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Homophobia in Education:
Dividing Practices of Sexuality
in Two Ontario Public School Boards

by

Oscar Wolfman, B.A., B. Ed.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

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Homophobia in Education:
Dividing Practices of Sexuality
in Two Ontario Public School Boards

submitted by
Oscar Wolfman, B.A., B. Ed.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts

Chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Thesis Supervisor

Carleton University
September, 1996

Abstract

How homophobia is deployed as a dividing practice to normalize specific forms of gendered and sexual behaviour in high school students is investigated by comparing a discursive analysis of Ontario Ministry of Education and Toronto and Ottawa Public School Board policies and curricula with the lived experiences of lesbian, gay, and bisexual students attending those boards. The work incorporates Foucauldian analysis and queer theory with qualitative methodology, and uses the Internet as a research medium to conclude that sexualities cannot be quantitatively measured; erasure is integral to homophobic discourse; "semi-official" practices are lacuna for homophobia; and that students can resist homophobia both by being in the closet and by coming out. While all inclusive practices are beneficial for an anti-homophobic education, role models were found to be a determinate factor in the type of resistance that took place.

Acknowledgements

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*Sexuality is but the name of a
historical device of power.
(de Queiroz, 1993:50).*

1. Practices Make (Im)Perfect

1.1 Sexual (Re)Production

Relationships of power/knowledge are developed and practised through constructions of identity, working on and through the body, with certain attributes privileged and imbued with power, while others are made "abnormal". "Normalization" is a dividing practice which compares, differentiates, hierarchizes, homogenizes, and excludes, not only punishing the "bad", but rewarding the "good"; disciplining, rather than repressing. Through normalization, people are disciplined into "proper" gendered and sexualized subjects, that is a "normal" heterosexuality and a "deviant" homosexuality (Foucault, 1979:180; 184; 1978:94). Heterosexuality is constructed as essential, the basis of inter-sexual relations, and the basis of reproduction and society, although heterosexuality is an achievement of culture, not its precondition (Prentice, 1994:10; M. Warner, 1993:xxi).

By subordinating the feminine, and by associating homosexuality with effeminacy (Whyte, 1993:29), heterosexual masculinity is normalized as a dominant power. This

subordination is deployed through discursive practices which construct "truths" about sex, gender, and sexuality as "(un)natural", "(im)moral", and "(un)healthy", and are embodied in "tradition", "history", "common sense", and "facts". Homophobia encompasses the dividing practices which subordinate bodies based on sexual orientation, (re)producing a "moral panic" about homo/bisexuality which supports the gender-roles privileging heterosexual males (Dollimore, 1986:9).¹ As education is connected to forms of domination and subordination in society (Apple, 1989:1), this thesis will examine whether the educational institution is a site where a normative sexuality is both (re)produced and challenged. If there is no homophobia in education, bi/homosexuality will receive an equivalent representation as heterosexuality in educational practices, and all sexualized students will have similar experiences. If homophobia is used in education, then only certain forms of sexuality will be (re)produced as normative.

My goal is to contribute to the study of power/knowledge deployed through the dividing practices based on sexual subjects, and to show the processes and consequences of

¹ The term "homosexual" is the prevalent term used in this study as it is the most frequent term used in the "official" discourses. Its use draws attention to the scientific typologies which instill "truth" into bodies. "Lesbian", "gay", and "bisexual" (and their collective abbreviation as "lesbigay") will refer to homosexuals and bisexuals who identify themselves as "out" and as part of homo/bisexual communities.

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contesting these deployments within a particular institution
at a specific time and place. Through research on two Ontario
school boards, Ottawa and Toronto, and their students as
purposive samples, I will investigate homophobia in education,
juxtaposing an analysis of educational dividing practices,
social and spacial, formal and informal, against the lived
experiences of bi/homosexual students, exploring the
discourses that construct sexuality, and mapping the sites
within the institution where homophobia occurs. As well, I
will identify the various agents involved in the practices and
challenges to homophobia, and I will establish the
relationship between typologies of resistance or compliance
with social identities.

My work addresses the dearth of sociological research in
the area of homophobia in education, particularly in Canada.
It is unique in focusing on both policies and experiences at
the secondary school level in Ontario, and in documenting how
students actively mediate the structures and curricula of
homophobia in education. This study may be used to look at
similar deployments of power relations in other areas, such as
other levels of education, gays in the military, same sex
spousal rights, homophobia in prisons, homophobia in general
society, employment equity, aboriginal rights, and racism and
sexism in education. This study also serves to document the
experiences of some Ontario high school students who have been

denied a voice in their education. If this can be helpful for them or other lesbigays, then I have accomplished much.

