested and robotic observer" (Burns, 1994) has now a long history of critique. Feminist research has been at the leading edge of the epistemological critique of a scientific inquiry that "conceals its own invention", to borrow Foucault's (1977) phrase. For example, Johnson (1981) describes this critique as one that

> reads backwards from what seems natural, obvious, self-evident or universal ... to show that these things have their history, their reasons ... their effects ... and the starting point is not a (natural) given but a (cultural) construct, usually blind to itself ... (in Blackmore, 1989, p.97).

Feminist poststructuralists would take this even further and claim, as for example Butler does, that feminist social theory "seeks to show how theory, how philosophy, is always implicated in power ..." (1995, p.38). It follows, that feminist research makes the 'position' of the author clear, as discussed in Chapter 1[3]. Realisation of the spuriousness of claims to neutral research has meant for feminists and others that the integrity of the research process must be sought in more explicit ways, such as the "self-reflexivity" advocated by Patti Lather (1992). In particular, it is critical to be aware of value positions, including those of the researcher, rather than claim a spurious detachment, a pretended God's eye view. Linda Nicholson has described this claim to 'true scholarship' as masking the "perspectives of particular persons or groups" (Nicholson, 1990, p.2). Or as Michelle Fine has said:

> As for 'intellectual independence,' I've never seen it, I don't believe in it, and I have no desire to share in the illusion. Collective democracies of difference, struggling over authority and validity at the hyphen between activism and research – now there's an illusion worth having. (Fine, 1994, p.31).

[3] In the methodology chapter I discuss the 'political' implications of the persistence of the positivist paradigm outside of academe. Being aware of the persistence of this paradigm as 'commonsense knowledge' amongst the target audience for this research meant some shaping of the methodology of this study to take this into account.

Whereas feminist theorising may share the above critique with some non-feminist critical theorists, the unique contribution of feminist scholarship is the way in which gender is the central category of analysis in any inquiry and "every issue (is seen) as a feminist issue" (Lather, 1992, 91). Feminist research, however, is not a method, nor is it necessarily aligned with any one method such as qualitative research methods, but it focuses on making gendered relations of power explicit and problematic. This gender analysis is particularly central to any discussion of how sexual 'roles' and 'identities' and discourses around these subjectivities are construed in the late 20th century. At the heart of heteronormative discourses lies a project to maintain what Connell (1987, 1995) calls the hegemonic gender order. From infancy, 'is it a boy or a girl?' seems to be an obsessive concern in western societies. If biological sex is not clear at birth, (a not uncommon occurrence), then a gender is assigned and surgical procedures used to make the 'sex' (apparently) clear, even though male and female in biological terms are relative characteristics (Palmer, 1995, Bagemihl, 1999). A 'proper family', as the English legislators termed it in Section 28 (1988), is a man and a woman with children produced from a heterosexual relationship. Lesbian, gay, bisexual or other diverse sexual orientations disrupt the boy-girl gender division and arguably, this lies at the heart of the animosity to homosexuality as suggested by Simon Watney (1991) in his discussion of the Section 28 legislation. This "gender trouble", as Butler called it (1990), will be discussed further below in the section on subjectivity and identity.

Having outlined why the primary theoretical perspective is a feminist one, that includes an analysis of the links between heteronormativity and a hegemonic gender order, I shall now explain why a poststructuralist analysis is used. Firstly, I offer a brief critique of other feminist positions. I make these comparisons because some of the discourses identified in the discussion of the literature arise from these other theoretical approaches, employed consciously or unconsciously. Making these theoretical positions explicit helps to identify the problems inherent in some of these discourses.

Liberal feminism

Liberal feminism did not question the Enlightenment 'man' as an abstracted, universal citizen, constructed in the dichotomous terms of (white, western, middle-class) male rationality / female emotion, male civic actor / female passive at home, male autonomous / female dependent and so on. As Blackmore (1989, 106ff) has argued, Hobbes and Locke in fact created women as non-persons in any public sense and the liberal individualism deriving from these philosophers continues this exclusionary foundation. Liberal feminists, then, concentrated on a political programme of 'equal rights', so that women too might 'whakatane', or act like a man. The appropriation of certain characteristics to the male, the privileging of these as normal and proper, and therefore the need to 'get the same' for women, was unquestioned. Women, too, wished to be visible in the 'male' (seen as proper, real, natural, public) world. For many, the accomplishment of equal rights legislation and workplace policies has meant the fulfilment of feminist goals.

These masculinist and feminist liberal discourses resonate in much of the data described in the literature review, and also with data collected in my research. For example, 'solutions' to 'problems' of sexual diversity are positioned within discourses of individual rights, of equal opportunities, of toleration, and of welfare liberalism. Within liberal feminism, Just as women could be accepted (at least to a degree) into a male / public world of education and work, based on discourses of individual rights (as human beings), so the 'straight' world is beginning to accept into legislation the rights of homosexual people to have equal opportunities without discrimination, in an unquestionably, unproblematically, straight world. The toleration exists only to the degree, of course, that the straightness of the world remains unquestioned and unchallenged, and that everyone behaves that way, at least in public: "We grant them their rights, but they've no place in a parade of this kind" (overheard at a St Patrick's Day Parade and cited by Biddy Martin, in Barrett and Phillips, 1992, p.94).

As Weedon has put it, "While Enlightenment narratives tend to make universalist claims, speaking, for example, of freedom and human rights for all, the ways in which they are realised in practice are often partial and exclusionary. This requires constant vigilance" (Weedon, 1999, p.130). This thesis explores, amongst other issues, how the will to such vigilance in the highly heteronormative atmospheres and practices of schools, is in itself, problematic.

Radical / cultural feminism

Radical, or cultural feminism, in critiquing the liberal acceptance of a male defined society and politics, celebrated 'womanliness' and defined 'real women' in terms of many of the very characteristics ascribed as female in the Enlightenment: nurturing, affiliative, passionate, communitarian and so on. The main themes of radical feminism are described by Robyn Rowland and Renate Klein (1990) as:

> Women as a social group are oppressed by men as a social group and this oppression is the *primary* oppression for women. Patriarchy is the oppressing *structure* of male domination ... as it is exercised in every sphere of women's lives, both public and private (p.273).

Patriarchal structures include:

> institutional structures such as the law, religion, and the family; ideologies which perpetuate the 'naturally' inferior position of women; socialization processes ...(Rowland & Klein, 1990, p.277).

Of the patriarchal ideologies, Adrienne Rich (1980) identified compulsory heterosexuality as defining men's access to women as a natural right, a "beachhead of male dominance" (p.633). She surveyed a range of cross cultural and historical examples of the enforcement of the institution of heterosexuality, which suggested to her that "an enormous counter force is having to be contained" (p.638). The struggle to maintain heterosexuality as the natural and proper form

of sexual relations, not to mention gender practices, is clear in the literature reviewed in the next chapter (for example, Norris, 1992; Watney,1991; Khayatt, 1994).

A problem, however, with radical feminist theorising, has been the essentialising of certain attributes as 'womanly', and an exclusionary, universalising vision of 'woman's-culture', construed implicitly as 'pure and good' when untainted by the culture of men. This became seen as problematic for a number of reasons, particularly that the reification of certain attributes excluded women of different colour, class, sexual orientations, ambitions, behaviours and endless 'others'. Hierarchies of oppression were developed: white women over coloured, heterosexuals over lesbians, middle over working class. The theoretical and political debates have been satirised wonderfully by Alison Jones and Camille Guy (1992) in their descriptions of two conferences a decade apart (1978 and 1989), where the presence of bowls of black olives on the lunch table were clear "evidence of the alienating and oppressive middle classness of the organizers" (at Piha, 1978) and where ritualistic intoning of 'personal identity' – 'I am a middle-class lesbian Jew, an academic with White privilege'- began each workshop (at Newtown, 1989). (Jones & Guy, 1992, pp.303, 306).

Radical lesbian feminists took this essentialising position even further. For example, the searching back in personal histories for a 'discovery' of 'true lesbian identity' became a preoccupation of many lesbian women. With the slogan, 'the personal is political', radical lesbian feminism, with its separatist ideals, saw any other position as complicit in the patriarchy and, on those grounds, anti-feminist.

While there are many more layers to radical and lesbian feminism than described here, the central notion of ascribing a cultural (and essentialist) identity to lesbian women and gay men has affected much of the literature both by and about lesbians and gay men. It is this theoretical position which has produced the

discourses, identified in the next chapter, about 'alienated identities' and 'oppressed minorities'. This is a discourse of cultural alienation, (Phelan, 1994, pp.60-61) on the same lines as the discourses around ethnic minorities and colonised indigenous peoples[4] who struggle for equality in schools and other social institutions. Such discourses give rise to demands for a gay-inclusive curriculum, for support groups, for role models and so on. Reasonable and legitimate as these demands / requests may be, they, like the equal rights discourses arising from liberal humanism, leave unproblematised, undeconstructed, the very notion of sexual orientation as a cultural identity. The notion of subjectivities, *created* not described, through discursive regimes, is not possible within a cultural feminist framework.

Socialist feminism

Without discussing the complexities of socialist feminisms at this point, it can be seen that the Marxist-feminist attempt to create 'woman' as a 'class' within an economic framework runs into similar essentialising problems as do the radical feminists. Socialist feminists who use Althusser's concept of ideology as 'false consciousness', perpetuated in institutions such as schools, hospitals and so on as 'state apparatuses', are closer to the poststructuralist views argued below than are liberal or radical feminists. However, the belief in ideologies embedded in structures 'out there' in universal forms, is markedly different from the Foucauldian view of discursive power as immanent, multi-directional, and to be examined in local contexts. It is argued in this thesis that the Foucauldian view is a more appropriate way of theorising and of conceiving political action concerning ways non-conventional sexualities and gender 'performances' are positioned in schools.

[4] Critiqued, for example, by Mercer (1994), who makes the point that a 'minority' is literally a 'minor', a "childlike figure necessary for the legitimation of paternalistic ideologies of assimilation and integration" (p.270).

Hegemonic masculinity

There is one writer in particular, however, who theorises from a structural view, but whose insights into and empirical research concerning the construction of the homo/heterosexual divide has been significant in the development of the author's thinking about research. This is R.W. Connell, whose *Gender and Power* (1987) and *Masculinities* (1995) draw on a (socialist) feminist analysis of gender relations in society, and uses the concept of hegemonic masculinities described by Willis (1977) within Gramsci's neo-Marxist analysis of class relations:

> At any given time, one form of masculinity rather than others is culturally exalted. Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Connell, 1995, p.77).

Connell, and writers such as Lynne Segal (1990, 1994), see the practice of homophobia as closely tied to the construction and affirmation of masculinity, where

> ... the boundary between straight and gay is blurred with the boundary between masculine and feminine, gay men being imagined as feminized men and lesbians as masculinized women
> (Connell, 1995, p.40).

Certainly, in schools, 'girl' is a commonplace insult hurled at any boy who seems in danger of transgressing hegemonic masculinity in the eyes of his peers, just as pleasantries such as 'bulldog' are offered to girls or women who do not assume the culturally accepted modes of 'doing femininity'. Connell uses sociological data to show up this symbiotic relationship between straight and gay, masculine and feminine. That is, his research shows people operating with these 'ideologies' in their day to day life.

Poststructuralists who work in a Derridean tradition of language deconstruction (Sedgewick, 1990; Butler, 1990; Fuss, 1989, 1991) have a parallel analysis of how

binary concepts such as straight / gay are in an hierarchical relationship, with the privileged concept needing its opposing partner for self definition. Although this poststructuralist language deconstruction appears a long way from Connell and Gramsci, it can be useful to place these theoretical approaches alongside each other, certainly in a state of tension, but where we can use the insights of each and perhaps mitigate the weaknesses of each. Jane Kenway (1995), indeed, has argued (from a standpoint of 'materialist feminism') that the 'post' structural analysis is not necessarily antithetical to the structural, but rather the one 'articulates' with the other:

> ...materialist feminism ... articulates important insights from postmodernism with an analysis of social totalities. It articulates an analysis of struggles over meaning with an analysis of struggles over other resources (Kenway, 1995, p.45).

Kenway, too, sees Gramsci's concept of hegemony as useful alongside the ideas of Foucault, in that it describes the process "wherein cultural authority is negotiated and contested (and) presupposes that societies contain a plurality of discourses and discursive sites ..." (Fraser, 1992, in Kenway, 1995, p.45). Kenway also refers to the argument that a Foucauldian analysis of power that focuses on "the myriad of power relations at the micro level of society" (Sawicki, 1991, p.20) does not exclude widening the lens to acknowledge broad patterns of domination and subordination (in Kenway, 1995, pp.44-45).

Having struggled for a long time with the decision whether to view the data in this research primarily from a Gramscian or Foucauldian perspective, I had come to a conclusion that these theorists are not necessarily mutually exclusive. One can speak of concepts such as 'patriarchy' and of 'hegemonic masculinity' in the sense of describing a broad pattern in the relationships of power between men and women, but for reasons argued in the next sections, a post / structural analysis is best suited to frame this particular research project.

Feminist Poststructuralism

A compelling and useful way of theorising issues around sexuality and schools as state institutions, is through the insights of poststructuralism, particularly the ideas deriving from Foucault[5]. Feminist poststructuralism can produce an analysis of power to frame 'what is going on here', which does not lose sight of the central feminist concerns with the gendered nature of power, yet does not encounter the pitfalls of universalism and the unitary subject as in earlier feminisms. Especially useful here is the concept of discursive practices, where power is exercised through language and which also produces actions and material effects.

Because 'naming' and 'silence' are such commonplace characteristics of the way non-hetero sexualities are positioned in schools, a theory which puts language use into the centre of the analysis of practices of power, certainly seems to need close examination. Kenway (1992) describes poststructuralism as:

> a term applied to a very loosely connected set of ideas about meaning, the way in which meaning is struggled over and made, the way it circulates amongst us, the impact it has on human subjects and finally, the connections between meaning and power (1992, p.124).

The following discussion will centre on two key aspects of this "struggle over meaning"; firstly, the relationships among identity, subjectivity, sex, gender and bodies and secondly, following Foucault, how these enter into relationships of power.

I will begin this discussion by briefly explaining how Foucault theorised the historical construction of 'the homosexual' subject, and how this was taken up by

[5] Weedon (1999, p.100) distinguishes three main traditions within poststructuralism: one is the work of Foucault regarding the constitution of subjectivities through discursive power. She distinguishes this from the psychoanalytic tradition from Jacques Lacan, including Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray; and from the deconstructive tradition of Derrida.

social constructionists who persisted with a unitary and essentialist view of the self as an 'identity'. The politics of difference that derive from this view is then discussed. I then discuss the Foucauldian notion of subjectivity as discursive effect.

Social construction of identity

In his discussion of ways sexuality has been historically (and discursively) constructed since the seventeenth century, Foucault identified a transformation in the 19th century of sexual acts such as sodomy into 'personages' namely 'the homosexual'.

> The nineteenth century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology. Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. It was everywhere present in him ... The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now[6] a species (Foucault, 1990, p. 43).

Sexuality, in fact, is not for Foucault a 'natural given' which power tries to control, or knowledge tries to 'uncover', but rather

> the name that can be given to a historical construct: ... a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power (Foucault, 1990, pp.105-106).

On one reading, this is a classic statement of the social construction of sexualities. As Seidman (1993) has pointed out, however, scholars who have 'uncovered' the social construction of modern categories of lesbian or gay or indeed heterosexual

[6] Foucault dates the creation of 'the homosexual' as subject at 1870, formed in an article by Carl Westphal.

concepts, do not necessarily get away from the unitary subject and identity politics of 'the' gay and lesbian 'communities'. So a type of essentialism persists, even though no longer of the biological or medical models.

Problems with social constructionist politics of difference

As Seidman (1993) has stated, "the logic of identity is a logic of boundary defining" (p.130). Groups that increasingly objected to being marginalized by universalist gay and lesbian (and other forms of) identity politics, based on the ethnic minority model, have led to the emergence of a 'politics of difference'. Yet this politics, too, can persist with a unitary-identity model of subjectivity, albeit based on an ever-extending list of differences.

The dilemmas of 'difference politics' are discussed by Patricia Johnson and Leonie Pihama (1995). They argue that difference is often used to "uphold the interests of (dominant) groups and individuals over 'others' (p.75). They refer to Iris Marion Young's observation that identifying difference often entails one group occupying the position of 'the norm' against which all others are measured (in Johnson & Pihama, 1995, p.77).

Arguably, as long as people of lesbian, gay and other unconventional sexual orientation adopt either an ethnic-minority or a 'difference' model with its 'othering' effect, they will be even more vulnerable to the "regulatory regimes" (Butler, 1991) of stigmatised categorisation imposed from without their own 'communities.' 'Faggot', 'bulldog dyke' and other epithets, not to mention the physical violence, will continue to discipline both heterosexual and gay, lesbian or bisexual youngsters who look in danger of transgressing 'proper' gender roles.

> I've said no to gender, and I'm going to keep saying no to systems that would reign me in, classify me, pin me down, or keep me in my place. Nope. Not gonna play that game any more (Kate Bornstein, 1998, p.271).

A politics of difference serves to continue the divide between 'them' and 'us', 'normal' and 'unnatural', because the focus remains on the 'others', no matter how multiplied the others become. This has implications for concepts such as the 'inclusive curriculum', discussed in Chapters 11 and 12.

Attempts to deal with such problems, whereby difference is thought of in terms of its binary 'other' are addressed for example by Stephanie Di Stefano (1990), who suggests using the category of diversity rather than difference, able to "both uphold *and* deconstruct the notions of difference and gender" (in Johnson & Pihama, 1995, p.78). Certainly, as Biddy Martin (1992) points out, the stakes are high, particularly in a period of conservative backlash against "left-wing, politically correct repression" (p. 95), a backlash in danger of silencing discussion of gender, sexuality, race or class. So Martin, too, believes it is politically important to force public discussion of sexual diversity, in the face of "constant threat of erasure from discursive fields where the naturalization of sexual and gender norms works to obliterate actual pluralities" (Martin, 1992, p.95).

Beyond social constructionism

This section explores the concepts of identity and subjectivity from a feminist poststructural perspective.

Deconstructing the unitary subject

Moving beyond social constructionism, certain feminist scholars have deconstructed the lesbian or gay subject within the poststructuralist contexts of

binary meanings in the Derridean tradition.[7] Such scholars as Fuss (1989, 1991); Sedgewick (1990) and Butler (1990), argue that identity is always implicated in its opposite, hence the argument that homosexuality needed to be called into being as an 'identity' to shore up hegemonic heterosexuality. This concept is very important when focussing on how heteronormativity works in institutions like schools. It is also important as a critique of the inclusionary model of liberal humanist solutions to heterosexism, which focus on paying attention to the discrimination against and in/visibility of 'other' sexualities rather than focussing on hetero/sexuality itself.

Subjectivity as discursive effect

The other main thread in feminist poststructuralism is the Foucauldian concept of subjectivity as a discursive effect, an effect of power and, indeed, of "discourses that produce multiple and contradictory modes of subjectivity" (Weedon, 1999, p.116). For Foucault, sex is constituted in a range of discourses and discursive fields (such as biology, medicine, psychiatry, the law) just as forms of subjectivity are produced as the effects of discursive power. In *A History of Sexuality: Volume I, An Introduction*, Foucault (1990) described how a political and economic obsession with 'population' led to a situation where:

> between the state and the individual, sex became an issue, and a public issue no less; a whole web of discourses, special knowledges, analyses, and injunctions settled upon it (Foucault, 1990, p.26).

Foucault stated that his purpose in that volume was to:

> account for the fact that it *(sex)* is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt people to speak about it and which store and

[7] Although the deconstructive concepts from Derrida are important, this thesis owes its argument primarily to Foucault and the feminist philosophers who have worked in that tradition. See footnote 5 above.

> distribute the things that are said. What is at issue, briefly, is ... the way in which sex is 'put into discourse' (Foucault, 1990, p.11).

Foucault traced the emergence of secular discourses around sex to the turn of the nineteenth century, discourses which also became a concern of the state. The development of a medical discourse of sex opened up:

> the great medico-psychological domain of the 'perversion,' which was destined to take over from the old moral categories of debauchery and excess....The medicine of perversions and the programs of eugenics were the two great innovations in the technology of sex of the second half of the nineteenth century (Foucault, 1990, p.118).

It was these medical-scientific discourses that produced the 'subject' of 'the homosexual' as an identity, or species as Foucault described it.

Furthermore, in a statement that resonates strongly with themes in the literature reviewed in the next chapter, Foucault describes silences, "the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name", as "an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses" (1990, p.27).

Discourse, then, for Foucault was more than what is naively expressed through language. It was collections of statements that become "ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and the relations between them" (Weedon, 1996, p.105). Discourse in the material sense used by Foucault, thus produces 'regimes of truth' and of meaning, that are expressed not only in language, but through social and 'scientific' practices, which produce particular forms of subjectivity such as the production of 'the homosexual' described above. Competing discourses represent struggles over meaning, which in turn, can represent competing subjectivities.

Furthermore, subjectivity is taken up in multiple and changing ways, within particular discursive spaces and times. As Phelan (1994) has put it,

> We emerge as subjects within a particular space, a space defined by the networks of power and intelligibility operative at that place / time ... each of us occupies a space defined by overlapping discourses and practices, and ... each of us exists only in that space (p.19).

The way subjectivity is constituted through discourse is one of Foucault's major contributions to postmodern theorising. The "unparalled struggle ... waged with special ferocity in those areas of social life where sexual identity is most contested ..." that Watney (1991) speaks of, and quoted at the head of this chapter, should be seen in terms of competing subjectivities within a Foucauldian framework of competing discursive practices. The daily 'disciplining' that occurs in schools through heteronormative discourses and discursive practices, to shore up Rich's (1980) "compulsory heterosexuality" is powerfully described through a Foucauldian poststructuralist framework. But because of the 'overlapping discourses' that occur in particular configurations in particular sites, it is also possible to work to refuse the subject positions of heteronormative discourses. A 'struggle over meaning' can be actively and consciously engaged in. We do not have to be agentless flotsam and jetsam as the tides of discourse wash over us, turning us this way then that. This study seeks to understand just what some of the discourses are that prevail in schools, that are embedded in teachers' and administrators' beliefs and practices, that constrain subject positionings of hetero / sexualities, but also which might enable sexual diversity to be positioned 'otherwise'.

Feminists such as Judith Butler have applied these ideas to gender and the discursive construction of normative heterosexuality. In her essay Gender Trouble... (1990a), Butler critiques the position that "...sex conditions gender, and gender determines sexuality and desire" (p.336). Rather, she maintained, the gendered body is "performative" of certain "words, acts and gestures" which have

an illusion of an inner and core gender, an illusion which is "discursively maintained for the purposes of the regulation of sexuality within the obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality" (Butler, 1990a, p.337). In response to feminists who allege no feminist politics is possible without the gender divisions of women from men, Butler states that "The critique of the subject is not a negation or repudiation of the subject, but, rather, a way of interrogating its construction as a pre-given or foundationalist premise" (Butler, 1995, p.42). Furthermore, this can "expand the possibilities of what it means to be a woman and in this sense to condition and enable an enhanced sense of agency" (p.50). As Weedon (1999, p.103) has put it, subjectivities are lived as real, and do not exclude agency, as that agency forms part of subjectivity. Through discourse we learn how to think and behave "as though a fully coherent, intentional subject". But being aware, at the same time, of how our subjectivities are constructed in discourse, enables us to unveil more of 'what is going on here', including our own subject positioning in the social institutions we critique (Jones, 1992, p.25).

And just as sex is also a cultural construct, as argued by Foucault, so is 'sexual orientation' with no necessary linkages among sex, gender, gender preference, or sexual orientation / desire[8]. Yet through the disciplinary practices of discourse, fixed identities of sex, sex roles, gender roles, the identification of preferences of partners' gender as the defining characteristic of sexual orientation and so on are constructed as natural or perverse. Thus, an understanding of the power of discursive constructions 'denaturalises' institutions such as heterosexuality, and calls into question notions of 'normal' and 'natural'. Poststructural analysis is thus a powerful tool to analyse dominant heteronormative discourses in schools. It is also recommended in the final chapter that this tool of analysis be available to educators, and through them, to students, as a means of understanding and diminishing the destructive discursive practices that stigmatise and isolate those not 'doing' commonly accepted notions of masculine and feminine performances.

[8] As does Butler, (1991), and Gilbert, (1997, Chapter 8) also has an extended discussion that deconstructs sex and gender as understood in 'commonsense' in the twentieth century.

Discourse, subjectivity and power

Discourse is central to the Foucauldian notion of power "that no longer takes law as a model and a code." Power is "not an institution and not a structure"...it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society", a "multiple and mobile field of force relations, where far-reaching, but never completely stable, effects of domination are produced" (Foucault, 1990, pp 93, 102).

Discourse is used by Foucault to "designate the conjunction of power and knowledge" (in Kenway, 1992, p.128). In his exploration of an 'archaeology of knowledge', he set out to reveal how knowledge is never neutral, but rather there are 'regimes of truth' produced through political struggles over meaning, over 'truth telling'. It is the discourses that emerge as dominant, that constitute the 'truth regimes'. Discourses, in this sense of power / knowledge, constrain what can be said and who can speak. The way non-heterosexuals experience this form of power in schools is what gives rise to the metaphor of 'silences' and 'invisibility', which permeate the literature about homosexuality in schools and other institutions. Particularly relevant is Foucault's exposure of "how forms of rationality inscribe themselves in practices ... suppressing a plurality of alternative discourses, reducing their credibility ... and may be accompanied by regimes of morality or moral technologies" (in Kenway, 1992, p.129). Thus, the extract from Watney (1991) at the head of this chapter, describes not only a struggle between competing subjectivities, but shows how rival discourses can be accompanied by a state enforced 'regime of morality' that in England produced the Section 28 legislation (see p.14).

Foucault's assertion of sexuality as the effect of various social discourses such as medicine and psychiatry is clearly an important example of how discursive power operates. "Between the state and the individual, sex became an issue, and a

public issue no less; a whole web of discourses, special knowledges, analyses, and injunctions settled upon it" (Foucault, 1990, p.26).

Foucault rejected power as essentially repressive in operation and effect stating that "... repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power" (Foucault, 1980, p.119). Appealing to 'commonsense understanding', Foucault argues that if power were merely repressive, a 'saying no', who would obey? Rather,

> what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that ... it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse ...a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than a negative instance whose function is repression (Foucault, 1980, p.119).

It is only too easy to see the commonly spoken of 'silence' around homosexuality as 'repressive', which in significant material ways it is. Yet the nature of the power formations that effect the silence are much more complex than simple repression. Indeed, those same power formations, while silencing, simultaneously bring about very noisy, visible, and at times literally lethal discourses and behaviours on to the subject and bodies of homosexual and bisexual people, and also heterosexuals, who are made subject to these disciplining discursive practices. "Sexuality is far more of a positive product of power than power was ever repression of sexuality" (Foucault, 1980, p.120). The homophobic abuse in schools, documented in the following chapter as well as the data reported in this thesis, is theorised in terms of such disciplining discursive practices.

Other aspects of Foucault's analysis of power are also of interest when thinking about the positioning of homo/sexualities in schools. Another corollary of power as non-repressive, is his view of power as "in every relation from one point to

another" (1990, p.93). Rather than 'structures' of power, there are the 'broad patterns' arising from multi-directional relationships. Power, "insofar as it is permanent, repetitious, inert and self-reproducing, is simply the over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities ..." (Foucault, 1990, p.93).

Barbara Creed (1994) believes this view of the construction of sexuality and of power as discursive effect, offers a critique of the gender order as patriarchal structures and sexual order as heterosexual structures – that 'repress' everyday lives. "This (structural) view of power which sees lesbians and gay men as passive objects of heterosexual male power structures is not only utopian; it also denies the various ways in which homosexuals already exercise power and autonomy and are engaged in social transformation" (Creed, 1994,p.156).

This is a particularly important argument in viewing the ways in which sexual practices and sexual relationships are 'disciplined' within the state-community as I will show in the next section. It is also an important idea to bear in mind when considering some of the emancipatory discourses that are used by researchers and others who speak and write about the positioning of non heterosexuals in schools and other social institutions. Thinking in terms of how discursive relations of power intersect in local and specific sites of each school (or even each classroom or other sphere of action) may be at least as, if not more helpful than thinking in terms of grand strategies that do not take into account the ways discursive power circulates in specific sites.

The relationship between the local and specific sites of power relationships, and an 'overall strategy and effect' of power, leads to a discussion of the role of the state in issues of sexuality. For power, according to Foucault, consists of "the multiplicity of force relations...whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various

social hegemonies"(1990, p.92-93). The state, then, is one aspect of an 'overall strategical effect' of the micro-politics of power.

Power, schools and the state

This research project requires a theory of the state because the discursive practices being examined occur within schools, which are state institutions. Education and other policies, moreover, that impinge on sexuality in and out of school, as they are constructed, enacted (or not) and 'read' in the locus of school, originate within the complex relationships between state and community. Furthermore, the permeability among state, community and individual consciousness, which will be outlined in the following theorising of the state, means that even if schools were less bureaucratically linked to the state, discursive practices in schools would still be partially shaped by discursive practices of the state – and vice versa. One aspect of this direct relationship will be examined in Chapter 4 in the context of official literature and regulation relating to sexuality in secondary schools. If this research project is to produce tenable suggestions for resistances to or transformations of discursive practices that limit the lives of young people, then an understanding of those relationships is needed.

Feminist post-structuralists have taken up Foucault's concept of power and the state. Kenway (1992b, p.130) has described this as:

> ...an apparatus of social control which achieves its regulatory effects over everyday life through dispersed, multiple and often contradictory and competing discourses. It is a composite of micro powers.

Or as Biddy Martin has described it, "the state is not the origin, but an overall strategy and effect, a composite result made up of a multiplicity of centres and mechanisms" (1988, in Kenway, 1992b, p.135). Schools exist within these

intersections of state, community and capital and within these webs of locally situated discursive power.

Foucault has been particularly influential in these post-structuralist conceptions of power and the state. Not only did he reject power as repressive (see above), and as multi-directional rather than top-down, Foucault's own conception of the power wielded by the state is that it is limited, and that "(it) can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations... The state is superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family...knowledge..." (Foucault, 1980, p.122).

It is through such pervasive and overlapping 'technologies of power' that individuals, particularly gay and lesbian youth, internalise and locate themselves within homophobic and heteronormative discursive spaces. Indeed, in discussing his concept of 'surveillance' of populations, Foucault argued that "...power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes and modes of everyday behaviour. Hence the significance of methods like school discipline..." (op. cit. p.125). He believed that sex was of political significance because of the connection between control of the body and control of the population.

The state conceived not as sovereign power but, just as powerful, as an intersecting site of discursive practices and of knowledge/power relationships in society, is one location to examine 'what is going on' in the disciplining of gender relationships in schools. The state directly intervenes in issues of hetero/sexuality, in and beyond contexts of education and schools. Examples include the control of who may or may not marry, who does or does not have access to contraception and abortion, what will or will not be taught in schools

about hetero/sexuality, what sort of resource materials will or will not be available in state schools that teach about or even refer to hetero/sexuality.

The state and its bureaucracies, including the bureaucracies of education, are significant institutional sites for the production of 'knowledge' and 'truth'. State bureaucracies have played a significant role in what Foucault called the 'surveillance of populations', through the application of social science, data gathering, social programmes and so on. All this has played a major part in the establishment of discourses of normalisation. The 'official literature' (including laws, policy documents, curriculum statements, and resources) reviewed in the following chapter demonstrates some aspects of this state production of 'truth regimes'. Most of it is cast within a liberal humanist discourse of individualism and equal rights, and which masks a competing heteronormative discourse which underlies virtually all of these texts.

Kenway, then, argues that political action needs to include vigorous critique of state participation in this web of control and to "unmask the workings of institutions which appear both neutral and independent" (1992a, p.133). If one follows Foucault's analysis of the relationship between the local and specific sites of discursive power, and the broader strategies such micro politics bring about, then the subject of this thesis is to look at "what were the most immediate, the most *local* power relations at work? How did they make possible these kinds of discourses" (Foucault, 1978, p.97), and from there to suggest ... 'how were these discourses used to support power relations?' This thesis will examine the discourses that emerge from the data collected, and apply a form of analysis[9] which 'unpacks' the forms of institutional power relations, amongst other aspects of discursive practice, which underlie and interweave with those discourses.

[9] The form of analysis follows McNaughton (1998) – see methodology chapter.

Summary

This chapter has argued why feminist rather than queer theory was chosen to frame this study, and further, why poststructural theory is preferred over other feminist theorising to frame the research problem and to approach the analysis and discussion of the data. In particular, it was argued that liberal feminism, as with masculinist liberal thought, with its derivative discourses of equal rights and toleration of difference, leave heteronormative discourses fundamentally unchallenged. Because of this, a politics based on liberal aims of equal rights and toleration, will always leave 'other' sexualities and gender performances as able to be called into question, and 'watched' by those seeking inclusion and those seeking exclusion. 'Business as usual' will prevail.

Similarly, liberal and radical theories and politics that are based on essentialising notions of identity are not helpful. Even when conceived in terms of a politics of affirming / including difference, such theories cement in powerful, commonsense ideas of normalcy and the stigmatising 'otherness' of non-heterosexuality, and gender performances that do not fit conceptions of 'normal' masculine, feminine behaviour.

A post-structuralist femininism, drawing largely on the ideas of Michel Foucault, is used firstly to critique a view of 'the self' as fixed identity, and then to outline a view of subjectivity as multiple, contradictory and constituted by discourse. In the former approach, rather than challenging the stigmas attached to 'fixed identities' (of the homosexual, the lesbian, the transgendered), the solidity of the identity as not-normal, as unnatural, becomes entrenched. The latter approach, of course, while avoiding some pitfalls of essentialising theory, can also be seen as problematic. In particular, as Biddy Martin (1992) has cautioned, we need to avoid

the mere sweeping away of the homosexual subject, rather than critiquing and exposing 'regimes of truth' that leave (masculinist) discourses of heteronormativity unproblematised.

This chapter has also examined a poststructuralist view of power, which sees power not in a top-down relationship of dominant to subordinate, or state to citizen, but as a complex, 'strategical' web of power relationships. It has been argued that it is possible to use such a view of power alongside a Gramscian view of hegemonic and subordinate ideologies (Kenway, 1995), but that in looking at the micro-politics of power, in this case in the sites of ten secondary schools in New Zealand, we can gain an insight into the discursive production of stigmatised versus normal sexualities. We can also see how these intersect with state policies as seen in some cultural artefacts of the state bureaucracies of education.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

Sexualities positioned in the research literature

Introduction

There are, to my knowledge, no previous studies in New Zealand of how teachers and school administrators perceive the ways in which people of non-heterosexual preferences experience schools and/or are positioned in schools. There are, however, a few studies of how lesbian, gay and bi-sexual students have experienced school and even fewer that focus on gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers. This literature will be reviewed because it reports what those who are 'other' to the heterosexual mainstream say it is or was like for them in schools. Those reports need to be placed alongside any findings as to what the mainly heterosexual teachers and administrators believe it is like for their non-heterosexual colleagues and students as reported in this study.[1] The responses of the gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers in this study can also be compared with the findings of that literature.

Literature from overseas, mainly Britain and North America, will also be reviewed. This includes studies of how gay, lesbian and bisexual students and teachers have experienced school, but also studies of attitudes towards homosexuality in the context of school and university campuses. From overseas, too, are reports of interventions that have been documented, to reduce homophobic and heterosexist practices and to mitigate their effects in schools.

To my knowledge, there are no New Zealand studies that investigate the experiences of other groups such as parents, support staff or community

[1] This study had its inception as a study to complement the research by Town (1998) and Quinlivan (1994) of how gay and lesbian students experienced school. See Chapter 1.

workers in schools, whose sexual and family relationships are not heterosexual. Nor has there been any systematic investigation reported in the New Zealand literature of how students, parents or other affiliated school people perceive and position diverse sexualities within the context of school. There is, however, an account (Stewart, 1993) based on personal experience, of the 'invisible families' of gay, lesbian and bisexual people in New Zealand.

This literature review, then, will firstly cover New Zealand and overseas research within educational contexts of the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual students and then of educators' experiences. This is followed by discussions of documented interventions, of studies about 'attitudes' toward homo/sexuality in educational settings. In the next chapter, I also examine discourses embedded in some of the 'official' literature that emanates from the state and which position homo/hetero sexualities in schools in particular ways.

The Approach to the Literature Review

In this chapter, I identify discourses in the literature that position gay, lesbian and bisexual students and teachers as *alienated identities*, as *oppressed minorities* and as *deserving equal rights*. These discourses do not problematise heterosexuality, but position and locate non-heterosexual subjects as stigmatised 'others'. The literature examining attitudes to homosexuality is largely positioned within a *discursive field of psychology*.

Because of the way discourse is implicated in power, the discursive positioning of those whose sexuality one way or another challenges dominant or hegemonic[2] discourses of sexuality and of 'school', is of critical importance to this study. As a consequence of framing their inquiries within either liberal

[2] Originally a neo-marxist concept from Antonio Gramsci, hegemony refers to the way a particular form of a social practice is "culturally exalted" over other forms at any one time (see Connell, 1995, p.77). Within a poststructuralist framework this positioning occurs through discursive practice rather than through social structures of class or gender.

humanist or radical feminist discourses, many studies have perpetuated some of the very subject positions they set out to critique.

Discourses of essential identities

Alienation

In this chapter, I identify a position of *alienation* that derives from discourses of essentialism, where lesbian, bisexual and gay people are positioned as essentially 'gay' or 'lesbian' or 'bisexual' beings. Whether construed as such in biological, medical, or social constructionist terms, these 'identities' are seen as the 'core personality', "an essence at the heart of the individual which is unique, fixed and coherent and which makes her what she *is*"[3] (Weedon, 1996, p.32). In a humanist framing of the individual, homo/sexuality becomes the controlling characteristic in what is sometimes called an 'ethnic minority' model (see Chapter 2, p.23). Within this discourse, issues of visibility, inclusiveness, marginalisation, silencing, 'coming out' and 'passing', of the need for 'role models' are frequently spoken about and reported by researchers in this field of inquiry. In the literature, gay, lesbian and bisexual students and educators are viewed and positioned as problematic in a heteronormative environment.

Oppressed minorities

Similarly, and intersecting with the discourse described above, is the way gay, lesbian and bisexual subjects are positioned in some studies as an *oppressed minority*, and as powerless victims. Emphasis is placed on issues of 'the bad effects' of not 'being' unequivocally heterosexual in a heteronormative environment. Suicide and school drop out rates, a range of at risk behaviours and vulnerabilities and psychological / social alienation from friends and families are emphasised. This reinscribes the stigmatising binary relationship of 'the other' to 'the normal'.

Liberal humanist discourses

Equal rights

The literature advocating solutions to issues such as those outlined above is generally cast in a liberal humanist discourse of *equal rights* and *fairness*. This discourse sees the 'problem of gays and lesbians' as one of discrimination and denial of equal opportunities to education or in employment.

Toleration of difference

'Toleration' of those who are 'different' (from the norm) is frequently cited as important. Again, heteronormativity itself is not problematised.

School Experiences Of Lesbian And Gay Students

In this section I review first New Zealand then overseas literature that describes how young people identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual have experienced school life. These reports have generally been cast within discourses of 'essential identities', with strong themes of alienation and oppression.

Discourses of essential identities

Alienation

Firstly, the literature covering studies with gay and lesbian students is discussed. Here, there is a noticeable emphasis on the issue of identity, visibility and inclusiveness. In New Zealand, for example, Ann-Marie Stapp (1991) interviewed ten lesbian students, and reported that the students found

[3] This is in contrast to a post-structural view of subjectivity as discursively constructed. The "ways in which particular discourses constitute subjectivity have implications for the process of reproducing or contesting power relations" (Weedon, 1996, p.88) See previous chapter.

little 'visibility' (none in Catholic schools) of lesbianism, nor of lesbian issues beyond a cursory mention in the health curriculum in the schools they attended. This theme of 'visibility' and of being 'hidden' and also of being 'silenced' pervades the literature of lesbian and gay experiences in education. Kathleen Quinlivan (1994) also interviewed ten young lesbian women whose ages ranged from 15 to 25, one of whom was still at school and seven who had left within the previous three years.

Invisibility is one of the main themes that emerged for Quinlivan who discusses lesbian identity vis a vis the school curriculum in terms of cultural capital, and draws comparisons between the gender bias experienced by female students and the cultural alienation experienced by Maori students and "other minority cultures" (1994, p.63)[4].

This denial is a common (and often extremely painful) theme in both the New Zealand and overseas literature. The recurrence of this theme in the literature is well summarised by Vincent and Ballard (1997) who list the harmful effects of invisibility and silencing of lesbian or gay identity as "negative impact on students' emotional and physical health, relationships with family and friends, and on school attendance and achievement...feelings of isolation and depression... (and) 'at risk' behaviours such as the misuse of alcohol and drugs as well as suicide attempts" (Vincent & Ballard, 1997, pp.147-8).

In their study, Vincent and Ballard (1997) report on interviews carried out by Vincent with four young lesbian women who left school in the early 1990s and who had identified as lesbian while at school. The main headings they use to discuss the findings are "invisibility and difference, silence and marginalisation." Like Quinlivan, they also discuss this marginalisation in terms of cultural exclusion (p.158).

[4] Although in a chapter entitled 'Creating Lesbian Identities' Quinlivan uses the discussions of her participants to problematise the concept of 'lesbian identity' as fixed, essential and as a defining label, they also discuss the harmful effects of being forced to 'deny identity' in the face of a wall of hostility and / or a lack of acknowledgement within schools.

This kind of analysis is reminiscent of early feminist analyses within disciplines such as history and science and technology, that rendered women invisible and consequently absent from university and school curricula.[5]

In what emerged as a parallel study with Quinlivan's, Shane Town's qualitative research with ten young gay males[6] reports on their alienating experiences at their schools as well as in their families and communities. For example:

> Peter identified the power of the social conditioning that operated around him to suggest that a normal life was heterosexual, married with children ... 'So I guess, yeah, the only option was to be straight' (Town, 1998, p.115).

Here we see schools reinforcing for the boys the messages they had been receiving since they were young children, about acceptable ways of being masculine and of positioning sexual desires.

> The young men reported that schools either officially maintained a silence about sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular or provided minimal information, which resulted in confirming the minority status of sexualities other than heterosexuality (ibid, p.117).

As a consequence of these powerful homonegative messages, nine of the ten young men Town interviewed stayed in the closet throughout their schooling. This was despite the fact they had all self identified as gay between the ages of 10 and 12 years. They reported a resulting "fragmentation" of self (ibid, p.129).

Overseas, the most well known studies relating to students are those of Trenchard and Warren (1987) carried out in 1984 under the auspices of the London Gay Teenage Group. The 416 young people surveyed revealed that experiences at school compounded the problems they faced in coming to terms with their sexuality and with social and familial stigmatisation. Again 'visibility' was central to the discussions.

---

[5] These 'add women and stir' analyses were soon replaced by a feminist analysis of the very categories of history that imbedded unequal relations of power (Mathews, 1986). Similarly, critiques have emerged of 'girl friendly' approaches to science education (Gilbert, 1994).