In order to situate this work academically, sixteen major sociology of education journals were reviewed for earlier work around the subject. The emphasis of the search was for articles that had sexualities, homophobia, or sexual education as important elements of the discussion, as based on the titles and abstracts. Consequently, there may have been articles alluding to these issues that were overlooked. While sexuality overlaps with gender issues, I did not include articles on gender unless they dealt with the construction or regulation of a type of sexuality.

My journal review does not extend to June, 1969, the time lesbians and gays date the beginning of the "Gay Liberation Movement" with the Stonewall Inn riots (New York, June 28-July 3, 1969), as I did not expect the euphoria of that event to have manifested itself in a flood of lesbian and gay-inspired sociological articles. I did not want to include articles from the early 1980s, when AIDS was considered a "gay" disease.² I have chosen to review a decade of journal articles that will reflect current approaches to sexuality in education, as well as encompassing (except for one year-- a moot point, as I found nothing written on the subject until 1986) the period

² Unfortunately, this attitude still exists and is used, as I will describe, to incite moral panics about non-heterosexual monogamous relationships.

when sexual orientation was protected under the Ontario provincial Human Rights Code (Table 1).

Table 1: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION JOURNALS
DISCUSSING SEXUALITIES AND HOMOPHOBIA

Journal:	Years Reviewed:	Number and years of relevant articles:
American Educational Research Journal	1985-95	0
Canadian and International Education	1985-93	0
Canadian Journal of Education	1985-95	3 (1991; 1992; 1993)
Education	1985-95	1 (1992)
Educational Forum	1985-95	0
Educational Research Quarterly	1985-94	0
Educational Theory	1985-95	2 (1989; 1995)
Harvard Educational Review	1985-95	2 (1988; 1989)
High School Journal	1985-95	28 (1985; 1994) ¹
Journal of Education	1985-95	2 (1988; 1994)
Journal of Educational Research	1985-95	0
Journal of Educational Thought	1985-95	0
McGill Journal of Education	1985-95	1 (1989)
Our Schools/	1988-94 ⁴	7 (1990;

³ The double issue (77;1/2) was devoted to lesbian/gay issues. The majority of these articles were reprinted in The Gay Teen (Unks, 1995).

⁴ Not all the issues of this journal were found (approximately three issues).

Our Selves
Sociology of Education 1985-94

1994)⁵
1 (1989)

The dearth of articles could mean that sexuality and homophobia in education are non-issues, or it could reflect the erasure of homo/bisexuality within education, reflect the dominant ideology of the journal publishers, or reflect upon the sexual labelling of the potential or actual authors. If sexuality is a non-issue, this would deny the development of sexual education, family studies, social hygiene, and health courses to address concerns about teenage sexuality. Homophobia must be an issue in schools, as the Ontario Ministry of Education has specified it as occurring in schools, as being detrimental to the educational process, and as a source of violence that must be reported to the police (Ontario Ministry of Education--hereafter, OME, 1993; 1994). Homophobia also must be an issue because students say it is an issue, and their opinions (perfectly valid in themselves) are supported by studies which show that homosexual students are more likely than heterosexual students to contemplate or attempt suicide, and are prone to truancy or dropping out from school because of the homophobia within schools.⁶

⁵ The October issue dealt with sexuality and Canadian education from a sociological perspective. All six articles discussed the construction of sexuality. Five of these discussed homosexuality, with three of these articles locating the topic in Ontario schools.

⁶ Studies include: Tremblay, 1994; Elia, 1993; Magnuson, 1992; Hetrick and Martin, 1987.

Journals are meant to reflect intellectual freedom of discussion but, in this period when funding is limited and when educational library cut-backs mean journal subscriptions are decreasing, what Michael Apple has noted about textbooks can apply as well to journals: they are commodities "caught in a complicated set of political and economic dynamics", and what gets published tends to reflect the concerns of the dominant group (1993:50-51). Another possibility is that articles may not be published, not due to the faults of editors, but because there are few sociologists writing on these issues (there is a similar absence of textbooks on the subject until recently⁷). As homophobia entails sexual blackmail, heterosexual sociologists may fear being accused of homosexuality if they write on the topic, and closeted bi/homosexuals may fear pursuing these topics so as not to be accused of "recruiting". However, there have been heterosexual sociologists working in these fields, as well as many sociologists who are openly bi/homosexual. The question remains: why is there so little written on these subjects?

The question remains unanswered, as I cannot, at this point, explore the editorial and publishing processes of sociology of education journals and textbooks. I leave that for future research while, at this time, I would like to

⁷ Unks, 1995; Woog, 1995; L. Garber, 1994; Irvine, 1994; Jennings, 1994; Klein, 1994.

suggest that the erasure is part of the discourse on homophobia in education.