[6] Whereas earlier studies tended to conflate the experiences of gays and lesbians in education, more recent literature has acknowledged the differences see for example Khayatt (1992, 1994), Quinlivan (1994) and Town (1998).

> boy or girl coming to their sexual identity in a school such as this, in which the pressure to be 'normal' is immense, will reject or suppress if they can those aspects of themselves which might bring into doubt their 'normality'. Thus we have the unpleasant spectacle of third, fourth, fifth or whatever year boys being, or trying to be swaggeringly, aggressively, manly.... Similarly, girls have a restrictive model of femininity to live up to (Baker, 1984, in Trenchard & Warren, 1987, pp.226-7).

Trenchard and Warren found in their own surveys that the absence of gay or lesbian sexual orientation from the curriculum and other school resources including support services meant the students faced isolation, abuse and pressure to conform from peers, with teachers generally condoning this hostility. Anxieties had resulted in a detrimental effect on their schooling and one fifth of those surveyed had attempted suicide. An ethnographic study in Britain by Mac An Ghaill (1991) also found schools negative, controlling and alienating (expressed in terms of suppressed identities again), although some of the boys in that study found strategies to challenge these features of their environment. Also, these boys were aware of the intersections of homophobia with sexism and racism, and thus this study goes beyond the 'suppressed identities discourse' and engages in critical analysis of the relations of power in operation and of ways of disrupting the discursive practices that positioned the boys as victims.

In Canada, Didi Khayatt (1994) and George Smith ran parallel ethnographies with lesbian and gay students in their school environments. Although Khayatt discussed institutional heterosexism in terms of schools as transmitters of official ideologies, the young women in her study mostly reported the homophobia and the resounding silence on gay issues, as "...a form of discrimination. It renders the individual or group invisible because they are not part of the norm" (p.56). In the U.S.A. Sears (1991) studied 13 lesbian and gay young people in the South, and he too found the same evidence of invisibility and alienation, as well as abuse at school. The strategies used by the young people to cope with these problems, were detrimental to their academic, emotional and physical well-being.

In this literature, then, heterosexism is viewed as an exclusionary ideology but within a humanist understanding of a 'core self', or of fixed identities. There is

little discussion of the ways subjectivity is formed through discourse and of the implications that creates for both heterosexual and non-heterosexual groups of individuals. 'Identity' is not problematised as a theoretical concept.[7]

Oppressed minorities

Another prevalent theme in the literature that arises from discourses of essential identities, positions young people who are not heterosexual as oppressed minorities and powerless victims. There is, of course, an often grim material reality behind such discussion in the research literature. The overseas evidence gathered in the U.S.A., the U.K. and Canada[8] that lesbian and gay youth are over-represented in suicide statistics by up to six times is particularly disturbing (Khayatt, 1994). The Massachusetts Education Report of the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth (1993) was itself a response to a shocking report on youth suicide issued in 1989 by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.[9] This subsequently suppressed report revealed a 170 per cent increase in youth suicide compared with a 20 per cent increase for the total population, with half a million young people attempting suicide every year in the United States. The report stated that approximately one third of suicides were of lesbian or gay youth, who were two or three times more likely to attempt suicide (Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, 1993, p.5). Less systematically gathered data in New Zealand suggests there may be a similar pattern here (Rose,1993). In an attempt to deal with the human misery behind these statistics, and to help gay and lesbian youth "... stay at home and stay in school so they can have healthy and productive lives" (Governor Weld, op.cit. 1993 p.5) the Commission held public hearings to gather testimony from gay and lesbian youth, parents, teachers and welfare professionals. The Report, entitled "Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth", containing strong recommendations for action, was the result.

---

[7] Although Town (1998) discusses the theoretical shift he had made from when his interview schedule was designed with an assumption of hetero/homo sexual binaries.
[8] Secretary's Taskforce (U.S.A.) on Youth Suicide, 1986, Warren (U.K.), 1984, Prairie Research Associates Inc, Winnipeg, (1989) - referenced in Khayatt, (1994).
[9] This does not appear to be the same report as the 1986 Secretary's Taskforce referenced above.

In New Zealand, a similar survey did not factor in sexual orientation (Barwick, 1994, cited in Town, 1998), and so the opportunity to gain systematic data on suicide statistics for the gay, lesbian and other non-heterosexual groups of youth was lost.[10] Evidence in qualitative studies, however, such as those of Quinlivan (1994), Stapp (1991) and Town (1998) strongly suggests that alienation of lesbian and gay youth not uncommonly leads to suicidal feelings. For example, five of the ten interviewees in Quinlivan's study and four of the ten young men interviewed by Town reported that they had contemplated suicide.

Suicide is the extreme end of the destructive effects of the homophobic and heteronormative environments gay, lesbian and bisexual youth experience at school and often in their families and communities. The literature in New Zealand that has focussed on experiences of gay and / or lesbian youth (Quinlivan, 1994; Stapp 1991; Taylor, 1989; Town 1998) has documented the psychologically damaging effects summarised by Vincent and Ballard (1997) and referred to above.

Yet arguments that construct non-heterosexuals as passive victims, as powerless and as outside the safety of 'normal', arguably have the unintended but harmful effect of leaving the focus of 'the problem' with people who are gay, lesbian, transgendered, and bisexual. Rather, it would be helpful for research to investigate 'what is going on' in terms of where the real problem lies, which is with discursive practices of heteronormativity. Furthermore, such constructions do not recognise the resistances and strategies employed by young people to manage their sexual identifications and same sex desires within the discursive positionings in which they find themselves in their schools and communities. Town's (1998) interviewees, for example, all emerged from school with academic successes from the sixth or seventh form.

[10] Attempts by gay and lesbian activists to have sexuality included as an analytic factor in the survey were unsuccessful. (Town & Quinlivan, 1995).

School Experiences of Lesbian and Gay Educators

This section examines the literature reporting studies of how lesbian and gay educators have experienced school. Most of the literature reviewed is from overseas, as little has been published in New Zealand. As with the literature reporting school experiences of gay, lesbian and bisexual students, discourses of essential identities, alienated and oppressed, dominate the literature about gay, lesbian and bisexual educators.

Discourse of essential identities

Much of the literature concerning the experiences of gay and lesbian educators is constructed within the discourse of essential identity which positions them as alienated and as an oppressed minority.

There is no published research about the experiences of gay, lesbian or bisexual teachers within New Zealand, although both Town (1993) and Quinlivan (1993) have reported in unpublished university papers on interviews with gay and lesbian teachers respectively. In addition, a paper prepared for the 1999 annual conference of the NZPPTA summarised reports from a series of workshops held during that year of gay and lesbian teachers sharing their experiences of working in secondary schools in New Zealand. Town (1994) has also published a review of the literature of gay male educators, and necessarily this mainly concerns literature from England, Canada and the USA.

The small group of teachers (eight) who identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual within the sample of the current study are therefore offering significant information as the perspective of these teachers is largely missing in the New Zealand literature.

Alienated teachers - identities in the closet

Not surprisingly, the dominant theme that emerges in the overseas literature is the closeted identities of lesbian, bisexual and gay teachers. Indeed, Gillian Squirrell (1989) discusses the absence of academic research writing about homosexuality in educational settings in terms of the invisibility of homosexual

teachers, of corruption myths associated with homosexuality and school children, of 'guilt by association' or the stigma attached to researching in this area, and of the technical and political difficulties associated with such research.

Squirrell (1989) conducted her interviews in the mid 1980s in England, when New Right conservatism was at its height and a homophobic moral panic eventually produced the infamous Section 28 of the Local Government Amendment Act. Passed in 1988, this legislation prohibited the 'promotion' of homosexuality in schools and prohibited any teaching "of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship" (Watney, 1991, p.394). This was a backlash to demands for a gay inclusive curriculum[11]. Keeping their sexual orientation hidden was therefore a matter of professional survival for Squirrell's interviewees.

Squirrell discusses the effects of hiding homosexual identities, mainly in negative terms, excepting for the career benefits for some, who threw themselves into work because managing / hiding a relationship was too difficult. Most reported the strain of keeping a personal distance from colleagues and senior students. They also talked about the frustrations and guilt of not being in a position to confront homophobic insults and prejudice nor address heterosexism in the curriculum. Not being out, positive role models for homosexual students added to the psychological stresses from leading double lives.

Writing a few years later (1992), Pat Griffin in the U.S.A. believed there were hopeful signs the climate was changing for gay and lesbian teachers. Teacher unions were beginning to sponsor gay networks, run anti-homophobic workshops and curriculum groups were calling for support for gay and lesbian youth.

Reviewing the literature in the U.S.A., Griffin (1992) found the same syndrome in all the studies as that described by Squirrell in England. Griffin undertook an action research project with 13 educators, male and female, from a range of

[11] See page 24 and Chapters 9 and 11 for a discussion of the concept of the 'inclusive curriculum' as problematic.

schools. The groups developed a continuum of how the teachers managed their lesbian and gay identities at school. The strategies they identified ranged on the continuum as follows: totally closeted, passing, covering, implicitly out, explicitly out and publicly out. Participants used different strategies depending on who they were with. They identified the closeted end of the continuum as separation of the personal and professional self, and the out end as self integration. The latter strategies were seen as high risk, and the most comfortable of the strategies was the implicitly out, as it preserved self-integrity but provided an 'escape hatch' in that they never explicitly used the words gay or lesbian to describe themselves. Also writing in the United States, Woods and Harbeck (1992) found that a group of lesbian teachers were also coping with internalised homophobia and self-hatred, not helped by feelings of remorse at their lack of honesty about themselves in their workplaces.

In Canada, the study Didi Khayatt (1992) carried out with lesbian teachers is entitled *Lesbian Teachers: An Invisible Presence,* reflecting again the theme of closeted sexual identity. Khayatt theorised within a framework of Gramscian ideological hegemony, arguing that heterosexuality is enforced through institutions such as the media and schools which act as "purveyors of hegemonic ideologies" (p.71). Lesbian teachers can only be tolerated as long as they pass as straight. The stigmas attached to homosexuality are likewise theorised as 'commonsense knowledge', necessary to a patriarchal hegemonic social order that is threatened by gender behaviours which flout heterosexual foundations. [12]

The theme of 'passing' at school, either by elaborate strategies to keep gay or lesbian identities hidden from colleagues and students, or limited coming out to colleagues, is a familiar one in New Zealand also. The networking of gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers, reported in the NZPPTA conference paper (1999) attest to this.

[12] In the previous chapter, I discuss how this concept of hegemony can be used within a poststructuralist framework, even though it comes from a very different theoretical position. See Kenway (1995).

Positioning gay and lesbian teachers as an oppressed minority

The reasons Squirrell's (1989) interviewees gave for keeping their lesbian and gay identities closeted, ranged from fears for job security and / or promotion, actual victimisation (fuelled by the AIDS panic), and concerns that their professional competence would be discredited:

> Homosexuality puts into question all your other work. It makes it invalid and you don't get taken seriously (Squirrell, 1989, p.23).

Squirrell was reluctant to focus on the 'victim' position, fearing it would fuel the homophobic prejudices and not confront the real problems that lie with institutional heterosexism. But a literature which researches 'the other' rather than focussing on and problematising the so-called 'normal', will inevitably buy into a victim positioning, especially when cast within a discourse of fixed identities. The central problem with 'coming out' as a lesbian / bisexual / gay man is that the sexual 'identity' immediately becomes the controlling characteristic of the person,[13] as discussed in the previous chapter.

Liberal Interventions – An Emphasis on Equal Rights

While there are both theoretical and pragmatic problems arising from a focus on discrimination and on 'victim' positions, the publicising of suicide and other abuse statistics among gay and lesbian youth can at least provoke sufficient outrage for some communities to adopt strategies aimed to prevent this abuse. Such interventions are generally cast within a discourse of equal rights and fairness, a liberal humanist framework. These interventions are significant and some have made a real difference to the quality of life for non-heterosexuals in schools. None the less, it will be argued in this thesis that the liberal framework limits the potential for fundamental change.

[13] The daughter of a friend of the author came home from her first day at college and in reply to her father's query about who her form teacher was, said (quite cheerfully), "I don't know, Dad, but she's a lezzie."

The most well known of these strategies is the Massachusetts Education Report of the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth (1993) which is referred to on page 44. This report, as a result of the evidence collected, which included "stories of violence, abuse and harassment, from both peers and adults" (ibid, p.7), made a series of recommendations "designed to create an environment where all students might learn, free from fear and intimidation" (p.7). Recommendations were formulated for schools, for families and communities, for state agencies, and for the state legislature. Recommendations to schools included policies to prevent harassment and discrimination, training for counsellors and teachers, gay / straight alliances as support groups, information in libraries and curricula inclusive of gay and lesbian issues.

This is the most comprehensive project ever conducted, to my knowledge, to address the problems of gay and lesbian youth in their school years (although it also goes beyond the context of school). The Commission has continued to employ people charged with implementing the recommendations[14] and there are mandatory links with teacher training programmes (Harbeck, 1997, p.318).

One of the most interesting of the strategies set up under the auspices of the Commission, is the 'gay-straight alliance' system of support networks. These support groups have a dual role in supporting gay and lesbian youth and also educating the straight school community about homophobia and heterosexism. Because membership is 'unidentified' in terms of sexuality, they are non-threatening to join and thus members are less able to be the target of homophobic attacks. The Massachusetts state has also passed a law banning discrimination in schools on the grounds of sexual orientation – a first in the United states – and a step beyond conventional EEO provisions which are passively inclusive of sexual orientation. Students can sue their schools if they fail to address discrimination and harassment. Massachusetts has undertaken this proactive, state wide programme on the basis of student safety and equal access to education and this is what is stressed in the face of opposition when it is encountered. Thus it fits firmly within the liberal discourse of discrimination

[14] Two of these employees were brought to New Zealand to address the 1996 GLEE Conference in Wellington, in particular to talk about the operation of the Gay-Straight Alliances.

and equal rights, and does so self-consciously, for pragmatic and political reasons.

Another well known project in the United States is the Los Angeles 'Project 10' developed at Fairfax High School 1985-86 (Uribe and Harbeck, 1992). Prompted also by outrage over the circumstances in which an openly gay youth who suffered constant harassment and abuse, dropped out of school and into the streets. This project has concentrated on counselling and support for gay and lesbian students, coupled with anti-homophobic education in the school at large. The theoretical perspective was the effect of the process of stigmatisation: "...a stigma so discrediting that it in effect reduces or denies the individual's other social identities" (Ibid, p.13). A survey to establish the experiences of gay and lesbian students found widespread verbal and physical harassment and extensive self-destructive behaviours including substance abuse, attempted suicide and dropping out of school. Surveys at the commencement of, and after 18 months of the programme, found a shift in attitudes in the school population and a general lack of resistance to the programme. The programme has subsequently been taken up in other schools across the United States and the authors recommend it as low cost, effective in reducing discrimination, and able to keep controversy to a minimum (Ibid, p.26).

In England, it is noteworthy that an attempt to introduce an anti-heterosexist curriculum, supported by the Greater London Council, provoked the backlash 'Section 28' legislation referred to on page 14.

In New Zealand, the only comparable project is currently being undertaken by Kathleen Quinlivan, who is undertaking action research in an urban secondary school as part of her PhD. Her results are not published as yet.

In another urban centre, Shane Town initiated attempts to set up gay/straight alliances in schools on the model of the Massachusetts Task Force. While several schools indicated interest, only one has been established to my knowledge. Meanwhile, the NZPPTA (1999) has revived a 'Safe Schools Task Force' and produced an Executive Conference Paper resolving further action. A draft pamphlet of advice and information to NZPPTA members has been

produced (NZPPTA, 2000). Gay and lesbian activists in individual schools have also made a difference to policy formation and school climate and these efforts need to be 'written up' in the form of historical research.

The comments Town's interviewees made on proposals for changes in schools are very interesting. On the one hand, the interviewees all said that schools needed to reduce the invisibility of gay sexualities and provide information. They identified the social studies, English and health curricula as suitable arenas for this to happen. They commented that social studies included a lot on Treaty issues but nothing on gay rights. On the other hand, they did not want special blocks of time devoted to gay issues, as this would be embarrassing and put them at risk. Rather, they wanted it to be 'an everyday thing'.

Attitudes to Homo/Sexuality in Education Institutions – Psychological Discourses

To my knowledge, there are no documented studies of attitudes[15] to homo/sexuality in New Zealand schools. The most well known published research in this area was conducted by James Sears in South Carolina (Sears, 1992a) and initially this study was intended to be modelled closely on Sears' concepts and methodology (see Chapter 5). The other studies reviewed below were in American college campuses and they are included because of some methodological and theoretical insights as well as for the empirical data they contribute.

Sears defined attitudes in cognitive terms and assessed these separately from feelings, which were assessed in affective terms. He set out to probe the relationship between personal attitudes and feelings, how these affect professional beliefs and practices, and how in turn these personal feelings and

[15] 'Attitude' research is situated within a particular theoretical framework of social psychology, the implications of which are discussed in Chapter 5. Foucault theorised Psychology and other 'fields of knowledge' as a discursive field which can constitute subjectivity in particular ways according to the 'truth regime' constructed through its particular configuration of knowledge. See also Chapter 2.

professional activities impact on students who are struggling with sexual identities (Sears, 1992a, p.30). Data on the last of these questions had been gathered between 1986 and 1988 and reported in his book *Growing Up Gay in the South* (1991). Responses to the first two questions were gathered from a survey in 1987 of 483 school guidance counsellors (142 responded), and a further survey in 1987-1988 of 258 teacher elementary and secondary trainees (191 responded). Both groups received a questionnaire including two standardised instruments measuring attitudes to, and feelings about, homosexuality as well as questions probing professional beliefs and practices.

Sears found a high degree of negativity towards homosexuality amongst both groups and although this was reduced amongst those who had some knowledge of or acquaintance with homosexuals, it was not eliminated. Four fifths of the prospective teachers held homonegative attitudes and feelings, of whom one third were analysed by Sears as "high grade" homophobic. Two thirds of the counsellors held homonegative attitudes and feelings, the administrators more so than practising counsellors, and were fearful of personal contact with homosexuals. Although this group also expressed more liberal opinions in terms of civil rights, and Sears concluded that in view of this, educative workshops would only be effective if directed at emotions as well as cognitive content.

Furthermore, even a shift in attitudes would not necessarily lead to changes in professional behaviour. Using instruments appropriate for each group, Sears probed professional behaviours - projected for the trainees, and current for the counsellors. What Sears found was that while both groups claimed to be able to set aside personal prejudices and assume a professional relationship with their gay or lesbian clients, their responses to the professional behaviours questions indicated that this was far from the case. As with the author of the next work reviewed, Sears saw a paradox in the messages counsellors receive from the profession, that homosexuality is okay, and messages from society that homosexuality is not okay (1992a, p.73).

William P. Norris, (in ed. Harbeck, 1992), described an extensive survey of attitudes to homosexuality undertaken at Oberlin College, "a nationally known,

highly selective liberal arts college ... with a strong commitment to equal rights" (Norris, 1992, p.83). The entire campus was surveyed – all staff and students and Norris reported that "two Oberlins seemed to emerge" – one in which strong positive attitudes towards gays, lesbians and bisexuals were expressed and one in which gays, lesbians and bisexuals were experiencing

> many instances of direct discrimination, ranging from verbal abuse to physical attacks, violent intolerant language, and the sense that there was no place to turn in order to seek help ... (Ibid, p.82).

Norris sought to explain this paradox within the particular configuration of Oberlin's history, traditions and priorities in the wider context of U.S. society. With a complex analysis and discussion of the data, Norris concluded that what was operating was two competing sets of values in the institution, one focussed on equal rights and the other on enforcing a heterosexual orthodoxy, with the latter keeping heterosexual men and women in line as well as 'disciplining' others who transgress the traditional gender roles. People who espouse equal rights, may still be reluctant to actively support gay and lesbian issues because of being pulled by the conflicting value of heterosexual orthodoxy. He concludes that the 'puzzle' for gay and lesbian activists seeking to end discrimination is "how to appeal to the people across these two competing value dimensions" (p.118) and believes that the only probable hope of success is to organise around equal rights.

Thus, while Sears conducted his research within the traditional framework of attitude research, looking for connections and disjunctions between attitudes and behaviour, Norris examined textual data and explained the results in terms of institutional culture and the way that intersected in particular ways with larger societal structures. Norris's 'competing value systems' could as well be cast within a post-structural theoretical framework of 'competing discourse'. Read this way, his conclusions would strongly be reflected in the analysis of discourses and discursive practices emerging from the data in this thesis.

There is one further campus survey in the United States which is included in this review because of the approach taken in analysis of textual responses.

Linda LaSalle (1992) analysed the comments from an attitude to homosexuality survey conducted in 1991 at a large, public research university located in the northeast of the U.S.A. She used grounded theory methodology (Strauss, 1990) to "allow the patterns, themes and categories of analysis (to) ... emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (LaSalle,1992, p.6). LaSalle identified a continuum of acceptance through to resistance of homosexual existence, and five categories emerged: advocating, accepting, neutral (unclear), oppositional, and hostile. (The examples given in each category were very similar to comments that emerged in this writer's data, notwithstanding the difference in location and institutional context.) LaSalle (and her assistant) then analysed the comments in the oppositional category (about 50 per cent of the total) and found four themes: homosexuality is immoral / against religion, it is abnormal, it is a private issue, and the issue is a waste of time. Again, these themes emerge in the data of this thesis. LaSalle theorised about her data in terms of homophobia and heterosexism and argued the need to educate the university community about these concepts in order to "create an environment of visibility and safety for lesbian, gay and bisexual people" (p.18).

Conclusions

In conclusion, I have reviewed what I consider to be the key literature relating to the context of this study, both from overseas and in New Zealand. This review has shown a fairly wide (while not extensive) literature relating to the experiences of gay, lesbian and bisexual students and educators within their educational settings, particularly secondary schools. This literature has, along with the literature documenting school-based interventions on behalf of gay, lesbian and bisexual students, been cast within discourses of essential identities such as alienation and oppressed minorities, and of liberal humanist discourses of equal rights and toleration of difference, with emphasis on the problems lesbian, bisexual and gay people have in surviving within, at worst hostile and at best indifferent, heteronormative communities. Very few studies,

none in New Zealand, have put the spotlight on the school institutions themselves, and why the adults within them, charged with the education and well being of all students, persist in a failure to create fully inclusive, not to mention safe, educational environments.

Those studies in the United States that have addressed this question, have done so within a framework of psychological and behavioural attitudes, although Norris (1992) has used concepts of institutional culture, competing values and gender role 'orthodoxy' as explanation.

Clearly, there is a need in the New Zealand context and overseas, to begin to examine school institutions and how the people that work in and for the schools perceive these issues. There is also a need to explore different theoretical perspectives, in the hope that fresh ways of viewing the situations, experiences and utterances will produce fresh insights, capable of forming a framework for positive change.

Thus, the significant gap I have identified in the New Zealand research, and even in the overseas literature, of how sexual identifications are positioned in secondary schools, is the absence of any investigation of why, or how is it, that teachers and administrators in schools fail to address the silences and silencing utterances around (homo)sexuality, and fail to actively work towards anti-discriminatory inclusion of people with non hetero/sexual identifications in the school community. As Town (1998) has put it:

> There is a clear need to discover how heteronormative processes are constituted and represented within schools ... to silence and make invisible young males who are managing their emerging same sex desires. The cost of not attending to the silences about (homo)sexuality and education, mean that for young males and females schooling is an alienating, frightening and unsafe experience (Town, 1998, p.36).

The relatively extensive literature from outside New Zealand, and emerging literature from within New Zealand, shows that by and large school leadership does fail in this respect from the point of view of those who are not heterosexual. In this study, therefore, there is less concern to show *that* there is such a failure, although the research questions are framed in such a way as to

not exclude data that might indicate this is or not so. Rather, the investigation seeks to expose and understand the discursive practices of teachers and school administrators that position people of other / transgressive sexual identifications in particular ways. In terms of the research problem, it is important also to remember the original political purpose of the investigation, which was to seek to understand the constraints and opportunities that operate in schools to inhibit or facilitate the success of anti-discriminatory intervention strategies.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE 'OFFICIAL' LITERATURE

A Discourse Analysis

> What is at issue, briefly, is ... the way in which sex is 'put into discourse'.
>
> -Foucault, 1990, p.11

Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss some of the discourses encoded in official and semi-official texts that relate to ways sexuality is positioned in New Zealand secondary schools. This will include government legislation, regulation, curriculum documents and some curriculum related teaching resources.

In Chapter 2 (p.31ff) I discussed the relationships among "power, schools and the state", including texts that emanate from the state. It was explained there that a poststructural view sees that the permeability among state, community and individual consciousness, means that even if schools were less bureaucratically linked to the state, discursive practices in schools would still be partially shaped by discursive practices of the state – and vice versa. It is important, therefore, to examine official texts that contribute to the ways in which sexuality is or can be positioned within secondary schools. Of course, the ways in which such official discourses are taken up in schools will result from the ways that the "multiple, and often contradictory and competing discourses" (Kenway, 1992b, p.130) intersect in the particular configuration of each local school site, and indeed, even more local sites within each school.

The texts I have chosen, and analysed for discourses that position hetero/homo-sexualities in particular ways, have been selected for their direct and / or indirect connections with both broad school policy and particular curriculum treatment of sexual diversity and sex and health education. For this reason, they are confined to New Zealand. These texts, therefore, comprise an

important aspect of the context from which participants in this study responded to the questionnaire. The recommendations in the final chapter are also framed within the context of these official discourses.

Government Legislation

The Human Rights Act (1993)

The New Zealand Human Rights Act (1993), which includes sexual orientation in its anti-discriminatory clauses (Part II, Section 21, (m)), is relevant to the liberal humanist discourses of equal rights and the espousal of toleration that was discussed in some sections of the previous chapter. On the face of it, this legislation means that lesbian, gay or bisexual students and teachers in New Zealand should be able to state their sexual preferences, if so choosing, with no fears of harassment. Teachers should be able to be open, with no worries of not gaining promotion or being an object of complaint or of being ostracised in any way by their colleagues and senior managers and students. As we shall see, however, heteronormative and homonegative discourses operating in New Zealand communities and schools can and often do have greater force than the liberal discourse of equal rights encoded in the law. This was seen also in the context of some studies in the U.S.A. (Norris, 1992). The anti-discriminatory beliefs encoded in the law, on the other hand, do have the potential to counter the heteronormative discursive practices and effects described in the previous chapter.

Education Regulations

The legal and regulatory framework for schooling in New Zealand is centred on the National Education Guidelines, (Ministry of Education [MOE], 1993, 1999) which in turn encompasses the National Education Goals (MOE,1993), *The*

New Zealand Curriculum Framework (MOE, 1993) (the foundation policy statement on curriculum - not yet gazetted), the various National Curriculum Statements and the National Administrative Guidelines (MOE, 1993, 1999a), (which give specific directions to Boards of Trustees). I will examine those statements in these official texts which contribute to the discursive positioning of hetero/homo sexualities in schools, and suggest how they do this.

The national curriculum framework

Although not yet legally gazetted, the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (MOE, 1993) document has in fact provided the guiding policy for the development of curriculum statements in the 1990s. It sets out the Principles (nine), Essential Learning Areas (seven), Essential Skills (eight), and the Attitudes and Values expected to underpin the curriculum.

Two of the Principles have a bearing on provision of education for students who may be 'different'. One states that the school curriculum "will provide learning opportunities which will enable all students to achieve the learning objectives to the best of their ability "(MOE, 1993, p.6). Another states that the school curriculum will

> recognise, respect, and respond to the educational needs, experiences, interests, and values of all students: both female and male ... all ethnic groups ... different abilities and disabilities ... different social and religious backgrounds. Inequalities will be recognised and addressed. All programmes will be generally inclusive, non-racist and non-discriminatory, to help ensure that learning opportunities are not restricted (MOE, 1993, p.6-7).

This discourse of 'equal education opportunities', also implied in the principle quoted previously, including its anti-discriminatory statement, is framed within the liberal-humanist discourse of individual rights. As such, it is a discourse which can counter and also be countered by competing discursive practises prevailing in schools.

The statement on attitudes and values is also of interest. Values are defined as "internalised sets of beliefs or principles of behaviour held by individuals or groups ... no schooling is value-free" (MOE, 1993, p.21). The statement goes

on to prescribe that the school curriculum will "through its practices and procedures, reinforce the commonly held values ... (that) include honesty, reliability, respect for others, respect for the law, tolerance (rangimarie), fairness, caring or compassion (aroha), non-sexism and non-racism." Clearly, the values named fall mainly within the liberal humanist traditions discussed above. Arguably, however, a welfare liberal discourse of 'community', or perhaps 'social democracy' is also embedded in some of these statements, which goes beyond mere 'individual' rights. For example, the value of aroha / caring for others, suggests a concern for community welfare. (The notion of 'community' is given even more weight in the Health Curriculum statement on attitudes and values (see below). Many of the items in this statement on values were used by respondents in the survey for this thesis, some in the context of oppositional as well as of supportive statements towards homosexuality.

The Essential Skills also contain statements of interest to this thesis. Under 'Communication skills', it is stated that students will "develop skills of discrimination and critical analysis in relation to the media, and to aural and visual messages from other sources" (MOE, 1993, p.18) Under 'Problem-solving Skills', students are also encouraged to "think critically, creatively, reflectively, and logically" (Ibid, p.19). The recommendations in the final chapter of this thesis will suggest ways schools can give effect to these essential skills in the context of students (and teachers) acquiring skills to deconstruct heteronormativity.

The National Administration Guidelines

The National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) to Boards of Trustees were revised in 1999, and no longer require schools to 'identify barriers to learning'. The Guidelines do, however, as with the 1993 version, require Boards to give effect to The New Zealand National Curriculum Statements (NAG 1), and thus to the clauses discussed above. They also require Boards to comply with the State Sector Act and "be a good employer" (NAG 3), thus having regard to the well being of staff. The well-being of students is addressed in NAG 5, which requires Boards of Trustees to

i. provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students:

ii. comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees (The Education Gazette, 25/11/99).

The second clause above, particularly when set beside NAG 3, would certainly require school to have active sexual and general anti-harassment policies in place.

An interesting test case is currently being prepared against a secondary school which allegedly failed to provide a safe environment and to follow up on complaints of harassment by a young lesbian student who was badly injured in a homophobic attack by other students there (TVNZ, The Holmes Show, 20.11.00). Presumably, the basis of the litigation against the school is the non-compliance with NAG 3.

The first clause, furthermore, can be interpreted more widely than just providing for anti-harassment policies and procedures. If a school fails to address a school culture which alienates students on the basis of heteronormative discursive practices, then it could be argued strongly that the school is in breach of clause I of NAG 5.

The Health Syllabus in the New Zealand Curriculum

Perhaps the most significant 'official text' for the discursive positioning of sexualities in New Zealand schools, is the health syllabus and its successive revisions. Gillian Tasker (1996) has written about the politics of developing and implementing the health curriculum in an era when the New Zealand curriculum has been actively contested by political groups such as the Business Round Table. Her concluding comments echo Watney's (1991) description of the "unparalleled struggle ... in those areas of social life where sexual identity is most contested ..." (Watney, p.393). In pondering the long delay between the approved draft and final promulgation of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum (of which she was a principal writer), Tasker asks:

> Will the statement reflect a theoretical commitment to health for all in the twenty first century, or will it be a step backwards to the individualism of the past? Perhaps the key question to ask...(is) whose interests will it serve? (Tasker, 1996, p.199).

Lisette Burrows (1999) has also discussed in some detail the way in which the health syllabus in schools reinforces normative ideologies of health and fitness.

Following on from the fiercely debated Johnson Report (Department of Education [DOE], 1977), the first revision of the health syllabus was published in 1985 (DOE).[1] The syllabus (reissued in 1990) makes direct reference to the public controversies:

> In the public discussions during the past decade, some organisations have expressed concern about the use of a broad definition of the term *health,* and about the possibility that programmes based on such a definition might put children in conflict with some of the attitudes held by their families ... also ... a move away from traditional values (MOE, 1990, p.11).

The solution was to require parental consultation while the syllabus was developed in each school, and to give parents the right to withdraw students from sex education classes. While the contested values causing most controversy at the time revolved around contraception and acknowledgement of sexual activity by young adolescents, in more recent years controversy has also erupted over how lesbian and gay relationships are being discussed within the framework of the health syllabus.

Thus, not only conservative discourses about hetero/sexuality have shaped the way the syllabus has been implemented, but also conservative discourses about the way heterosexuality is positioned vis a vis alternative sexualities.

It can also be noted here that the political struggle has been shifted away from the centre of government to the site of each school. In a sense, the then Department of Education washed their Pontius Pilate's hands of the controversies inherent in the syllabus, and allowed each community to fight it out with their school. This can be viewed as an instance of Foucault's micro-politics of the state-community, where the local and specific site is the focus of discursive struggle.

[1] This syllabus, although now superseded, is discussed in detail here as it was in force during the period that data was gathered from schools for this thesis (1995).

In view of the marketisation of schools in the 1990s, schools have been left vulnerable and arguably timorous about what to include in their health programmes in terms of discussing a range of family and sexual relationships. Data in this thesis supports this argument and this tension is further discussed in Chapter 10. The consultation clauses also give individual principals considerable power over how the health syllabus is to be interpreted and there is evidence that this power is conservatively used in schools.[2]

The specified content, or 'themes' of the 1985 syllabus, that required consultation with parents, were "understanding physical changes" (in a theme Building Self-Esteem); "pubertal changes and associated body care" (theme of Caring for the Body); and "changes in friendships and relationships, sexuality" (theme of Relating to Others) (MOE, 1990, pp.14-19). The New Zealand literature on how this curriculum was experienced by gay and lesbian young people indicates that there is a great silence around non-heterosexual friendships and relationships (Quinlivan, 1994; Town 1998). Furthermore, the experiences the young people report would indicate that the intended aims of the syllabus, such as building self-esteem through "understanding their feelings ... learn(ing) to value themselves and gain a sense of assurance" (MOE,1990, p.14) was not able to be experienced by students who were questioning their sexual orientation or identifying as other than heterosexual, as these relationships were excluded from discussion.

> I never accepted myself until I was accepted by other people ... I had no self esteem ... (Town, 1998, p.188).

One final comment on the 1985 Health Syllabus, both as a syllabus intended to be enacted across the curriculum of schools, and also in a reference to the informal curriculum of schools, is worth noting. The then Director General of Education stated in his foreword to the document that

> this syllabus is directed at every teacher, as in a sense, every teacher is a teacher of health education (MOE, 1990, p.3).

---

[2] A former teacher from one of the schools in this research described to me how the health syllabus resources were personally vetted by a former principal, and with extremely conservative choices made. (Personal communication – anonymous to protect identity of the school.)

This assertion was either unknown or disagreed with by some respondents in the current study, who contended that such matters were not part of their professional duties.

In contrast to the predominant liberal humanist discourse of Equal Opportunities embedded in *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (1993), and the way this discourse appears as advocating toleration and acceptance in the 1985 Health Syllabus, the latest curriculum statement for Health education (MOE, 1999b) explicitly includes a discourse of collectivity, or social justice. Not only is 'social justice' named as a core value of the curriculum (p.34), it is present in numerous achievement objectives. One, for example, requires students to "take individual *and collective* action to contribute to safe environments ..." (p.64). However, this discourse of social justice seems derived more from Critical Theory (Habermas, 1971), than Enlightenment liberalism. The latter has given rise to the liberal discourses of humanist individualism that appear in the guise of equal opportunities, equal rights, tolerance of difference and non-discrimination (which are also apparent in the document).

Related to this discourse of social justice is a discourse of 'social critique' embedded in the required skills of the curriculum. Students will be given opportunities to "critically analyse societal attitudes and practices and legislation ..." (p.64) and to "reflect critically" (MOE,1999b, p.15ff) on their own values and attitudes in respect to diverse sexualities as well as other issues affecting the well-being of individuals and communities. For example:

> Through the socio-ecological perspective, students will critically examine the social and cultural influences that shape the ways people learn about and express their sexuality, for example, in relation to gender role, the concept of body image, discrimination..." (MOE, 1999b, p.38).

This new curriculum statement also makes specific reference to sexual orientation and requires students to deconstruct prevailing social attitudes towards gender construction and homophobia. While the examples given in the achievement objectives are not mandatory, at least issues of sexual orientation and gender construction are explicitly present in the health curriculum and this

may encourage more open consideration of these aspects of sexuality and family and friendship relationships.

Another feature of the curriculum statement is the distinction it makes between sexuality education and sex education, with sex education as only the physical component of sexuality. The 1964 legislation, seen with its opt out clauses, still applies to this curriculum, to those aspects deemed to be 'sex education'. By the same legislation, schools are also required to consult their current and potential future constituency on the scope and emphasis of the way the curriculum will be treated in the school. Following this consultation, the Board of Trustees can direct or refrain from directing the school to include or exclude any aspect of the sex education programme. This does not apply to the treatment of the health curriculum as a whole. The persistence of this legislative requirement gives force to Watney's contention that "values and identities forged within the sexual categories of the nineteenth century and rival values and identities that have emerged in the twentieth century" (1991, p.393) remain strongly contested in our schools.

Although not gazetted at the time data was gathered for my research, I have included this recent curriculum document in this review for two reasons. Firstly, this curriculum document was under development at the time data was being gathered in schools for this research, and this had involved extensive consultation (Tasker, 1996). Some of the teachers surveyed, therefore, would have been familiar with the drafts and, in fact, all teachers should have been involved in consultation over these drafts. The change in emphasis from the 1985 syllabus, analysed in the forgoing paragraphs, could have affected the responses gained in this research. Secondly, this shift in emphasis provides an opportunity for future changes in the ways gay, lesbian and bisexual students, teachers and their families are positioned in schools. This opportunity is taken up in the recommendations in the final chapter.

Of course, viewed as an 'object' or 'product', a curriculum statement may or may not bear much resemblance to the enacted curriculum, let alone the curriculum as experienced by individual students. Cornbleth has commented:

> It may be that, in some education systems, schools and classrooms, there are few differences between curriculum documents and curriculum

> practice ...This is not the case in the US and, I suspect, not often the case elsewhere, particularly in pluralistic societies and nations with relatively open decentralized education systems (Cornbleth, 1990, p. 24).

Indeed, Tasker (1996) notes that the Education Review Office of New Zealand has found in 1993 and again in 1996, that fewer than half of schools were enacting the official health curriculum.

Aside from this clear avoidance of the curriculum, even where schools and teachers may believe they are implementing a syllabus, what happens is far from the technocratic myth[3] of an unproblematic and linear connection between the document, the teacher and the learner. Rather, as Cornbleth (1990) puts it, curriculum is "constructed and reconstructed in situated practice" (p.26). Curriculum is

> an ongoing social activity that is shaped by various contextual influences within and beyond the classroom and accomplished interactively, primarily by teachers and students (Cornbleth, 1990, p.24).

The way sexuality is positioned in this daily interactive process has been theorised, in this study, in terms of discursive practice. A critically constructed curriculum document, such as the most recent document discussed above, offers some discursive spaces for critiquing some prevailing social practices of heteronormativity. In each school and each classroom, however, counter discourses will also come into play, in the manner described above by Cornbleth (1990).

Class room Resources

One significant way that official curricula are mediated in classroom practice is through the availability and selection of teaching resources. Tasker (1996) has critiqued the reliance on commercial or interest group 'packages' produced to support the health curriculum in New Zealand. Certainly in terms of the sexuality component of the curriculum, the contestation of sexual values is

[3] A technocratic and linear view of curriculum design / implementation was set out by Tyler (1949). It has been extensively critiqued e.g. by Schwab, 1969, Cornbleth, 1990 and others.

evident in some of the resources available to schools. This includes the positioning of sexual orientation. A selection of resources, used in one of the schools in the area of the survey sample, is reviewed here to show this contestation. The school these resources were gathered from was not one of the sample schools, but was a moderate sized, middle decile school in the same metropolitan area, and has done considerable developmental work in implementing both the 1985 and 1999 health syllabii.

One resource used in schools is the Blackline Masters *Health Education* (Brice, 1995) published in Australia and used in New Zealand schools. Chapter 26 is headed "Growing Up – Dating". The opening sentence is unequivocally heterosexist:

> Going out on dates with a person of the opposite sex is like going for a 'trial- run'. You are both trying to find out whether you really like doing things together. Write in the heart the qualities you look for in the person you want to go dating with (Brice, 1995).

Another comprehensive, activity based resource is *Teaching sexuality* (Kokonis and Maginness, 1996). This resource includes (somewhat stilted) units on 'gender stereotypes' and 'diversity of sexual orientation'. At one point in the latter unit, it is suggested that the teacher ask for examples of sexual orientation. "If they offer slang or offensive words include them as they will become useful later when discussing appropriate language." (Kokonis & Maginness, 1996, p.95). There does not seem to be any suggestion of discussing why or how such language positions 'different' sexualities.

Yet another resource, *Let's Talk About Sex* (Harris, 1994), endorsed by the Family Planning Association, also includes a chapter on sexual diversity called "Straight and Gay – Heterosexuality and Homosexuality." This includes illustrations of happy faced combinations of same and opposite sex couples. It takes a historical approach to talking about homo/sexuality and does begin to explore homophobic attitudes:

> Some people disapprove of gay men and lesbian women. Some even hate homosexuals just because they are homosexual. People may feel this way because they think homosexuals are different from them ... (Harris, 1994, p.17).

A recent publication of the Family Planning Association (2000), *The Word*, also includes a section on sexual orientation and explores bisexuality as well as heterosexuality and homosexuality. The discussion is brief, matter of fact and includes photographs of same sex and opposite sex couples kissing.

> It doesn't matter who you are attracted to, have relationships with or what label you put on it. The world is full of people loving different people for different reasons (F.P.A., 2000, p.7).

Sisters (Morris, 1995), an up beat booklet for girls on sexuality published by the Y.W.C.A. and the Public Health Commission, has several pages at the front of the book on "your sexual orientation". This section begins with heterosexuality, which is not therefore positioned as universal sexuality separate from sexual orientation of the 'others' namely lesbian and bisexuals. This booklet also has sought to go beyond the mono-cultural presentation of most other publications, and has used the advice of Samoan and Maori communities.

In contrast to the above publications is *Sex With Attitude*, published by 'Parents with Confidence Inc' (Cowan, Grant & Hielmann,1997). Presented in an 'up beat' style, not dissimilar to the FPA book, *The Word*, this book is designed to promote conservative values. Sexual Orientation is discussed towards the end of the book, sandwiched between a page on pornography and one on marriage. Thus we see the discursive positioning of homo/sexuality presented in 'material' form as stigmatised 'other'. The page layout is austere, featuring a large question mark, and faces the page on pornography which also has a dark and austere lay out. In contrast, the following page has busy and happy images of (heterosexual) marriage. The text has strong suggestions that choosing homosexual relationships is a failure to relate positively to the opposite sex:

> Remember feelings don't always tell the truth, and you certainly don't have to act on them. Feelings of loneliness, hurt, and longing for companionship are not the best helpers in a decision like this (Cowan et al, 1997, p.13).

Whereas all of the above publications were designed specifically for the sex education component of the health syllabus in schools, two others have been produced specifically to address heterosexist and homophobic attitudes.

These are, firstly, *Straight Talking – A kit for educators*, produced by the New Zealand Aids Foundation (Rankine, 1992); and *Affirming Diversity - An Educational Resource on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Orientations*, produced by the Auckland Branch of the Family Planning Association (Liggins, Wille, Hawthorne & Rampton, 1994). The first, *Straight Talking,* provides workshop exercises for any organisation wishing to address discrimination against and / or promote understanding of homosexuality. It expresses two key goals as helping participants to

> ... recognise the extent and nature of social and institutional prejudice against lesbians and gay men, and the impact it has on their lives, (and to) explore ways in which heterosexism and anti-gay/lesbian bias limit options for sexual and emotional expression for all people (Rankine, 1992, p.7).

Thus, this resource goes beyond a liberal humanist discourse of tolerance and inclusiveness, towards problematising the effects of heteronormativity for all people.

Affirming Diversity, states in its preface that "sexual orientation (is) a key issue that has not been adequately addressed" (Liggins et al, 1994). The resource was produced to address a "lack of inclusiveness" in the resources available and in response to demand. They note a concern about the "discrimination and abuse of lesbian and gay youth" and a commitment to "creating equal learning and living opportunities for all young people." This resource also addresses "lesbian, gay and bisexual invisibility" (p.20) and the need for schools to include specific statements about sexual orientation in their Charter policies, that are "not included in vague general statements about sexism and gender equity." This resource, then, while providing a range of activities to facilitate exploration of homophobic attitudes, seems situated within the discourses of equal rights and tolerance discussed earlier in this and in the previous chapter.

Conclusions

Official discourses of the state have, especially since the early 1990s, included anti-discriminatory legislation and anti-discriminatory discourses within official curriculum documents. Discourses embedded in bureaucratic regulations governing schools, also require Boards of Trustees to ensure a safe physical and emotional environment for students and the well-being of employees. Most of these discourses lie within a liberal humanist framework of individual rights and equal opportunities. A significant exception is the most recent revision of the Health curriculum, which has a socially critical theoretical foundation.

Teaching resources produced in the 1990s to support the teaching of Health and sexuality mostly do make reference to non-heterosexuality, focussing on an 'it's OK to be different' discourse. A notable exception is the resource (Cowan et al, 1997) that contests discourses of sexual diversity and strongly supports heterosexuality and chastity before marriage. Two resources concentrate exclusively on queer sexualities and homophobic attitudes. The extent to which individual schools and individual teachers avail themselves of such literature, particularly in the current climate of competitive marketing among schools, is problematic.

In the final chapters, I will take up again the ways in which the liberal discourses that circulate in schools can limit, but also provide 'discursive spaces' for expanding the possible ways diverse sexualities, and people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual, can 'be' in our secondary schools. With respect to the political purpose of this investigation which I reiterated at the end of the last chapter, it is interesting to note how Gilbert (1997, pp13-14) has discussed the inherently political nature of education in the modern (post-Enlightenment) era, whether teachers recognise this or not. The very nature of liberal-humanist discourse, which I have argued permeates the official literature governing education, reveals a political goal of equal opportunities among citizens. It is the inherent limitations of this goal as a means of achieving less restrictive and stigmatised subject positions for gay, lesbian, bisexual *and* heterosexual people in schools which forms a major theme in this thesis.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE METHODOLOGY

Shifting theory and evolving design

> In a socially stratified society, the objectivity of the results of research is increased by political activism by and on behalf of oppressed, exploited and dominated groups. Only through such struggles can we begin to see beneath the appearances created by an unjust social order to the reality of how this social order is in fact constructed and maintained.
>
> - Sandra Harding (cited in A. Gitlin, 1994)

Introduction

In order to analyse the empirical data for the insights, discussed in Chapter 3, about the discursive production of subjectivities in New Zealand schools, I developed a methodology that draws on techniques of both statistical analysis and of discourse analysis. The theoretical and pragmatic journey is described through which the final shape of the methodology emerged and issues arising from these developments are discussed.

This chapter first identifies the research questions used to gather and analyse the data. The overall method used to address these questions, survey research, is described and justified. As part of this justification, changes in the original conception of the research design and of the data gathering instruments, are outlined. This is the 'theoretical and pragmatic journey' referred to above. Following on from this, issues in the selection of the target population and of the sampling methods are discussed, including the response rate for the sample obtained. The chapter describes in some detail, issues in the administration of the instrument, including a discussion of ethical considerations. Limitations in the design and administration are referred to as they arise in each section. Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief description of the techniques used for statistical and discourse analysis, and reported in the ensuing chapters.

The Research Questions

The focussing research question, derived from the research problem, became:

> *What are the perceived personal / professional and social / political constraints and possibilities, that prevent or enable school administrators and teachers to address discrimination against non-heterosexual students, staff and other members of the school community?*

The specific research questions used were:

1. What is the nature and degree of discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff that teachers and administrators perceive exists in their schools?

2. What do teachers and administrators perceive that their schools are doing to address discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff?

3. What do teachers and administrators perceive as the constraints against, and possibilities for taking anti-discriminatory action on behalf of bisexual, lesbian and gay students and staff in their school?

4. What are some of the discursive practices that position sexual identifications in particular ways in the context of school?

Method

In order to identify, collect and analyse data relevant to these questions, the method of 'survey research' was adopted. Survey research, as used here, gathers both quantitative and qualitative data. In the first section, survey

research is justified *as a methodology* rather than the conventional understanding of surveys as a technical method. Then in the second section, the methodology is justified in terms of its suitability for the research problem. Thirdly, the way the methodology evolved to meet the demands of the theoretical framework and the pragmatic considerations of administering the survey instrument, is described and implications discussed.

Survey as methodology

The methodological approach for this study calls on both the quantitative and qualitative research traditions. L.R. Gay (1996) notes an increasing trend in educational research towards combining both these approaches, so that the richer narrative data is used to illuminate, or "to gain insights into the *meaning* of quantitative results" (Gay, 1996, p.232). Gay also notes (p. 232) that there is a trend for qualitative research to become more structured than the original ethnographic studies that were carried out in the field of anthropology. That is certainly the case in this study where the problem/s have been pre-formulated - at least in a broad sense, and an instrument designed to gather both the quantitative and narrative data. Qualitative data, in the context of this research, refers to the methodology of eliciting language, using a formal process of analysis to allow both themes and discourses to emerge from the data (Jacobs, 1987, p.90), and looking for *meaning* from these emerging discourses (Anderson, 1990, p.149). This process will be described more fully in the section on methods of analysis later in this chapter.

The particular method used is a survey by questionnaire. Since I was interested in the distribution as well as the range of opinions, beliefs, perceptions about sexual orientation issues in schools, as expressed by teachers and administrators, clearly some quantitative data was needed and survey methodology is ideally suited to this.

Survey research can be seen (erroneously) as simply the administration of a questionnaire and as such would be merely a data gathering technique. In the broader sense, outlined for example by David de Vaus (1985, 1991), the

defining characteristics of the survey in terms of data collection and data analysis, are that it is based on a "variable by case data matrix" (p.3) and that it seek explanation by "looking at a variation in that variable across cases, and by looking for other characteristics which are systematically linked with it" (p.5). While the questionnaire is an obvious instrument to use to ensure a structured data matrix, it is not necessary to the method and can certainly be supplemented with other data gathering techniques such as observation and interviewing. Indeed, it was the intention of the original research design to use some interviews and gather policy documents to complement the data from the questionnaire. As explained further on, this did not happen.

De Vaus (1991, pp.330-335) discusses several criticisms that have been levelled at survey research, based on a misunderstanding of what survey research is and can achieve. For example, a faulty ascribing of causal links to simple bivariate correlations, or conversely, an emphasis on descriptive data that does not probe the meaning of behaviour are common criticisms. The latter criticism is often part of a wider view that alleges survey research is necessarily positivist. Referring to Catherine Marsh's (1982) discussion of this point, de Vaus points out that while earlier surveys may have relied on bringing the meaning from outside, such as through subsidiary interview, survey research was beginning to include such dimensions in the study design (de Vaus, 1991, p. 332). This is certainly the case with the design for this study, where a particular innovation was developed to produce some of the qualitative data.

Another criticism discussed by de Vaus is the claim that survey research is necessarily empiricist and atheoretical. He argues that it is merely a characteristic of poor research of any type, and that theories both ought to be and can be the basis of research design and analysis in survey research. Responding to the mystifying statistical discussions that often accompany survey research, de Vaus agrees that it is important to explain the logic of the statistical results, rather than hide behind them and obfuscate results that need to be communicated clearly and accessibly.

I am also distinguishing survey methodology from what is generally described in research texts as *correlational research* (e.g. Gay, 1996; Charles, 1988) which sets out specifically to establish and measure a relationship between two or more variables; for example: is there, or what is the relationship between University Bursary scores and family income? (Charles, 1988, p.100). Survey research is interested in relationships between variables. This is clear in the definition of de Vaus (1991) referred to above, and also described by Wiersma as research that "deals with the incidence, distribution, and relationships of educational, psychological, and sociological variables... studied as they exist in the situation, usually a natural situation" (1995, p.15). This study does look for patterns among variables and across cases and does use statistical methods to measure and test for significance among some of these relationships. These correlations, however, are not the main purpose of the study. Rather, the purpose is to use such correlations where they exist as one form of results that may provide some answers to the more broadly framed research questions, alongside other forms of analysis including discourse analysis of narrative data.

The development of the data gathering instrument will be discussed in some detail below, but in terms of the general research design, it can be noted here that in addition to statistical 'variable by case' analysis of both closed and open textual responses, a form of discourse analysis is used with some of the data. This discourse analysis extends the explanatory power of the analysis of survey as a method and explores some ideas within the approach of the theoretical framework as outlined in Chapter 2. In the context of a questionnaire, an attempt was made to let the voices of the respondents emerge in an open format. My analysis of emerging discourses is based on a method of analysis described by Glenda McNaughton McNaughton suggests that discourse be treated as "the emotional and social practices through which meaning is constituted in our lives" (McNaughton, in ed. Yelland, 1998 p.159). The steps she uses in this discourse analysis are described on pages 102-104.

Elizabeth Frazer (1989) also discusses the concepts of discourse and discourse analysis in the context of her research design for a study of teenage girls' discourses of gender. Firstly, she points out that any method can and

does produce data that *is* discourse, whether "attitude measuring instruments to a vast sample, ... (or) in-depth interviews with single respondents, ... (or) field notes of what I saw and what people said" (p.282). In terms of social theory, Frazer uses discourses in the Foucauldian sense of "institutionalised language use ... which bring their objects into being" (p.282). She distinguishes this from another related term that she uses, which is 'discourse register' – "a situationally specific, culturally institutionalised way of talking...of the classroom, the debate, chitchatting ..." (p.282). The discourse analysis employed in this study follows the Foucauldian understanding of discourse as outlined in Chapter 2. This form of analysis is to be distinguished from an analysis of 'talk' from a psychological perspective, where it is assumed that talk reveals actors' intentions, although as outlined below, the latter was the original intention in the research design.

Justifications for the methodology

I have identified in Chapter 3 that the overseas and New Zealand research findings of how lesbian and gay students and educators perceived their place in the school environment, clearly shows degrees of exclusion, discrimination and alienation. Why is this? Can it be changed? How? How can we know what intervention strategies will work? How can we persuade our colleagues there is a problem and that change is necessary and possible? Just what is it that needs intervention?

It seemed important to start answering those questions by finding out what was going on in teachers' and administrators' heads about (homo)sexuality, in a range of school types. I could have chosen to conduct a purely qualitative study based on in depth interviews of a few teachers and administrators. For the reasons outlined below, however, I decided to use a quantitative survey based round a questionnaire as the main method, using interviews to complement and explore in depth aspects of the quantitative data. In the end,

no interviews were conducted[1] and the qualitative data all came from the open-ended questions of the survey instrument.

Firstly, I was interested in getting information about the *range* of attitudes in different types of schools. Even with anticipated problems of gaining acceptable response rates (given the topic), I believed quantitative data from a larger sample of participants would provide a broad brush indication of this range and its distribution, which a few interviews could not. Furthermore, a fundamental reason for using the survey method, as defined by de Vaus, was that originally I was probing *attitudes*[2], in the belief that these held the key as to why schools persisted in avoiding anti-discriminatory interventions on behalf of lesbian, bisexual and gay students and teachers. Clearly, some cross referencing of responses and of responses with profile information about the respondents, would be likely to provide patterns for analysis. This "variable by case data matrix" (De Vaus, 1991, p.3) is most easily established through a questionnaire instrument when relatively large numbers of respondents are sought.

There was also a political reason for using quantitative data, relating to the intended audiences of the findings. I wanted this research to be taken seriously by teachers and administrators in secondary schools, and as understanding of the nature and value of qualitative research methodologies is still limited outside universities, the production of 'numbers' seemed likely to win more 'commonsense' acceptance. A further reason, outlined in the description of the questionnaire development, was that I originally set out to replicate an American survey of school counsellors and teacher trainees attitudes towards homosexuality in schools (Sears, 1992a). Even though I moved well away from this original design, the survey was retained as the organising method but adapted to a broadening purpose, as well as to the local New Zealand context. Finally, an unintended justification for the method was the political, and hopefully educative, function of taking the questionnaire into a

[1] The time frame for getting the questionnaire into schools became hugely extended because of the need to present it in person. In the end, I ran out of time to conduct interviews

[2] See page 82 for discussion of attitude research and its placement in the theoretical framework of this study.

number of schools, some of which had possibly never heard the words gay, lesbian, bisexual publicly uttered in the staff rooms before, let alone been asked to think about it in relation to their professional practice. "You could have heard a pin drop" said one participating (lesbian) teacher to me recalling the occasion. "It was great!"

In summary, the research design uses the survey method, aimed at gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, and using both traditional variable by case analysis alongside discourse analysis. While the method is clearly suited to the research questions, and produces a rich store of data for analysis, problems and issues associated with this design are discussed in several places of this report. Most of these relate to the contentious nature of the topic being investigated.

Evolution of the Survey Instrument: Shifting Theoretical Perspectives

In this section, I describe in some detail how and why the design of the data-gathering instrument changed and evolved in response to emerging theoretical as well as pragmatic considerations. In the process, an innovation for gathering textual /discursive responses was developed and included in the final questionnaire.

When I began this investigation, I thought I was attempting to uncover the nature and extent of teachers' and administrators' homophobia and heterosexism. My belief was that commonly held notions of heterosexist and homophobic attitudes primarily explained why schools drew a veil of silence and disapproval over gay issues and open gayness in schools. Since the political purpose of the investigation was to help find ways of dealing with these barriers to justice and inclusiveness for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in school communities, unravelling the nature of what caused the barriers seemed an important first step to introducing intervention strategies. Finding out 'what's in teachers' heads' - a psychological approach - and basing this in explanatory

concepts of critical and feminist theory such as hegemony, gender order and compulsory heterosexuality, seemed, in view of the literature guiding my thinking at that stage, to be the best way to illuminate the problem. I therefore initially decided to model the main instrument on Sears' study (1992a) of attitudes among teacher trainees and school counsellors in southern U.S.A..

The literature Sears surveyed indicated that studies of the 'helping professions' showed heterosexist bias in professional attitudes and personal homophobia. Interviews Sears conducted with lesbian and gay adolescents showed that their perceptions of educators' attitudes to homosexuality were predominantly negative, ill informed and ranging from teacher avoidance of and detachment from the issue, to picking on gay and lesbian students. As Sears was interested in probing the intersection of personal beliefs and feelings, and the claims of professionals to be even handed in their dealings with all students including non-heterosexuals, he used instruments to measure not only beliefs, feelings and knowledge about homosexuality, but also professional attitudes[3]. Essentially, Sears' instruments seemed ideal as a basis for my research problem, formulated at that stage as: "... *to understand what teachers really think and feel about sexuality issues, how they do/not perceive their lesbian, gay and bisexual colleagues and students, and what determines their active or passive resistance to dealing with the issues.*"

Sears had used two standardised instruments to measure attitudes and feelings towards homosexuality. These were the Index of Homophobia (IH) (Hudson and Ricketts, 1980) and the Attitudes Towards Homosexuality (ATH) (Larsen, Reed & Hoffman, 1980). Both were Likert –type scale questionnaires measuring respectively the affective and the belief components of attitudes. Sears modified these instruments and also developed a further questionnaire for the counsellors on their dealings with students, and for the trainee teachers, a questionnaire asking about encounters with homosexuals, knowledge about homosexuality and about their projected professional behaviour towards gay

[3] Sears apparently understood 'attitudes' in cognitive terms and as a separate concept from 'beliefs' and 'feelings'. The literature on attitudes, however, sees beliefs, feelings and behaviours as components of attitudes (Triandis, 1971).

students (see Appendix 1 for Sears' instruments.)

I set about to replicate his methodology in a form modified for New Zealand and for my targeted respondents. The research questions I developed at that stage (see Appendix 1) were designed to probe the intersection beween privately held beliefs and publicly articulated professional practice around the issues of homosexuality.

The first drafts of the questionnaire, therefore, focused on personal homophobia and professional heterosexism. As the first two research questions were about *attitudes* as defined in the literature (Triandis, 1971), that is beliefs and feelings as predictors of behaviour, I proposed to use the Index of Homophobia (Hudson and Ricketts, 1980) and Sears' modified Attitudes to Homosexuality (Larsen et al, 1980) and a version of Sears' (1992a) Knowledge about Homosexuality questionnaire.

My first question was framed to investigate not only attitudes to homosexuality, but also to heterosexuality. Thus, even at an early stage in the research, I had a notion of 'deconstructing' the binary homo/heterosexual discourses and wanted to find out if people were consciously framing *hetero*sexuality in any way. Sears' questions were not designed to investigate this, so I needed to develop open questions for this purpose.

For the research questions two and three I developed twenty "yes/no" items with space to comment at the end. For the fourth question I developed a list of ten interventions culled from recommendations in the research literature on lesbian and gay experiences in schools, and asked for "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" responses to such measures being introduced in their schools. (See Appendix 1 for these draft questionnaires).

During my preparatory reading for and thinking about this topic and study, I moved away from an interest in focussing on psychological / personal attitudes

and towards an interest in discourse, and discursive practice using a post-structuralist model. As this happened, it became less important to ask questions about private / personal beliefs along the lines of Sears' research.

I was thus beginning to feel somewhat uneasy about the draft questionnaire I had developed. However, I sent it to my supervisers for comment. They soon came back with questions about the length of the questionnaire, its purpose, issues of access and of personal repercussions for the researcher. Their responses, together with the shift in theoretical perspective referred to above, led to a radical reshaping of the instrument. Reasons for this are outlined in the following section.

Issues in the original design

What are some of the issues that, in hindsight, emerged during the process of the initial conception and design of the survey instrument? I say hindsight, because although the instrument changed to deal with these issues, they were not all necessarily as clear at the time as they are now.

Attitude research

First, there was the theoretical problem of thinking in terms of *attitudes* as the barriers to be investigated in the defined research problem. On the face of it, this seemed a 'commonsense' approach and a useful operational concept. Triandis (1971), for example, writing within the field of social psychology, extracts three essential components of attitudes: the cognitive, the affective and the behavioural. These components are seen, for example, in the definition of an attitude as "an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations" (Triandis, 1971, p.2). Sears' instruments and my initial modification of them were clearly designed to investigate these components - what people *thought* and *knew*, how they *felt* and what they *did*, or would do in professional practice.

Triandis' discussion of the psychological *functions* of attitudes was also relevant to my research problem. Triandis claims that attitudes help people to make sense of complex experience, provide predictability, protect self-esteem by protecting the self from unpleasant self truths, and allow the expression of fundamental values. These are powerful psychological imperatives, and psychological discourse on attitudes occupies an elevated position in social science research as well as in 'commonsense' as an explanatory factor in human behaviours.

Within this discourse, it would be argued that, given how fundamental to self-identity sexuality is, attitudes formed around sexuality would be difficult to shift. Psychological discourse constructs a two way link between attitudes and behaviour. Attitudes, within this discourse, both cause and are caused by behaviour and experience, with complex relationships among the components of belief, feeling and behaviour. These relationships were discussed by Larsen, Reed and Hoffman (1980) who developed the ATH Likert scale, and were certainly assumed by Sears in his methodology. Research based on psychological discourse, however, does not take sufficient account of power relationships in the social context. It locates attitudes as 'pathological' to individuals. Thus, the methodology I evolved became less concerned with attitudes per se, and more concerned with how beliefs, feelings and behaviours are an expression of the discursive practices that are embedded in prevailing relationships of power and surveillance, both within and beyond schools.

The focussing research question

A second issue in the original design, already alluded to in the foregoing discussion, was the implied hypothesis in the wording of the research problem and perhaps in the implied assumptions about solutions. The Sears study had led me to believe that homophobic and heterosexist attitudes of individual teachers and administrators constituted the barriers to schools acting inclusively. Following from this, I originally thought, therefore, that I needed to discover how many teachers and administrators in schools were homophobic / heterosexist and to what degree. This, I thought, would enable me to

understand responses and lack of responses to any intervention strategies that might be attempted in schools. An article that had influenced me towards this kind of thinking was a nursing paper by Pamela Wood and Margaret Schwass (1993) that looked at strategies for introducing cultural safety into the nursing curriculum in New Zealand. These writers were themselves influenced by arguments that attitudes based on intense feelings will resist educative strategies unless there is a careful balance between support and challenge. They developed a model for structured introduction of cultural safety whereby a non-threatening process of values clarification led to critical values analysis and thence to changes in behaviour. While this remains a useful way of thinking about planning for attitudinal change in schools, it begs the question of 'what are the ... constraints and possibilities that prevent or enable school administrators and teachers to address discrimination ...'.

While I remained interested in the intersection of personal belief and professional, school based behaviour, the important question that began to emerge was 'how are educators in schools constructing homo/heterosexuality, and what do they say they perceive as problematic, if anything?' It became evident to me that approaching this question through discourse analysis rather than through psychological attitudinal analysis as per Sears could be more productive. My reading of Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1990) was shifting my thinking towards a poststructuralist understanding of the discursive construction of knowledge and power and of ways of being in and thinking about the world, rather than a psychological explanation.

In summary, rather than believing that I knew what it was that needed intervention, I realised that the research questions needed to focus on 'just what is it that needs intervention'? Since teacher 'talk' would be needed to find out about this, the method of data collection and its analysis shifted from focussing on just attitudes, to a focus on discourse and discursive practice. These concepts have been explained in Chapter 2. Discourse analysis, as a method of examining data, is explained on pp.102-104 in this chapter.

Access and acceptability of the research

A third consideration for moving away from the Sears - style instruments, was the issue of access and acceptability in schools. Written up in the distancing language of academic research, a 'standardised instrument', the questions Sears asked his subjects looked innocently neutral. In fact, they would probably have incensed the teachers in my sample, even if they had got past the approval of the principals. I had to ask questions teachers did not find too personally threatening, and for which they could see professional relevance. As it was, the final questionnaire was rejected by one principal as 'biased and unscientific' and some respondents, and presumably at least some of the non-respondents, found the questions unpalatable. If this research was to make a difference to what happens in schools for non-heterosexual people, and indeed for the enlightenment of heterosexual people, then I needed people on my side. With these considerations in mind, the questions were re-shaped, eventually into the form they appear on page 73.

Pilot testing - the trial school

When the questionnaire had been through several drafts, it was trialled in a co-educational school. I phoned then met with the principal and outlined the nature and purpose of the research. It was arranged that the principal would distribute the questionnaires. I printed enough for all the staff (about 60) and the Board of Trustees and obtained nine responses, including one each from the principal and a Board of Trustees member.

In that school, a person on the staff informed me that the response ranged from anger that the subject was even raised, to anger at demands on their time (apparently even the principal's appraisal questionnaire got a very low response) but also to interest and supportive comment. The length of the questionnaire was certainly seen as an issue and I cut out one of the scenarios in Part B in an attempt to make the questionnaire less daunting. In the end, however, I had to make a judgement whether non-response would be a problem more because of the subject matter rather than because of the length.

Furthermore, the methodology required a reasonable length in order to get the qualitative responses built into the design. An alternative would have been to use interviews only for the qualitative data, but again, the subject matter meant that honesty might not be as likely as in the anonymity of a questionnaire. The other modification made as a result of the trial was to the method of administration. One of the trial respondents had strongly challenged the researcher to 'front up' to present and explain the purpose of the research. On reflection, this seemed an important step in gaining credibility for the research, even though it was to enormously lengthen the time for the data-gathering part of the process. This is discussed in the section describing the administration of the questionnaire.

The final instrument - some innovations to fit queer into straight

The revised questionnaire was constructed, in four parts. Part A consisted of yes/no/don't know questions with space to comment. This addressed the first two research questions - did respondents see a problem, and what did they think their school was doing about the issue. Part B attempted to elicit teacher talk about the placement of homosexuality in the context of school. It was expected that this section in particular would be analysed through a discourse analysis. Part C addressed the research questions three and four - what did respondents see as the constraints against, and possibilities for themselves as individuals, and for the school as an institution, taking action to counter heterosexist bias and /or discrimination against homosexual students and staff. Part D asked for profile data which would be used to cross tabulate with other questions, testing for such effects as school type, length of service and so on.

There were still some theoretical and methodological problems to work through, however. How do you ask people who are largely or wholly unconscious of feminist post-structuralist or queer theories, to respond to questions framed from within such perspectives? This is particularly problematic when the very 'positions' and 'categorisations' which are being probed are those that a heteronormative order in society makes so pervasively unproblematic and

therefore 'unthinkable'? *Ask a straight question and you'll get a straight answer. But ask a straight a queer question ...*

This problem emerged in my wording in a Part A question where I wanted people to consider the possible effects of heteronormativity / institutionalised heterosexism on students and staff who were not heterosexual. I used the phrase "tacit acceptance of heterosexuality as 'normal'". The inverted commas were intended to make the term 'normal' problematic. Generally this worked, but the phrase enraged a few respondents who either insisted that 'normal' could only be used in the sense of the normal curve and that therefore, of course heterosexuality was normal! Or perhaps felt the reference was to the usage where the opposite to 'normal' must be insane / not right in the head! Making this word problematic certainly roused some strong feelings. It was important, however, to do this as this study has pursued an understanding of the power of discursive constructions which denaturalise institutions such as heterosexuality. The study calls into question notions of 'normal' and 'natural'.

This is a good example of the idea, discussed by Lather (1994) in the context of research validity, of how to stand outside of a concept so completely embedded in our thinking. She quotes Althusser who suggests that "to make the thought possible, one occupies the place of the impossible" (in Lather, 1994, p.52). And Derrida, who discusses how to "think the unthought, to say the unsayable, to see the unseeable and to represent the unrepresentable" (in Lather, 1994, p.52). One of the biggest problems in this study was how to find language to represent concepts that respondents could recognise, and make the concept problematic without participating in the everyday (unproblematised) meaning of the words used.

Another area that needed innovative thought was how to elicit in depth qualitative data for research question four, which was looking for discursive patterns; while also probing the other 'individual perception' based questions? In particular, I was still interested in the relationship of the personal / professional intersection that question three was designed to investigate.

The idea for using scenarios came from a publication used for anti-homophobic education, produced by the Family Planning Association (1994). This publication used certain scenarios for workshops intended to raise consciousness about homophobic responses. Because they were structured in ways that fitted the literature on the cognitive, affective and behavioural components of attitudes, structuring an instrument around this format seemed to offer possibilities to reach the different dimensions of attitudes. This was an innovation in the design that emerged as a response to the complexities of the study.

The scenarios, then, by presenting typical situations that do occur in schools and which implicitly require a response by teachers and colleagues, ask the respondents what they would think, what they would feel and how they would act in each situation. Through this device, it was hoped that the 'think' and 'feel' responses would show the cognitive and affective components of an attitude, and that this would show something about how the third response, the professional action, was shaped. Or to return to Triandis' (1971) definition of an attitude as "an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations", the device of the scenario was a "particular class of social situation" and the aim was to reveal the attitude in the form of its three component parts - the idea, the emotion and the action. The situations were deliberately 'emotive' in order to get an affective as well as a cognitive response.

The scenarios were shaped up in consultation with colleagues, especially Shane Town whose research with young gay males' in schools was a major source of insight (Town, 1995). In retrospect, not all the scenarios were needed; some appeared as repetitive to a number of respondents (one had already been eliminated following pilot testing of the questionnaire). While respondents' 'reading' of the scenarios did not always produce the intended subtleties that we had 'read' in them, the technique did produce excellent data as will be seen in the next chapters.

The scenarios were used, however, more for an analysis of the discourses that seemed to be operating, than for psychological states of mind. I will discuss this again later when I explain the method used for the discourse analysis on s 102-104.

The Sample

This section describes the theoretical basis for the method used to obtain a sample, then describes and justifies the sampling process. The response rate is discussed as a significant constraint in obtaining a statistically rigorous sample for data analysis. This is offset, however, by matching the sample obtained with the demographic profile on several variables of the population of New Zealand secondary teachers and administrators, including Boards of Trustees.

It can be noted, that in New Zealand secondary schools, 'senior administrators' generally refer to the top three positions of the Principal (usually non-teaching) and the Deputy and Assistant Principals (who do teach). Members of Boards of Trustees are also included in the frame of 'administrators' since their role is to 'administer schools' on behalf of the government and their communities. They were included in this study because of their role in determining policy for their individual schools. Trustees also form an interface between the school and the community of parents that they represent. Furthermore, as the employers in each school, trustees under the NEGs and NAGs are responsible for the delegated management of the Principal and the work of the school. Many other teachers, of course, also have significant administrative roles such as running subject departments. Generally they are classified as 'middle managers'. For the purposes of this study, this latter group of middle managers are categorised as teachers, and senior managers and trustees are categorised as administrators.

Some technical and theoretical considerations

> In the end the decisions about samples will be a compromise between cost, accuracy, the nature of the research problem and the art of the possible (de Vaus, 1991, p.79).

A *purposeful* sample was used in this study, in preference to random sampling (de Vaus, 1991, pp.77-79, Wiersma, 1995, pp.283-306). This means that representativeness of the sample, of a population of about 14,500 teachers and senior administrators and about 3,500 trustees of New Zealand secondary schools, will be discussed on logical grounds (Wiersma, 1995, p.298) rather than on the grounds of mathematical probability theory. Because, however, the instrument was designed to gather quantitative as well as qualitative data, (see page 74) the representativeness of the sample obtained does need to be established. Although it can be argued that the sample produced "information rich cases that are studied in depth" (Wiersma, 1995, p. 298), the purpose of the study also required some generalisability. That is, we know from rich qualitative data in New Zealand (Town, 1995 and Quinlivan,1993) how some gay and lesbian youth experienced their positioning in schools, (see literature review for overseas studies). However, possible interventions in schools arguably depended on some understanding of the *range and distribution* as well as the *nature* of teachers' and administrators' beliefs, attitudes and discursive practices around sexual orientation. While the quantitative data are needed to give some idea of *distribution,* qualitative data would be "information rich" as to the *nature* of the discursive practices in particular. Although random sampling was not used within a framework of probability theory to ensure a match with the population, other means, described below, have been used to establish this as far as possible in terms of the demographic profile of the sample (see Appendix 2).

A form of (non-random) stratified sampling was used in an attempt to cover a range of different types of school. Stratified sampling, strictly speaking, refers to the technique in probability or random sampling of selecting units in proportion to the occurrence of that variable in the population. In this case, for example, that would have been a certain percentage of teachers from single-

sex state schools, integrated schools and so on. The strata for my sample included school type as a way of gathering a range of responses, and responses to some questions have been analysed in relation to this variable. By school type, I mean coeducational and single sex boys' and girls' schools. To select purposively within this stratum, I used a range of decile rankings and a range of locations within the large metropolitan area, including city and suburban locations, but did not analyse responses in relation to these last two variables. As discussed below in the section on selecting the sample, some school types in the New Zealand secondary system were excluded, for example no private schools were selected. School type was used for the strata because of 'hunches' that this variable could affect the ways homosexuality was positioned by teachers and administrators in these different types and locations of schools. For example, some school communities were possibly more conservative than others. As it turned out, numbers of responses from some types were so low, that cross tabulated analysis did not yield significant results in those cases.

Overall, the relatively low rate of response was a technical issue that arose partly as a consequence of the design for the sample selection and is discussed on pages 94-96. Although the return from some schools was low, even in relation to school size, so that generalisations on the basis of school type became limited, nonetheless, the data from these schools added to the global results. The data from all schools remains rich as a source of information for qualitative and some quantitative analysis.

Selecting the school sample

In accordance with the technique described above, I selected one metropolitan area, and selected ten state secondary schools from that area. Stratification was according to school gender type, and with a range of characterisics taken into account within this statum. The schools were: a state single-sex girls, a state single-sex boys, an integrated (Catholic) boys and integrated (Catholic) girls, an outlying rural co-educational school, and five urban co-educational schools.

The decisions and processes for selecting these ten schools are outlined in this section. These decisions constitute the 'purposes' for which each strata and site were eventually chosen.

Firstly, the decision to use a metropolitan area was made to give a number of different school types to select from within an easily accessible geographical area. The particular metropolitan area chosen was that in which the researcher lived and worked, again selected for reason of access. This accessibility was not only physical, it also meant the researcher knew and was known in many of the schools and this has been described as an important issue for gaining access. It was decided, however, to include one outlying rural school, as this was likely to produce different perspectives, reflecting the different nature of the community served. Although confining the study to a particular area prevents the ability to generalise from the study to teachers and administrators in all secondary schools in New Zealand, the study was conceived as exploratory, and any results tentative. Recommendations for further research in this area are made in Chapter 12.

Secondly, the decisions to select ten schools, and all teachers in each school, were made as it should have produced a big enough sample (approximately 500 teachers and 60 trustees) for statistical analysis, with a minimum of 25 in each category. It was also considered that this would generate as much data as could be handled given the scope and limitations on time and resources for a master's research project. The response rate, however, left several categories too small to produce significant statistical trends from the cross tabulations.

The ten schools chosen excluded some strata from the population of New Zealand schools. Secondary schools were chosen, but not 'composite' (area and private) schools that have secondary departments attached to primary departments, as in the state sector these are more focussed on primary schooling than secondary. This excludes 94 schools (49 state and 45 private) (MOE, 1996) from the New Zealand population of secondary schooling, none of which occur in the metropolitan area which was chosen to provide the

population of secondary schools for my study. Within the category of 'secondary schools', private schools were also excluded (there are 16 non composite private schools in New Zealand), as they are not obliged to comply with government regulations and curricula, and their inclusion would have introduced a very different set of issues. Access might also have been difficult. Thus, the total number of state secondary schools in New Zealand, as defined in this study, is 320 (see Appendix 2).

Four single sex schools were chosen as this seemed likely to form an important variable given the focus of the study. Anecdotally, and according to some media stories, single sex boys' schools are particularly likely to have negative behaviours towards non-stereotypically heterosexual young males. Two of these were Catholic 'integrated' (once private, now state) schools, both single sex, chosen to include data from teachers and administrators who might have a particular view because of the particular religious values of their schools. The six remaining schools were co-educational, as are the majority of secondary schools in New Zealand. The proportions in which these types of schools occur in New Zealand is shown in Appendix 2.

In addition to the above 'types' that formed variables that were analysed statistically, other selection decisions were made for the sample. For example, amongst all these schools, including the single sex schools, a range of school sizes and of 'decile' (socio-economic) rankings was sought. Four were 'high' decile (8-10), four were 'middle' range decile (5-7) and two were 'low' decile (1-4). It was also known that some schools had had 'HIV Awareness' training and at least two schools were included from this category. I also chose schools from different types of urban locations, ranging from inner city to suburban.

This was my school sample. A further decision was to include all teachers and administrators (including trustees) from each school in the sample. These schools had a combined staff of 500 teachers and about sixty trustees. This represents approximately three per cent of 14,500 secondary teachers in state and integrated schools (private schools were excluded from the target population) in New Zealand, and two per cent of approximately 3000 trustees

(see Appendix 2 for sampling plan). While not representative of New Zealand secondary schools, (the sample excluded provincial urban and remote rural schools to mention two other notable school types) it never-the-less had the potential to produce information generalisable to some extent at least to other major metropolitan areas. To the extent that we have a mobile, national teaching force, generalisations also can be made beyond that to the rest of New Zealand. The *range* of possible responses may have been gathered, although with a high level of non-response this cannot be assumed. The proportionate weightings of the identified responses in the sample similarly cannot be assumed to be the same as those which a national, random sample would produce. The latter would, for example, enable more account to be taken of attitudes and discursive practices in provincial areas.

Rate of response in the sample

Of the ten schools originally selected, only two declined to take part (see page 98). One said they had too many requests, although he had no objection to the nature of my topic. The other expressed the view that the questionnaire was a biased instrument. These two schools were replaced with schools of the same characteristics, one being rural and the other suburban coeducational with a low decile ranking of socio-economic status.

In terms of the sample of teachers and administrators, according to conventional wisdom in the literature (e.g. deVaus, 1991, p.73) the response rate was low. In statistical terms, this affects the degree to which the sample obtained can be held to be representative of the population being sampled, and thus the generalisability of the results is called into doubt. As can be seen from Tables 6.1 through to 6.7, however, the demographic profile of the respondents closely parallels that of the national teaching force in most respects. Therefore, although the low response rate will have introduced a degree of bias into the results (de Vaus, 1991, p.108), at least the sample obtained does reflect the target population in terms of several variables that were cross tabulated in the analysis.

The response rate varied enormously from school to school (from 10% to 38%) and the overall rate of response was 26 per cent. Interestingly, this is similar to the rate (29 per cent) obtained by Sears' (1992a) survey of guidance counsellors in the U.S.A. As there is no previous research of this nature in New Zealand education, known to me, with which to compare response rates, it is difficult to draw conclusions about reasons for the response rate. It seems highly likely, however, that the subject matter itself would be a major factor. It can be noted that a survey of *Teacher Satisfaction, Motivation, and Health* (Harker, et al, 1998), where it could be expected teachers would have a strong motivation to respond, only obtained a 42 per cent response from secondary teachers in New Zealand. It is possible, then, that the 26 per cent response obtained by this highly controversial survey could represent a very good response given the topic.

A further point is that researching a 'veil of silence' is likely to produce a fair amount of silence as one response! I do know that in one school, where the principal had expressed great interest, mysteriously the questionnaires never emerged for the staff to fill them in. Eventually a staff member on leave at the time the questionnaire was distributed, followed this up and a number of returns did eventuate - probably fewer due to the lapse in time after my visit. The rural school returned only three questionnaires, so statistically, this variable has no significance in the results. One does indeed wonder what the overall response rate would have been from predominantly rural and/or provincial schools. (This could be a productive area for further research in New Zealand.) The highest rate of response was from a school where quite a lot of work has been done on policies and anti-homophobic interventions. This work has come from activism of out gay staff and with the support of the principal, who was also prepared to write about this in the PPTA News.

Inquiries in the trial school (see pp. 85-86) had certainly shown that the length of the survey was an issue. This survey was administered at a period when secondary teachers were expressing severe disgruntlement with pay, conditions and workload (Harker & Gibbs et al, 1998) and any additional demands on teacher time were not favourably received. Although the

questionnaire was shortened slightly following that pilot testing, in hindsight it could perhaps have been shortened even further with at least one more scenario deleted.

Highly problematic is the response rate from Board Trustees. Only six were received in total, plus 2 staff representatives who included this role with their other responsibilities. This represents a 10% response rate in the sample of non-teaching trustees and a 12% response rate of all trustees. Furthermore, the non-teaching trustees were drawn from only three of the ten schools. As explained on page 89, trustees were included because of their role in setting school policy, including that for sex education in the school. Despite the low response rate from this group, and the narrow range of schools the obtained sample are drawn from, their responses do add to the variety of perspectives reported in this study.

So although the response rate is low in terms of the statistical literature that looks for a rate of around 70 per cent to guarantee representativeness of the sample, the response was probably as good as could be hoped for given the nature of the topic, and to some degree, the relatively lengthy nature of the instrument. I ended up with 124 completed questionnaires and appreciated the integrity with which they had apparently been answered. A further ten were returned incomplete with reasons for declining to participate, as I had requested.

Administration Of The Instrument

In this section I discuss issues with gaining access to the research sites and distributing the questionnaire. In particular, the need to personally introduce the questionnaire emerged from the pilot testing, and this was to affect the timeline for gathering the data. The controversial nature of the topic meant that access and introduction of the instrument had to be very carefully thought through.

Fronting up and speaking the unspeakable

Several of the issues raised by Sarah Delamont (1992) in relation to gaining access to research sites, especially schools, are highlighted in the following discussion. One is the length of time it can (unexpectedly) take to negotiate access (Delamont, 1992, p.79). She also advises detailed recording of the access process, as an important part of the data (p.95).

In the early stages of developing the research design, I had proposed to post or deliver all the questionnaires to all participating schools at much the same time, and I expected to get my data back for analysis by June of 1995. As it turned out, a strong message from the trial school where I had dropped off the questionnaires via the principal, was that I needed to front up to each staff room to explain what I was doing, why and give a brief rationale for the method. This meant booking times and therefore I could only contact a few schools at a time. The process tended to be protracted - contacting the principal, following this up with a letter, and a copy of the questionnaire, usually then waiting for them to consult or consider whether to participate, and then making a time to meet the staff, some weeks on in a few cases. In some cases I met with the principal first to discuss the research and the procedure. The last of the questionnaires were not received until late October, 1995. Although this drawn out process of administering the questionnaire was time consuming, and as such a considerable disadvantage over a `one shot' mail out survey, the nature of the topic and the instrument meant it had to be done that way. It reaped its own rewards, as I will explain later.

Initial contacts with schools

I rang each principal and explained what I was doing and why. (In two schools, a teacher had already made an approach and my call was expected.) I said that the research concerned the way gay and lesbian students (and teachers) are positioned in the school environment as evidence from other research suggests that attitudes and practices in schools can greatly influence how they cope with and come to terms with their (emerging) sexuality and consequently

their self esteem. I said I was looking at what educators think and feel about the role of teachers and of the school in recognising this issue and what could, should or should not be done about it. I said I had chosen their school as an example of a school profile in a cross section of types. If they would agree to take part, I requested 5-10 minutes with their staff to briefly introduce the questionnaire and answer any questions. Where a definite or possible interest was expressed, I said I would follow up with a letter (Appendix 4) and copy of the questionnaire (Appendix 6). This follows the practice suggested by Delamont (1992, p.85) of not submitting the questionnaire in advance of a personal contact.

There was only one principal I did not manage to speak to. His secretary took the message about why I wished to contact him and conveyed a reply – that they had had too many surveys already. All other principals listened courteously and only two of them turned me down. One said immediately that they were requested for too many surveys. The other, after requesting and reading the questionnaire, expressed the view (by fax) that it was "not objective". I wrote and thanked her for her time and opinion. These three schools were replaced as closely as possible with matching types. Of the ten schools who ultimately agreed to participate, five principals agreed during the initial contact to take part, the other five agreed after receiving the questionnaire and consulting with other staff (such as the guidance team) and / or the Board of Trustees. I believe that the fact that I was professionally known by all the principals who offered their co-operation, was a critical factor in securing their agreement.

Some typical responses were:

- "That's fine - I trust you - you're not proselytising are you - no - that's all very healthy."
- "Yes pleased to help - I see it as a health issue."
- "Certainly prepared to do it myself - believe others will - don't believe its an issue here - but happy to cooperate."

- "Pleased to be involved - interested in qualitative methodology - see it as a safety issue."
- A cautious yes –" worry about school anonymity – will sound out staff." - then agreement via guidance counsellor who was pleased because "its important to keep pushing the boundaries" - but who also thought it would "go down like a lead balloon"
- "Happy to do it myself - will ask who else - very important for a RC school to take part - would hope no differences but suspect there would be."
- Refusal – "no problem with topic but teachers stretched to the limit."

I have included these responses here because they are in themselves interesting data for the topic being researched. In retrospect, the whole issue of access and of response rate has been one of the really interesting aspects of the research process for this topic.

I was very nervous fronting up to the staff meetings although in most cases this was alleviated somewhat by knowing some members of staff who greeted me warmly and gave me the opportunity to chat on `normal' topics beforehand. I dressed carefully (see Delamont, 1992, p. 85) and ambiguously in order to present 'professionally' as my aim was to gain a sympathetic hearing to the educational justification for the research topic and to the methodology. Although I slightly refined and adapted the introductory comments over the first few sessions, in all cases I gave a brief description of the context, the nature of the survey and the justification of the research topic. A fuller account of this is given as Appendix 3.

Reception of my introduction in staff rooms and by principals in their office was unvaryingly polite and apparently interested. The questionnaires were left to be pigeon holed or picked up by those agreeing to take part. A stamped addressed envelope was included with each to return completed questionnaires to the researcher. Over six months, responses arrived from each school in succession and the process of coding began.

Ethical Considerations

Some ethical issues have already been raised in the context of particular research steps. The follow is a brief examination of issues under the guidelines of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (1980).

Informed consent

As outlined in the section on administration, every effort was made to inform participants of the purpose of the research and the method of analysis. This did not happen with Board of Trustee members where I relied on principals to pass on the questionnaires. Trustees had only the accompanying letter by way of introduction. This may have been responsible for the low response rate among trustees. Completion of the survey was, of course, completely voluntary.

Confidentiality

The questionnaire was filled in anonymously and an undertaking was given on the questionnaire form, as well as verbally by the researcher, as to the confidentiality of individual participant responses. When the instrument was devised, it was intended to carry out a few follow up interviews and those willing to participate in this gave their names and addresses. A very high proportion (one third) of responses offered interviews. This meant that these participants became known by name to the researcher but this information has not gone further than the original forms and has not been shared with anyone beyond the researcher. School principals were also anxious that their school remain anonymous, because of the sensitivity of the topic. This undertaking has been honoured and the demographic profile of the schools is written up in such a way that none could be identified, even where readers are familiar with the district in which the research was carried out.

Minimising of harm

As discussed earlier in this chapter, an aim of the research is that it be used towards creating schools that are safer, and more just, than they are at present. Some participants indicated that the very processing of completing the questionnaire was educative and led to some reflection on the issues. In one school, a staff member cut the survey up and placed it in the pigeon hole of a known homosexual teacher (who passed this information on to the researcher). This could have caused distress to the teacher concerned who, however, saw the action as sad, rather than personally distressing. Another teacher, 'in the closet' at school, wrote as a response on the questionnaire that she was considering 'coming out' at school, as a result of reflecting on the issues raised. This could have been damaging to the teacher without a careful, supported strategy, and I rang the person to discuss the implications.

Truthfulness

The researcher made every attempt to be open with the participants as to the nature and purpose of the study. One dilemma was whether to present the researcher as a lesbian feminist at the time of administering the questionnaire. It was decided this was neither necessary (it would be assumed by most participants who did not already know this), nor helpful for access. There is a difference between being tacitly and publicly 'out' and the latter is a more threatening stance to many heterosexual people than the former. The questionnaire was challenging enough in its content!

Methods Of Analysis

Statistical analysis

All responses in the questionnaires were coded for statistical analysis using the SPSS software at Massey University[4]. For the textual answers, fine-grained category construction was used for the coding process, as I wanted the actual words and nuances of meaning of the respondents to emerge as far as possible. For example, if a respondent expressed "outrage at his attitude", this seemed to me to be different from "outrage at his behaviour" and these were coded separately. Corbin and Strauss call this highly generative process "line by line analysis" within the procedure of "open coding" (1990, pp.72-73). Thus, multiple codes were used in the initial data input for SPSS analysis. Some banding of responses was carried out later for broader categorisation of responses in some places, particularly for the construction of tables. Numerical frequencies are reported with some indications of reliability through standard deviations and confidence tests and some tests of significance. Textual responses were, in addition, analysed using the approach described below.

Discourse analysis

Glenda McNaughton (1998, p.158) describes discourse analysis as:

> ...the process of 'taking apart' and critically reflecting on our social beliefs and practices, our emotional investments in them and the contribution of social institutions to beliefs, practices and emotions. Through such 'taking apart' we learn how social relations work, whose interests they work for and how we might do them differently in order to benefit groups who are discriminated against in our society.

Through such a feminist poststructuralist approach, the textual responses given in the questionnaire were 'taken apart' to reveal what discourses could be seen

[4] See acknowledgements for the technical support and advice given by Ted Drawneck at Computer Services, Massey University.

as operating to constrain or enable teachers and administrators in schools who might take action to interupt heteronormative practices.

As this thesis uses the discourse analysis process outlined by McNaughton (1998) the way she understands and uses the operational terms of 'discourse', 'discursive power' and 'subjectivity' are briefly outlined.

'Discourse' is used to refer firstly, to the *categories*[5] through which we understand and give meaning to social life, e.g. categories such as boy, girl, mother, father that denote our understandings of masculinity and femininity (McNaughton, 1998, p.158). Secondly, she understands discourse to include the *social practices* that arise from these categories, such as how we act and 'be ourselves' (p.159). Thirdly, discourse refers to the *emotional investments* we make in such social practices, referred to as our 'patterns of desire' (p.159). This last concept involves the pleasure we gain from "getting it right" and pain for not doing so. (This can be viewed as a parallel concept to the affective component of 'attitudes' in a liberal psychological framework. See pages 82-83 above)

'Discursive power' is used by McNaughton to refer to the way that "discourses enable particular groups of people to exercise power in ways that benefit them. They are able to do this because *discourses constitute particular ways of being as normal, right, and, therefore, desirable" (*my italics) (p.160).

'Subjectivity' is used by McNaughton to describe "who we are and how we understand ourselves, consciously and unconsciously. These understandings are formed as we participate in, articulate and circulate discourse."

Given these particular understandings of the poststructuralist framework of discursive practices, McNaughton demonstrated, within a study of how an early childhood teacher was framing classroom practices around 'gender equity', a

[5] The term 'categories' will thus be used in two different senses in this thesis. One will be in the sense described here, a very specific usage in the steps for discourse analysis. The other will be in the sense used to group and 'categorise' responses to the questionnaire so they can usefully be analysed.

six-step process for discourse analysis, to 'take apart' what was going on. This involved:

- identifying how we categorise people ... formed and expressed via our language
- identifying the social practices through which meanings are given to the categories we learn
- identifying the patterns of emotional meanings and investment we have in particular categories
- naming the discourses that are formed by our categories, practices and emotional investments
- identifying the institutional basis of discourses
- evaluating the social power relations and effects of different discourses" (McNaughton, 1998, p.161)

These, then are the steps used in this current study for the discourse analysis, applied to the textual responses to the open questions of the survey instrument, particularly in Part B.

Conclusion And Evaluation

This chapter has described a research approach developed within the methodology of survey research to investigate the discursive positioning of hetero/homosexual individuals and issues in secondary schools in New Zealand. A single instrument, a questionnaire, was devised to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from teachers and administrators in ten secondary schools of diverse types. The chapter described how theoretical and methodological shifts led me to make changes in the design of the instrument and methods of analysis. One hundred and thirty four questionnaires were returned, rich in thoughtfully constructed responses to the questions asked. The statistical and discourse analyses applied to this data is reported in the following chapters.

Conceptual, technical and administrative limitations have been identified in my discussion of the methodology. Psychological attitude research, that formed the basis of the original design, was conceptually limiting. The move towards a poststructural framework for the research design led to an emphasis on placing discourse, rather than attitudes, as the central concept. Nevertheless, there remain some tensions in the design resulting from some residual features of a framework centred on attitude research being placed alongside a poststructural framework. The study does not fit completely coherently into either one tradition nor the other. It was not possible to avoid "participating in the same dominant cultural practices which ... (were) problematic" (Lecompte & Mclaughlin, 1994, p.162). I consider, however, that juxtaposing the quantitative and descriptive results of individual respondents' 'perceptions' with the analysis of some discourses underlying their responses, gives a further tool to help "critically reflect on our social beliefs and practices" (McNaughton, 1998). Furthermore, for those who do not agree with the analysis and interpretation I have made of the discursive relations of power inherent in the data, they can 'read' the quantitative data as they will.

A further limitation that emerged was the difficulty of using language such as the word 'normal' for a concept that has several 'common sense' usages, as well as being a concept the researcher wished respondents to problematise in the sense of 'heteronormativity'.

An advantage of these conceptual difficulties has been that they forced the researcher to think innovatively in terms of instrument design, and many respondents reported that they found the questionnaire interesting and thought provoking. No models were found in the empirical literature for exploring this topic within a poststructural framework.

In technical terms, however, the innovations in some instances led to a longer questionnaire than desirable in terms of obtaining a good response rate. A relatively low response meant the statistical applications were limited in terms of generalising to the population being sampled. On the other hand, there was more than enough valuable qualitative data to support in depth text analysis.

Ethical constraints arising from the administration of the questionnaire led to the technical problem of the length of time it took to get the questionnaire out to all the schools. Partly as a result of this, the data were not triangulated, through follow up interviews, and school policy documents, as originally intended. On the other hand, some external triangulation was achieved through examination of national policy documents.

The section on administration of the questionnaire identified the length of time it took to get the questionnaires into each school as a significant limitation in itself. It was decided, however, that the benefits of personally introducing the questionnaire would outweigh the disadvantage of an extended time line. Gaining access was a more than usually difficult problem to negotiate, given the nature of the topic.

A general limitation has been the problems associated with doing 'queer research' in the context of schooling in New Zealand. Discourses around 'sex' and discourses around 'school', act to keep the former alienated from the latter. Apart from those limitations raised already in this chapter and the above discussion, the issues of 'voice' and 'position of researcher' (Jones, 1992) contain knotty dilemmas for researchers in this field. Some of these will be taken up further in the final chapter.

Finally, there is a premise about research paradigms underlying this study that is more fundamental than the qualitative / quantitative issue. This is the premise that research is implicated in the knowledge-power relationship discussed in the previous chapter, and thus has a political role in either helping to perpetuate current (inequitable) relations of power, or in helping to make a difference. (Gitlin, 1994; Lather, 1986, 1992) As Patti Lather expressed it

> ... an altogether different approach to doing empirical inquiry ... 'is that which uses form to disrupt received forms and undermines an objective, disinterested stance'. This approach... advocates the creation of a more humble scholarship capable of helping us to tell better stories about a world marked by the elusiveness with which it greets our efforts to know it (Lather, 1992, p.95).

CHAPTER SIX: WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

Profile of the participants

This chapter describes the demographic profile of the participants who responded to the questionnaire. One hundred and thirty-four questionnaire forms were received, of which ten did not respond to any of the substantial questions, and few to none of the demographic profile questions (excepting the school name). All were coded for analysis, however, so for most questions there were ten missing cases in the results. Only six responses were received from (non-teaching) Board of Trustee members, and their responses have been coded and analysed with those of the teachers (excepting for response rates).

Demographic Characteristics

School type

As described in Chapter 5, the sample was drawn from ten schools, of which six were co-educational and four were single sex - two boys' and two girls' schools. Of the single sex schools, two were Catholic integrated and two were state schools. It can be seen from Table 6.1 below that the sample obtained in most school types, closely matches the numbers of teachers in those school types in the sample. There were slightly fewer responding from the state girls' school and slightly more from the state boys' and the co-educational schools in relation to the sample surveyed. Nearly 60 percent (78) of respondents were from state co-educational schools, and more responses from the single sex boys' schools than the single sex girls' schools. The fewer respondents from the integrated schools is mainly because the girls' school is very small. The highest and the lowest response rates were from the state co-educational schools. (See page 89ff and Appendix 2 for a discussion of the sample).

Table 6.1: **Source of respondents according to school type, with response rates**

School Type	*Sample surveyed[1] (N)*	*Sample surveyed %*	*Sample obtained (N)*	*Sample obtained %*	*Rate of Response[2] %*
State Girls'	70 + BOT	13	14 +3BOT	11	23
State Boys'	75 + BOT	15	20	16	27
Integrated Girls'	15 + BOT	2	3	2	20
Integrated Boys'	45 + BOT	10	13	10	24
Urban co-educational	270+BOT	58	75 +3BOT	59	21 (12 → 38 range)
Rural co-educational	30 + BOT	2	3	2	10
Total teachers & trustees	505+BOT	100	128+6BOT = 134	100	

Position of responsibility

A reasonably representative distribution of teachers and trustees by school position was obtained. In the ten schools, three principals identified themselves by position and a possible two more responded but identified as senior management. Middle management is perhaps over-represented in relation to senior management, which in the Harker et al study (1998) were 43 per cent (middle management) and 10 per cent (senior management).

[1] The figures are based on estimated FTTE (full time teacher equivalents) according to roll and do not take part time staff into account.
[2] The response rate is calculated on teacher numbers, excluding the Board of Trustee responses.

Table 6.2: **Status Position in the School**

Position in school	*Number*	*Valid %*
Senior management	7	6
Middle management	57	46
Assistant teacher	52	42
Trustee or other	8	6
Non-response	10	0
Totals	124	100

Curriculum /responsibility areas

Table 6.3: **Curriculum or responsibility areas**

Curriculum or responsibility area	*First mention*		*Second mention*	
	(N)	*(%)*	*(N)*	*(%)*
Humanities	60	54	23	56
Science and Mathematics	27	24	4	10
Technology	5	5	1	2
P.E./Health/Transition	13	12	11	27
Trustee role	6	5	2	5
Totals	111	100	41	100

More respondents taught in the area of the humanities than the sciences, mathematics or technology areas, and more science than maths teachers responded. Within the humanities, a number of art and music teachers responded, disproportionate to their distribution in schools. Classifying by curriculum area, of course, cannot be exact as teachers teach in more than one area. They were coded by the first mention then the second. Figures are not

available nationally, for example from the Ministry of Education, for the distribution of teachers by subject area. A study conducted in 1993, however, *Teacher Development in State Secondary Schools – A Pilot Study* (Renwick, 1993), found the following distribution in the Wellington-Manawatu region.

Table 6.4: Distribution of subject areas in Renwick Study (1993)

Curriculum Area	*Major Area of teaching Teachers N=181*		*Minor Area of teaching Teachers N=139*	
	No.	%	No.	%*
Humanities (including English, Social Science, language and languages, The Arts)[3]	80	44	57	31
Science and Mathematics	46	25	31	17
Technology	24	12	14	8
Health and Physical well-being	14	8	24	13
Special education & Other	29	11	13	7

*Calculated as a percentage of total teachers hence does add up to 100%

In comparison with these figures, participants in my study are over-represented in the humanities subjects, virtually the same in Mathematics and Science, and under-represented in Technology. The others are difficult to compare because of different categorization of subjects.

Length of service

It can be seen from Table 6.5 that there is a tendency for greater numbers of responses from teachers who had fewer years of service, although numbers are higher again from the group with the longest service . The mean years of service was in the 16-20 group compared with a national mean of 16.14 years.

[3] Each of these subjects was broken down in the Renwick (1993) study with numbers and percentages for each. I have grouped them to give an easy comparison with my categories.

Table 6.5:**Years of service**

Total Years Teaching	*Number*	*Valid %*
1-5	27	20
6-10	23	17
11-15	15	11
16-20	24	18
21-25	8	6
26-30	9	7
31-40	25	19
Totals	134	100

Age groups

Surprisingly, the age groups did not seem to 'match' with length of service very closely. The age profile of the sample was similar to the national profile of age groups in the secondary service on the whole although decidedly under represented in the over 55 age group and also over represented in the 26-35 age group. In terms of numbers of respondents, two thirds of respondents were in the 36-55 age group and that is the same proportion as nationally.

Table 6.6: **Ages of respondents**

Age group in years	*Number*	*Valid Percent*	*National %*
20-25	5	4	3.4
26-35	27	22	16.5
36-45	42	34	32.7
46-55	44	35	35.1
56-65	7	6	11.9
no response/other	9	-	
Totals	131	100	100

Sex

Table 6.7: **Sex of respondents**

Sex distribution	*Number*	*Valid %*	*National %*
Female	73	59	54.6
Male	50	41	45.4
No response	11	-	
Totals	134	100	100

Table 6.7 shows that females were more inclined to respond than males, in relation to national statistics, although not by a very large margin. The slight over-representation of women could be of significance, as other data shows women to be more 'tolerant' of homosexuality as a social issue than males.

Ethnicity

Overwhelmingly, respondents were New Zealand Pakeha. The percentages are similar to the statistics for the national teaching work force.

Table 6.8: **Ethnicity of respondents**

Ethnic group	*Number*	*Valid %*	*National %*
N.Z. Maori	5	4	7
N.Z. Pakeha	105	85	88?[4]
Pacific Island	1	1	2
Asian	1	1	3
Other	12	9	
No response	10	-	
Totals	134	100	100

[4] No distinction is made between NZ Pakeha and other European in the M.O.E. statistics.

Current relationships

It was thought that personal relationships might have a bearing on personal responses to homosexual issues. This was not easy to categorise, because people sometimes fitted more than one relationship type. Nearly 20 per cent were never married, just over 50 per cent were currently married and a further 20 per cent divorced or separated. While only 5 per cent identified as "currently heterosexual", presumably this is because about 90 per cent did not see the need to 'state the obvious'. Only three per cent (four people) identified as currently or formerly in a gay or lesbian relationship, although in the next question, eight respondents identified as lesbian, bisexual or gay.

Sexual orientation

Table 6.9: **Sexual orientation**

Sexual orientation	*Number*	*Valid %*
Heterosexual	113	93
Lesbian	4	3
Gay	2	2
Bi-sexual	2	2
No response	13	-
Totals	134	100

Eight respondents identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (4,2,2 respectively.) This number certainly did not account for all lesbian and /or gay teachers known by the researcher to be working in the schools surveyed, but at 7%, could well reflect the ratio of gay:straight in the population of teachers and trustees in New Zealand. Given the significant difference in answers of gay:straight respondents on some items, although the total number of gay, lesbian and bisexual respondents is small, these differences need to be

examined seriously as a result of the position from which the two groups are viewing what is going on around them.

Summary

Analysis of the demographic profile of the sample obtained shows a similar profile to the national profile of teachers and schools in the secondary education sector in New Zealand. Although some variation exists, for example in some age groups and a slightly higher proportion of female respondents, this result justifies the decision to use a purposeful, stratified sample rather than a random sample to achieve representativeness of the population. Data from this sample is analysed first quantitatively, then qualitatively, in the following chapters.

CHAPTER SEVEN : WHO HAS A PROBLEM?

Teachers' and administrators' perceptions of discrimination in their schools.

This chapter reports the results from the questionnaire relating to the first investigating question for the research: What is the nature and degree of discrimination that teachers and administrators perceive exists in their schools against gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff?

Four closed questions with opportunity to add comment were asked to probe this aspect of the research which is about the *perceptions* of people in schools about what is going on for non-heterosexual students and staff.

Q1: Tacit Acceptance of Heterosexuality as 'Normal' – For Students

The first question asked: Do you believe that students are disadvantaged or harmed by a tacit acceptance in the school of heterosexuality as 'normal'? This was a question about heterosexism in relation to students.

A distinct majority (55%) answered affirmatively as is shown in Table 7.1, 35 per cent said 'no' and about 10 per cent said they 'don't know'. 70 per cent offered further comment, mostly expanding on 'yes' to this question.

Table 7.1: **Are students harmed/ disadvantaged by heterosexuality being seen as 'normal'?**

Response	*Number*	*Valid %*
Yes	67	56
No	41	34
Don't Know	12	10
No response	14	
Totals	134	100

Of those who responded affirmatively (67), the most frequent category of statement (25) was that there was a covert acceptance in the school that heterosexuality was 'normal' and difference from this was neither acknowledged nor accepted. Another sizeable group of responses (15) referred to invisibility of gay, lesbian or bisexuality, an absence of role models, lack of validation and an inability of these students to find acceptance of their sexuality. Of those who specified the harmful effects of this heterosexism, several (14) referred to alienation and isolation, and bullying was identified by 15. In the count of 'second mention' responses, the most frequent (13) were about invisibility and lack of validation of gay identities.

Of those who responded in the negative, their statements were that the school climate is positive and anti-discriminatory (5), that there is no evidence of such discrimination (2), that the topic is or should not be an issue for schools (5), and that heterosexuality *is normal* (9). This last comment was the most frequent of those who responded 'no' to this question. Altogether, however, twice as many comments expanded on an affirmative rather than a negative response to this question.

Overall then, both the quantitative and the textual responses indicate that a majority of teachers and administrators in the sample believe students are harmed by implicit heterosexism in schools. They believe heteronormativity is

not acknowledged and non-heterosexual students have no validation at school of this aspect of their being.

A closer look at which respondents were agreeing, disagreeing and did not know, also revealed some interesting patterns.

Cross tabulations by school type (Table 6.1) showed no difference from the overall affirmative responses, but there were differences in terms of those who were certain there was not a problem and those who did not know. There was more certainty (those who said 'yes' or 'no' rather than 'don't know') than expected (using the chi square test)[1] in the state as compared to the integrated schools, and there was more certainty than expected in the boys' schools and less certainty than expected in the girls' schools, whereas responses in the co-educational schools were as expected in relation to the overall response.

A more marked and surprising result from the cross tabulation of responses to this question was with subjects areas. Here, both the humanities and the maths/sciences groups responded in the pattern for the sample overall, but the health / helping group of teachers responded in a reversed pattern. Fewer than expected agreed that students were disadvantaged by heterosexism and more than expected disagreed; indeed, in contrast to the sample as a whole, a majority of this group disagreed that students were disadvantaged by heterosexism. Included in this group are Physical Education, Health, Transition, Careers and Special Education teachers. This is the group most likely to be given the responsibility of teaching about sexuality and to be given training to do so. (Indeed this group did stand out as having more training than other curriculum groups of teachers.) It is certainly interesting to note, then, that they do not, as a group, believe there is a problem to be addressed in schools as far as non-heterosexual students are concerned.

In contrast, another group that responded in a markedly different pattern,

[1] More /less 'than expected' reports the results of the chi square test which shows variations from the distribution of a particular group in the sample. Where the variation is statistically significant, I have indicated this.

though perhaps a more expected difference, was that which identified their relationships as gay, lesbian or bisexual. None of this group disagreed that students are harmed by tacit acceptance of heterosexuality as 'normal'. One said he/she did not know, and the other three agreed. Comparisons of the sexual orientation groups showed this trend even more markedly. All of the lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents to this question (7 in this case) agreed that students are harmed by tacit acceptance of heterosexuality as 'normal', in contrast to the 55 per cent overall who agreed, and none disagreed in contrast to 35 per cent overall.

Other discernible patterns in the cross-tabulations showed that respondents in the under 45 age groups were slightly more likely than expected to say 'Yes' than those over 45. By position in school, senior managers were less certain, middle managers less likely to say 'no'. By sex, females were more inclined to say 'Yes' and males less inclined to say 'Yes' but males were more inclined to be uncertain than females were.

Overall, there was much more agreement across all respondents that students are disadvantaged or harmed by implicit heterosexism than for the next question which asked whether they saw active discrimination against gay, lesbian or bisexual students.

Q2: Active Discrimination – Against Students

In this case, the level of agreement was reversed, with a slight majority saying that they did not believe there was active discrimination against gay, lesbian or bisexual students. This is shown in Table 7.2.

This time, 75 per cent of respondents offered comments of which 43 percent expanded on 'yes' and 52 percent expanded on 'no'. Of those who agreed that

there was active discrimination, the overwhelming majority of statements referred to verbal and physical abuse from peers to those who were, or were believed to be gay or lesbian. (Gay / lesbian is used as part of the language of homophobic abuse that can be directed to anyone, or as a general insult about anything.) In the responses of those who said no, the largest group of statements indicated that there was no evidence of such discrimination in the school. Others said the school climate was positive and anti-discriminatory, some said there was such discrimination from peers but not from staff, and yet others said such abuse was just blanket insults and that "it doesn't mean anything".

Table 7.2: **Is there active discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual students?**

Response	*Number*	*Valid %*
Yes	45	37
No	63	51
Don't Know	15	12
No response	11	
Totals	134	100

Cross-tabulations revealed an interesting result, however, showing that teachers in boys' schools had a majority agreeing that they believed there was indeed active discrimination against non-heterosexual students in their schools. This was a clear difference (chi-sq significant at 0.5) from both the girls' and the co-educational schools where teachers and trustees gave a definite negative response to this question. Integrated schools also had a majority agreeing there was active discrimination, in contrast to state schools but this is probably accounted for by the fact most respondents in the integrated schools were from a boys' school. (See discussion of sample in Chapter 5).

Comments from the boys' schools:

> Such students are frequently isolated or made figures of fun or actively taunted (04/14).
>
> Terms like gay, faggot, homo, are often used as terms of abuse and are sometimes seen as graffiti on desks etc (09/01).
>
> In areas of physical education and in the playground – perceived gay students are harassed (yet often accepted by the same offender/s on an individual-private basis) – mob rule (09/06).

Constrasting comments from the co-educational schools:

> Staff and students are 'positive' in accepting differences (02/06 – BOT member).
>
> ... in general, acceptance is growing. Not too many students feel school is a place to admit to anything other than normality (02/09).

Assistant teachers also agreed by a slight majority that there was active discrimination, in contrast to senior and middle managers. A higher proportion of men (21/48), compared to 23/71 of the women agreed there was active discrimination. This could be at least partially due to differences amongst school types as discussed above. The non-heterosexual responses reversed the trend of the heterosexual responses, with all but one believing there is active discrimination.

This result contrasts with the less equivocal views of lesbian, gay, bisexual respondents that staff are both disadvantaged by tacit heterosexism *and* are subject to active discrimination as discussed below.

The next two questions repeated the format of the first two, but in relation to staff rather than to students.

Q3: Tacit Acceptance of Heterosexuality as 'Normal' – For Staff

The majority opinion expressed was that staff were *not* harmed by heterosexism in the school, though a substantial minority did not know about this.

Table 7.3: **Are any staff disadvantaged or harmed by a tacit acceptance of heterosexuality as normal?**

Response	*Number*	*Valid %*
Yes	34	27
No	66	55
Don't Know	23	18
No response	11	
Totals	134	100

Sixty per cent of respondents offered comments of which 41 per cent expanded on "yes" and 52 per cent expanded on "no".

From those who said that they believed there was harm or disadvantage to staff from a tacit acceptance of heterosexuality as 'normal', there were comments on the discomfort that would or could be experienced from the heterosexist assumptions made and conveyed by heterosexual staff. They also mentioned the lack of support and affirmation of their personal relationships and home life, in contrast to that experienced by heterosexual colleagues. Some also spoke of harassment from students as a disadvantage for gay, lesbian and bisexual staff.

Of those who said they did not believe any staff were disadvantaged, frequent comments (9) were that the staff at their school were accepting and tolerant of all differences. Another common group of responses (9) was that there was clear evidence that the lesbian / gay staff members in their school were safe

from harm or disadvantage (although none offered examples of this evidence). Others said that there was no evidence of harm, and a small group (4) said that staff were judged by colleagues on performance only.

No senior managers believed any staff were disadvantaged in their school by heteronormativity but the results showed no difference in responses between middle managers and basic assistant teachers. Older age groups (over 45 years) however, were more certain that there was no problem than the younger age groups and this difference was statistically significant on the chi-square test at 0.5 certainty. Male respondents were also more certain staff were not harmed and/or disadvantaged by heteronormativity (31/48 men compared with 33/71 female). On the other hand, more respondents than expected from boys' schools believed staff were disadvantaged, fewer than expected said 'no' and more than expected said they did not know. These results were not significant at .05 of chi-square but did constitute a trend none-the-less.

In marked contrast to these results, seven of the eight non-heterosexual respondents were quite clear that heteronormativity was indeed harmful and/or disadvantageous to (presumably) non-heterosexual staff. This difference from the rest of the sample was significant at .01 on the chi-square test.

The following selection from the same school illustrates the variation in perceptions of the same situation:

> We have a couple of known gay female staff – there seems no problem with the staff – I doubt the students know... (10/14) (heterosexual)

> Gay, bisexual, lesbian staff are harmed because they are not keen to expose their sexuality as different, despite the fact that they know that gay students need role models... Because of bigotry amongst students, parents, other teachers, if they are publicly out their career and quality of life can be harmed, and I believe that appointments are affected. (10/03) (lesbian)

> It's quite acceptable in our school. (10/05) (heterosexual)

> I've heard on many occasions gay jokes being told in the company of lesbians. I've heard them chuck off at them as if they are weird etc. (10/09) (heterosexual)

Q 4: Active Discrimination - Against Staff

Very few teachers believed there was active discrimination against lesbian, gay or bisexual staff in their school. Most of the comments indicated that there was no evidence of this, while some said their staff was open, tolerant and accepting of difference. The only group that went against the trend for the sample was, significantly, the non-heterosexual respondents of whom six said gay, lesbian and bi-sexual staff were discriminated against although two (one lesbian, one bisexual) said they were not. Of the latter two, one said:

> I have not experienced any discrimination in this school as I did in my last school. (I) wouldn't trust students with the information as (I) would feel vulnerable (10/02).

Another (publicly out, gay) teacher, however, was less equivocal:

> Job applications & promotion – discrimination can occur depending on interview panel (02/03).

Whereas a (not out) lesbian teacher in another school (which has a reputation for liberal attitudes) said:

> There is not any terribly obvious discrimination – partly because there is no confrontationally 'out' gay staff member. The odd remark indicates homophobia is alive and well.

Table 7.4: **Belief there is active discrimination against gay, lesbian or bisexual staff**

Response	*Number*	*Valid %*
Yes	14	11
No	86	70
Don't know	24	19
No response	10	
Totals	134	100

Summary

Two clear trends emerge from these four questions. One is that, as the questions move from tacit to active discrimination and from students to staff, there is among different groups of respondents an increasing disagreement, but also increasing uncertainty that there is a problem to be addressed. The other trend is the contrast in perceptions of heterosexual respondents with teachers who are lesbian, gay or bisexual. A summary of these data is provided in Table 7.5.

The data collected on these questions, then, shows that over half of teachers in the sample believe that students suffer from a climate of heteronormativity in their schools, mainly through an absence of validation or acceptance of sexual orientations that are not heterosexual. Teachers in boys' schools, and teachers who identified as bisexual, lesbian or gay, were more inclined than the rest of the sample to agree with this. Teachers who disagreed (about one third of the sample) believe the positive and tolerant climates in their schools means no students are so disadvantaged. Just over half of the sample, however, believe students do not suffer from active discrimination in their schools, citing positive

school climates in support, and regarding homophobic insults as mere terms of general (normal?) verbal abuse.

Table 7.5: **Summary of responses**

Response	*Students harmed by heteronorm-ativity*		*Students actively discriminated against*		*Staff harmed by heteronormativity*		*Staff actively discriminated against*	
	All staff	*Gay staff*	*All staff*	*Gay staff*	*All staff*	*Gay staff*	*All staff*	*Gay staff*
	N=120	*N=7*	*N=123*	*N=8*	*N=123*	*N=8*	*N=124*	*N=8*
	%	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Yes	56	100	37	72	27	88	11	75
No	34	0	51	28	55	12	70	25
Don't know	10	0	12	0	18	0	19	0
Totals	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Those (about one third) who thought there was active discrimination, referred to the verbal and physical abuse suffered by students who were, or were believed to be gay, lesbian or bisexual. Teachers in boys' schools were more likely to believe there was such active discrimination in their schools, while a substantial majority of, gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers believed there was such discrimination.

Over half of teachers in the sample did not believe any teachers were disadvantaged by heteronormativity, believing their staff were accepting of all differences and sometimes claiming clear evidence that gay or lesbian staff were not disadvantaged in their schools. Those who believed there was disadvantage, spoke of the consequences of invisibility and discomfort from general heterosexist attitudes. There was a slight tendency for teachers in boys' schools to agree more than those in girls' or coeducational schools that there was disadvantage though male respondents overall were more inclined than female to disagree. Lesbian, gay and bisexual teachers, however, were

certain they were disadvantaged by heterosexist assumptions in the school. Most of this group also believed there was active discrimination against non-heterosexual staff, in contrast to 70 per cent of the sample who believe there is no such active discrimination. The heterosexual teachers and administrators generally believe their staffrooms are open, tolerant and accepting of difference. Their queer colleagues do not seem to agree.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ARE SCHOOLS DEALING WITH HETEROSEXIST DISCRIMINATION?

Policies and practice

This chapter reports results from the second investigating question: What do teachers and administrators perceive that their schools are doing to address discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff?

This question was tackled through four items; asking firstly what specific measures teachers thought were being taken in their schools, secondly, how adequately they thought the school was addressing the issue, thirdly asking about their own training in this area and finally asking what they knew of legislative requirements to address the issue.

Q1: Measures to Address the Needs of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Students and Staff

A majority of teachers believe their schools are addressing the needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students through the guidance network and through policies dealing with verbal and physical harassment. About forty percent also believe their school provides relevant education programmes for students, although many also believed this was not the case or did not know. Very few believed their school provided staff development programmes or addressed heterosexism in curriculum policy, or even specifically in the equity policy of the school. Nearly half did not know whether these latter two policies referred to sexual orientation. Nearly all, however, were clear that the school did not provide particular facilities for gay students.

Table 8.1: **Teachers' beliefs that specific measures are in place**

Measures to address needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual students and staff	*Yes*		*No*		*Don't know*	
	N	*%*	*N*	*%*	*N*	*%*
Specific statements in the equity policy	28	(23)	41	(34)	52	(43)
Policies that deal with verbal and physical harassment	83	(68)	21	(17)	19	(15)
Curriculum policy statements	16	(13)	48	(40)	57	(47)
Staff development programmes	10	(8)	78	(65)	32	(27)
Education programmes for students	52	(44)	31	(26)	36	(30)
The guidance network	72	(60)	10	(8)	38	(32)
Particular facilities for gay, lesbian and bisexual students, such as support groups, speakers, noticeboard space etc.	4	(3)	100	(82)	18	(15)

Of course, the extent to which these results reflect what *is* happening in schools, and the extent to which they reflect what the respondents believe *ought* to be (or not be) happening cannot be inferred from these results. None-the-less, it is what teachers state they believe to be the case. The high proportions who state they do not know in many instances is perhaps not surprising. These results will be looked at again in connection with the questions that probe what respondents saw as constraints and possibilities for action in schools.

Q2: How Adequately is the School Addressing Needs?

The next item asked respondents how adequately, in their opinion, is the school addressing the needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual students and staff? Did they think that the school is doing too much, enough or not enough?

The result was that a small majority believed that not enough was being done in their school.

Table 8.2: **Teachers opinions about how adequately needs are met**

Response	*Number*	*Valid %*
Too much	1	1
Enough	48	44
Not enough	61	55
Totals	110	100

Eighty-five percent (93) of respondents added comment to their responses to the above question. Only one respondent said it was not the school's role to do anything. Thirty-six expanded on 'enough' and by far the most common category of statements was that nothing specific beyond general tolerance and equity policies was needed. Others said there was a counselling service, or questioned whether there was a need to be fulfilled. Others believed the issue was dealt with within health education. Of those who commented that not enough was being done (56), the most common responses were about the silence surrounding the issue, the fears and active avoidance. Several said only individuals received support but this was not part of school culture and there was no policy support and back up for those who might wish to address the issue. This theme will be returned to in discussion of a later section of the questionnaire.

Cross tabulations on the demographic data showed a slight tendency for the under 35 year old group to say not enough compared with the older groups, and a similarly slightly greater tendency for basic assistant teachers to say not enough. Teachers in the girls' school were slightly over-represented in saying enough was being done. However, only one (bisexual) respondent of the eight gay/lesbian/bisexual group believed enough was being done and all the rest (87.5 %) said not enough.

Q3: Training and Staff Development

Next, participants were asked if they had ever participated in any training or staff development in issues relating to the needs of lesbian, gay or bisexual students and colleagues. Twenty five per cent said they had.

Table 8.3 – **Teachers' participation in training or staff development**

Response	*Number*	*Valid %*
Yes	29	24
No	91	76
Totals	120	100

Thirty-three respondents added text to the above responses. Most of the training received seemed to have been in the context of AIDS awareness and / or counsellor training. Only five referred to school based staff development.

Cross tabulation of data showed some interesting results here (e.g. age, sex, subject disciplines). Teachers in integrated schools were more inclined to say 'yes' than in state schools, as were teachers in boys schools, and fewer teachers than expected in girls' schools - both in contrast to co-ed schools. The 36-45 year age group was more likely than the others to say 'yes'. Four

lesbian/gay respondents said 'yes' and three said 'no' - in contrast to 23 'yes' and 84 'no' for the heterosexual group. The other significant difference was in the patterns for the subject areas where only 15 per cent of both humanities and maths/science teachers said they had had training but 65 per cent of the health/helping teachers had and 60 per cent of the technology teachers - though numbers are small in the last group (five in total). The result for the health/helping teachers should be noted in view of their belief, reported on page 117 that there is not a problem for gay, lesbian or bisexual students in their schools.

Finally, in this section of the questionnaire, teachers and administrators were asked about relevant policies.

Q4: Knowledge About Legislation Or Policies

The question was asked: What legislation or education policies do you know of that require schools to address the needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual students?

Legislation which is relevant includes the Human Rights Amendment Act (1993), and the National Education Guidelines and National Administration Guidelines (NEGs and NAGs) that govern schools' policies and practices. (See discussion Chapter 4.) Only one respondent was fully aware of these though seven others knew of at least one of these requirements. The table below sets out the range of responses to this question.

Table 8.4: **Knowledge of legislative or policy requirements to address issues for gay, lesbian and bisexual students in schools.**

Kind or degree of knowledge mentioned	*Frequency*	*Valid percent*
Detailed knowledge	1	1
Some accurate knowledge	11	11
Vague reference to EEO	46	46
Believes there are no requirements	2	2
Says 'don't know'	40	40
No response	34	
Totals	134	100

Summary

While a majority of teachers believe gay, lesbian, bisexual students are supported through their schools' guidance and harassment policies, a small majority believe that not enough is done to address the needs of these students. In particular, these latter teachers referred to a fearful silence and avoidance of tackling the issues and a lack of policy support for action taken on behalf of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. On the other hand, a sizeable group believes that general school tolerance is sufficient. Any staff development received was within the 'medical model'[1] rather than philosophical, and teachers' self-reported knowledge about official requirements related to homo/sexuality issues is limited.

These results will be linked through to analyses of discourses operating around sexuality in schools and also to the results of the third investigative question: what are the constraints and possibilities for school-based interventions on behalf of lesbian, bisexual and gay students and staff.

[1] Much professional development in schools around sexuality has resulted from concerns related to AIDS.

CHAPTER NINE : DISCOURSES AT WORK

Responses to some heteronormative and homophobic scenarios

In this chapter, responses to the five scenarios presented in Part C of the questionnaire are analysed using the discourse analysis method outlined by McNaughton (1998) and discussed in the methodology chapter. In the original research design, the scenarios were devised to probe attitudes (see Chapter 5). Each scenario asked respondents to say what they would think, feel and do in the situation presented. In asking for an affective response (what would you feel) as well as cognitive responses (what would you think), these two elements were useful in discerning both the 'emotional investments' and the 'social practices' that underlie discursive relations of power. The discursive practices analysed in response to these scenarios also fits with Foucault's analysis of power as occurring locally and specifically, "in every relation from one point to another" and connecting outwardly into broad patterns, "an over-all effect that emerges from all these mobilities..." (1990, p.93). The analysis of the responses of individual teachers in ten different schools reveals a complex web of dominant and competing discursive practices that open opportunities and constrain possibilities in ways that reflect broad societal patterns without merely reproducing them.

In the first instance, the following analysis describes the range of responses, with some quantitative indications of these. This scoping of the responses is then extended to form the basis of an analysis of the discourses that seemed to be operating.

SCENARIO ONE: **A boy in your class who does not conform to prevailing ideals / images of masculinity is being picked on by classmates who are calling him 'poofter', 'faggot', etc.**

What would you think, feel and do?

Scenario 1: Quantitative Analysis[1]

In the following analysis, the number in brackets is the frequency of responses. Where two figures are indicated, they are from counting the first and second mentions in multiple responses that were coded. Percentages given are from first mentions only.

In what they said they would *think* about this, fifty four per cent (62) (of first mentions) used statements of the category that 'this behaviour needs disciplinary action', and twenty eight per cent (33) used statements that 'these students' ideas need challenging'. A further seventeen per cent (19), said they thought 'the boy may need help' and two said 'this is just an idle comment - no action needed'. Within the first 'discipline' category, the main thought was that 'this is bullying / harassment and I need to deal with the offenders' unacceptable behaviour'. Within the 'student attitudes' category, the main thought was that they were ignorant and intolerant. A few respondents thought they would need to provide education in accepting difference. Of those whose first thought was for the boy, most wondered how best to support him but others expressed curiosity only - was he homosexual or not? A few thought this was just 'idle talk'. In the second mentions, the same thoughts were expressed with a further 23 mentioning that the attitudes needed changing.

[1] I am calling this 'quantitative' analysis to distinguish it clearly from the discourse analysis. A 'qualitative' step, however, has been used here too in discerning the categories of the responses to the open questions, as in the reporting of 'quantitative' results in the previous chapters.

Paralleling these responses about thoughts to some extent, the responses to the question about feelings centred on the behaviour, the attitudes and the boy. They also mentioned, however, the teacher as witness. The main feeling expressed was anger and outrage – forty one per cent (48). Sometimes this was specifically directed to the behaviour and sometimes to the attitudes, but several did not specify what the anger was towards. Others expressed sadness, concern, disgust and shame that such attitudes were being expressed and many (twenty six per cent) felt sympathy and protectiveness towards the boy. Some expressed frustration, hopelessness and even guilt at an inability to deal effectively with such a situation. One felt "knotted up inside - it could be me." Others expressed awkwardness and were "a little sorry for the poofter." Two or three spoke of feeling energised and determined to do something about the situation.

There was a high level of response to the 'what would you do' part of this question, including many second and third responses. The most frequent first response – fifty four per cent (66) - was to stop the behaviour as such 'put downs' were against school policy. Another frequently cited action - twenty per cent of first mentions - was to challenge the attitude of intolerance and discuss the issue of dealing with difference. Less frequent, but occurring more in the second mentions, was a resolve to challenge the attitudes towards homosexuality (not just 'difference') and the pejorative use of the word 'poofter'. Although, in total, only eleven people said they would challenge the attitude to homosexuality, it may be that some of the 59 who said they would challenge the intolerance of difference, might also have been prepared to discuss the basis of homophobia per se, and go beyond the liberal discourse of toleration as is discussed below.

Scenario 1: Discourse Analysis

In this section, and for each of the following scenario discourse analyses, I have used McNaughton's (1998) analytic steps. Firstly, I identified the categories used

in responses to the scenario, then the social practices these categories are associated with, and then the patterns of emotional meanings attached to these categories and social practices. From these steps, I identified a discourse or discourses and analysed the institutional basis of the discourse/s. Finally, I analysed the social power relations and effects of any competing discourses. This final step enabled an analysis of 'discursive practice' in the Foucauldian sense, discussed in Chapter 2, whereby discourse (as a knowledge/power relationship embedded in language) shapes subjectivity and will have material effects. This analysis can open up, for example, ways that transgressing sexualities are often made unsayable or invisible or the target of abusive homophobic attention through a variety of discourses that constitute the homo/sexual subject in the context of school.

In the first scenario, two discourses emerged from the responses: firstly, a discourse of 'school discipline' and secondly, a discourse of 'tolerance'.

School discipline

In Scenario One, a discourse of 'school discipline' emerges clearly from the categories used by many respondents. The categories used within this discourse were 'disruption', 'bullying', 'harassment', 'offenders'. These related only to the 'behaviour' of the harassment.

> ... I would refer to the Dean, emphasising the attack and its disruption rather than the possible underlying reason. I'm not in the classroom to debate whether someone's sexuality is justified, I'm there to teach young people. (04/11)

> This is an example of harassment or bullying and I would treat it as such. (04/01)

These categories have meaning within the social practices of 'discipline and punish' that are familiar to schools[2]. Teachers expressed anger at this behaviour because it contravened 'school policy' and teachers expressed professional outrage towards 'the offenders'.

A construction of 'taken for granted' knowledge, in the institutional context of schools and the teaching profession, holds that bullying is an offence and students 'caught' bullying need to be punished. Teachers know what to do, as this is a normal part of professional practice – and of unexamined conventional wisdom. You tell off the bullies and comfort the victim.[3]

The emotional meanings (anger that the teachers expressed toward the offenders) that are attached to this social practice are expressive of the professional disapproval teachers have towards this kind of behaviour. Clearly there was a strong belief that the situation 'was not right'. McNaughton (1998) speaks of the "implicit moral sense" (p.160) attached to categories of what is "normal and / or right". Our desires, then, are attached to affirming such moral sense and thus the outrage felt and expressed when the moral code is contravened.

Another emotional meaning attached to this social practice is, arguably, an expression of the 'comfort zone' for teachers of constructing homophobic harassment in terms of general 'bullying behaviour', rather than having to confront the deeper heteronormative and homonegative social practices within which the harassment is embedded.

The construction of such harassment and bullying as a punishable offence, is part of the culture of 'school' as a traditional institution in New Zealand. It is also embedded in the law of New Zealand, in terms of the Human Rights legislation outlined in Chapter 4. This discourse, furthermore, is institutionalised within the

---

[2] See Chapter 2. Foucault , argued that "...power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes and modes of everyday behaviour. Hence the significance of methods like school discipline..." (1980, p.125).

[3] A counter discourse to this professional practice is the 'no-blame', problem-solving approach to bullying promoted by Cleary (1997). See Sullivan, (1999).

state education system in the form of the National Education Guidelines (MOE, 1993,1999), including the requirement that Boards of Trustees ensure their school is an 'emotionally and physically safe' learning environment. Some schools have much more active anti-harassment policies than do others. These policies are usually encoded in Board of Trustee policies and may have been negotiated by staff, parents and students.

Although bullying and verbal harassment are endemic in schools in New Zealand and elsewhere (Cleary, 1997), there is also a code of behaviour in our society that condemns 'picking on the little fella'. This stands alongside, however, a `common sense' belief (attached to a discourse of masculinity?) that (male) children must 'learn to stand up for themselves'. This is a further example of how competing or contradictory discourses circulate in specific sites, intersecting in particular ways with other powerful discourses (Foucault, 1990).

Individual / equal rights

A second discourse emerging from the responses to this scenario is a liberal humanist discourse of 'tolerance' and 'equal rights'. The categories used that identify such a discourse were terms like 'intolerance', 'individual rights', 'acceptance' and 'difference'. Rather than focussing on the harassing behaviour as a disciplinary matter, these categories were used to refer to the perceived attitudes of the harassers. Very few used the category 'homophobia', although a few did speak about 'stereotypical ideas of masculinity'.

> (I would) spend some time discussing acceptance / difference / tolerance ... spend some time trying to shift attitudes (03/02).

> This is contrary to human rights legislation (03/03).

The categories of tolerance and equal rights that were used by the respondents can be placed within commonly understood social practices that circulate in schools and society at large, which express values of tolerance to 'difference' on

the grounds of individual rights. These expressions of values compete with opposing social practices of intolerance to those who are different, whether the difference is racial, or based on gender performances, age, dis/ability, level of education or what ever. Heterosexual intolerance of people perceived as or known to be gay or lesbian is a common social practice. The expression of prejudice, however, is not (officially) acceptable to the teaching profession – it is against their code of practice (NZPPTA, 2000).

The emotional meanings attached to these categories and social practices, in this instance, were expressed in terms of 'sadness' at the intolerance, but also outrage at the attitudes and sympathy to the 'victim'. Again, it can be seen that teachers' "implicit moral sense" of what is "normal or right" (McNaughton, 1998) was offended.

> I would feel sad for the boy and angry at the insensitive classmates (10/16).

The liberal humanist discourse of equal rights for all individuals, including tolerance of difference, has a strong institutional base in the schools and educational codes in New Zealand as well as in the law, as was mentioned in the context of the previously identified discourse. Official discourses of education, some of which were identified in the literature review, (Chapter 3) are permeated with this discourse of equal rights. It has many expressions, one of which is 'equality of opportunity', which arguably has underpinned our state secondary system since 1939.[4] The teaching profession can also be identified as a social institution within which these discourses circulate, and may even be officially encoded (NZPPTA, 1986, 1995, 1999, 2000).

[4] Alton-Lee and Praat (2000) identify this, within a framework of Discourses of Education, as a discourse of 'Social Democracy' and refer to the famous Beeby/Fraser statement "Every person, whatever his level of academic ability, whether he be rich or poor... has a right... to a free education..." (p.47).

Such a discourse of individual rights and tolerance of difference, may contest the way some individuals, such as the boy in this hypothetical scenario, are discursively positioned in the school community. The name-calling which the teachers were asked to respond to, derives its disciplinary power from the particular understandings of masculinity, some of which are accepted (even enforced) within the school community, while other understandings of masculinity, such as those invoked by the term 'poofter', are rejected. But this particular relation of power amongst the students was not explicitly referred to by respondents, even where they employed a discourse of 'tolerance and equal rights'. Only two or three said they would challenge the attitudes to homosexuality. This silence, or refusal to name the nature of the harassment, has the effect of reinforcing the discourses of 'acceptable masculinity' (Connell, 1995; Segal, 1990) that circulate in the school alongside the discourses of individual rights.

However, in addition to the encompassing institution of 'the New Zealand school', there are over three hundred individual secondary school institutions in New Zealand and each varies in the manner and degree to which such a discourse circulates and intersects with opposing discourses within their own local and particular site (Foucault, 1990).

For example, the much publicised controversy over bullying at Otago Boys' High School and at other boys' boarding schools in the late 1990s, indicates the level of contestation of liberal humanist discourses of tolerance and individual rights. Such competing discourses include particular discursive constructions of masculinity. Vilifying the feminine ('don't be a girl'), ascribing certain behaviours ('the normal rough and tumble') to masculinity, and excluding certain attributes (e.g. gentleness), interests and activities (e.g. reading) from acceptable ways of 'doing' masculinity, are examples of the discursive practices that strongly enforce a particular representation of masculinity amongst young people[5] and which persist to a degree in the adult population of New Zealand. This hegemonic performance

[5] Town, (1998) reports that some of the ten homosexual youth he interviewed even joined in themselves in this homophobic abuse of peers "to deflect attention away from their own hidden transgressive desires." (p.156)

of masculinity is represented strongly, albeit with different 'flavours', in New Zealand films such as *Vigil*, *Once Were Warriors*, *Savage Honeymoon*.

Arguably, however, the liberal humanist discourse of tolerance and respect for the individual, can interrupt the discourses around hegemonic masculinity and heteronormativity at least to some extent. It can challenge the right of students to persecute their peers in the process of 'disciplining' each other to act within what they consider gender appropriate ways.

The limits on how far a liberal humanist discourse of tolerance and individual rights can interrupt heteronormative and homophobic discourses, on the other hand, can be sourced to the competing discourses discussed above. The professional discourses that construct all bullying as a matter of discipline, leaves the heterosexist and homophobic social practices that do occur unremarked by 'authority'. Likewise, when a professional liberal humanist discourse of tolerance and individual rights is deployed, there is a collusion with the construction of the silences around homophobic bullying and other heterosexist practices, not withstanding the expressions of 'outrage' and 'sadness' indicated by these respondents. A concern for 'individual rights', which does not recognise and confront the wider practices of power that operate, can ultimately only have limited effect. As discussed in Chapter 2, liberal individualism leaves untouched the prevailing discursive relations of power and can, at best, only benefit isolated individuals in isolated times and places.

SCENARIO TWO: **Walking through the school one day, you come upon a situation where a female student has just pinned to a notice board a poster which says: 'Lesbian Support Group, Meeting - in usual room, 12.30 Wednesday 7th July, Visiting Speaker + music and relax together. See you there!'**

A group of male and female students standing nearby are calling out comments like: "Lezzie! Bulldog! Lemon! Can't you get it ..." etc. One of

them is obviously poised to throw some food at the poster. The young woman is ignoring them.

What would you think, feel, and do?

This scenario differs from the previous one in that, firstly, the 'victim' of harassment from her peers is female, and secondly she is publicly advertising her status as lesbian, or a lesbian supporter. She is, in fact, refusing the category of 'victim'. She is also well along the continuum of strategies (ranging from deeply closeted to publicly out), identified by Griffin (1992), used to manage lesbian identity. She is using the high risk but 'self integrating' strategy of being explicitly, even publicly out. This led to some interesting differences in response from the first scenario.

Scenario 2: Quantitative Analysis

The largest group, thirty seven per cent (43) of first mentions, thought about the cruelty of the bullying behaviour. Another significant group, sixteen per cent (18), focussed on the attitudes revealed in the behaviour: 'the bullies have a problem, they are ignorant, threatened by strong women'. Of those whose first thought was about the girl, many – twenty one percent (24) - expressed the (admiring?) thought: 'the girl is strong / brave.' Some (7) were perplexed as to how best to defuse / handle the situation with at least one wishing they were not there! Some also (7) wondered by what 'authority' the girl was posting up the information. In the second mentions especially, a group (12) wondered about how to challenge the group and the attitudes and behaviour in the wider school programme. As with the previous scenario, the concern mostly concentrated on the bullying behaviour and the intolerance behind it. In this instance, however, although there was support for the strength of the girl, there was also a worry by some that she was 'out of line'.

For forty one per cent (46), the feeling expressed was outrage - which I grouped with similar expressions such as anger, alarm, contempt and embarrassment - at the attitudes of the bullies. Another group of emotions, fourteen per cent (16), was sadness, despair, pity and frustration - also directed towards the attitudes. While a number (12), felt sympathy for the girl and were supportive of her 'rights', a similar number of respondents (10) expressed admiration and support towards the girl. Conversely, some (7) felt negative about the girl's action and worried for the school. A small group (3 of second mentions) who wished to intervene on the girl's behalf felt worried about "my reputation - what others might think of me." These were not necessarily non-heterosexual teachers as one heterosexual teacher commented elsewhere in the questionnaire that many people assumed s/he was bisexual as s/he often challenged heterosexist and homophobic attitudes and behaviour. Overall, then, the feelings were positive to the girl as she was seen as taking strong action (in contrast to sympathy for the boy in the previous scenario) and outraged at the bullying behaviour.

For the actions, forty three percent (50) said they would stop the abuse and name the behaviour as abusive and bullying and trampling on the rights of others. A smaller group (15) said they would strongly tell the group to move on (presumably without challenging the behaviour itself) and yet another similar sized group (14) said they would on the spot challenge the attitude of intolerance - 'what are you afraid of?' Some said they would (just) discipline the behaviour 'as a misdemeanour' (food throwing etc). This was said by eight of first mentions but a further fifteen of second mentions. Twelve responses said they would 'quietly' steer either the group or the girl away, with several suggesting to the girl that she be less public in view of peer intolerance. Four mentioned they would find out if the girl 'had authority' to paste up the poster.

Scenario 2: Discourse Analysis

Although, as with scenario one, a discourse of 'school discipline' dominated, evident again in these responses was the liberal humanist discourse of individual rights in the context of 'attitudes', 'tolerance of difference', and 'civil rights'. Also identified, is a discourse that I have called 'school knowledge' which is that which is 'able to be said' in the context of school and is thus sanctioned by school authority. Within this discourse there is knowledge which is held to be excluded as 'allowable' from expression in the site of school. A 'heroic' discourse can be seen in some responses too.

Individual rights

This discourse can be identified through the respondents' concentration on the category 'behaviour', described as 'unacceptable', 'cruel', and 'bullying' and 'abusive'. While the category of 'unacceptable behaviour', however, may seem to fit a 'school discipline' discourse, several respondents said they would name the behaviour as a violation of individual / human rights. Presumably, the human right at stake was 'free speech'. Those who focussed on 'attitudes' used descriptors such as 'ignorant' and 'threatened'. In these cases, the discourse was encompassing the 'right to be different', rather than the civil right of free speech.

As a full analysis of the underlying social practices, emotional meanings and institutional bases of the 'equal rights' discourse has already been made, this section will now look closely at the categories of 'bravery' and 'inappropriate / non authorised' statements. ('Ignorant attitudes' can be seen as part of the discourse of tolerance of difference, but will also be discussed in the context of the next scenario, which produced a strong response of 'ignorance'.)

Heroic individualism

The categories used to speak admiringly of the girl's 'bravery' seem to emerge from social practices in New Zealand society, endorsed in our schools, that 'standing up for yourself' and 'being honest about yourself' are valued. Respondents expressed feelings of approval and admiration, while also feeling sympathetic to the girl. (Similar feelings of admiration were expressed in Scenario 3 towards the gay staff member who introduced his partner to staff.)

> I'd feel admiration for the young woman's courage – but also concern for her (07/01).
>
> I'd feel that the young woman has a strong character (07/03).
>
> I'd feel admiration and respect for her strength of character to support or promote what she believes in (03/19).

In schools (and families) the inverse of this is often seen in discursive practices that blame the victims of harassment. Being 'a wuss' can be more unacceptable than being a bully, and can be constructed as the cause of the bullying.

The categories and emotional meanings and social practices operating here can be named as a discourse of heroic individualism, fitting also within the liberal humanist framework that supports equal rights and tolerance of difference. Derived from Enlightenment theories of liberalism, such discourses are deeply embedded in our social institutions, including schools, and are part of our 'common sense' understanding of behaviours that are admirable and those which are not. Unquestioned, in such understandings, is why such 'heroic' stands are, indeed, heroic. People may choose to be different and admired or maligned as a result, but what they are choosing to be different from, remains as the taken for granted 'norm'; unexplored, not needing to be explained nor justified, and social effects remain unexamined.

Authorised (versus subjugated) knowledge

The above discourse of heroic individualism is also contested in schools by discourses of 'legitimate authority' and 'legitimate knowledge'. Those respondents who questioned 'what authority' the girl had to put up such a poster, presumably would not have worried if it was a netball team notice she was displaying. Although it appears to be what she is doing, that is at issue, the actual objection is about the content of the notice, hence the analysis of subjugated knowledge. She was attempting to 'say the unsayable'.

> Has the student permission to put up a poster? If not, take it down and deal with the abusive students. If she has permission ... (this) would denote approval of her action by the Deputy Principal, which in turn would imply school approval of such a group (01/06).

The fact that she was, by her action, contesting prevailing discourses of heteronormativity, was recognised by some respondents who disapproved of this, and regarded it as a provocative and questionable action to take in school. Discourses of 'legitimate (and subjugated) knowledge' also occur in the last scenario to be examined, where the 'legitimate curriculum' is contested. Controversies over the health curriculum, examined in Chapter 4, indicate the level of contestation that can occur in schools, particularly where sex and sexuality are involved. (Although controversies over the Social Studies curriculum also showed how discourses of race relations are contested in New Zealand.)

Those teachers who worried that taking a stand in defence of the girl would affect their own reputation (taint by association), reveals how powerful the disciplining discourses of heteronormativity can be, even for adults normally in a subject position of 'in authority'. These teachers, indeed, felt their authority could be undermined if their position within prevailing discourses of 'teacher propriety' was called into question through a positioning within 'illegitimate' sexual orientation. Here is a vivid example of how competing discourses construct competing subjectivities. The teachers themselves felt disciplined by the powerful

heteronormative discourses intersecting with discourses of professionalism and of school authority.

The discourses emerging from responses to this scenario are also interesting for how they relate to the discourses of essential and alienated identities, and the associated victim positions' that were discussed in the literature review. Although the girl is being harassed and shown in a victim position from that point of view, she is also refusing a victim position by the action she is taking. Discursive responses show that some teachers admired and supported this refusal of the victim position, which at least opens up 'discursive spaces' for counter-discursive action. Even those who questioned the action in terms of 'legitimate school knowledge', may well have begun a discussion, which arguably interrupts the silences that act as discursive constraints on publicly 'being' gay, lesbian or bisexual in schools.

SCENARIO THREE: **At a staff social function, a male teacher who you did not know was gay, introduces you to his male partner.**

What would you think? (Would your perceptions of him change?) What would you feel, and what would you do?

Scenario 3: Quantitative Analysis

Forty percent (50) of respondents (first mentions) indicated they would not think or feel anything special about this and would respond with the usual social courtesies. Quite a number, however, (24 +13) said they would be 'interested' to 'know more about him', to discover a 'new aspect' and several indicated 'surprise' that they had not 'picked this up' previously. Gay colleagues were sorry they had not previously

picked this up and been able to offer support and some women (3 + 5) were disappointed at the loss of a potential relationship.

A number (10 + 3) expressed admiration at his openness and some (8 +6) expressed pleasure he had 'trusted' his colleague with this information about his personal life. Negative feelings were expressed by several respondents (16 + 1), ranging from embarrassment to repulsion (1). Such feelings were described as: hesitant, bemused, mild alarm, disappointed, uncomfortable, a bit threatened, repulsed, unsure, shocked at my own heterosexual conditioning. These were expressed as feelings, not thoughts, although one or two expressed reservation in their thoughts, for example: "If he was a poor teacher, he may go down further in my estimation." (See discourse analysis below for comment on these emotions.)

For actions, most indicated 'small talk' (seventy one per cent (95)) although in second mentions, a lot (60) said they would engage the partner in conversation about himself. A few said they would talk as they did not think (as one put it) "that gays should be shunned." One said they would do nothing "unless the partner was flaunting his sexuality in an offensively unacceptable way."

Scenario 3: Discourse Analysis

The main discourse I have identified here, is embedded in the heteronormative process of 'phatic communion'[6] or 'small talk' which covered the silences around the 'statement' being made by this teacher. Also, however, a discourse of heroic individualism emerged, as discussed in the previous scenario, and a minor discourse of 'legitimate sexuality'. (By 'minor', I mean that the categories in the statements, used to identify the discourse, occurred less frequently.)

[6] A linguistic term coined by R. Jacobson (1960) that refers to the 'small talk', 'social chit chat' that is assumed to be 'safe' territory for superficial communication. In ed. Sebeok, T. pp350-377.

Heteronormative phatic communion

The main category used in the responses was a category of 'small talk':

> I would say 'Gidday, how are you' (02/12).

> Hello – can I get you a drink / where are you from etc – usual small talk (02/09).

However, those who spoke (admiringly) of the teacher's 'openness' and 'trust' are remarking on the social practice which keeps homosexual relationships private in the context of school, in contrast to the unconsciously public nature of heterosexual relationships and heterosexual family life which is endlessly discussed as part of 'normal' social intercourse amongst professional colleagues. 'Phatic communion', is a linguistic term to denote talk that eases social relationships, but which in heteronormative practice, can be embarrassingly alienating (and boring) for lesbian, gay and bisexual people[7].

The patterns of emotional meanings invested in such social small talk, come from an overriding desire to ease social interactions regardless of other personal values. Thus, even those respondents who expressed private 'repulsion' at the hypothetical discovery a colleague was gay, still said he would "try to allow conversation to go with the flow"(02/02). This is the classic 'would you like a cup of tea' syndrome, using politeness to cover any embarrassing or difficult social situations. Of course, many respondents stated that they neither thought nor felt any social awkwardness, although others did indicate disapproval and personal repugnance. That this scenario was seen by some respondents as interrupting heteronormative assumptions, is indicated by the responses of 'surprise'. The heteronormative discourse of phatic communion was used, literally, to cover the silences that usually keep gay and lesbian relationships hidden in the professional world of teachers.

[7] A scenario removed from the instrument after the trial, in the interests of more brevity, was dinner party talk that focused on children and heterosexual family discourse.

It is interesting, in this context, to be reminded of the concept discussed by Griffin (1992) of the continuum of integration of the private and professional worlds of a teacher. Those teachers who 'pass' as heterosexual in their staff rooms report feelings of alienation and fragmentation, in contrast to those who are explicitly or publicly 'out' to their colleagues and the students. In view of the strong homonegative feelings expressed by some, albeit a minority of respondents, such feelings of alienation for some gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers is not surprising. Indeed, as reported in another chapter, one respondent did say that feeling "split" was not a bad thing, as "only half of me feels wicked."

The institutional base that supports this 'covering' discourse is the teaching profession, and, more specifically, the staff room dynamic that operates variously in each school, in semi-obligatory, semi-formal 'staff plus partner get togethers', which help build collegial relationships in schools. Conventionally, of course, partners are heterosexual partners, hence the 'surprise' expressed by many respondents at the introduction of a same-sex partner.

In the context of the teaching profession in secondary schools, the 'family' setting of teachers is regarded as a legitimate site for the Foucauldian 'gaze' to scrutinise. Evidence of this is the advice given in the last decade or so to women applicants for promotion to object to or decline to answer questions that were once routinely asked about family commitments during interviews. In contrast to the handicap of children to a woman seeking promotion, being a 'family man' was seen as an ideal attribute for a male. However, in the 1990s, at least one girls' school in New Zealand was rumoured to have actively sought a female principal with a heterosexual partner *in the house.*[8]

The social power relations operating in the above discursive situation does not, on the surface, appear to constrain or oppress those 'transgressing' conventional heteronormative territory. Any private reactions are concealed by the polite conventions of 'chit chat'. Thus, arguably, such discourses can on the one hand

[8] Personal communication to author from a teacher in that school.

be seen to enforce silences around transgressing sexualities in the context of schools, but on the other hand also can operate to open up discursive spaces for individuals to counter assumptions of heterosexuality. A micro-politics of power can be seen here. By fronting up to the staff social with his partner and allowing the predominant heteronormative (phatic) discourse of such occasions to prevail, the gay teacher has successfully interrupted the heteronormative expectations of such staff social gatherings. No voice of thunder struck the assembly to the earth (according to the respondents) and life went on. This is why a theory of locally situated discursive power, thus has more explanatory force than a universalist theory of compulsory heterosexuality as a structuring force that inhibits individual or locally organised agency. It is in the intersticies of discursive practices that counter strategies can occur.

Heroic individualism

Also supporting the above analysis, is the identification in the responses to this scenario of the 'heroic individualism' discussed in the previous scenario. The report of thoughts and feelings of admiration accord with some anecdotal evidence that being 'out' at school brings more support than disapprobation (Pegram, 1995). This, too, operates as a refusal to be positioned as a victim within prevailing discursive practices of heteronormativity and heterosexism.

Il/legitimate sexualities

The other discourse I identified for discussion in this scenario, was one of 'illegitimate sexualities'. Clues that such a discourse was present came mainly from the expression of feelings (hesitant, embarrassed, repulsed etc.) rather than cognitive categories used. The use of 'flaunting' (his sexuality), however, indicates a social practice, which can be accompanied by strong negative feelings, that homosexuals have no place in 'wholesome' heterosexual-family oriented places like schools. (One respondent did use the term 'wholesome' in the context of school programmes that discuss sexuality.) Presumably any physical display of affection (holding hands, a kiss, a hug), which might not be 'seen' in a heterosexual

couple, or if seen, noted approvingly, is 'flaunting' an illegitimate sexuality and an illegitimate relationship. The social practice described above of covering over any surprise or homonegativity through social small talk, maintains a silence and a lack of acknowledgement of such relationships. The emotional meanings attached to this categorisation of gay affection in the context of school are derived from societal heteronormativity and homonegativity, but also from discursive constructions of homosexuality as 'predatory' in the context of schools and 'innocent children'. This will be discussed further under Scenario 5.

SCENARIO FOUR: **Assume you were leading a discussion in a classroom on the topic of AIDS. After several minutes of class interchange, the following dialogue occurs:**

Mary: I think it's too bad that all these people are so sick and are going to die. I just think...
Paul: (interrupting): Those fags get what they deserve. What makes me mad is that we're spending money trying to find a cure. If we just let God and Nature take its course, I won't have to worry about any queer bothering me.
Mary: I never thought about it that way before.

Mary then faces you as teacher and asks, "What do you think about Paul's comments?"

What would you think, feel and do?

Scenario 4: Quantitative Analysis

Over half of the responses - fifty two per cent (60 + 6) - described Paul as 'bigoted', 'ignorant', 'misinformed'. Another group (13 + 9) wrote of 'values issues', 'debate', 'need to challenge' and 'need to be clear and honest'. Some (9) said Paul represented community opinion, and others said he was 'out of line / comment was inappropriate' (but he was entitled to his opinion.) A group (7) said AIDS and safe

sex was an issue for all of us and another group (7) wrote of how they would handle this – it was 'a tough one' and 'how much of my own feelings / private life do I reveal'. Two spoke of Christian love versus sin and two said it was not their role / subject area to respond.

While the predominant feelings reported were sadness/despair/alarm/anger at the intolerant attitude (35), a group of 15 said they felt 'good' as this presented an opportunity to discuss an often avoided issue. Some (7) were annoyed at Paul's 'inappropriate language' and four said they felt sickened, and needed to compose themselves, as this sort of comment was not unusual in their experience.

Over half (63 / 53%) said that the action they would take would be to 'lay out the facts' about AIDS, and that 'other people' get it too. (What 'facts' would they present if it *was* exclusive to the gay community, one wonders.) A significant group (15+19) said they would facilitate a discussion on societal attitudes to homosexuals and to AIDS. Another group (6+19) said they would bring in issues of compassion and / or Christian charity. A small group said they would state their own opinions and feelings (7+4) and a similar sized group said they would deal with the 'process' of classroom discussion (presumably Paul's interruption / 'inappropriate' comment).

Scenario 4: Discourse Analysis

The discourses, then, that can be identified from the above analysis, are, firstly, the liberal humanist discourse of equal rights, discussed in some detail under Scenario One, and cast in terms of human and civil rights in the context of this scenario (everyone has the right to life and medical attention). Secondly, there is a 'medical discourse' around homosexuality, cast in terms of 'safe sex' since the advent of AIDS. Thirdly, two competing professional discourses can be discerned, one relying on 'setting out the facts' to combat 'ignorance' and the other, a discourse of critical inquiry into the values issues raised by Paul's comment. A further

professional discourse was that used by a group who said they would deal with the process of classroom discussion (rather than, by implication, the substantive issue).

Equal / civil rights

The discourse of equal rights in this scenario can be traced to the respondents' use of categories to describe Paul in terms of 'ignorance', 'bigotry', and 'misinformation'. The social practices underlying these categories are the commonly accepted valuing of human rights (to life); valuing of civil rights (all citizens are entitled to medical attention); valuing of humane compassion; and an abhorrence of blatantly expressed prejudice based, apparently, on 'ignorance' and 'misinformation'. This is 'not a fair go' in New Zealand. The emotional meanings attached to these social practices lie in their being culturally embedded values, as well as institutionalised in laws such as the Human Rights Act. Respondents expressed very strong feelings about Paul's contravention of these values.

As in other contexts, however, where this liberal humanist discourse of equal rights has been discussed, though offended by the denial of human rights implicit in Paul's statement, most respondents did not refer to or question the underlying construction of homosexuality as 'other' than 'normal'. Indeed, some were at pains to point out that 'other' (in this case 'normal') people get AIDS too with a possible implication that therefore it is not just a well deserved divine retribution upon sinful homosexuals. If both the licit and the illicit, the sinful and the innocent are susceptible, then it is even more important to apply 'equal rights' to medical intervention. This resolution of competing discourses was explicit in those responses which referred to the need for Christian charity and compassion, regardless of 'the sin'.

Good professional practice – competing discourses

The two competing discourses identified, of what constitutes 'good professional practice', emerged clearly from the different categories used by respondents,

especially in the section 'what would you do.' One can be called 'scientific' professional practice and the other, 'critical' professional practice.

Within the dominant discourse then, named as a 'scientific / value free' professionalism, teachers just need to 'lay out the facts' about 'who gets AIDS' and the prejudices of Paul's statement will fall away. Objectivity is highly valued as a professional practice within this sort of discourse, and it is held that teachers should not be political or promote controversial values. Within such a discourse, the socially and politically situated nature of all school knowledge is not recognised. Certain knowledge is held as commonsense truth, rather than constructed within particular epistemological frameworks. Within the institution of the teaching profession, the emotional meaning attached to 'objectivity' and 'neutrality' is that they are right and proper, and accords with teachers' feelings and perceptions of themselves as 'professional' as compared to 'unprofessional'. This is explored more in the next scenario.

A counter discourse of professionalism can be seen in the responses which used categories of 'societal attitudes', 'personal feelings', 'facilitating discussion'. This discursive construction of the professional which legitimates 'critical inquiry' as an approach to curriculum knowledge, including the affective domain of knowledge, is also associated with the social practice of teaching. Some respondents had welcomed the extreme nature of Paul's statement as opening up opportunities for critical inquiry and exploration of ideas, feelings, and how they are situated in social /political constructions. These teachers were interested in exploring not only societal attitudes to AIDS, but to homosexuality also. The emotional meanings attached to this view of teaching also affirmed these teachers' image of themselves as 'good professionals'.

These teachers would find some (perhaps weak) institutional support for such discourses of critical inquiry in curriculum statements such as those reviewed in Chapter 4, particularly the recent Health curriculum (MOE, 1999) which advocates exploration of societal attitudes and beliefs. But such 'official' discourses are contested, not only by groups external to the profession such as the Business

Round Table, but by other unofficial discourses of professional practice and discursive constructions of what constitutes 'school knowledge'. The unofficial and commonsense discourses can powerfully constrain teachers (and students) wishing to pursue a critical evaluation of knowledge, for example from a feminist or anti-heterosexist, or social justice critique.

SCENARIO 5: **At morning tea, an `open' lesbian teacher within your subject department (of which you are a senior member) engages you in conversation about lesbian and gay writers (or scientists etc.,) that she intends to introduce in a teaching unit. She asks if you know of any further examples she could use.**

What would you think, feel and do?

Scenario 5: Quantitative Analysis

Half of the respondents (58+7) who answered this question were positive towards the proposal. They said it was 'not a problem'; they were 'pleased at the initiative'; said it 'would be useful'; 'visibility' was important; and it was 'an equity issue'. Ten were cautious in their responses, worrying that 'she might alienate' or 'be counterproductive' and that she 'needed to be low key'. Some others also worried about adverse reactions from parents and students. Forty per cent of responses (45+12) were more clearly against the proposal, considering sexual orientation as 'irrelevant' to the syllabus, that she was 'out of line', 'pushing self interest', 'social engineering' and questioned whether this had approval in school policies.

Thirty five percent (39) expressed positive feelings – 'pleased to help', pleased to be asked' and a further five per cent were neutral. Thirty two per cent, however, (35) said they felt 'wary', 'uncomfortable', 'concerned', 'nervous' or 'anxious'. A further 15 felt annoyed, angry, alarmed, 'yuk' or 'sick' that the teacher was

selecting material 'on the basis of sexual orientation' / that she was 'pushing a barrow'.

Thirty seven per cent (44) said they would offer help with a further twenty two per cent (26) offering support or encouragement. Twenty two percent (26), however, also said they would 'voice their concerns', 'discuss appropriateness' and further nine said they would tell her to 'stick to the syllabus' and would 'remind her of her professional obligations'. Two would consult senior management.

Broadly, then, responses were about half positive and half negative towards the hypothetical suggestion of a gay inclusive curriculum.

Scenario 5: Discourse Analysis

There are two competing discourses evident in the responses to this scenario. One is a liberal discourse of the 'inclusive curriculum', congruent with the discourses of 'alienated identities' and of 'visibility' and 'difference' as discussed in the literature review. The other is a discourse of 'il/legitimate knowledge' as was identified in the discussion of Scenario 2.

Alienated identities

Categories used here by respondents were such as 'inclusive teaching', 'addressing imbalance', 'visibility', and 'raising awareness'. Comparisons were made with gender and race inclusive curricula.

> I would think she was trying to redress the imbalance in the curriculum (04/04).

> For a well rounded education equity issues need to be addressed (02/09).

> I would recommend various British, USA and Australian gay artists who have been a huge success on the international art scene (02/11).

> ... I would get on to it – finding examples – perhaps raising the issue in a department meeting – doing an audit of our programme for inclusiveness (07/01).

The concept of the inclusive curriculum has been part of official educational practice in New Zealand at least since the mid 1980s (Alton-Lee & Praat, 2000, p.46). In terms of gender equity, a critique of unconsciously androcentric curricula and learning resources was argued as contributing to educational disadvantage for girls on the grounds that female experience, interests and role models were 'invisible' and therefore girls were alienated from the curricula and performed poorly in comparison with boys (e.g. Alton-Lee & Densem, 1992; Bell, 1988; Department of Education 1989; Shaw, 1989; WACE, 1988). Such concepts as 'gender and race inclusive curricula' have become 'normalised' in the professional practice of secondary teachers in New Zealand, and thus accords with feelings of 'what is normal and right' in McNaughton's (1998) framework of analysis. Evidence that the concept of gender and race inclusiveness has become institutionalised in the education system of New Zealand can be seen in official curriculum policy documents as discussed in Chapter 4.

> All programmes will be gender inclusive, non-racist, and non-discriminatory, to help ensure that learning opportunities are not restricted (MOE, 1993, p.7).

Not all respondents, however, were prepared to extend the 'non-discriminatory' principle to a curriculum inclusive of 'other' sexualities. Largely, their objections were embedded in the discourse of 'il/legitimate knowledge' discussed below. Others, however, were wary that the teacher in this scenario might alienate students and parents. In the next chapter, moreover, I report that some respondents were concerned that a finite resource of money and curriculum time could not be stretched to include yet another 'minority' issue.

The concept of the gender/gay/ race inclusive curriculum has also been critiqued academically, (Gilbert, 1997; Town, 1998). Gilbert, for example, in the context of science education, wrote that:

> In arguing, for example, that "girls can do anything" on the one hand, and for the development of more "girl friendly" approaches to the teaching of (an unquestioned) scientific knowledge, on the other, sexual difference's status as the very condition of possibility of science was not recognised, with the result that the interventions that were developed – paradoxically - worked not to disrupt, but to affirm the very categories through which the 'problem' of girls and science is produced in the first place (Gilbert, 1997, p.424).

Some of the young gay men interviewed by Town (1998) also had worries at the suggestion of a more 'gay inclusive' curriculum in schools. While they talked a lot about 'silencing' and 'invisibility' and a desire for out 'role models', some also thought that teachers talking about gay issues would have been dangerous for them, and not helpful for their strategies to manage their sexual identities in school (1998, p.218).

Some theoretical problems of discourses of difference were outlined in Chapter 2. It is argued throughout this thesis, that the 'othering' technology of heteronormative discourse is unlikely to be disrupted, but will be reinforced, by discourses which perpetuate this focus on the other. The inclusive curriculum needs to be constructed 'differently' from a 'curriculum of difference/s'.

The discourse, then, of the gay inclusive curriculum, while accepted by a number of respondents in this research, was contested by some as counter-productive, a position which has some support in academic literature. For others, the notion was professionally abhorrent.

Il/legitimate school knowledge

Some respondents used categories such as 'irrelevance', 'out of line', 'social engineering', 'keeping to the syllabus', 'referring to senior management'. For these respondents, a heteronormative curriculum was not only okay, it was correct and

proper. The emotional meanings they attached to their constructions of professional practice and legitimate knowledge in the school curriculum were strongly expressed in terms of 'alarm', 'anger' and 'feeling sick' (at including gay examples / reference). These teachers were professionally and morally outraged, illustrating Foucault's argument of 'subjugated knowledges':

> Foucault's exposure of 'how forms of rationality inscribe themselves in practices ... suppressing a plurality of alternative discourses, reducing their credibility ... and may be accompanied by regimes of morality or moral technologies' (Kenway, 1992, p.129).

> There is no place for this in the history syllabus (01/06).

> Be careful lady – don't push your own sexual preference. I don't push mine (01/12).

> I would warn against the danger of losing academic neutrality, and the need to provide a balance of attitude (04/06).

> I would feel anger that she is using her position as a platform to advocate homosexuality. I would remind her of her obligations (02/02).

> She might be promoting her sexual preference to a dangerous degree (10/14).

The discourse that constructs the existence of a 'legitimate (and non-legitimate) body of (school) knowledge' has become institutionalised through curricula statements, examination prescriptions and teaching resources that have generally been unconsciously heterosexist and heteronormative. The attempt by one New Zealand publisher to include a chapter on gay rights in a social studies text (Harrison, 1991) was met with such resistance that two versions of the book were published, one with and one without, the gay rights chapter.

Curricular statements, while cast in the liberal humanist terms of 'inclusive' and 'non-discriminatory' tolerance of difference, are none-the-less silent on 'different' sexualities, with the notable exception of the recent statement for health education as discussed in Chapter 4. Even the fact that sexuality is dealt with in a curriculum area, which has had to fight for curriculum time in schools, institutionalises a hierarchy of knowledge, legitimates the exclusion of sexuality from high status knowledge areas, and enables teachers of those subjects to distance themselves from any discussion of hetero/homo sexualities in the classroom.[9] As Foucault put it:

> We must try to determine ... how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized ... There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses (Foucault,1990, p.26).

Summary

This chapter has analysed the written responses to the scenarios presented in the questionnaire, first using a 'quantitative' analysis of the types of statements that were categorised in the same way as responses to open questions in Part A of the questionnaire. Then I used the steps for a discourse analysis developed by McNaughton (1998), which is based a Foucauldian understanding of discourse.

Discourses discerned from this analysis, that appear to circulate in the schools of the sample, included a particular discourse of 'school discipline' within which homophobic statements and actions were constructed and which seemed to exclude a confrontation with the *homophobic* nature of the statements and actions being dealt with. In the case of the lesbian girl publicly asserting the existence of a lesbian support group in the school, one discourse positioned her as individually 'heroic' for her stand, while another positioned her as 'transgressive' of an

[9] My memory of staff room discussion of the health curriculum (1985) in which it was conceived that "every teacher is a teacher of health" is that this was strongly resisted by teachers.

assumed school policy that excluded her right to public expression of lesbian sexuality. Similar to this, was the discourse analysed in the staff room scenario, of 'illegitimate sexuality', where it was suggested that the gay men might 'inappropriately flaunt' their sexuality. Competing discourses within which teachers construct their professional practice also emerged. A discourse of 'scientific, value-free' professional practice, and a discourse of 'critical professional practice' emerged in the last two scenarios, where respondents considered first the AIDS discussion and then the proposal for the inclusion of lesbian and gay material in the curriculum. In this last scenario, too, there emerged, it seemed, a discourse of 'alienated identities' such as was discussed in Chapters 2 and 3.

The dominant discourse, however, that seemed to emerge in this analysis, was a liberal humanist discourse of 'equal rights' for individuals. Within this, toleration of difference was supported, the right to be free from harassment, the right to 'free speech', the human right to life, and the right to inclusion in the curricular practices of the school were espoused. This discourse resonates strongly with liberal feminism, and also discourses of civil rights for ethnic minorities. Implications will be discussed in Chapter 11.

CHAPTER TEN: CONSTRAINTS, POSSIBILITIES

Can schools deal with heterosexist bias?

In this chapter, results from the fourth investigating question are reported: What do teachers and administrators perceive as the constraints against and possibilities for taking anti-discriminatory action against lesbian, gay and bisexual students and staff in their school?

Four open questions were asked about perceptions of their own and the school's capacity to take anti-discriminatory action. Responses were finely coded, then grouped again into broader categories for the purposes of showing general trends in the form of tables and graphs. It is important, however, not to lose sight of the more finely coded responses, which reveal the subtleties of reasoning and perceptions and which would probably need to be taken account of in planning any professional development or other interventions in schools.

Q1: School Barriers to Addressing Heterosexist Bias

The first question in this section asked: "What would you see as the barriers to, or limits on the school's capacity to address the issue of heterosexual bias in the school community"?

This, and the ensuing questions, deliberately used the phrase 'heterosexual bias' for two reasons. One is that the literature (see Chapter 3) overwhelmingly supports the contention that such bias exists in schools. For the purposes of this research question, however, it was also important to ask the respondents to think beyond whether or not they believed there was such bias, to consider what constraints and opportunities existed to redress the bias, assuming it did

exist. It is important to know what constraints and restraints might operate if intervention strategies were planned.

One hundred and fifteen respondents offered comments for this question, of whom 69 mentioned a second factor and 35 a third factor. Six accumulated categories of constraints were identified from the responses. The frequencies and distributions across these categories are reported in Tables 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3. Following the tables, there is a report of this detailed analysis of responses within each of the categories.

Table 10.1: School constraints to addressing heterosexist bias - first mentioned responses

Category of constraint	*Number*	*Valid %*
Community factors	48	42
Staff factors	25	22
Not school role	20	17
Resource constraints	9	8
School culture and leadership	6	5
Student factors	4	4
None / Don't know	3	3
Totals	115	100

Table 10.2: School constraints to addressing heterosexist bias - second mentioned responses

Category of constraint	*Number*	*Valid %*
Community factors	19	27
Staff factors	25	36
Not school role	9	13
Resource constraints	6	9
School culture and leadership	2	3
Student factors	6	9
Other	2	3
Totals	69	100

Table10.3: School constraints to addressing heterosexist bias - third mentioned responses

Category of constraint	*Number*	*Valid %*
Community factors	7	20
Staff factors	10	29
Not school role	5	14
Resource constraints	8	23
School culture and leadership	0	0
Student factors	5	14
Other		
Totals	35	100

Community factors

The single most frequent first response to this question was the perception that community /parental / Board of Trustee values would not support affirmative action against heteronormativity or homophobia, and that vulnerability of the school roll in the current 'marketplace' of secondary schooling was a major constraint for schools that might contemplate such action. This, and other responses that referred to community beliefs without specifically mentioning fears about the roll, was the most important kind of constraint mentioned first by respondents. The responses included the following kinds of comments: (numbers have been aggregated from first, second and third mentions)

- school competition and the vulnerability of rolls (53)
- fundamentalist Christians in community (7)
- teachings of Catholic church (6)
- difficulty of managing parental consent (3)
- parent wishes to preserve the 'innocence' of their children (2)
- community beliefs that gays are unsuitable to teach / fears of recruitment (1)
- parent fears their own children may be gay (1)

Staff factors

The next largest category of constraints was staff attitudes. Here, the most frequent kind of response referred to unthinking heterosexism amongst staff:

- heterosexist assumptions, lack of awareness and "weak liberalism" of staff (18) (these phrases were used in the responses)
- prejudice and homophobia (8)
- active discouragement by senior staff (8).
- uncertainty, shyness and a general reticence to deal openly with such issues (9)
- anyone "seen to be pushing a barrow" would be alienated (2).

> Attitudes – either homophobic or not recognising of the problem. Many staff are liberal but not very aware. (03/03)
>
> Our general reticence or reluctance to talk openly about this. A discouraging attitude by senior staff. (01/10)
>
> ... (Principal's) dislike of perceived adverse publicity from having gay/lesbian staff who are open about it and go public... (02/12)

Not school role

The third significant group was made up of those who said it was not the role of the school to address such bias, and who saw this belief (of their own) as a constraint for the school taking action. Presumably their assumption was that others would share this belief and therefore the school community would not wish to act. As this group of responses indicated professional attitudes of respondents towards anti-discriminatory action, a more detailed description of the responses within this category will be reported on under the heading of the third research question which analyses 'attitudes' to professional action, and the fifth question which analyses discourses.

- the school role should be the general promotion of respect, tolerance, non-judgementalism (7)
- the majority are heterosexual / nothing needs addressing (5)
- it is not the role of the school to seek to change society (3)
- priorities - there are more important issues (3)
- the school role should be limited to preventing active discrimination and bullying (2)
- the school should avoid discrimination but also avoid promoting gay values (2)

- schools should not be forced into dealing with every politically correct issue / can't deal with every 'minority' (2)
- there has to be limits - especially in a school with definite values / with impressionable young minds (2)
- a confrontational attitude would be counter-productive (1)
- the issue is a personal one - the school should just quietly support non-heterosexual students as needed (1)
- if there are to be special facilities for non-heterosexuals there must be for heterosexuals too (!) (1)
- object to claim that there is heterosexist bias (1)

Three other categories emerged from the statements about constraints: statements about resources, about school leadership and culture and statements about student attitudes.

Resource constraints

Statements about resources indicated a perception that here was another 'thing' to squeeze into tight curriculum, tight resources, heavy work loads. Others were concerned there would not be appropriate personnel to deliver programmes, training and so on.

School culture and leadership

Allied, perhaps to these perceived student attitudes and also to staff attitudes were the statements about school culture as too 'macho' (6) and a school leadership that supported such culture and tradition, or was just too unconfident to tackle the difficult issues (2).

> There is an emphasis on 'manly' sports e.g. rugby. Speeches at assembly tend to promote the standard idea of a family (04/01).

> I think the school too often runs away from issues and this one they'd run from because they – BOT and senior admin – are so amazingly 'straight' (07/05).

Student factors

In the count of first mentions, student attitudes was the smallest group, getting just four mentions out of 115. This category became more significant, however, in the second and third count of multiple responses. The problems seen here ranged from student (un)readiness to discuss such issues (3), to anti-gay backlash (9) and the vulnerability of gay students who would not feel safe to be 'out' (1).

> Risk of 'us and them' mentality amongst students, so minority groups feel threatened if identified (03/13).

Q2: Desirable and Possible Courses of Action the School Could Take

Respondents were asked: What would you see as desirable and possible courses of action that the school could take to address the issue of heterosexual bias in the school community?

This question gained a similar rate of response to the previous question and with a similar rate of second and third responses. Some broad categories emerged, although with a range of suggestions within these categories. In order of frequencies, shown in Table 10.4 (first mentions), the categories were:

- curriculum support,
- not the role of the school,

- go gently/ just EEO,
- staff action /education
- policy development
- support gay, lesbian, bisexual students & staff
- educate the community

Although the second and third largest categories did not support action, over seventy percent of the responses did advocate definite action (see Table 10.4) and curriculum support remained the most frequent suggestion through the first, second and third count of the multiple responses to this question.

Table 10.4: Possible school action - first mentioned responses

Categories of Possible Courses of Action	*Number*	*Valid %*
Curriculum support	36	32
Not the role of the school	17	15
Go gently / just EEO	17	15
Staff action / education	15	13
Policy development	11	10
Support gay, lesbian, bisexual students and staff	9	8
Educate the community	2	2
Unsure /Don't know	5	5
Totals	112	100

Table10.5: Possible school action - second mentioned responses

Categories of Possible Courses of Action	*Number*	*Valid %*
Curriculum support	26	47
Not the role of the school	1	2
Go gently / just EEO	7	13
Staff action / education	13	24
Policy development	5	9
Support gay, lesbian, bisexual students and staff	1	2
Educate the community	1	2
Unsure /Don't know	1	2
Totals	55	100

Table10.6: Possible school action - third mentioned responses

Categories of Possible Courses of Action	*Number*	*Valid %*
Curriculum support	19	64
Not the role of the school	0	0
Go gently / just EEO	1	3
Staff action / education	3	10
Policy development	3	10
Support gay, lesbian, bisexual students and staff	2	7
Educate the community	1	3
Unsure /Don't know	0	0
Re-educate PPTA	1	3
Totals	30	100

As the practical purpose of this research exercise was to find out, as a pre-condition of any planned intervention strategies, how teachers and administrators were positioning issues of sexual orientation, it is worth paying attention in some detail to what strategies the respondents thought were possible and necessary. The suggestions for active interventions are outlined, followed by categories of responses that suggested nothing specific was needed.

Curriculum support

The most frequent suggestion was that sexuality education in health or life skills courses should include or acknowledge 'other' sexual preferences. Either this is not happening currently, or teachers are unaware that it is (see pages 62-67 in Chapter 4). In addition to the health curriculum, respondents also mentioned the need for a more 'inclusive' curriculum in the general classroom, with resources reflecting a range of relationships, challenging stereotypical gender roles, exposing students to positive and non-stereotypical role models by inviting speakers and performances. Several also mentioned the need for counter-homophobia /heterosexism programmes and workshops at all levels of the school. One respondent spoke of the need to "inform, educate and *be persistent.*" Generally, the kinds of suggestions parallel the kind of curriculum inclusiveness and countering-prejudice programmes many teachers would have experienced in addressing issues of racism and sexism in their schools.

Not school role

Presumably the same people who responded to the previous question on constraints by saying it was not the role of the school to address heterosexist bias, said the same thing in response to this question. Responses ranged from - there is no need / nothing further needs to be done to - there is no bias / it is not the school's business. Again a few stated that the majority was heterosexual and there was no need to 'cater for a minority'. A few felt the question was unreasonable in its assumption of bias and one said they approved of the bias - though not in the sense of intolerance.

Go gently / just EEO

One of the most frequently mentioned suggestions was that the school should not do anything special about issues of homophobia and heteronormativity, but that the EEO policy should be enough to deal with any bias or discrimination. There was a fear that 'playing up the differences' would be counterproductive and 'just the usual EEO and accepting attitudes in the context of 'less contested liberalisms' would serve better. One thought that perhaps 'just a small dose - increased gradually over the years' would be a safe policy. Another brisk comment was that 'just good balanced health programmes' was sufficient. The good will behind most of these comments was clear and this dilemma of teachers who want to do their best by all students will be returned to in the later discussion.

Staff action / education

Here, the most common suggestion was the need to have staff training / meetings on issues of heterosexism and homophobia - and guidance staff were singled out in some instances of needing this education. Respondents also wanted specific, practical training in how to challenge and deal with homophobic behaviours and some said that the questionnaire had already raised some awareness. Some mentioned the need for staff to avoid heterosexist assumptions and language, and the need to examine "taken for granted" structures and activities for heterosexist bias. There was mention of the need for 'key players' on the staff to be aware and supportive, specifically guidance, 'sporting heads' and senior staff. Several also believed that non-heterosexual staff needed to be out as positive role models and taking a lead in staff development. This position will be discussed further in later chapters, especially in the discussion of 'gay-straight alliances' but two issues can be flagged here; the question of vulnerability and the question of who has the problem.

Policy development

Several people wrote of the need for clear school policies on heterosexism and also on discriminatory behaviours and the need for such policy to be followed up with procedures to deal with persistent offenders of discriminatory behaviour. Two wrote of how development of policies can act as an educative and inclusive process. Connected to policy issues, mention was also made of the need to be 'unafraid to hire people with a declared non-heterosexual bias in their lives. The importance of senior staff being committed to open, balanced attitudes and accepting of gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff was mentioned too and this theme was also raised in the next two questions when respondents spoke of the importance of the school leadership to development and maintenance of inclusive policy and action.

Support bisexual, lesbian and gay students and staff

A range of suggestions, mainly to support students who were bisexual, lesbian or gay, included setting up support groups, using community resources, making lines of communication to support agencies available. One said that 'guidance should be available to those who want to face their problem and have it dealt with'.

Educate the community

A few respondents suggested the school should make educative sessions available for parents and community. Since the largest category of constraints was assumed negative values in the community, it is of interest that so few believed this was a worthwhile action to take.

Re-educate the unions

The last table contains a suggestion that did not fit the other categories - namely the need to re-educate the unions, notably NZPPTA. This came from a

gay respondent who had not found collegial support from his union for gay, lesbian and bisexual members in recent years. This issue has been discussed in Chapter 1.

Q3: Personal Barriers to Addressing Heterosexist Bias

The second question in this part of the questionnaire asked respondents what they would see as the barriers to or limits on their *own* capacity to address the issue of heterosexual bias in the school community.

Of the five categories that emerged, the largest was the grouping I have labelled 'personal constraints', which included lack of knowledge and training. The second most frequent response was the lack of support from the rest of the school community that 'limits my capacity to act alone'. These are the categories, listed in order of frequency of responses (aggregated multiple) that are used to group the constraints that were mentioned:

- personal constraints (52)
- lack of support from others (45)
- against my beliefs (24)
- no constraints (that I can't handle) (18)
- not my role in the school (8)

The following tables show the frequencies of each category for the first and second mentions in the multiple responses that were coded. Each category is then discussed in more detail.

Table 10.7: Personal constraints to addressing heterosexist bias - first mentions

Category of constraint	*Number*	*Valid %*
Personal constraints	37	34
Lack of support from others	27	25
Against my beliefs	20	17
Nothing I can't handle	18	16
Not my role	8	8
Totals	110	100

Table 10.8: Personal constraints to addressing heterosexist bias - second mentions

Category of constraint	*Number*	*Valid %*
Personal constraints	13	48
Lack of support from others	12	45
Against my beliefs	2	7
Nothing I can't handle	0	0
Not my role	0	0
Totals	27	100%

Personal constraints

In this category, the most frequent comments were about lack of background knowledge and lack of training in how to deal with discriminatory behaviours. Another sizeable group said their awareness of non-heterosexual points of view was limited by their 'position in the dominant culture'. Others spoke of the limits of their personal courage, energy and commitment - to put themselves 'on

the line.' For a few it was an issue they did not see as high priority but they did not wish to 'add to the problem'. Some wrote of shyness, uncertainty and inexperience. One said 'if I was a father of ten I would be in a stronger position.' Although this group wrote of constraints as personal 'deficits', clearly the issues they refer to are closely connected to those in the next group who felt they did not or would not have sufficient support to act.

Lack of support from others

In this group, the importance of having a commitment from the school community was seen as an essential prerequisite to personal individual action. This included other staff, parents, students and the Board of Trustees. Some spoke directly of the importance of clear school policy as a support to individual action. A few said the school's heterosexist bias limited effective action. Some spoke of their particular role in the school as it was affected by others for example as principal, being responsible for the roll; as a trustee being constrained by the community and Ministry of Education, as 'a Catholic, being told by students and staff that my beliefs are wrong according to church teaching'; as a female teacher in a male school, coping with student attitudes 'nurtured in an all male environment.'

The constraints perceived by gay, lesbian and bisexual staff also fall into this category. They wrote of their fears, worries or experience of backlash, of a loss of credibility and that 'my life would be hell.' Others wrote of having energy drained in a hostile environment. Some believed action would have more impact coming from straights. It is known to the researcher that some of these people have taken proactive positions in their schools in educating colleagues, students and developing policies. It is difficult to reconcile their fears and experiences of hostility with the overwhelming belief shown in Part A of the questionnaire that non-heterosexual teachers suffer no discrimination in their schools.

Against my beliefs

As this question asked for personal (rather than professional) expressions, beliefs that were personal but expressed in professional terms in previous questions, were expressed in a more direct way in response to this question. These responses are very interesting in terms of the 'intersection of the professional and the personal' (see discussion of Sears, (1992) in Chapter 3). This group were clear that their personal views about homosexuality were a constraint on taking action against heterosexist bias in the school, to the extent that for them it would be *wrong* to do so. The kinds of beliefs expressed were:

- It's against my religious beliefs / my church would pillory me whatever the school policy was
- I agree with the heterosexual bias / am heterosexual and therefore not interested
- personal disgust / lack of comfort with the subject / my upbringing and beliefs
- I believe the problem is exaggerated by activists / would agree with the bias if it existed
- I don't think you should interfere in personal beliefs
- I don't believe the issue is relevant to students in school / school is not the right place
- skilled teachers treat everyone as equals
- have read a lot and don't believe the structural limitations of school includes sexual bias

Finally, one respondent wrote:

> A lot of people commented – 'Why should this issue be so important and stand out'. I do understand why recognition is yearned for and wanted and a lot of people hurt. But it does not make it right ... (10/12).

Some of these statements will be returned to in the next chapter which discusses discourses that enable and discourses that constrain speaking, and therefore acting, in ways that 'give permission' to 'others' to exist in schools.

No constraints

The most frequent single response was that there were no constraints on their capacity to act - or none that couldn't be handled, or none now they had done a course. Presumably this is the group that was most confident in stating in the next question the kinds of actions they felt able to take. Several indicated they would be taking a proactive position in future.

Not my role

Several respondents did not believe that they had any responsibility to take action against heterosexist or homophobic discrimination. They said it was not 'relevant' to their area and some stated this was a guidance role, not one for other curriculum teachers. One trustee said their position was purely policy and voting - (clearly a restricted view of policy!).

Q4: Desirable And Possible Courses Of Action Individuals Could Take

Repeating the pattern for what schools could do, the next question asked participants what they could see as desirable and possible courses of action for themselves to take to address the issue of heterosexual bias in the school community.

Again, the overwhelming majority responded positively to this question and, in view of responses to the previous question and to Question 6 in Part A (see

Table 7.2), surprisingly confidently. The suggestions were classified as follows (in order of frequencies, aggregated multiple responses):

- work directly with students (44)
- curriculum change (38)
- offer leadership (including gay/lesbian leadership) (29)
- oppose action (18)
- just EEO / apply fairness (16)
- educate myself (13)
- not sure (5)

The following tables indicate the distribution and frequency of responses for the above categories in the first, second and third mentions coded for multiple responses.

More detailed analysis of responses within each category follow the tables.

Table10.9: Possible personal action - first mentioned responses

Categories of possible personal action	*Number*	*Valid %*
Work directly with students	23	22
Curriculum change	25	23
Offer leadership	13	12
Oppose action	17	16
Educate myself	12	11
Just EEO /apply fairness	12	11
Not sure	5	5
Totals	107	100

Table 10.10: Possible personal action - second mentioned responses

Categories of personal action	*Number*	*Valid %*
Work directly with students	13	34
Curriculum change	10	26
Offer leadership	10	26
Oppose action	1	3
Educate myself	1	3
Just EEO /apply fairness	3	8
Not sure	0	0
Totals	38	100

Table 10.11: Possible personal action - third mentioned responses

Categories of personal action	*Number*	*Valid %*
Work directly with students	8	44
Curriculum change	3	17
Offer leadership	6	33
Oppose action	0	0
Educate myself	0	0
Just EEO /apply fairness	1	6
Not sure	0	0
Totals	18	100

Curriculum change

The most frequently mentioned action was a personal commitment to ensuring no heterosexist assumptions in the curriculum areas these teachers worked in, and that attempts would be made to broaden resources, with greater visibility of gay images, including library resources. In addition to this, one said they would monitor the health programme to ensure the 'medical model' of gayness was not taught and a number of others also mentioned health and human relations programmes needing to be broadened to include material on a range of sexualities. It was suggested that non-heterosexual sports leaders could be invited to speak to groups in the school. As a 'way in', it was suggested using the context of the parallel issues of counter racism and counter sexism for curriculum intervention.

Working directly with students

The next most popular course of action initially was to interrupt homophobic behaviour always, and to refuse to tolerate offensive language. Others said they could work to keep students open minded through discussions, and to 'expose the silliness of homophobia.' Perhaps overlapping with the 'leadership' category, others also said they could role-model acceptance of gay lifestyles, make it obviously 'no big deal' and 'as if it couldn't possibly be an issue.'

Offer leadership

Just as some had seen their particular role or positioning in the school as a constraint, in this question some saw the possibilities ensuing from their particular role. Examples were: as principal, promoting discussion, collegiality and consensus; as a trustee, promoting greater health education in this area and (another said) ensuring EEO policies were adhered to. Gay and lesbian teachers wrote of continuing to be a role model of an out gay teacher, and a 'good' teacher. Indeed one who said she was 'too busy to be political' also said that 'being a good teacher helps avoid discrimination.' This issue will be returned to in later discussion. One gay/lesbian/bisexual teacher said they

could "consider being more publicly out - but this was daunting without support."

As well as those who identified action relating to their particular role, others suggested leadership roles such as being prepared to raise the issues of heterosexism and homophobia with staff and the guidance network, getting involved with policy development and including gay, lesbian and bisexual parents in this process, and offering support to bisexual, lesbian and gay students, including helping with a support group.

Educate myself

Quite a few respondents said that they could become more effective by increasing their knowledge of the issue. Some said they could go on a course and /or urge other to do this too. Others said they could read, keep an open mind and talk with non-heterosexuals as a way of enlarging their awareness. This awareness of the importance of information and access to perceptions of 'the other' is accepted as an essential prerequisite to making change to one's professional practice.

Just EEO / apply fairness

This was a fairly popular type of suggestion too. Here, teachers said they should 'just be accepting' and of 'tolerance not support' and apply the principles of EEO. Some said they could offer compassion. This discourse of tolerance is examined in the next chapter.

Oppose action

Judging from the tone of the comments, some of the respondents who disagreed with the assumption in the questionnaire that there was a bias and that it should be addressed, were becoming increasingly crotchety in their responses by the time they got to this question. One, for example, suggested he could 'ban the school prom, eliminate the need for a woman in the senior

administration team and cancel the rugby and netball teams'. This teacher clearly identified the issue of countering heterosexism with the issue of sexism - which also was not a favourite cause apparently!

Another somewhat caustically expressed view was that 'the bias is just a matter of numbers and no different from other minorities of blind, diabetic or otherwise impaired people'. Another voiced a common fear that 'teenagers need protection from soliciting' but the most common response in this category was 'no interest' and no action could or should be taken. The last word in this section, however, will go to the person who said they 'would refer a known homosexual to guidance and offer solace.'

Summary of Research Question - Perceived Constraints and Possibilities for Taking Anti-Discriminatory Action

What this part of the questionnaire revealed was that teachers and administrators in the obtained sample identified some barriers and constraints that inhibit schools addressing heterosexism, yet they also responded strongly with suggestions for what the school and they personally might do about the issues. School reputation in the community loomed large as a constraint, as did staff attitudes. Some thought the latter could be worked on with staff development, which also was identified as a personal need. Working towards a non-heterosexist curriculum was identified as possible action for the school and for individual teachers. The need for strong school policy and leadership support for any affirmative action was also identified.

This chapter concludes the analysis and reporting of the results of the data collected in the questionnaire. I now turn to a discussion of these results, including the discourses and discursive practices identified in the analysis.

CHAPTER ELEVEN : DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Schools as sites of discursive practice

This chapter discusses the results reported in Chapters 7 - 10 in relation to the literature which was reviewed in Chapter 3 and the feminist poststructuralist framework discussed in Chapter 2. The discussion is structured under each of the investigating questions used to guide the research and concludes with a summary of the research findings.

1. Perceptions of discrimination

What is the nature and degree of discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff that teachers and administrators perceive exists in their schools?

The Students

Did the teachers in the sample believe there was anything problematic in how lesbian, gay and bisexual students are positioned in their schools? The results reported in Chapter 7 show:

- A majority (55%) thought there was some tacit discrimination. They referred to a prevailing acceptance of heterosexuality as 'normal' and there was a consequent invisibility, lack of validation and acceptance of students who were different in sexual orientation. A number described harmful effects of prevailing heterosexism and heteronormativity as alienation ("being forced to live a lie"), isolation and bullying. Of those

who disagreed, comments were divided between those who saw no evidence of discrimination and cited a positive school climate, and those who said heterosexuality *was normal*, and therefore, by implication, the issue of discrimination does not arise. A few said the topic was not a proper issue for schools to consider. A surprising result from the cross tabulated analyses was that a majority of teachers in the health / guidance subject areas did *not agree* there was any discrimination, going against the trend for other subject groups. All (100%) of the 8 gay, lesbian and bisexual respondents agreed there was tacit discrimination.

- Fewer than fifty percent of respondents, on the other hand (45%), believed there was *active* discrimination against lesbian and gay students. Those who did believe this referred mainly to verbal and physical abuse from peers towards students who were or were believed to be gay or lesbian, (or, presumably, did not conform to hegemonic beliefs of correct masculine and feminine behaviour). Those who did not believe there was active discrimination, saw no evidence of it, or believed the school climate ensured there was none, or saw the peer abuse as 'normal insults' that meant nothing. Here, the boys' schools went against the trend, with a majority agreeing there was active discrimination. Also, all but one of the non-heterosexual respondents believed there was active discrimination.

What does all this mean?

Minoritising discourses

Firstly, it can be noted that the categories 'invisibility', 'alienation' (from the 'normal') and 'difference' are part of the 'homosexual as minority identity' discourses, discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. There were no prompts for these categories, beyond the construction of the question with 'normal' in inverted commas. Although these teachers are certainly, to some extent, locating the problem in 'prevailing notions of heterosexuality as normal', the language they

use locates the problem with those who are positioned as 'other', as different from, as the binary opposite of 'normal/heterosexuality'.

This discursive positioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual students as 'other', within a 'cultural minority' or 'essential identity' discourse, fits also the liberal humanist discourse of toleration and equal rights (Blackmore, 1989; Coltheart, 1986; Weedon, 1999) that was identified in Chapter 9 from the responses to the scenarios. It will be argued further on, that although there are some practical advantages in having such discourses circulate in school sites, there are also severe limits in what they can achieve in terms of freeing up restrictive and harmful discourses around sexuality. None of the respondents, for example, wrote of heterosexual students as disadvantaged by (discourses of) heteronormativity. Yet Alton-Lee and Praat (2000), for example, argue that boy's and girl's different levels of academic performance relative to the other sex in some subjects can directly be attributed to discursive positioning of particular masculinities and particular femininities which can constrain the way those subjects are approached.

None-the-less, over half the respondents do acknowledge that bisexual, lesbian and gay students are disadvantaged to the extent where they are unsafe, or feel unsafe, displaying those factors which make them at risk in their social, emotional and academic lives and even at risk of losing their life. While both Norris (1992) and Sears (1992a) had found sympathy to the 'civil rights' of lesbian, gay and bisexual people, they also found this sympathy conflicted with homophobic and heteronormative beliefs and practices. None-the-less, this recognition of the effects of heteronormativity and of homophobia by a majority of teachers in the sample, is a significant finding of this research. It provides the 'window of opportunity' for schools to take action to make their environments physically and emotionally safe as required in the National Administration Guidelines for Boards of Trustees (MOE, 1999). This is similar to the conclusion that Norris (1992) reached in terms of realistic political action.

What is 'normal'?

A further interesting issue arising from the responses, was the reactions to the use of the word 'normal', used in inverted commas in the questionnaire. Some reactions were almost hysterically antagonistic to the deliberate problematising of this concept within the framing of the question. Two examples:

> "Heterosexuality *is* normal" (05/02)

> "I think the question (sic) may be better phrased: heterosexuals think heterosexuality is normal; homosexuals/bisexuals think it is normal for the above, but simply not their preference. 'Normal' is a subjective descriptor." (04/11)

Indeed it is. The above respondent was nonetheless reluctant to have homosexuals / bisexuals think their own sexual preference was normal. Then there was a determination by others to define normality as merely the behaviour of a numerical majority.

So the problematising of heteronormativity (Warner, 1993) apparently caused discomfort for some (after all, why should one be questioned about being normal for goodness sake!). In fact one respondent used the word 'uncomfortable' in a lengthy analysis of 'normal'.

Although such responses were relatively few in number, the strength of these responses was surprising. However, often it was only the overtly religious responses that came out with statements that heterosexuality was right and homo/bisexuality was wrong.

Indeed, getting to 'be normal', as argued in Chapter 2, focuses on difference and thus upholds the interests of dominant groups and individuals over 'others'. It often entails one group occupying the position of 'the norm' against which all others are measured (Johnson & Pihama, 1995, pp75-77). Further, the 'othering' effects of a minoritising or difference discourse opens up more

vulnerability to the "regulatory regimes" (Butler, 1991) of stigmatised categorisation and homophobic insults and bullying.

A recent statement from a high school student who is a member of a support group "School's Out" for queer teenagers, described the group as "a place where you're normal for a couple of hours" (City Voice, 21.09.00). In this context the word normal is being used in opposition to being (unacceptably) 'different'. In the support group, the students, if not 'the same as' everyone else, are at least in a position to have something important in common and, as such, are a community of equals.

The normalisation of queerness for teenagers or adults, however, may not be an ideal solution to discursive 'othering'. Within queer communities, there is considerable debate about whether queer people wish to be or be seen as 'the same as' straights' where straights are 'normal' and they are not. Such a deficit comparison can be seen as sourced to Enlightenment liberalism, where universal 'man' (in this case, exhibiting heteronormative notions of reproductive masculinity and femininity) is the standard. Just as this discursive position limited the achievements of liberal feminism, it also limits the aspirations of gays, lesbians and bisexuals who seek 'equality' with an unproblematised straight society. We will never "belong in that parade" (Martin, 1992).

Subjugated knowledge

Those who said sexuality was 'not a proper topic' for school were also discursively positioning non-heterosexuality and /or a problematised heteronormativity as 'beyond the pale' of school as a cultural-political site. Despite the myriad ways and occasions when male / female relationships are brought into discourse in probably most school curriculum areas, let alone the informal curriculum, a deconstructive focus on gender in the context of sexual orientation is also clearly unacceptable to some teachers and administrators. This whole area of silencing and rendering invisible gay, lesbian and bisexual relationships and critiques of heteronormativity within the curriculum, constitutes what Foucault (1980, 1990) called "subjugated knowledge".

Foucault theorised 'regimes of truth'; discourses, in the sense of power / knowledge, that constrain what can be said and who can speak. I argued in Chapter 3 that this phenomenon is expressed in the literature about gay and lesbian experience in terms of a metaphor of 'silences and invisibility' (Quinlivan, 1994; Sears, 1991; Squirrell, 1989; Town, 1998; Vincent & Ballard, 1997). In schools, official knowledges successfully sideline 'other' knowledges about hetero/sexuality and homo/sexuality.

The discomfort expressed by some respondents in thinking about including gay or lesbian material or thinking about heteronormativity as an issue to be discussed with students was analysed in the previous chapter in terms of competing discourses of what was professionally 'correct'. It was most sharply seen in responses to the scenario where specific reference to gay issues in the curriculum was proposed. One discourse saw the inclusion of gay and lesbian writers as fitting a professional discourse of 'equity issues' in the same way as 'different' (from European descent?) ethnic groups and females (as different from males) would be represented in the 'inclusive curriculum' as a matter of course. A competing discourse to this saw 'different' sexualities as either too political or too overtly sexual to be professionally / properly included in the curriculum. Those expressing the latter discourse, displayed considerable anxiety around this issue.

This is a good example of how discursive practice works to materially shape a cultural experience such as the school curriculum, and therefore the lives of those participating in such a discursively shaped curriculum. The young women in Quinlivan's study (1995), for example, spoke of an almost complete absence of lesbian or homosexual examples or discussion in both the mainstream and the health curricula:

> ...I think they had enough problems with racism and sexism let alone being able to start in on homophobia (Quinlivan, 1995, p.66).

Even where a writer known to be bisexual was being studied:

> ...It seemed fine to discuss the author's heterosexual partners but not her lesbian ones (Ibid, p.67).

In the health curriculum, homosexual and lesbian relationships were rarely or never discussed either, in any of the schools Quinlivan's participants had gone to. These young women connected the silencing of lesbian issues in the curriculum with the repression and isolation they experienced in the school community (Ibid, p.66). The young men in Town's study reported the same lack of information and visibility of gay relationships in the curriculum (Town, 1998, p.198ff).

My own study shows that the material effects (such as isolation) on the bodies of gay, lesbian and bisexual students, to a considerable extent stem from a discourse of professional practice which excludes (homo)sexuality from the curriculum. And therefore it is likely that the bullying and harassment suffered by many students from their peers (and even teachers), described by many respondents in this study, also can in part be attributed to this discursive construction of the curriculum which excludes homosexuality as a 'proper' subject.

This is a good example of Foucault's analysis of how "forms of rationality inscribe themselves in practices ... suppressing a plurality of alternative discourses, reducing their credibility ... and may be accompanied by regimes of morality or moral technologies" (in Kenway, 1992, p.129).

Homophobic harassment

Over forty respondents referred to the verbal and physical harassment inflicted on students as the overwhelming form of overt and active discrimination against gay, lesbian or bisexual students. A further eleven described this harassment as (mere) blanket insults bandied around amongst young people. A significant proportion of these were from boys' schools.

The phenomenon of homophobic bullying in schools needs to be deconstructed both in terms of the discursive practices driving the behaviour itself, and also the discourses used by teachers to describe it.

Homophobic bullying derives, at least in part, from the discourses around sex, gender and identity that are deeply embedded in common sense understandings in our society. These discourses act as the "regulatory regimes" Butler has written of, where "...sex constitutes gender, and gender determines sexuality and desire" (Butler, 1990, p.336). Nowhere, perhaps, are the regimes more viciously enforced and disciplined than among the peer groups at schools, where dominant notions of masculinity (Connell, 1995) are defined in terms of the not-feminine. To be/come a 'real man' is to be as distant as possible from 'being a girl'. Stereotypical conceptions also associate the homosexual with the feminine - so either way, being 'a girl' or being 'a faggot' is equally insulting to boys struggling with emerging images of 'manhood' (see Chapter 2). Town's participants were very conscious of how they had had to explicitly 'reject the feminine' in assuming adequate performances of masculinity (Town, 1998, p.110). (Segal, 1994, refers to this phenomenon amongst some males as 'the enemy within'.)

This, coupled with the ubiquitous obsession that teenagers, especially, have with being accepted by their peers, leads to the pack behaviour around the disciplining of sexual identities. Girls do not escape these disciplining discourses. Those whose behaviour and appearance does not fit what Connell (1987) calls "emphasised femininity", including obvious adherence to heterosexual relationships, get 'dealt to' by their peers also.

Furthermore, it is all very well to be privately 'supportive' of gay or lesbian friends, but courage can flee with the crowd. One respondent in this survey spoke of observing this private support for gay friends but then joining in on public taunting. Some respondents also spoke of hesitancy in confronting homophobia lest they be turned on also. In fact, some of Town's participants who self-identified as gay, but strenuously hid their gayness, reported that they

had joined in on homophobic abuse of peers "to deflect attention away from their own hidden transgressive desires" (Town, 1998, p.156).

Thus, in the local sites of school and school peer groups, alternative discourses of masculinity and of femininity, or as Butler (1990) would have it, of "doing masculinity" and "doing femininity" differently, are accorded little space.

> I have often thought that a boy at our single sex boys'' school who is questioning his own sexuality must go through inner torment when he hears the homophobic comments that several boys make. (04/12)

The material effects[1] of this form of discursive practice can be horrendous. Weedon (1999) explains how discourse is material because it is "... located in institutions and practices which define difference and shape the material world, including bodies" (p.103). For too many boys and girls, the "inner torment" becomes too much, as the New Zealand suicide statistics indicate (Quinlivan, 1994; Rose, 1993; Town 1998).

Yet, in all schools in the sample, some respondents talked of this persecution as a prevalent fact while others in the same school said there was no evidence of it. They claimed a tolerant school climate which ensured such harassment did not occur or was minimal. (Just as some claimed there were no gay, lesbian or bisexuals on their staff while others said it was well known that some were there and were well accepted. What people 'see' seems shaped by what they want to see.)

The Staff

Did the teachers in the sample believe there was anything problematic in how

[1] See Weedon, (1999), Discourse is material because it is "... located in institutions and practices which define difference and shape the material world, including bodies" (p.103).

lesbian, gay and bisexual staff are positioned in their schools? The results summarised show:

- In a reversal of the result for the students, a majority (55%) did not believe staff were harmed by tacit heteronormativity, although 18% said they did not know. The reasons offered were tolerant school climates, and evidence (not specifically provided) that gay staff were safe from harm. In contrast with the result for all staff, lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents overwhelmingly believed there was harm or disadvantage.

- In terms of active discrimination, only 11% believed it existed, although again, 75% of gay, bisexual and lesbian staff believed it did. One of the two who disagreed said there was no discrimination only because gay, lesbian and bisexual staff had fought hard for policies and awareness in the school.

Invisibility and vulnerability

The results and conflicting perceptions within schools give testimony to the invisibility of the actual presence of lesbian or gay staff, let alone the invisibility of ways those staff are positioned in their schools.

The comments supporting agreement that there was disadvantage from both tacit heteronormativity and from active discrimination were common to both questions. Disadvantages mentioned ranged from isolation and vulnerability in a dominant heterosexist culture through to career and promotion barriers.

Several of the comments used categories such as 'vulnerable', 'trust' ("I would not trust students with the information that I was gay/lesbian"), 'not safe to expose'. These were used by both heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents. Also of having to more than prove their (professional) worth:

> I believe I would be treated differently by most staff

if they knew I was gay (07/08) .

Clearly, notwithstanding the cries of 'politically correct middle class anxieties' levelled against the survey by a few respondents, it is still far from 'politically correct', let alone safe, to be 'out' as a lesbian, gay or bisexual teacher in secondary school staff rooms. Furthermore, the complacency heterosexual staff have about the 'tolerant and accepting' attitudes in their staff rooms is misplaced, according to the reports in this survey from the non-heterosexual respondents.

Added to the above positions of disadvantage, are the experiences of "conflict" expressed by one respondent, of knowing that students need 'out' role models but feeling too vulnerable to personally make this stand.

The comment was also made that gay lesbian and bisexual staff (as with Maori teachers) "carry the burden of awareness raising and promoting rights". Another spoke of 'lacking the personal energy' to do this. These categories of 'making a stand', 'carrying a burden' and 'needing energy' denote a discourse of struggle. This emerging discourse needs to be set in sharp relief against the overwhelming assertion by (heterosexual) respondents that their gay colleagues experience no ill effects of heteronormativity, let alone homonegativity, in staff rooms and school communities.

Furthermore, the perceived need by some to be closeted at school can add to psychological stresses such as internalised homophobia – a phenomenon that is not uncommon for lesbian, gay and bisexual people (Squirrel, 1989). For example, one respondent wrote

> Being different wears you down. Sometimes I feel like a split person, its almost better that way, then only half of me feels like I'm wrong, wicked. Because you don't or can't talk openly, it does make it feel like you should be ashamed of yourself (07/08).

There was an awareness from many heterosexual respondents of the 'burdens' managed by lesbian, gay and bisexual staff. Many spoke of their isolation in a predominantly heterosexist culture. Examples were given of 'derisory jockish males', of gay jokes being told, and of a former principal who had publicly supported the Christian Right in anti-homosexual statements in the press. Others were aware of 'invisibility' issues, with some claiming that "they're OK if they are not obvious" and, contrary to this, 'the assertive lesbians are OK (because feared) but the less assertive are not'. Several stated there *would be* a problem if the staff were not 'invisible'.

One respondent stated that 'we are all harmed by prevailing assumptions that non-heterosexuality is abnormal'. This statement was unusual in not locating the problem of heteronormativity with the 'others', with those who are 'different', rather than with the normatively positioned discursive practices of heterosexuality in our society and schools.

Overall, then, there is some recognition that gay, lesbian and bisexual staff face, at the very least, a degree of discomfort in how they are positioned in schools. Again, it could be argued that any degree of recognition that heterosexism disadvantages some staff, provides some 'window of opportunity' to work with towards more inclusive working environments. That most teachers, however, did not see a problem to be addressed, means that many eyes remain to be opened to see what exists in front of them.

2. What are schools doing?

What do teachers and administrators perceive that their schools are doing to address discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff?

The responses to questions in the questionnaire probing this research question showed that:

- A majority (55%) believed their school was not doing enough to address these issues. Policies to deal with verbal and physical harassment, support from the guidance network, and education programmes for students, were the measures respondents most frequently identified were happening in their schools. Very few believed the issues were addressed in the curriculum, or through staff development, or through specific facilities or support for lesbian, gay and bisexual students. There were also high counts of 'Don't know' for each suggested measure.

The majority (55%) who believed not enough was being done is, perhaps, a logical match to the percentages who believed students were harmed by tacit heteronormativity and overt discrimination. The comments respondents gave here were about the silence, the fears and the active avoidance of the issue. Those who thought enough was done, mainly justified this in terms of general tolerance being sufficient.

Dealing with harassment

To the extent that harassment and bullying was an identifiable harm for students and even for staff, then respondents saw the school being proactive by having the general policies that existed to deal with these behaviours. The fact that homophobic harassment was, according to many respondents, nonetheless endemic in their schools, suggests that such policies are not working. There are probably several reasons for this.

One such reason is the whole issue of best practice in dealing with bullying of any nature. Students are reluctant to report bullying by their peers, particularly if teacher intervention makes matters worse, or if they know that no action will be taken, or worse still, the victim will be told to alter his/her behaviour! A recent New Zealand publication (Vincent, 1999) discusses 'whole school' approaches to dealing with bullying. However, in their review of the literature

on masculinity and violence, Alton-Lee & Praat (2000) note that 'programmes' and isolated strategies do not appear to work:

> ... policies that punish behaviour of individual students, but do not connect the behaviour to wider practices of racism and / or sexism, or recognise their function in supporting some forms of masculinity, are treating the symptoms while leaving the problem untouched (Alton-Lee & Praat, 2000, p.285).

Staff development

Although only eight percent of the respondents believed that the needs of gay, lesbian or bisexual students and staff were addressed through staff development programmes, twenty four per cent said they had themselves participated in some such training. Most of this was in the context of AIDS awareness and / or counsellor training, and by far the largest group of teachers who had had such training was the health/guidance group.

This is the group of teachers most likely to claim (see Chapter 7) that gay, lesbian and bisexual students do not suffer any harm or discrimination at school. This finding appears extraordinary, and one can only speculate on the reasons for it. This claim of minimal harm is certainly strongly at variance with the perceptions of teachers from other disciplines and strongly at variance with the evidence reported by lesbian, gay and bisexual students themselves (Quinlivan, 1995; Town, 1998) and staff. Whereas sixty percent of respondents believed the needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual students were being addressed within the guidance network of their schools, it appears as if the guidance networks are unaware that there are needs to be addressed – or perhaps actively believe there are no such needs. Indeed, the evidence reported by students (Quninlivan, 1995; Sears, 1991; Town, 1998,) is that guidance staff are not seen as knowledgeable or supportive of gay or questioning students. It was Sear's (1991) doubts about the capacity of guidance staff in the United States to cater for the needs of gay youth, that led to his subsequent research into attitudes of school counsellors and prospective teachers (1992) and which was the inspiration for the original design of this

research (see Chapter 5). Sears' doubts have been supported by the findings that emerge in this study about New Zealand guidance and health teachers.

Curriculum

It is significant that very few respondents perceived that issues for gay, lesbian and bisexual students or staff were (or should be?) addressed in the curriculum. The discourse analysis of Scenario 5 showed considerable anxiety of many teachers about the place of gender / sexuality as an issue for inclusion in the formal school curriculum. It could be argued, however, that students need access to information about how society constructs and discursively positions certain performances of masculinity and femininity. Students may need analytic tools to unpack assumptions about the causal relationships among sex, gender and sexual relationships. Otherwise, fears about abnormality will be perpetuated amongst young people searching for their own authentic ways of 'doing gender performances' and searching for comfortable ways of relating to emotional and sexual feelings for others. This point relates back to the reasons discussed earlier as to why just having anti-harassment policies will not in itself prevent continued harassment. Arguably, unless the source of the homophobia is addressed, then homophobia will continue. The next two research questions investigated to what extent, and in what ways, did teachers and administrators see themselves and their schools positioned to address these fundamental issues.

3. Perceived constraints and possibilities for action

What do teachers and administrators perceive as the constraints against, and possibilities for taking anti-discriminatory action on behalf of bisexual, lesbian and gay students and staff in their school?

Four questions were asked: what were the perceived constraints against school action, what were possibilities for school action, what were constraints on themselves as individuals, and what possibilities did they see for themselves.

Constraints on Schools

In summary, the results were:

- The most mentioned constraint for schools was community factors (42%) followed by staff factors and beliefs it was not the school role. Other mentions included resource constraints, school culture and leadership and student factors. Of the community factors, the most frequent constraint seen was the competitive school market and vulnerability of rolls. A few mentioned fundamentalist or Catholic Christians in the community. Of staff attitudes, most mentioned heterosexist assumptions and 'weak liberalism', but also active discouragement from senior staff. On the school role, comments generally were in favour of limiting school action to preventing discrimination but not 'promoting gay values' or seeking any critique of prevailing attitudes and norms.

Schools in the education market place

The finding that fear of negative community and /or parental reaction is the most frequently mentioned constraint is hardly surprising, although the fact that it was expressed in terms of 'market place' school politics is certainly an interesting comment on New Zealand education politics in the nineties! (Arguably, this contrasts with the U.K. experience of Section 28 (Watney, 1991) where constraints on legitimising 'alternative' sexualities in schools were imposed by central government.) Whether or not this fear of negative community response, let alone adverse effects on the roll, is warranted, would bear further investigation. Some comments can be made, however, in the light of experiences observed by the researcher during the period of this research.

Firstly, one of the schools in the sample, as a result of determined action by out gay and lesbian teachers on the staff, had taken a very proactive stand in building in awareness of heterosexism and homophobia into school policies and programmes for students. The principal was supportive of this, seeing it as a mental health issue. A statement made by the principal and also a school newspaper item are included in the Appendices, (but names are disguised to protect the anonymity of the schools). By working carefully with the Board of Trustees, this school not only avoided negative reactions in the community, but has enlisted positive support. The school has been firm, but managed the process carefully. Another situation arose in a school in the same city, where students established a lesbian-gay support group with the support of the guidance counsellor and the principal. When this 'leaked' to the media, which attempted to beat up a negative story, it was dealt with firmly by the principal and the story soon died down. Homophobic responses from some students (to the media story) also died down when dealt with openly and firmly by the principal.[2] The rolls of both these schools have continued to grow in the period since these events.

In contrast, the situation described in the Introduction to this thesis, where a school reacted negatively and publicly to the establishment of a support group in the school, led to months of media interest and considerable controversy in the community. Perhaps schools need to take cognisance of the way community perceptions of homosexuality and of homophobia are changing in New Zealand. Schools also, of course, need to remember the law which now requires that there be no discrimination on grounds of sexuality. None-the-less, dealing effectively with heterosexism and homophobic behaviours is still a problematic issue. Such issues need to be confronted and problem-solved, rather than allowing vague fears of adverse consequences to drive a school's lack of moral courage. The Massachussetts' 'Safe Schools' programme (Massachussetts Governor's Report, 1993) provides us with a model for this. Perhaps the parental consultation that is required for implementation of the health curriculum will provide a vehicle and a motivation for schools to manage the process of dealing with sexuality in the wider school curriculum and

[2] Personal communication to the writer.

relevant school policies. It will be argued in the next section, however, that positioning of sexuality only within the health curriculum reinforces stereotypical associations of homo/sexuality with bodily sex. As sex is regarded as 'private' and 'adult', and schools are constructed as sites where students are children who are impressionable, discourses of recruitment with suggestions of paedophilia are more likely to get an airing (Whatney, 1991).

Staff attitudes

Although heterosexism and homophobia were the main categories of staff attitudes referred to, several responses wrote of 'uncertainty', 'shyness' and 'general reticence'. These should not be underestimated and any staff development should not dissipate good will through a lack of awareness of this shyness. Indeed, it will be seen in the next sections that a number of respondents identified a lack of knowledge as an important inhibitor for personal action. Sears (1992a) in the United States found a correlation between more knowledge about homosexuality and less homophobia amongst his respondents, and in the 'Project 10' development at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles (Harbeck, 1992) and evaluation after three years found a positive change in attitudes amongst staff and students as a result of education programmes.

Resources

Although few respondents mentioned resource constraints, it is interesting that they saw issues of heteronormativity as 'something else' to be 'squeezed in'. In view of a constantly expanding list of 'what schools ought to do' this response is understandable. However, it rests on the minoritising discourse of 'endless differences' discussed in Chapter 2. As Jane Gilbert has written in the context of science education for girls:

> It sets the scene for claims to be made for the recognition of the needs of a whole new set of identity categories – Maori students, 'gifted' students, students with 'special needs', gay/lesbian students and so on - ...which produce the fragmentary politics

which charactise the notion of an 'inclusive curriculum'[3] (Gilbert, 1994, p.7).

Possibilities for School Action

- The results for 'possible courses of action' for schools showed curriculum support to be the most favoured category of action, followed by staff development and policy development. However, in the context of this question several teachers cautioned against any action, advising none, or "go easy".

Curriculum support

By curriculum support, most respondents meant sexuality education within health and life skills programmes. While many had believed, when responding to the previous investigating question, that this was the main way schools were already catering to the needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual students, there seems doubt as to how widespread this is. In one school, for example, a teacher had 'inquired' and found sexuality was discussed in Form 6 Life Skills, but another teacher in the same school believed that even within that programme, inclusion was uncertain 'depending on who the teacher was'.

Leaving all discussion of gender and sexuality issues to the health curriculum is problematic from several points of view. The manner or degree to which non-hetero sex is included in such programmes is uneven. More worrying, is the discursive positioning of homosexuality only within 'sex education' programmes. What this does is reinforce stereotypical associations of homosexuality solely with physical sex, rather than the much broader field of human relations with which heterosex is associated, in a myriad of taken for granted contexts. Worse, is when homosexuality is discussed only in the context of sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS. These 'medical'

[3] It can be argued, however, that the notion of an 'inclusive curriculum' can still be used without the sense of adding in more and more categories to the 'normal'.

discourses provide no constructive vehicle for deconstructing heteronormative assumptions in society and may even reinforce prejudices. Furthermore, Quinlivan and Town (1999) have critiqued the presentation of sexuality programmes as experienced by the young gay males and lesbian women who participated in their respective research (Quinlivan, 1995; Town, 1998). Their participants found that discussion centred on physical bodies which "were separated from thoughts and feelings, which meant issues of identity (e.g. gay, lesbian, straight) were ignored" (cited in Alton-Lee & Praat, 2000, p.225).

Although most respondents believed discussion of homosexuality was best placed within the health curriculum, some also believed the general curriculum should reflect a range of relationships and should challenge stereotypical gender roles. These views support the argument that only through such broad curricular treatment of issues of gender, (masculinities, femininities, sexualities) can the narrow and pathologising discursive positioning of gay, lesbian and bisexual experience be avoided. But again, the approaches would need to be critical and deconstructive rather than mere representation of differences – which would just perpetuate the 'norm'.

In their literature review of gender in education in New Zealand, Alton-Lee and Praat (2000) note, following an extensive discussion of action research projects working towards a gender-inclusive curriculum (Alton-Lee & Densem, 1992; Alton-Lee, McBride, Greenslade & Nuthall, 1997) that

> Male-only implicit and male norm /female exception discourses were seen to convey a message that participation (in Antarctic work) may relate to genitalia rather than skills, abilities and interest.
>
> ... social studies should focus more on deconstructing unitary identity than creating sharp contrasts between people. (Alton-Lee & Praat, 2000, p.253)

It is not only because discursive practices of heteronormativity, based on hegemonic ideals of masculinity and femininity, are closely tied to discursive practices of male / female gender relations, that these lessons should be

applied to ways teachers think about positioning diverse sexualities in the curriculum. It has already been argued that focussing on difference merely continues to privilege categories assumed to be the norm. Teachers need to be equipped with the theoretical and empirical knowledge to engage in deconstruction of heteronormativity in society. This leads through to the next intervention suggested by respondents in this research, teacher development.

Teacher development

The most commonly suggested need was for workshops on heterosexism and homophobia. Some respondents singled out guidance, senior and sporting staff as in particular need of such teacher education. This could well be a useful starting point for schools, colleges of education and guidance counsellor training courses. The survey itself appeared to have raised awareness in the schools in the sample and some respondents had found it useful to get them thinking. In a sense, the survey had become a teacher development tool. Even those who were provoked by the way questions were constructed were clearly stimulated to think about taken for granted assumptions and to think about the issue in terms of their own students and staff. As stated in the methodology, one respondent informed the researcher that the introduction of the survey in their staff room provided the only occasion she knew of that the word lesbian had been publicly uttered there. Breaking silences that reinforce the heteronormative discursive positioning of hetero/homosexualities in schools is in itself, therefore, important.

Two issues need consideration, however. The first is that such workshops need to go beyond discussions of homophobic behaviours, which position the problem as 'out there' and 'fixable' with suitable programmes. Anti-homophobic workshops, however, may be a suitable starting point for teachers who, as this survey shows, have enormous good will towards making the school environment safe and inclusive for all students. Indeed, given the range of views and the anxieties many teachers have about the topic, as reported in this research, I cannot think of a better 'way in' to introduce teachers to

fundamental issues of heteronormativity. Most respondents were horrified at crassly homophobic attitudes and harassment. But as argued in the section above on curriculum, teachers need to be taken beyond anti-homophobic education and programmes to consider the underlying analysis of heteronormativity in society and in the wider school curriculum. Otherwise, discourses of 'difference' (as discussed in Chapter 2) will continue to unquestioningly position the hetero view of sexuality as the universal norm in nature and society and 'special programmes' to deal with the 'other' will continue to drop off the agenda of 'business as usual' in the schools.

The second point needing consideration, here, is what models of teacher development and of school development work, and which do not. There is not space here to refer to the enormous literature on this issue, but advice from writers as Michael Fullan (1993) and Joyce & Showers (1995) is helpful. Fullan, for example,cautions:

> Policy makers have an obligation to set policy...but you cannot mandate what matters ... (because) almost all educational changes of value require new (i) skills; (ii) behaviour; and (iii) beliefs and understanding ...You cannot *make* people change. You cannot force them to think differently or compel them to develop new skills (Fullan, 1993, pp.22-23).

Amongst other conditions for bringing about lasting change in schools, Fullan stresses the need for individuals to work on school wide change and to join forces with others beyond the school in order for action in their own classrooms to be effective (Fullan, 1995, p.38-39). At the same time, it is individual teachers "taking action to alter their own environments that (provide) any chance for deep change" (Ibid, p.40).

In this respect, Fullan's analysis intersects with Foucault's view of discursive power as sited locally, but intersecting "from one point to another" to produce "an overall strategy and effect." (Foucault, 1980, p.93). Such understandings are critical when considering appropriate teacher development (and pre-service education) for teachers. Simplistic strategies will not work, but it is equally

important not to be overwhelmed by daunting complexities. Acting locally, but also critically and self-reflexively, while thinking and learning about the wider connections, seems the approach most supported in the literature.

Policies

A number of other suggested categories of action are reported in Chapter 10. One was the need for school policies. Notwithstanding the comment above about mandated change, there can be little doubt of the importance of supporting action with school policies. This indicates 'official sanction' for a framework of action by individual teachers and gives them the support needed. Both heterosexual and gay teachers spoke of the vulnerability of individuals 'sticking their necks out' and policy development commits the school leadership to supporting these teachers. This is an essential feature of the Massachussetts programme (Massachussetts Governor's Report, 1993) which uses state law to sanction anti-discriminatory policies, action and education programmes. The State of Tasmania in Australia appears to be following this direction, also, with the publication of detailed policy prescription and support materials by the Department of Education (1999), including material on 'Challenging Homophobia'.

Support groups

Specific support facilities for students who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual was not included as a suggestion by many teachers in the sample. Indeed, a solution which focuses on the groups excluded by their discursive positioning in schools, rather than focussing on the discourses of heteronormativity, may not bring about change in the position of those groups nor in the power relations operating in the schools. Nonetheless, the literature suggests that, as an adjunct to school wide action, or even in the absence of such action, support groups for students can literally be a life saver. Quinlivan (1995), reported on the experience of one of her participants who set up such a group at her school. The process of doing this, was itself empowering, and getting support from the principal and guidance counsellor contributed significantly to "giving her strong and positive feelings about her emerging lesbian sexuality"

(Quinlivan, 1995, p.181). At the same time, the young woman felt that a disadvantage of coming out at school was that "I have become known as Belinda the lesbian and not Belinda the person" (Ibid, p.180). This comment illustrates the vulnerability of individuals taking action without wider changes in the environment being worked towards also. It also supports the concept of the Massachusetts 'Gay Straight Alliance' support groups (Massachussetts Governor's Report, 1993). Another variation is the establishment of a support group at a school site, but catering for students from all surrounding schools. A current example is the 'School's Out' group operating at Wellington High School (Halba, 2000).

Respondents did not mention support groups for teachers who are gay, lesbian or bisexual. Perhaps this corresponds with the perception of most that such teachers do not suffer any disadvantages! There are, of course, such support groups. In New Zealand the umbrella group is GLEE – Gays and Lesbians Everywhere in Education (Town, 1998). They play a very important role in supporting individual teachers but also in advocacy of anti-homophobic, anti-heterosexist activities and resources in educational institutions, particularly in secondary schools. Furthermore, their very existence provides for a counter discourse to discourses of heteronormativity, heterosexism and homonegativity that prevail in schools.

No action – gently does it

A number of comments expressed the fear that 'playing up the differences' would be counter productive and 'just accepting attitudes in the context of 'less contested liberalisms' would serve better.

The worries about 'playing up differences' resonates somewhat ironically with the theoretical position being argued in this thesis. So does the assumption, (not unwarranted) that redress of heterosexist practices would occur within a 'liberal' framework of seeking equality of status along the model of liberal feminism (Blackmore, 1989; Fraser, 1989; Frazer and Lacey 1993; Weedon, 1999), a position critiqued in this thesis. However, I detected no

consciousness of such theoretical analysis in the respondents' comments. Rather, the discourse here seemed to intersect with others already discussed, such as those which hold that sexuality is 'not a proper topic' for schools, and those concerned with community backlash.

Constraints on Individuals

- The results for this section showed the largest categories of constraints for individuals were perceived as 'personal constraints' (34%) which included lack of knowledge, secondly 'lack of support' from the school community (25%), thirdly 'against my beliefs' (17%) (plus 'not my role – 8%) and fourthly, 'nothing I can't handle' (16%).

Personal constraints

As reported in detail in Chapter 10, the main personal constraint mentioned was lack of background knowledge and training in how to deal with discriminatory behaviours. This is a significant finding in terms of the research problem, as it suggests that making good this self identified deficit would empower a lot more teachers to address issues around heterosexism. It does, of course, still beg the question of how to get past barriers to making such knowledge and training available to those teachers who would be willing to have it, which relates to the issue of support discussed below. The comment of one "if I was a father of ten I would be in a stronger position" refers to the vulnerability mentioned elsewhere in the survey responses, to being 'tainted'. It is an interesting aside, that the authority of the patriarchal figure in schools carries more weight, still, than women, children and 'deviants'.

Lack of support from others

Although discussed in the context of school constraints, some issues emerging from 'lack of support' for individuals were different. For example, some of the ways individuals perceived themselves as positioned in relation to other

(more?) powerful groups was interesting. The principal accountable to the Board of Trustees for roll growth; the Catholic accountable to the community of Catholics and the 'teachings of the church'; the trustee accountable to the community – illustrated how individuals are discursively positioned in various and often conflicting ways. One respondent wrote a lengthy, highly personal 'working through' of how she had chosen chastity to deal with religiously based homonegativity, which conflicted with her self identification as a lesbian, and how each of these positions conflicted with the professional issues she saw emerging as a result of completing the questionnaire. Some time later the person identified herself to the researcher and revealed that she had chosen to 'come out' as a lesbian and had also become involved in GLEE. (The impact of the survey on individuals, such as this, is discussed in the ethical issues section of the methodology.)

The group for whom support from others stood out as particularly critical was the gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers. As reported in Chapters 7-10, they spoke of backlash, life as hell, loss of credibility and hostile environments. The point is repeated here, that this response is difficult to reconcile with the overwhelming belief of heterosexual respondents that there is no discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers. It also points to the pragmatic and theoretical position that leadership on this issue should come from heterosexual teachers and not be left to the more vulnerable gay, lesbian, bisexual teachers as, in fact, appears usually to be the case.

> "Straights need personal exposure of out gays, but this is always at a cost to the gay person." (10/03)

If the numbers of respondents who identified (fixable) personal constraints is added to those who said there were no constraints that couldn't be handled, then arguably fifty percent of the sample is indicating that personal action is 'do-able', given the training. If to these numbers are added the 25% who indicated lack of support as the first mentioned constraint, then 75% are indicating constraints that don't seem insurmountable. In a definite minority are those who indicated it was 'against my beliefs' or 'not my role'.

Against my beliefs

The three main groupings here seemed to be religion, homonegativity and the perceived in/appropriateness of such issues in schools. Taken together, those who identified beliefs and those who said it was not their role, and who clearly are against taking any anti-discriminatory action, constituted 25% of first mentions for this question. In the more open ended question at the end of the scenarios section of the questionnaire, about 20% stated explicit homonegative beliefs. Two examples were:

> Homosexuality is not natural. It is learned – probably a lack of ability to form heterosexual relationships.

> As a Christian I believe homosexuality is a sin but God is forgiving and I hope I am too.

Any programmes to intervene in heterosexist schooling would need to take the certain existence of these attitudes and the discursive practices they represent into account. But in the sample obtained for this research, these positions do not appear to be dominant in our staff rooms.

Possibilities for Individual Action

Notwithstanding the constraints discussed above, the overall response for possible action was surprisingly confident and positive:

- The two largest categories of suggestions were working directly with students and curriculum intervention, with a third substantial group saying they would offer leadership and a fourth would "educate myself". Taken together, in the count of first mentioned responses, this

represented 68% of responses. Opposed to that were 16% who would oppose action and 11% would just 'apply EEO / fairness'.

Curriculum intervention

Details of all these responses are reported in Chapter 10. It is interesting to note that in terms of curriculum, the teachers referred to their own subject areas rather than assuming the issue would be sidelined to the health curriculum as many suggested in another part of the survey (see page 172). Some, however, did mention the need to broaden health and human relations programmes too. Generally their suggestions were in the model of the 'inclusive curriculum' of including gay and lesbian images. It was suggested such curriculum intervention should follow the 'counter racism' and 'counter sexism' models. It would be important for teachers to become familiar with the literature concerning the effects and limitations of this model of the gender inclusive curriculum, as discussed in Alton-Lee and Praat (2000), especially Chapter 4 (science) and Chapter 10 (social studies). Ideas and positions in this literature have been referred to in previous sections of this discussion. Included in the appendices, is an article that could provide the starting point for a discussion on sex and gender in senior biology classes.

Working with students / offering leadership

Chapter 10 gave the detailed responses under these headings. In particular, teachers saw they could refuse to accept homophobic abuse and could role-model positive attitudes and behaviours themselves. Mirroring constraints identified with particular roles in the school, many saw positive action these roles could facilitate, such as the principal who wrote of promoting discussion and collegiality. The gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers wrote of being 'good role models'. It could be pointed out, however, that heterosexual teachers might consider the extent *they* need to role model being particularly good teachers as well as being 'out heterosexuals'.

Oppose action

Fifteen per cent of the comments (first mentions) fell into this category. Most were of the 'no interest / not my role' type. One or two reflected the beliefs discussed in the constraints section, including 'teenagers need protection from soliciting' and a few irritated comments associated anti-heterosexist action with (apparently equally irritating) feminist anti-sexism. The following comment is repeated here for illustration of the discourses it represents:

> I would ban the school prom; eliminate the need for a woman in the admin team and cancel netball and rugby.

Apparently, the school dance with its assumption of male/female only partners would be seen as 'heterosexist' as is the assumption that rugby is necessarily a male /masculine prerogative and netball a female /feminine prerogative. The perceived threat to such discursive positioning of sex and gender in what is clearly seen as 'normal and commonsense', everyday "life as we know it" (Gilbert, 1998) arouses derision from this respondent. The 'need for a woman in the admin team' is a reference to affirmative action arising from liberal feminism. Somehow, the gender order would be so disrupted by a focus on heterosexuality, that such affirmative action would be obviated, perhaps by a fear that all sexual /gender difference would disappear. These discourses are less grounded in homophobia, as such, than anxieties that the 'naturalness' of the gender order itself is being called into question. Such worries intersect with homophobia and homonegativity, but also with discourses of sexism.

4. Discursive practices that position sexualities

What are the discursive practices that position sexual identifications in particular ways in the context of school?

In this section, I will discuss the results of the discourse analysis of the scenarios that were reported in Chapter 9. Discourses that have emerged from the other research questions were discussed in preceding sections of this chapter. The implications of these discursive positions, and their relationships to the theoretical and research literature as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, will be explored.

Equal rights

The dominant discourse that emerged from responses to the scenarios was an *equal rights* discourse in the tradition of liberal humanist individualism, deriving from Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. This was seen in several contexts, including the contexts of homophobic harassment by students of each other, and was constructed in several different ways. One construction emphasised *toleration of difference*, in the sense that individuals have an 'individual right' to look, behave or act as they choose or as they 'are' without being persecuted by others. In another form, this equal rights discourse appears in discourses of *anti-discrimination.*

Anna Yeatman (1990) has argued that liberal humanist individualism actually suppresses pluralities.

> ... there emerges the decentred world of a plurality of individual agents responsible for their own destinies. At the same time ... the primitive type of individuality involved necessitates that there be a single standard or norm of authority which subordinates the plurality of individualized agency, and renders it so many distinct versions of this sole authoritative voice (Yeatman, 1990, p.289).

This is the problem, identified by Weedon (1999), when she describes how

> Enlightenment narratives tend to make universalist claims, speaking, for example, of freedom and human rights for all (but) the ways in which they are realised in practice are often partial and exclusionary. This requires constant vigilance (Weedon, 1999, p.130).

This issues renders all the following versions of liberal equal rights discourse as problematic.

Another way this equal rights discourse was constructed, was in the context of *civil liberties.* This underlay the anti-harassment / toleration of difference discourses too, but appeared strongly in the context of the AIDS discussion and of the lesbian putting up her support group notice. In the case of the former scenario, the human and civil right to equal access to medical attention was the focus, and in the latter, the right to 'freedom of speech'.

The equal rights discourse also underlies the discourse of the *inclusive curriculum,* although the discourses around 'identity' and 'difference' also are important there, and will be discussed below.

Yet another discourse identified in the analysis of the scenarios was a discourse of *heroic individualism.* Although not directly an 'equal rights' discourse, it nonetheless derives from liberal humanist traditions of individualism. It can be seen as nesting within discourses of equal rights, in that such discourses do not allow for a critique of discursive practices that constrain 'what can be said, and who can say it'. Discourses of equal rights are often constructed in terms of equal opportunities and, within such discourses, individuals are on their own to make the best they can of opportunities available. 'Opportunities' are unproblematically constructed. Within the feminist traditions discussed in Chapter 2, for example, liberal feminism encouraged individual women to 'make it in a man's world' and 'heroines' who did so were admired and taken as proof that the man's world was non-discriminatory and / or unproblematic (Blackmore, 1989; Weedon, 1999).

Within education in New Zealand, discourses of equal rights, equal opportunities and non-discrimination of individual differences, is well embedded in official discourses as well as in the 'common sense' understandings articulated by respondents in this study. These official discourses (discussed in Chapter 4) can be discerned in legislation, regulation and curriculum policy documents. Since the 1970s, gender and race have been unequivocally

recognised as categories of discrimination requiring to be addressed. More recent, and arguably more timid, are statements about sexuality as a category of discrimination. The only education policy document that makes specific reference to sexual orientation as a category of discrimination and which is a proper focus of inquiry in the curriculum, is the very recent *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 1999).

Because sexuality is not named / included as a legitimate category in other official policy documents, it is left to schools whether or not to make explicit in policy the school's disapproval of discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. Even in sexual harassment policies and procedures, there is no guarantee sexual orientation will be specifically recognised as grounds for complaint against homophobic harassment. Indeed, the training that the Human Rights Commission contracted out in 1997 for Boards of Trustees on sexual harassment, specifically excluded sexual orientation as a category of sexual harassment. The silencing effect of the discourses in these official 'texts' is very powerful. Just as individual teachers said they needed the back up of legitimating policies and approval from the school leadership to effectively take action against discriminatory practices in their schools, so do the schools themselves need this legitimation from government level bureaucracies. NZPPTA (2000) has recently developed guidelines for teachers that may help provide some professional legitimation for anti-discriminatory action.

Thus, the liberal humanist discursive framework of equal rights and equal opportunities, does open up possibilities for dealing with discrimination, particularly harassment, against individuals whose sexualities are constructed as 'other' than the usual heterosexuality. However, as Weedon (1999) has said, working with this framework requires 'constant vigilance'.

Other discursive practices constantly militate against the 'freedoms' gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff and their families do / not have to live, work, study and socialise as 'unmarked' individuals in schools.

It appears from the data in this study, moreover, that the 'constant vigilance' that exists in a few schools comes from gay, lesbian and bisexual staff, not from heterosexual staff. Hence, in some of the data, there was a discourse of *struggle* identified. Once again, this fits within the discourse of *heroic individualism* discussed earlier. This might be admired by some heterosexual staff, but it leaves the 'heroes' exposed, vulnerable and eventually tired of carrying the can.

Professionalism – competing discourses about 'teaching'

In several scenarios, but particularly in the one suggesting gay / lesbian representation in the curriculum, at least two clearly competing discourses emerged about what constituted good / proper teaching practice in secondary schools. One could be described as the *scientific-value free* discourse (Tyler, 1949) and the other, a discourse of *critical inquiry* (Kemmis, Cole & Suggett (1983). Within the latter, could be placed the discourse of the *inclusive curriculum*, although its limitations in terms of critical inquiry have been discussed (Gilbert, 1997). Also intersecting with these discourses of professional practice, is the concept of *subjugated knowledges* (Foucault, 1990). This has been seen in discourses of *im/proper and un/authorised school knowledge,* which exclude (homo)sexuality from legitimate curriculum knowledge.

The identification of these competing discourses is significant for the research question underlying this study, particularly in view of the argument being advanced that teachers and students need the knowledge and pedagogical tools to deconstruct heteronormativity in order to make a real difference to how gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff are positioned in schools. To those teachers whose discursive practices of pedagogy exclude critical inquiry, on the grounds that 'it is not my job', or 'it is social engineering' or 'teachers should keep to the facts', then deconstructing taken for granted 'knowledge' will probably not be acceptable. Apart from resistance, considerable professional development would be needed to give these (and other) teachers the knowledge and skills to approach their teaching in new ways. Dissemination of

materials such as those developed by the Massachussetts Safe Schools Task Force (Massachussetts Governor's Report, 1993) and Project 10 (Harbeck, 1992) in the United States would help. Recommendations and materials are also likely to emerge from the study Quinlivan (in progress) is currently working on.

Homophobic harassment as a matter of discipline

As with the curriculum and pedagogical discourses discussed above, there emerged a clear discourse of professional practice in responding to harassment behaviours amongst students. The predominant response was analysed in terms of a discourse of *school discipline.* The limitations of dealing with homophobic behaviour only as 'bad behaviour' needing to be 'punished' has been commented on earlier in this chapter. This is unlikely to remove the causes of the harassment, particularly if the behaviour is not named as 'homophobic' or as 'sexual harassment'. Indeed, some data from the first part of the questionnaire suggested that such behaviour is sometimes seen as 'not really meaning anything'.

Firm sanctions against harassment, however, that are enacted alongside attitude changing programmes, will arguably reduce homophobic harassment. At least they will send messages from the 'authority' of the school that such behaviours will not be tolerated. In Massachusetts (Governor's Report, 1993), the proactive legislation that banned discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students in public schools allows students to pursue legal redress in the courts if schools do not address any such discrimination. As mentioned previously, legal challenges to schools are beginning to happen in New Zealand (Waitakere College), on the basis of the Human Rights Legislation (New Zealand Government, 1993) and the National Administration Guidelines for Boards of Trustees (MOE, 1999a).

The argument is reiterated, however, that sanctions on their own, whether authorised in national laws or school policies, are not a substitute for, but

rather a complement to 'education' for students and for teachers. This education ideally should go beyond anti-homophobic training to critical inquiry into heteronormative social practices.

Perhaps a concentration on 'disciplining offenders' of harassment to the exclusion of examining attitudes and the deeper discursive practices underlying such attitudes, is another face of the competing professional discourses discussed in the section previous to this. Arguably, attending to discipline enables an avoidance of the deeper issues – issues some teachers, at least, consider are not properly discussed in the domain of school.

The inclusive curriculum

The theoretical and pragmatic drawbacks arising from a discourse of an *inclusive curriculum* (Gilbert, 1997) have been discussed in several contexts in this chapter. This discourse articulates with discourses of essential (and alienated) identities and minoritising discourses of difference. Such discourses carry the undesirable effect of continuing a discursive representation of normal / not normal; heterosexuality / other sexualities where one side to the binary is in a privileged relationship to the other. Within such representations, it is heterosexuality that is invisible as 'sexuality' in the curriculum, such is the ubiquitous nature of heteronormativity, and therefore unquestioned in its inclusion in 'proper' or officially sanctioned school knowledge. It is discursively constructed 'other' sexualities that become visible and questionable, so that the very issue of whether 'to tolerate' or 'to include' is raised, as it was by respondents in this study.

Certainly, respondents in this and other studies reported in the literature (e.g. Quinlivan, 1995; Town, 1998), also affirm the importance of visible representation in school curricula of 'other' sexualities. The silencing and effacing effects of heteronormative and homonegative discourses *are* alienating and psychologically / physically damaging to young people who are developing a 'lived' sense of self that includes sexuality and gender preferences of sexual partners that transgress hegemonic heterosexuality. But

when heterosexuality is treated as not needing to be noticed, when effects of heterosexual behaviour are seen as the only effects of sexual behaviour, when particular constructions of masculinity and of femininity are discursively positioned as 'natural' adjuncts to being male and female, then arguably, little will be gained from mere inclusion of 'other' sexualities in the curriculum.

Summary of Findings

Within the sample obtained for this study, about half believed that gay, lesbian or bisexual students were disadvantaged in their school communities either through a lack of validation or / and through verbal and physical abuse from peers. Very few believed gay lesbian or bisexual staff were discriminated against although more perceived the same lack of validation and ability to 'be themselves' as students who were gay, lesbian or bisexual. Responses from gay, lesbian and bisexual teachers and administrators showed an opposite trend, with most believing there was both tacit and active discrimination against students and staff who were, or were believed to be gay, lesbian or bisexual.

More than half believed their schools were not doing enough to address the identified disadvantages for gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff. The main actions they perceived existed to varying degrees in their schools were anti-harassment policies, guidance support and sexuality education. Many were unaware of what, if anything, existed to address the issues.

The main constraint on schools taking active steps to address issues for gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff that were identified by respondents, was fear of adverse effects on the roll of the school from community backlash to any such interventions. Staff attitudes, including a lack of confidence, were also mentioned as a significant factor.

Curriculum support, staff development and policy development were seen as possible courses of action schools could take. By curriculum support, sexuality education programmes was mostly intended. By teacher development, anti-homophobia workshops were mostly intended. There was a strong call for any action to be backed by official school policy development so that individuals were not left vulnerable through acting alone.

Personal constraints identified included lack of knowledge and strategies, and a lack of school wide policy and support, and some who said it would be against their personal beliefs to take affirmative action beyond prevention of outright harassment. Heterosexual teachers believed the lead should come from lesbian, bisexual and gay teachers. For these teachers, however, who often were taking the lead, this was a role that made them vulnerable to homophobic discrimination and was sometimes seen as a 'struggle' they took on, on top of their other professional roles.

There were, however, many positive suggestions from respondents as to what action they could take as individuals. They suggested working with students and in the curriculum to educate students towards attitudinal change and to provide positive images of 'other' sexualities. A number were prepared to offer leadership in this area. There was a lot of good will amongst respondents towards becoming more self-reflective about issues of sexuality.

Several discourses were identified that positioned hetero/homo-sexualities in particular ways in the context of schools. The identification of these discourses emerged from teachers' textual responses, using a procedure of discourse analysis (McNaughton, 1998) deriving largely from Foucault's theorising of discursive practices, along with feminist poststructuralist understandings and applications of these ideas. Such an analysis seeks to "read backwards from what seems natural, obvious, self-evident or universal ... to show that these things have their history, their reasons ... their effects ..." (Johnson, 1981, in Blackmore 1989, p.97). The discussion of these discourses in this and preceding chapters has shown how particular discourses that circulate in schools can constrain or enable school administrators and teachers to address

discrimination against lesbian, gay and bisexual students, staff and others in the school community.

A discourse permeating many responses was the minoritising discourse that positioned heterosexuality as unproblematic. This positions 'other' sexualities as 'different from' a 'standard' that is heterosexual, and which is placed in the hierarchically privileged position in the hetero/homo-sexual binary of being 'normal' and 'right' and 'natural'. Even when issues of invisibility and alienation were identified and discussed by respondents, the discourse of difference based on this essential binary of sexual identities, often left prevailing heteronormative assumptions unchallenged.

Discourses used by teachers that maintained gay, lesbian and bisexual people in a position of 'otherness', intersected also with discourses of 'proper' school knowledge and 'proper' professional practices which excluded homosexuality from the curriculum and excluded deconstructive critiques of heteronormativity from teachers' repertoire of classroom investigations. These excluding practices can be seen in Foucauldian terms of 'subjugated knowledge'. Dominant discourses construct 'what is sayable' (and what is 'seeable'), and what cannot be said. Like the Gramscian concept of hegemonic ideologies, such (dominant) discourses enter into 'commonsense'. The scornful responses of some teachers to the design of the survey instrument also represented such commonsense understandings of 'scientific' research methodology.

Another professional discourse positioned homophobic harassment as a breach of school discipline rather than evidence of 'disciplining regimes' that maintain hegemonic heterosexuality through 'compulsory' gender definitions. More teachers appeared comfortable with tackling such harassment from a disciplinary rather than an educative stance.

Closely tied to the foregoing discursive practice, was a discourse that positioned individuals who challenged heteronormative or homophobic practices as 'heroic individuals' in the tradition of liberal individualism.

Again, this left embedded discourses and discursive practices unchallenged, as solutions were in the hands of those marked as 'other'. This is not dissimilar to discourses in New Zealand which position the 'problem' of biculturalism with Maori. This is notwithstanding the many teachers who expressed a need and a willingness to increase their personal knowledge about issues of hetero / homosexuality.

CHAPTER TWELVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In outlining the background to the research problem in Chapter 1 and Chapter 5, I emphasised that this study was undertaken to seek to understand both constraints and enabling factors that affect whether school is a safe and educationally challenging experience for all students, given the way issues of sexual orientation are positioned. The key understandings in respect to this problem are summarised at the conclusion of the last chapter. Given those understandings, and given the limitations of this study that are discussed below, I conclude with the argument that it is time for the teaching profession in New Zealand to update the prevailing intellectual and pedagogical assumptions underlying school knowledge. It is time to go beyond the exclusionary nature of 'accepting difference' to an inclusivity based on deconstructive critical practice. On the basis of this conclusion and the discussion in the preceding chapter, recommendations are made for schools, for teacher education institutions and for further research.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations to the study have arisen from theoretical and practical issues in the research methodology, as outlined in Chapter 5. For example, a deeper and earlier understanding of the limitations of attitude research, and of the explanatory potential of discourse analysis, would perhaps have created a more coherent design to the research. On the other hand, the decision to run 'quantitative' analysis alongside a discourse analysis has proven a sound one. A better understanding early on in the development of the research process of the technique for the discourse analysis, however, would have led to more efficient

handling of the data for the discourse analysis. Similarly, with an earlier understanding of theoretical concepts of poststructuralism, it may have been possible to avoid the use of 'defining' (and binary) categories in the design of the questionnaire, and that are embedded in both the liberal humanist and essentialist discourses that have been critiqued in this report.

In the light of the results and conclusions reached so far, a further discussion of the impact of the relatively low rate of response (see pp.94-96) is also warranted. Because of the controversial nature of the topic and the somewhat elaborate design of the questionnaire, an attempt to find out reasons for non-response was built in to the design. The covering letter and oral introduction by the researcher invited those in the sample who received the questionnaire and decided not to respond, to fill in the demographic data only and send it back with a brief reason for non-response. Ten such replies were received, most without the demographic data completed. Among the reasons stated for non-response, (some gave more than one reason) six stated 'too busy', two stated 'no interest', two stated 'questionnaire bias', one stated 'topic never discussed here' and one gave no reason at all. Of course, the 'too busy' responses could really mean 'no interest' but even this cannot be assumed as at least one person (a principal) took the trouble to write and apologise for not completing the form – had found it buried some months later! This principal had been very sympathetic to the survey. As discussed in Chapter 5, I had also attempted to follow up through teachers I knew, reactions to the questionnaire and characteristics of non-respondents. Except in the case where the questionnaires had got 'lost', this follow up did not reveal any patterns beyond the acknowledgement of the hectic pace teachers work at, and the difficulty of finding time to complete such surveys.

Certainly, as noted in Chapter 5 and subsequent discussion, heteronormative discourses that exclude diversity of sexuality, an effect often spoken of as a 'veil of silence', particularly from sites such as schools, will have been operative in the (low) rate of response as well as in the range of responses that were obtained.

In addition to this, moreover, a voluntary participant study will obtain more responses from those who are interested in the topic than those who are not. The results do show, however, that those who were interested included respondents who wished to state views interpreted as 'negative', as well as those stating views interpreted as 'positive'. Thus, respondents anxious to state support for the heteronormative status quo in schools, did respond. On the other hand, perhaps the very low response rates from the rural school (10 percent) and the low decile urban co-educational school (12 per cent) are an indication of what could be called 'negative disinterest' in contrast to 'negative interest'. This is speculative.

What is clear, however, as indicated in the methodology chapter, is that the distribution (if not the range) of responses cannot be regarded as representative of the sample, let alone of all teachers and administrators in New Zealand secondary schools. It is highly likely, for example, that a higher response rate in the sample would have altered the proportions of those who believed there was disadvantage for non-heterosexual students, as compared to those who believed there was not, with probably fewer in the former category than these results show.

As de Vaus (1991) points out, however, it is still a valid research aim to be less interested in the proportions of a population that give a particular response, but "rather in obtaining an idea of the range of responses or ideas that people have" (de Vaus, 1991, p.77). In such cases, as he explains, it is important to try and get as wide a variety of people in the sample as possible, rather than a strict representation of each type in its true proportions. This was the aim in the sampling decisions for this study, although the response rate limited the variety achieved. For generalisability, the quantitative results must be read in the light of the foregoing constraints analysis. Nonetheless, the instrument has produced a wide *range* of responses from the participants in the sample schools.

Apart from the response rate in the sample, a further limitation on the generalisability of the results comes from the sample itself. This, too, was discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. Attempts to establish the representativeness of the demographic profile of the schools and the respondents showed a closer parallel

with national demographic data on some variables than on others. For example, the sample obtained is slightly younger than the national profile of teachers and the school sample, in terms of school type, cannot be regarded as representative of New Zealand schools. For example, even the metropolitan area chosen would probably differ from others in some characteristics and rural schools are very under-represented. The sample included no provincial and no private schools. Constraints on such sample factors arise largely from the nature of the research project as a thesis for masters degree, where time and resources are necessarily limited. This study, however, was conceived more in terms of an exploratory study than one producing generalisations for the national population. The results and discussion should also be read in terms of the New Zealand context within which the research has been carried out. While the results are significant in terms of international literature, which has few examples I am aware of, of this type of research, the local contexts within each country would produce a different configuration of results, including the results of the discourse analysis.

Furthermore, this study, as with all research, has to be read as just 'one story'. 'I' the researcher am written into the text of this study (Jones, 1992) at many levels. I have followed academic research processes as rigorously as I could to make this study as credible as possible and to satisfy myself, at least, that any subjectivity and bias was limited to what is unavoidable given the constraints that have been outlined. Nonetheless, the study is my account and, as Jones has said, "can only be (a) construction, made up from the language, meanings and ideas historically available to us, the 'I'" (Jones, 1992, p.18). 'I' selected from these available meanings and ideas the theoretical framework; 'I' developed the research design as a result of the interactive process with the literature, my supervisors and other colleagues and with issues that arose; 'I' administered the survey amongst colleagues to whom I was known, and this will have had an effect on the data gathered; 'I' coded, analysed, discussed the data – bringing to bear all the personal, academic, professional and other characteristics including my own demographic positioning in New Zealand society at this particular point in history. I 'take up' multiple subjectivities as I analyse the discourses and subject positions that appear to me to emerge from the data in this study. The study is of more than

academic or professional interest to me. It matters that it is done well and that it can therefore make a difference. I have friends who have crept around the corridors of their school because of vilification of their sexuality; others who have had broken bottles stuck in the gate posts of their homes by homophobic teenagers; and others who have had offensive matter left in their classroom desk and offensive messages scrawled on the classroom blackboard. Gay students have left the school at which I teach because they do not feel sufficiently supported and I must share in the responsibility for that failure. As a senior administrator in a school, I 'read' the data as a professional insider, while needing also to stand as far 'outside' as possible as academic researcher. Far from being value free, the topic is value laden. This, of course, is what has made it an intriguing and worthwhile study to pursue, as well as presenting some intriguing conundrums.

Conclusions

The main findings of this study are summarised at the end of the last chapter.

The most important finding to emerge from this study is the prevalence in schools and effects there, in terms of the research problem, of a liberal humanist discourse of individual rights and tolerance of difference. This emerged in various guises, including civil rights, equal educational opportunities, and in the discourse of heroic individualism. The liberal humanist discourse was also identified as underlying much of the official literature governing secondary education in New Zealand, and also in the literature describing or recommending interventions in schools and other educational institutions to mitigate the harm done by prevailing homophobic and heteronormative social practices. Although teachers and administrators believe disadvantages for lesbian, bisexual and gay students can be dealt with through equal rights and general tolerance, their own testimony indicates this has not happened to date. As Weedon (1999, p.130) has said, relying on liberal discourses of equal rights and toleration requires "constant vigilance". That is, it is

always going to be up to the interested / activist individuals to pay attention to issues constructed as 'other' to the 'business as usual'; in this case the powerful heteronormative discourses that prevail in schools.

The following recommendations arise from the understandings that emerged from this research, and seek to capitalise on these in order to bring about change in schools. Although liberal humanist discourses of equal rights have been discussed in terms of inherent limitations, they can also be seen as an opportunity to begin to challenge fundamentally constraining discursive practices. In Foucauldian terms, where power is inherent in discourse, or rather discourse "designates the conjunction of power and knowledge" (in Kenway, 1992, p.128), the essentially unstable, non-structural, and multi-directional nature of power gives rise to the possibility of disrupting from within the very discursive space which constrains such disruption.

Thus, some of the following recommendations are firmly grounded within existing discourses of liberal individualism and equality. While remaining mindful of the limitations of these discourses, steps can be taken towards more fundamental and socially critical changes in professional practices in schools. This research revealed competing discourses of professionalism amongst teachers and administrators, but did show the existence of discursive practices that would open some doors toward changes that would be of benefit to all students.

It is argued, therefore, that those responsible for 'school knowledge' should become abreast with intellectual developments of the post-modern age and develop for themselves and their students the ability to deconstruct and critique concepts and social practices that constrain ways of being for all of us, regardless of sexual or any other kind of 'orientation'. When such critical approaches to knowledge and beliefs become 'normal' in schools, an appreciation of diversity will have moved beyond claims to tolerance of difference towards an understanding of the power / knowledge nexus and a questioning approach to 'who says' what is different, different from what, and why do they say that. For our schools to become safe and enriching environments for all students, teachers and their families,

teachers and administrators need to exercise leadership as educators who are prepared to confront prejudice, seek to understand it and act to overcome it.

Recommendations

> *These things should be done so that the strange becomes familiar, and the familiar, strange.*

Recommendations for schools

1. Anti-harassment policies and procedures should specifically name homophobic harassment. It is recommended that schools explore 'best practice' for strategies to deal with student to student harassment, including the 'no-blame bullying' approach. Sullivan (2000) has excellent models for a whole school approach to dealing with student harassment. Policies need to be living documents so that the whole school community is aware that any form of harassment is unacceptable and will be followed up by 'authority'.

2. Anti-homophobic workshops should become a regular part of staff development programmes in schools. At the very least, common myths and misunderstandings, and the alienating effects of homonegative attitudes for students, staff and their families can be explored. Such workshops could also begin to raise awareness of the constructedness of sex and gender binaries, and of heteronormative practices in society and in the school.

3. School wide support for and understanding of the document *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum* (MOE, 1999) should be promoted by school administrators. Some auditing of implementation should take place to ensure that students benefit from the socially critical strand in the document. Other resources should be reviewed to ensure they are consistent with the educational intent of the new curriculum.

4. Ongoing staff development for health and guidance teachers will be needed. This could be done within the framework of the new curriculum document referred to above. This research shows an apparent low level of awareness amongst health and guidance teachers about issues of sexual orientation.

5. School counsellors need support to find an appropriate mode of practice in dealing with young people who are exploring their emerging sexuality. Heteronormative assumptions and even homonegative beliefs are not helpful. (Counsellors who responded in this study expressed appreciation of the way the instrument had helped clarify their thinking in respect of sexual orientation issues. See Appendix 5.)

6. Senior administrators and others responsible for welfare of staff should be made aware of how gay, lesbian or bisexual staff (and other adults in the school community) may be experiencing personal and professional stresses from heteronormative and homonegative attitudes, assumptions and practices in the school. As they will not necessarily know who such teachers or other adults are, the school should address the heteronormative and homonegative practices in the same way they would wish to eliminate racism as a general principle.

7. Support specifically targeted to the lesbian, gay and bisexual student population should be undertaken within the frameworks of existing successful models, such as those pioneered in Massachusetts and described in the literature review. In particular, the 'gay-straight alliance' model is consistent with the theoretical positions argued in this study. The negative 'marking' (Hall, 1997) that ensues from a focus on the gay, lesbian or bisexual student as the location of a problem / solution, can be mitigated or foiled to some extent through the gay-straight model, rather than the 'lesbian support' or 'gay support' model.

8. Steps towards an 'inclusive curriculum' should be supported through appropriate teacher development programmes. 'Visibility' should be addressed through deconstructive rather than 'add on' approaches. To achieve this, teachers

should have access to theoretical developments in the epistemological bases of knowledge and of pedagogy. It has been written that 'there is nothing so practical as good theory'. Teachers are in the business of transmitting culture, amongst other things, and should not be transmitting knowledge and ideas that are no longer academically or intellectually, let alone politically supportable.

Ultimately, steps taken under the 'equal rights' discourses of liberal humanism will never become embedded in professional practice until the social, political and epistemological bases of heteronormative discursive practices are commonly understood.

Recommendations for teacher education

9. It will be important for trainee teachers to have sufficient opportunity during their teacher education to develop the intellectual tools to be socially critical as teachers and facilitate the development of these intellectual tools for their students. The competing discourses of professional practice identified in this research shows that a technical rationalist conception of teaching and learning exists in schools alongside a socially critical conception. For reasons outlined in Recommendation 8, teachers need the theoretical understandings of what shapes practice. Recent struggles, initiated by the Business Round Table, over rival conceptions of teacher education, have highlighted in sharp relief the different discursive positionings of teachers as technicians or teachers as educators.

Recommendations for further research

The following recommendations are made to facilitate a deeper understanding of some issues that emerged in the current study and which seem to me to be critical to successful implementation of teacher development as already recommended above.

10. Qualitative research should be undertaken with health and guidance teachers to explore some of the discursive practices that impinge on sexual orientation in schools. Implications for professional development should be explored.

11. More New Zealand based research should be undertaken with children and adolescents on the construction and enforcement of hegemonic performances of masculinity and of femininity, paying attention to the 'disciplinary regimes' within which such performances are enforced.

12. The research reported in this study could be replicated or used in a modified form in different regions of New Zealand such as in rural and provincial areas. Given that we have a national education system and a relatively mobile, national teaching force, analysis of trends in comparison with this current study of teachers in mainly urban schools would be interesting. It would also be possible to use the range of responses gained from this study to develop a Likert scale instrument that could be used in a much larger and more varied sample. Or an interview schedule could be developed on the basis of this study to use with focus groups from different types of regions and schools. A discourse analysis of such interview responses would also be of interest in relation to this and other related studies.

13. The sample obtained for this research was overwhelmingly pakeha in the ethnic identification of respondents, just as the researcher is pakeha. Ways in which gay, lesbian and bisexual students and staff who are Maori or from other ethnic communities are positioned in schools, could well be explored by appropriate researchers.

14. Results of research in this field, for example Quinliven (1995) and Town (1998) should be made widely available to teachers and administrators in schools and to people responsible for teacher education programmes.

15. Narratives need to be collected and written of work done in individual schools by lesbian and gay teachers and / or straight people committed to making a difference.

16. Given the findings of Town (1998) that young gay men acknowledged their sexuality to themselves between the ages of 10 and 12 years, but did not come out for six to eight years later, research in primary and intermediate schools would seem urgent. This is particularly so in view of the homophobic harassment that reportedly begins amongst young children and continues into the early years of secondary school.

REFERENCES

Alton-Lee, A. & Densem, P. (1992). Towards a gender-inclusive school curriculum: Changing educational practice. In S. Middleton and A. Jones (eds.). *Women and Education in Aotearoa 2.* Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, pp.197-221.

Alton-Lee, A. & Praat, A. (2000*). Explaining and Addressing Gender Differences in the New Zealand Compulsory School Sector.* A *Literature Review.* Wellington: Ministry of Education Research Division.

Anderson, G. (1990). *Fundamentals of Educational Research.* London: The Falmer Press.

Bagemihl, B. (1999). *Biological Exhuberance. Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity.* London: St Martin's Press.

Baker, M. (1984). Gays in education. PGCE Thesis, University of London, Institute of Education. Cited in L. Trenchard & H. Warren, H. (1987). Talking about school: The experiences of young lesbians and gay men. In G. Weiner & M. Arnot (eds). *Gender Under Scrutiny.* London: Hutchison.

Barwick, H. (1994). Youth suicide prevention project: workshop report and literature review. Wellington: Department of Health. Cited in S. Town (1998). Is it safe to come out now? Sexuality and the education of ten young gay men. Unpublished PhD. thesis, Victoria University, Wellington.

Bell, B. (1988). Girls and science. In S. Middleton (ed.). *Women and Education in Aotearoa.* Wellington: Allen & Unwin, pp.153-160.

Blackmore, J. (1989). Educational leadership: A feminist critique and reconstruction. In J. Smyth (ed.). *Critical Perspectives on Educational Leadership.* Lewes: The Falmer Press, pp.93-130.

Bornstein, K. (1998). *My Gender Workbook: How to Become a Real Man, a Real Woman, the Real You or Something Else Entirely.* New York, London: Routledge.

Brice, J. (1995). *Health Education: Blackline Masters.* Melbourne: Longman.

Burgess, R. (Ed.) (1989). *The Ethics of Educational Research.* London: The Falmer Press

Burns, J. (1994). Overview of developments in research'. Unpublished lecture to Course 36.412, Massey University, Faculty of Education, Palmerston North.

Burrows, L. (1999). Developmental discourses in school physical education. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin.

Butler, J. (1990a). Gender trouble, feminist theory, and psychoanalytic discourse. In L. Nicholson (ed.). *Feminism / Postmodernism.* New York: Routledge, pp.324-340.

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* New York & London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1991). Imitation and gender insubordination. In D. Fuss (ed.). *Inside / Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories.* London: Routledge, pp.13-31.

Butler, J. (1995). Contingent foundations. In S. Benhabib, J. Butler, D. Cornell & N. Fraser. *Feminist Contentions.* New York: Routledge, pp.35-57.

Charles, C.M. (1998*). Introduction to Educational Research,* (3rd Edition). San Diego: Longman.

Cleary, M. (1997). The No-blame Approach to Bullying – materials produced for an in-service training session to guidance staff, Wellington.

Coltheart, L. (1986). Desire, consent and liberal theory. In C. Pateman and E. Gross (eds). *Feminist Challenges. Social and Political Theory.* Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Connell, R.W. (1995). *Masculinities.* St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Connell, R.W. (1987). *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research. Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* London: Sage Publications.

Cornbleth, C. (1990). *Curriculum in Context.* Basingstoke: The Falmer Press.

Cowan, J., Grant, M. & Hielmann, C. (1997). *Sex with Attitude.* Auckland: Parents With Confidence.

Creed, B. (1994). Queer theory and its discontents: Queer desires, queer cinema. In N. Grieve & A. Burns (eds). *Australian Women: Contempory Feminist Thought.* Melbourne: Oxford University Press, pp.151-164.

Cropp, A. (2001). Pride and Prejudice. *Next,* January 2001, pp.30-34.

Delamont, S. (1992). *Fieldwork in Educational Settings: Methods, Pitfalls & Perspectives.* London: The Falmer Press.

Department of Education (1985). *Health Education. Syllabus for Schools in Primary and Secondary Schools.* (Reprinted by Learning Media for the Ministry of Education in 1990.) Wellington.

Department of Education (1989). *Countering Sexism in Education. A Practical Guide for Educators.* Wellington: Department of Education.

De Vaus, D. A. (1991). *Surveys in Social Research* (3rd Edition). St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Di Stefano, C. (1990). Dilemmas of difference: Feminism, modernity and postmodernism. In L. Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism / Postmodernism.* New York: Routledge, pp.63-82.

Eiser, J. R. (Ed.). (1984). *Attitudinal Judgement.* New York: Springer-Verlag.

Eisner, E.W. (1979). *The Educational Imagination.* New York: Macmillan.

Family Planning Association. (2000). *The Word.*

Fine, M. (1994). Negotiations of power inside feminist research. In A. Gitlin (ed.). *Power and Method. Political Activism and Educational Research.* New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction* (trans. R. Hurley, 1978). New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1980). Truth and power. In C. Gordon (ed.). *Power / Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977.* London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp.109-133.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power / Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977.* Ed. C. Gordon. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Fraser, N. (1989). *Unruly practices. Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory.* Cambridge: Polity Press

Frazer, E. (1989). Feminist talk and talking about feminism: teenage girls' discourses of gender. *Oxford Review of Education,* Vol.15, No.3, pp.281-290.

Frazer, E. & Lacey, N. (1993). *The politics of community: A feminist critique of the liberal-communitarian debate.* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change Forces. Probing the Depths of Educational Reform.* London: The Falmer Press.

Fuss, D. (1989). *Essentially Speaking.* New York: Routledge.

Fuss, D. (1991). Introduction. In D. Fuss (ed.) *Inside/Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories.* New York: Routledge, pp.1-12.

Gay, L.R. (1996). *Educational Research* (5th Edition). N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Gilbert, J. (1994). Beyond "girls can do anything": the deconstruction and reconstruction of feminist approaches to science education in New Zealand. Paper presented at the annual conference of the *Australian Association for Research in Education*, Newcastle University, November, 1994.

Gilbert, J. (1997). *Thinking 'Otherwise': Re-thinking the problem of Girls and science education in the post-modern.* Unpublished PhD.Thesis, University of Waikato, Hamiliton.

Gitlin, A. (1994). *Power and Method: Political Activism and Educational Research.* New York: Routledge.

Griffin, P. (1992). Lesbian and gay educators: Opening the classroom closet. In K. Harbeck (ed.). *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet.* New York: Haworth Press, pp.167-196.

Grob, L. (1984). Leadership. The socratic model. In B. Kellerman (ed.). *Leadership: Multi-disciplinary Perspectives.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Habermas, J. (1971). *Knowledge and Human Interests.* Translated by J. Shapiro. Boston: Beacon Press.

Hall, S. (1997). The work of representation. In S. Hall (ed.). *Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* London: Sage Publications.

Halba, G. (2000). Support group for queer teenagers looks to expand. *City Voice 21.9.00,* Wellington, p.2.

Harbeck, K. (1992). *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet.* New York: Haworth Press.

Harbeck, K. (1997). *Gay and Lesbian Educators: Personal Freedoms, Public Constraints.* Malden, MA: Amethyst Press and Productions.

Harding, S. (1994). The science question in feminism. In A. Gitlin (ed.), *Power and method: political activism and educational research.* N.Y.: Routledge, p.13.

Harker, R. & Gibbs, C., et al (1998). *Teacher 2000 Project: An International Study of Teacher Satisfaction, Motivation, and Health. The New Zealand Report.* Massey University College of Education, Palmerston North.

Harris, R.H. (1994). *Let's Talk About Sex: Growing up, Changing Bodies, Sex and Sexual Health.* London: Walker Books.

Harrison, K. (1991). *Courage and Convictions. A Study of Human Rights.* Auckland: Macmillan.

Hudson, W. & Ricketts, W. (1980). A strategy for the measurement of homophobia. *Journal of Homosexuality,* Vol.5, No.4, pp.357-372.

Jacob, E. (1987). Qualitative research traditions. *Review of Educational Research.* Vol. 57. pp.1-50.

Johnson, P. & Pihama, L. (1995). What Counts as Difference and What Differences Count: Gender, Race and the Politics of Difference. In K. Irwin & I. Ramsden (eds). *Toi Wahine: The Worlds of Maori Women.* Auckland: Penguin, pp.75-86.

Jones, A. (1992). Writing Feminist Educational Research: Am 'I' in the Text? In S. Middleton, & A. Jones (eds). *Women and Education in Aotearoa.* Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, pp.18-32.

Jones, A. & Guy, C. (1992). Radical Feminism in New Zealand: From Piha to Newtown. In R. Du Plessis (ed.) *Feminist Voices. Women's Studies Texts for Aotearoa / New Zealand.* Auckland: Oxford University Press, pp.300-316.

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (1995). *Student Achievement Through Staff Development: Fundamentals of School Renewal.* (2nd edition). N.Y.: Longman.

Kemmis, S., Cole, P., and Suggett, D. (1983). *Towards the Socially Critical School.* Melbourne: Victorian Institute of Secondary Education.

Kenway, J. (1992a). Making 'hope practical' rather than 'despair convincing': Some thoughts on the value of post-structuralism as a theory of and for feminist change in schools. Paper delivered to the *Australian Association for Researcher Education Conference.* Deakin, Geelong.

Kenway, J. (1992b). Feminist theories of the state: To be or not to be. In M. Muetzelfeldt, (ed.). *Society, State and Politics in Australia.* Leichhardt, N.S.W: Pluto Press with Deakin University, pp.108-144.

Kenway, J. (1995). Having a postmodernist turn or postmodernist *angst: A* disorder experienced by an author who is not yet dead or even close to it. In R. Smith and P. Wexler (eds), *After Postmodernism: Education, Politics and Identity.* London: Falmer Press, pp.36-55.

Khayatt, M.D. (1992). *Lesbian Teachers: An Invisible Presence.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Khayatt, M.D. (1994). Surviving school as a lesbian student. *Gender and Education.* Vol. 6, No.1, pp.47-61.

Kokonis A. and Maginness, K. (1996). *Teaching Sexuality. A Comprehensive Activity –based Resource.* Sydney:

LaSalle, L. (1992). Exploring campus intolerance: A textual analysis of comments concerning lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. (Pennslyvania State University). Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting of the *American Educational Research Association,* San Franscisco.

Larsen, K., Reed, M. & Hoffman, S. (1980). Attitudes of heterosexuals toward homosexuality: A Likert type scale and construct validity. *Journal of Sex Research,* Vol. 16, No. 3, pp.245-257.

Lather, P. (1986). Research as praxis. *Harvard Educational Review,* Vol. 56, No.3, pp.257-277.

Lather, P. (1992). Critical frames in educational research: feminist and post-structural perspectives. *Theory Into Practice,* Vol. 31, No.2, pp.87-99.

Lather, P. (1994). Fertile obsession: validity after poststructurlism. In A. Gitlin (ed.). *Power and Method. Political Activism and Educational Research.* New York: Routledge, pp.36-60.

Lecompte, M. & McLaughlin, D. (1994). Collaborative work with Navajo schools. In A. Gitlin (ed.). *Power and Method. Political Activism and Educational Research.* New York: Routledge, pp.147-166.

Liggins, S., Wille, A., Hawthorn, S., & Rampton, L., (1994). *Affirming Diversity. An Educational Resource on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Orientations.* Auckland: Auckland Education Unit, New Zealand Family Planning Association.

Longhurst, R. & Peace, R. (1993). Lecture theatre to classroom – feminist geography. *New Zealand Journal of Geography,* Vol. 96, pp.16-19.

Lusk, B. (1999). *Making a Difference. A Guide for Health Co-ordinators and Teachers.* Family Planning Association.

Mac An Ghaill, M. (1991). Schooling, sexuality and male power: towards an emancipatory curriculum. *Gender and Education,* Vol. 3, pp.291-309.

MacNaughton, G. (1998). Improving our gender equity 'tools': A case for discourse analysis. In N. Yelland (ed.). *Gender in Early Childhood.* London & New York: Routledge, pp.149-174.

Marsh, C. (1982). *The Survey Method: the contribution of surveys to sociological explanation.* London: Allen & Unwin.

Martin, B. (1992). Sexual practice and changing lesbian identities. In M. Barrett, & A. Phillips, (eds). *Destabilizing Theory. Contemporary Feminist Debates.* Cambridge: Polity Press, pp.93-119.

Massachusetts Governor's Report (1993). *Making Schools Safe for Gay and Lesbian Youth.* Education Report of the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth. Boston, MA: State House, Room 111.

Massey University Human Ethics Committee. (1995). *Code of Ethical Conduct.* Palmerston North: Massey University.

Mathews, J. (1986). Feminist history. *Labour History,* Vol. 50, pp.147-153.

Mercer, K. (1994). *Welcome to the Jungle. New Positions in Black Cultural Studies.* New York: Routledge.

Ministry of Education (1993). National Education Guidelines. *The Education Gazette*, 30 April. Wellington.

Ministry of Education (1993). *The New Zealand Curriculum Framework.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1995). *New Zealand Schools 1994.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Education Statistics of New Zealand, 1996.* The Data Management and Analysis Section, Ministry of Education, Wellington.

Ministry of Education. (1998). *New Zealand Schools 1997.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1999a). 'Revised National Education Guidelines'. *The Education Gazette,* 25 November. Wellington.

Ministry of Education. (1999b). *Health and Physical Education in the New Zealand Curriculum.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Morris, F. (1995). *Sisters.* Wellington: YWCA.

New Zealand Government. (1993). The Human Rights Act, 1993. Wellington: New Zealand Government.

NZPPTA. (1986) Issues of equality. Paper to the Annual Conference of the *New Zealand Post-Primary Teachers' Association,* Wellington.

NZPPTA. (1993). Inward correspondence to the General Secretary.

NZPPTA. (1995). *Constitution and Code of Ethics.* Wellington: NZPPTA.

NZPPTA. (1999). Towards safe schools. Paper prepared by the Executive for the Annual Conference of the *New Zealand Post-Primary Teachers' Association,* Wellington.

NZPPTA. (2000). *Making Schools Safe for People of Every Sexuality.* Wellington: NZPPTA.

Nicholson, L. (1990). Introduction. In L. Nicholson, (ed.). *Feminism / Postmodernism.* New York: Routledge, pp.1-16.

Norris, W. (1992). Liberal attitudes and homophobic acts: The paradoxes of homosexual experience in a liberal institution. In K. Harbeck, (ed.).*Coming Out of the Classroom Closet.* New York: Haworth Press, pp.81-120.

O'Brien, S. (1988). The experiences of lesbians at school during 1985 and 1986. The years of the homosexual law reform campaign in Aotearoa. Unpublished Sociology Paper, Victoria University, Wellington.
Palmer, G. (1995). *Rouge Magazine.*

Pegram, D. (1995). Interview with L. Smith, & K. Hanrahan: David Pegram – on being out. *The Voice.* Vol. 9, No. 1. Newlands College, Wellington, p.5.

Phelan, S. (1994). *Getting Specific. Postmodern Lesbian Politics.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Quinlivan, K. (1993). *Voices from the Margins: The Experiences of Lesbian Educators in New Zealand Secondary Schools.* Unpublished M.Ed research project, Education Department, University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

Quinlivan, K. (1994). *Ten Lesbian Students Reflect on Their Secondary School Experiences.* M.Ed Thesis, Canterbury University, Christchurch.

Quinlivan, K. & Town S. (1995). Queer as fuck? In D. Epstein & J. Sears (eds). *A Dangerous Knowing. Sexual Pedagogies and the Master Narrative.* London: Cassell.

Rankine, J. (ed.) 1992. *Straight Talking. A Kit for Educators.* New Zealand Aids Foundation.

Renwick, M. (1993). *Teacher Development in State Secondary Schools – A Pilot Study.* Wellington: NZCER with NZPPTA.

Rich, A. (1980). Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture & Society. Vol. 5,* No.4 pp.631-660.

Rose, R. (1993). Gay and dead. *The Listener,* May 8 1993, pp.40-41.

Rowland, R. & Klein, R. (1990). Radical feminism: critique and construct. In S. Gunew, (ed.). *Feminist Knowledge. Critique and Construct.* London: Routledge, pp.271-303.

Schwab, J. (1969). The practical: A language for curriculum. *School Review,* Vol. 78, No.V, p.10.

Sears, J. (1991). *Growing up Gay in the South.* New York: Haworth Press.

Sears, J. (1992a). Educators, homosexuality and homosexual students. Are personal feelings related to professional beliefs? In K. Harbeck, (ed.). *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet.* New York: Haworth Press, pp.29-80.

Sears, J. (1992b). Researching the other / searching for self: Qualitative research on [homo] sexuality in education. *Theory Into Practice.* Vol. 31, No. 2, pp.147-156.

Sedgewick, E. (1990). *Epistemology of the Closet.* London: Penguin.

Segal, L. (1990). *Slow Motion: Changing Masculinities, Changing Men.* London: Virago Press.

Segal, L. (1994). *Straight Sex. The Politics of Pleasure.* London: Virago Press.

Seidman, S. (1993). Identity and politics in a "postmodern" gay culture: some historical and conceptual notes. In M. Warner, (ed.). *Fear of a Queer Planet.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp.105-142.

Shaw, C. (1989). Women into history: The National Forms 5-7 History Syllabus. *NZPPTA Journal.* Wellington: NZPPTA.

Squirrell, G. (1989). Teachers and issues of sexual orientation. *Gender and Education.* Vol. 1, No.1, pp.17-34.

Stapp, A. (1991*). Coming Out As a Young Lesbian. The Effects of Secondary School Environments on Young Women Being Able to Identify as Lesbian: A Proposal For Change.* Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University, Wellington.

Stewart, T. (1993). *Invisible Families.* Auckland: New Women's Press.

Strauss, A, & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques.* London: Sage.

Sullivan, K. (1999). *The Anti-Bullying Handbook.* Auckland : OUP.

Tasker, G. (1996). For whose benefit? The politics of developing a health education curriculum. *Delta,* Vol.48, No.2, pp.187-201, Massey University.

Tasmania Department of Education. (1999). *Anti-Descrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.* Tasmania: Department of Education.

Taylor, B. (1989). Gay and lesbian youth services in New Zealand. A discussion paper. Wellington: Youth Mental Health Project.

Television New Zealand (2000). *The Holmes Show,* 20.11.00.

Town, S. (1994). Are you gay, Sir?: A review of the literature concerning the experiences of gay male educators. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education,* Vol. 4, pp.207-227.

Town, S. (1998). Is it safe to come out now? Sexuality and the education of ten young gay men. Unpublished PhD. thesis, Victoria University, Wellington.

Trenchard, L. & Warren, H. (1987). Talking about school: The experiences of young lesbians and gay men. In G. Weiner & M. Arnot (eds). *Gender Under Scrutiny.* London: Hutchison.

Triandis, H. (1971). *Attitude and Attitude Change.* New York: Wiley.
Tyler, R. (1949). *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction.* Chicago: UCP.

Uribe, V. & Harbeck, K. (1992). Addressing the needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth: The origins of project 10 and school based intervention. In K. Harbeck, (ed.). *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet.* New York: Haworth Press, pp.9-28.

Vincent, K. & Ballard, K. (1997). Living on the margins: Lesbian experience in secondary schools. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies,* Vol. 32, No. 2, pp.147-162.

Warner, M. (ed.). (1993*). Fear of a Queer Planet. Queer Politics and Social Theory.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Watney, S. (1991). School's out. In D. Fuss, (ed.). *Inside Out: Lesbian Theories, Gay Theories.* New York: Routledge, pp.387-404.

Women's Advisory Committee on Education (WACE), (1988). *A National Policy for the Education of Girls and Women in New Zealand.* Wellington: WACE.

Weedon, C. (1996*). Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory.* 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

Weedon, C. (1999). *Feminism, Theory and the Politics of Difference.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Wiersma, W. (1995). *Research Methods in Education,* 6th Edition. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids get Working Class Jobs.* Westmead, UK: Saxon House.

Wood, P. & Schwass, M. (1993). Cultural safety: a framework for changing attitudes. *Nursing Praxis in New Zealand.* Vol.8, No.1, pp.

Woods, S. & Harbeck, K. (1992). Living in two worlds: The identity management strategies used by lesbian physical educators. In K. Harbeck, (ed). *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet.* New York: Haworth Press, pp.141-166.

Yeatman, A. (1990). A feminist theory of social differentiation. In L. Nicholson, (ed.). *Feminism / Postmodernism.* NY: Routledge, pp. 281-299.

Yelland, N. (ed.) (1998*). Gender in Early Childhood.* London & New York: Routledge.

Young, I.M. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The Original Research Design.

A. The investigating questions as they were designed to replicate sears' research.

1. What are the different perceptions and feelings held privately by teachers and administrators in schools towards homosexuality, bisexuality and heterosexuality?

2. What are the different perceptions and feelings held privately by teachers and administrators in schools towards known or assumed lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual students and/or colleagues?

3. What are the different perceptions held by teachers and administrators in schools towards how people of different sexual orientation are affirmed or otherwise in the formal and informal school curriculum and social relationships?

4. What are the different perceptions held by teachers and administrators towards potential intervention programmes in their schools, that would facilitate critique of prevailing attitudes and behaviour towards non-heterosexual people.

B. The first draft of the survey instrument

This was adapted from Sears' design, which included Likert scale instruments to measure: 'Attitudes to Homosexuality', 'Index of homophobia', 'Knowledge about Homosexuality' and 'Professional Attitudes'.

PART A: ATTITUDES TO ISSUES OF SEXUALITY

This part of the questionnaire is designed to measure the way you feel about working or associating with homosexuals. It is not a 'test', so there are no right or wrong answers.

Answer each item as carefully and as accurately as you can by circling the numbers which denote whether you:

1. strongly agree
2. agree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. disagree
5. strongly disagree

1.	I would feel comfortable working closely with a male homosexual	1 2 3 4 5
2.	I would enjoy attending social functions at which homosexuals were present	1 2 3 4 5
3.	I would feel uncomfortable if I learned that my neighbour was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5
4.	If a member of my sex made a sexual advance towards me I would feel angry.	1 2 3 4 5
5.	I would feel uncomfortable knowing that I was attractive to members of my sex.	1 2 3 4 5
6.	I would feel uncomfortable being seen in a gay bar.	1 2 3 4 5
7.	I would feel comfortable if a member of my sex made an advance toward me.	1 2 3 4 5
8.	I would be comfortable if I found myself attracted to a member of my sex.	1 2 3 4 5
9.	I would feel disappointed if I learned that my child was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5

10.	I would feel nervous being in a group of homosexuals.	1 2 3 4 5
11.	I would feel comfortable knowing that my church leader / priest was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5
12.	I would be upset if I learned that my brother or sister was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5
13.	I would feel that I had failed as a parent if I learned that my child was gay or lesbian.	1 2 3 4 5
14.	If I saw two men holding hands in public, I would feel disgusted.	1 2 3 4 5
15.	If a member of my sex made an advance toward me I would be offended.	1 2 3 4 5
16.	I would feel comfortable if I learned that my daughter's teacher was lesbian.	1 2 3 4 5
17.	I would feel uncomfortable if I learned that my spouse or partner was attracted to members of his or her own sex.	1 2 3 4 5
18.	I would feel at ease talking with a homosexual person at a party.	1 2 3 4 5
19.	I would feel uncomfortable if I learned that my boss was a Homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5
20.	It would not bother me to walk through a predominantly gay section of a city.	1 2 3 4 5
21.	It would disturb me to find out that my doctor was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5
22.	I would feel comfortable if I learned that my best friend of my sex was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5
23.	If a member of my sex made an advance toward me I would feel flattered.	1 2 3 4 5
24.	I would feel comfortable knowing that my son's male teacher was homosexual.	1 2 3 4 5

25. I would feel comfortable working closely with a female homosexual. 1 2 3 4 5

PART B. PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDES

This part of the questionnaire is designed to measure your beliefs and perceptions about how your school should / not act.

Please circle YES or NO.

1. Do you believe there may be students in your school who are lesbian, gay or bisexual? YES NO
2. Do you teach / deal with any students in your school whom you know are lesbian, gay or bisexual? YES NO
3. Do you believe such students should be consciously affirmed and supported by staff? YES NO
4. Would you wish to affirm and support lesbian, gay or bisexual students but feel constrained from doing so? YES NO
5. Do you feel comfortable in acknowledging the sexual orientation of lesbian, gay or bisexual students? YES NO
6. Do you feel comfortable in acknowledging the sexual orientation of lesbian, gay or bisexual students? YES NO
7. Do you believe most of your colleagues feel comfortable in acknowledging the sexual orientation of lesbian, gay or bisexual students? YES NO
8. As a teacher / administrator, do you feel as comfortable in relating to such students as you do with heterosexual students? YES NO
9. Do you believe / have you observed that lesbian, gay or bisexual students "get a hard time" from peers and / or staff? YES NO
10. Do you believe that jokes / comments that make fun of / are negative about lesbians and / or gays are commonplace in your school? YES NO
11. Do you know of any colleagues who are lesbian, gay or bisexual? YES NO
12. Do you believe that the staff in your school (would) feel comfortable with such colleagues? YES NO
13. Do you believe your school acknowledges non-heterosexual parents / caregivers which communicating with families? YES NO
14. Do you believe that curriculum materials should be inclusive of gay/lesbian/bisexual issues and people? YES NO
15. If you wish to comment further about any of the issues raised in the above questions, please do so here:

PART C: ATTITUDES TOWARD CURRICULUM INTERVENTIONS

Overseas and New Zealand research indicates that some or all of the following measures would be helpful to making schools more inclusive of lesbian, gay and bisexual students.

Please indicate on the scale how you would view these measures being introduced to your school.

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. neither agree nor disagree
4. agree
5. strongly agree

1.	Professional development and support materials in issues of sexual orientation for guidance and health teachers.	1 2 3 4 5
2.	Professional development as above for all staff and trustees	1 2 3 4 5
3.	Speakers available for student groups	1 2 3 4 5
4.	Non-fiction library materials giving information on issues of diverse sexualities	1 2 3 4 5
5.	Suitable fiction library material portraying non-heterosexual relationships.	1 2 3 4 5
6.	The development of school policies and procedures to actively counter verbal harassment and physical abuse of lesbian, gay and bisexual students and staff.	1 2 3 4 5
7.	The development of curriculum materials that include visible and affirmative references to sexualities other than heterosexuality.	1 2 3 4 5
8.	School initiated research and reflection on heterosexist bias in the formal and informal curriculum of the school.	1 2 3 4 5
9.	The establishment of support groups for lesbian, gay and bisexual students.	1 2 3 4 5
10.	Support and encouragement to lesbian, gay or bisexual staff members who wish to be open about their sexual orientation.	1 2 3 4 5
11.	If you have further comment to make about any of the above suggestions, please write them here.	

APPENDIX 2. Sampling Plan

Table 4.1 State Secondary School Types (1995) Sample was Drawn From (MOE, 1996)

School Type (all secondary)	*Population* N	%	*Sample* N	%
State Boys' schools*	43	13	2	20
State Girls' schools*	54	17	2	20
State coeducational**	221	70	6	60
N	318	100	10	100

* Includes single sex integrated schools.
** Includes rural school

Note: Private and Composite (Area) schools (63 in July 2000) and private secondary schools (15 in July 2000) are excluded from the national statistics as they were excluded from the sample. The total number of schools providing secondary education in New Zealand is currently 456 if including these composite and private secondary schools. 'Integrated' schools are mainly Catholic schools that were formerly private but are now included in the state system.

At July 2000, there were 69 state integrated secondary schools, compared to 251 state non-integrated. Only 11 secondary schools were classified as rural, and a further 15 as 'rural centre' (Data Management Unit, MOE, 2000).

Table 4.2 Numbers of Teachers in Sample, by School Type, 1995

School Type (all secondary)	*Population* N	%	*Sample* N	%	*Sample Obtained* N	%
Boys' schools*	unknown		125	25	33	25
Girls' schools*	unknown		90	18	20	15
State coeducational**	unknown		282	57	81	60
N	14,500	100	497	100	134	100

* Includes single sex integrated schools.
** Includes rural school

In July 2000, there were 327 secondary teachers (headcount, not FFTE) classified as 'principal', 5,596 as 'management ' (holding management units?) and 10,690 as 'teachers'. (Data Management Unit, MOE, 2000).

APPENDIX 3. Introduction To Survey In School Staff rooms

- I am doing the Master of Education Administration degree from Massey University and concentrating on the thesis this year
- This survey is for the thesis and is connected to policies, practices and attitudes in schools that affect the way non-heterosexuals, especially students, are positioned in schools.
- There is quite a lot of research, especially overseas, about the experiences of young people in schools and in their families etc who are questioning their sexuality or who are identifying as gay or lesbian or bisexual.
- However there is little to no research of attitudes and beliefs of school educators and administrators about this issue and about what schools can, should or should not do about it - certainly none in New Zealand. This is what I am doing.
- The survey consists mainly of open questions - a few tick boxes - because it is attempting to listen to what people *express* as their beliefs and attitudes. I am seeking mainly *qualitative* rather than *quantitative* data, although I am interested in numbers to some extent also.
- The questions are therefore about what you believe and feel as an individual. There are no assumptions although you may feel some of the questions make assumptions - they are phrased that way in order to gain responses to issues you may not have thought about.
- The questionnaire is anonymous and the school will not be identified in the report - as far as is possible. I am using a range of types of school and yours is chosen as a sample of a particular type.
- I will be doing a very few interviews as follow up to this data and if you wish to offer an interview, then and only then do you fill out the space on the front with your name and a contact address.
- The time will vary from individual to individual - if you fill out every question with a detailed response it will take about 50 minutes - on average it will take about half an hour.
- If you choose for some definite reason *not* to complete the survey I would be interested in that reason - there is a space to say why on the personal profile page.
- You can either post the completed survey in the collection box or use the addressed envelope to return it direct to me. I would be grateful if you could try to complete it within the next fortnight - that is by ..... (depending on date it was left).
- I would be very happy to return to the school at some future date to discuss the findings and implications of the research if the school is interested in my doing so.
- If you have any questions.....

APPENDIX 4. Sample Letters to Principals of Participating Schools

A. Letter to trial school

29th May, 1995.

The Principal,

Dear

Here are the questionnaires you kindly agreed to trial for me in your school.

Could you or a nominee see they are distributed to all teachers, to four Trustees and one to yourself. I shall supply envelopes which could just be labelled `sexuality survey', and a post-box for their collection.

As this is a trial, and your school won't be included in the main data collation, I would appreciate it if all questionnaires were returned, whether completed or not and that there was limited discussion of it beyond the school at this stage. I would also appreciate comments people have on the construction of the survey. I will revise the questionnaire both on the basis of how it is completed and on any such direct comments.

I would like to collect the questionnaires next Tuesday. I shall contact you for a convenient time to do this.

A further request to you is to allow me to have a copy of any documentation which indicates relevant school policy in respect of the issues raised in the questionnaire. Obvious examples would be the school's equity and harassment policies, but there may be others as well. These would be treated with the same confidentiality as the rest of the data.

Many thanks for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Cynthia Shaw.

B. Letter of introduction (preceded by a phone call)

19 June, 1995

The Principal,

Dear

Following our telephone conversation, I am writing to thank you for expressing interest in the research questionnaire I outlined. For your reference, this letter sets out the nature of the project.

I am doing this research towards an M.Ed.Admin thesis from Massey University. As you will see from the enclosed questionnaire, I am survey teachers' and administrators' beliefs and attitudes towards the issue of sexual orientation in schools. I am hoping to survey about ten schools of different types in the XXXXX region and have chosen your school as representative of a particular category of schools.

You will be aware that young people who are, or who are assumed to be gay or lesbian, can find the school environment as difficult to negotiate as other arenas in their life when coming to terms with sexuality issues. The existence of a supportive guidance network is no guarantee of their physical and emotional safety.

The rationale for this research is that educators need to understand what the range of current beliefs, attitudes and practices are in a given situation in order to evaluate what strategies can best be planned and implemented to assist schools to deal with this difficult and controversial issue. If your school has been part of the HIV Education programme, it is likely considerable discussion has already occurred amongst staff and trustees. If the school is not taking part in that programme, it is likely that very little or no discussion has occurred. This questionnaire is attempting to identify what teachers, the Principal and trustees actually think and feel, and hopes to avoid 'politically correct' responses. The data is confidential and anonymous of course.

As discussed, I should like to briefly introduce the questionnaire to the staff. If the school is interested in a follow up discussion of the issues raised and / or the survey findings, I would be pleased to do this at some future point.

I would like as many teachers as possible to complete the questionnaire, in addition to you as principal. I would also ask if you or a staff member could allow me copies of any school policies which had a bearing on the issues.

If you have further questions, please phone or write to me at the above address. I am here most of the time. I look forward to hearing from you when you have had time to consider whether to participate in the research. The usual techniques would be used in writing up the research to prevent identification of specific schools and of course anonymity and confidentiality is guaranteed to individual responses.

Yours sincerely,

Cynthia Shaw

C. Letter of thanks

18 July 1995.

The Principal,

Dear

I am writing to thank you for the school's participation in the survey I took into the school. Would you please pass on thanks to the teachers who responded. They gave time generously to consider the questions in a very thoughtful way and I am most appreciative of that. I would also like to thank the whole staff for listening so attentively and encouragingly when I came to your staff meeting. The warmth in the room made it a pleasant experience and I imagine that is largely a credit to you yourself, XXXXX.

XXXXX has indicated that the questionnaire has stimulated some general discussion around the issues it raises. I would certainly be happy to return to the school either late this year or next year to discuss results and implications from the exercise if you were interested in that.

Best wishes for the remainder of the year - and beyond!

Kind regards,

Cynthia Shaw

APPENDIX 5: Some Reactions to and Reflections on the Survey Instrument

I feel the questionnaire has a bias to it, namely that a heterosexual bias is a bad thing – I disagree. (09/01)

Schools need to be shown – especially the administrators – by professional gay rights people how to implement education policies in schools. (09/05)

Come to think of it, after thinking about "heterosexual bias" to answer these questions, I will pay more attention to it now. (Also try and spot it.) (09/11)

I don't find the topic either interesting or useful, merely current. (09/13)

I use market research as part of my job. This questionnaire is full of "loaded" questions which try to guide those responding in direction in favour of the personal point of view of the researcher. Basically, you are not conducting objective research. (03/06)

Really thought provoking and challenging. Well done. (03/03)

Thank you for the opportunity – we could do with in-service training and materials being available. (03/19)

I am very concerned at the invisibility of gay/lesbian students and staff at XXXX – ostensibly a liberal school. I feel concerned that any staff member openly lesbian/gay is expected to ... be sole spokesperson...(in much the same way as a Maori becomes responsible for all issues / problems perceived as 'Maori'. 03/11

I would not like to see any programme or campaign designed to teach acceptance. It is better imparted more subtlely, from well balanced people of integrity and care.03/14

Thanks for the chance to do this! It helps me clarify my perspective.03/13

I have constructed surveys at post-graduate level and believe that the nature of this questionnaire will make it very difficult to achieve valid results. The combination of strong feelings, bias and the nature of the questions is likely to please the researcher in an almost impossible position when the results are analysed. 03/20 (did not fill in the questionnaire)

I think this research is enormously important. It will by itself raise awareness. There's so much work to be done and some people only take notice if 'authoritative' research is presented to them. I wish you all the best with this valuable work. (07/01)

I feel 'steered' a bit to be pc and I could have a reaction to that. Do I want to take on more problems? However I do believe society needs to change and for once this is a human area and not an economic or technological one and I can cope with that. 07/07

Thought provoking questions – I really appreciated them. It has also made me aware of gaps in my knowledge re policy and curriculum areas. So thanks – I'll be following those up. (guidance counsellor). 07/13

Some of my best friends are straight and I have no problem with that. I am usually relaxed in their company... (02/03)

If there is heterosexual bias in the school or community it is probably because of the greater number of heterosexuals. By and large I think they lack the intelligence to deal with something different that they don't, or don't want to understand (02/02) (BOT).

I find the assumption of heterosexual bias more than somewhat ridiculous. 02/01

Schools must monitor their mental health to ensure an open and supportive culture where individual rights and self-worth are valued. (02/04))(Principal).

The idea of combating heterosexual bias is excessively aggressive – the issue is more one of defending the rights of minorities, as for race groups, disabilities, etc. (02/10)

What you consider to be bias and prejudice is quickly becoming more accepted amongst the far religious right in America and Europe (& dare I say it, in NZ). Isn't this thesis two decades too late? (02/11)

The questionnaire was thought provoking and energizing. I would like to suggest staff development programmes on this issue and will do so for our staff. (05/02)

I can understand the gay community wanting many public figures to hold up, but I am against unwanted 'outings' of people who wanted to either keep it private or tell themselves. (05/03)

I am a Christian! I am accepting of all cultures and people, however I would not encourage anyone to get involved in homosexuality etc. God created male and female and it quite clearly states in the biblical account which I believe that (Romans 2:26,27) such desires are unnatural and if not repented of will prevent such people from inheriting the kingdom of God... (06/02)

I have never seen this as a real issue – always accepted people for what they are. (08/01).

I am not sure this is an issue that is best dealt with by the education system. (08/02)

This has been a very useful exercise for my own thinking. (04/01) (counsellor).

There are many issues for teachers to concern themselves with, and bias of any group etc does not disappear because people hold forth about them or demand special privileges or facilities for those who believe their issues aren't being addressed. What about showers, hot water, sufficient toilets, a place to lie down if not feeling well. Are these more basic requirements being dealt with too? (04/03)

Is it possible that things could be made more difficult for our students (gay) by well meaning but ill informed or insensitive do gooders? (04/12)

I do object to a push by homosexuals to cater to the 'hidden' population of g/l/b which is a waste of time, funds. (Statistical surveys of different countries show 1-3% of population are g/l/b rather than 10%) (04/11)

The questions are so loaded that the most likely reaction is: (a) homophobes will throw it away, (b) gay/lesbian/bisexuals will write novels in response (c) therefore the results will be completely skewed towards what is clearly your intended outcome. (04/06)

Already this questionnaire has raised awareness. I see it as part of a raft of other issues – racism, sexism, affluent put downs etc – up front statements on the dignity of the person. (04/08).

... if only to explain how angry I feel about this questionnaire. This cannot possibly provide you with relevant information. Vast numbers of my colleagues cannot justify completing such a questionnaire. Do you have any idea why though?(04/09)

I feel far too much is made of heterosexual bias – is it going to be the next social issue? Making a mountain out of a molehill. This is not something I am interested in. I feel too much is made of it. Homosexuals I know who are teachers don't seem to have problems in school. As far as students are concerned there are more important issues. (04/17)

I object to the loaded nature of many of the questions. (04/19) (questionnaire not filled in)

There is a major problem of teenage youth suicide in New Zealand- particularly boys. I know that confusion over sexuality is a contributing factor in many cases. Some urgent work is needed either research or programmes to address this. (10/03).

I wish it was easier. (10/01). (Principal).

A lot of people commented – "why should this issue be so important and stand out". I do understand why recognition is yearned for and wanted and a lot of people hurt but it doesn't make it right. We all have wrong attitudes that need dealing with – I see this as no different! (10/12)

... I can't see you have a control to compare your data against (10/13).

A minority who choose a deviant course to the majority should not label the majority behaviour as "biased" (10/17).

This made me really think about my own attitudes and question how much I support homosexuality. (10/20).

It is good to see these issues addressed. Good luck with the research. (01/01)

APPENDIX 6. The Questionnaire – follows