1.2 Realizing Sexual Orientations

Fundamental to this thesis is an understanding of sexuality and its construction. I have based my understanding on Michel Foucault's works on power/knowledge through anatoma-power and discourse (particularly 1978, 1979, and 1991), and supplemented it in the areas of agency and resistance (Gramsci, 1988; Richer, 1990). Trajecting from Foucault's concepts of "dividing practices" and "normalization", I have incorporated queer theory into this analysis (Britzman, 1995; M. Warner, 1993; Sedgwick, 1990). Queer theories not only investigate how "normal" is established, but question the concept of "normalcy". They decentre and resist "the regimes of the normal" so as to expand the parameters of knowledge--to make theory queer-- and, subsequently, action. Rather than seeing the effects of normalization as the sites of violence, the process of normalization, in itself, is understood to be a form of violence (M. Warner, 1993:xxvi).

Queer theory is not based on sexual orientation or identity politics. Queer theory does not impose a queer (read: lesbian/gay) space within a heteronormative culture, which could only validate a heterosexual dominance or "normalize" a queerness. Queer theory defines itself against the normal,

not the heterosexual (M. Warner, 1993:xxvi), making a space for all identities within a queer culture, queering identity.

But in order to queer homophobia in education, sexuality needs to be deconstructed. John P. DeCecco defines sexual orientation as:

*an individual's physical sexual activity
with, interpersonal affection for, and
erotic fantasies about members of the same
or opposite biological sex (1982:61).*

The gender binary is associated with the sexual binary of hetero- and homosexualities-- a tenuous association, as sex is biological, while sexualities are social constructions. Furthermore, hetero and homosexualities are not equal terms, as homosexuality has been socially subordinate to heterosexuality. Even this subordination is problematic, as homosexuality was constructed before heterosexuality (in 1868), and homosexuality is both internal (i.e.: needed to maintain heterosexuality) and external (subordinated as the "other") to heterosexuality (Sedgwick, 1990:10).

The male heterosexual body deflects desire away from itself, while its binary "other" becomes dichotomized through gender (female) or through orientation (homosexual) or, in the case of female homosexuals, dismissed as comprising the two subordinated binaries of gender and orientation. Since its construction, homosexuality has been associated with gender as well as sexuality: acting like the other gender (Roscoe, 1988:11-12). Male homosexuals are stereotyped as feminine (in the stereotype of femininity as weak, irrational, emotional:

"hysterical") and female homosexuals are stereotyped as "failed men". These associations not only connect gender with sexuality, but also connect sexism with homophobia and, through stereotyping, create heterosexual females and male and female homosexuals as passive subjects, unable to resist the "truths" of their identities.

Biological essentialism anchors sexual and gender expression in anatomy, with reproduction as the goal (DeCecco and Elia, 1993:2). This definition makes homosexuality abnormal and "defective", as only heterosexuality is attributed with a functional capability.⁸

Social constructionism sees sexualities as social constructions (Connell, 1993:602) through which bodies may be controlled and power exercised (Dollimore, 1983:73). Things begin with their own invention; they do not have an essence (Foucault, in de Queiroz, 1993:44). Social constructionists avoid answering why anyone would take up a homosexual identity when there was so much stigma attached to it, and it was already possible to have same-sex relationships before the emergence of the term (Roscoe, 1988:9).⁹

⁸ It is frequently assumed that homosexuals do not procreate, which follows as essentialist assumption that sexualities are permanent.

⁹ According to DeCecco and Elia, Foucauldian thought is "an extreme form of cultural reductionism" where sexual desire is "reduced to the disembodied and decorticated status of social and political inventions" (1993:15).

Both opponents and supporters of homosexuality share these two methods of interpretation. The discovery of chromosome Xq28, which appears to provide a genetic base for male homosexuality, offers homosexuals a biological legitimation¹⁰, while opponents may view the chromosome as a defect detectable through amniocentesis and rectified through abortion or eugenics (Hamar and Copeland, 1994:217). Similarly, the social constructionists who view homosexuality as a choice are among those who have subjected homosexuals to "cures" such as chemical and drug aversion therapies, hormone injections, electric shock sessions, castrations, testicle transplants, and lobotomies (Katz, 1976: 175-194; Kinsman, 1987:115-116; 152; Schmidt, 1985:128-130). With both essentialism and social constructionism there is an assumption that society is dichotomized into biology and culture (variously expressed as nature/nurture, body/mind, heredity/environment). For DeCecco and Elia, sexuality combines biology and culture when people become aware of their desires, as well as the historicity which allow those desires to be manifested (DeCecco and Elia, 1993:14).

Sexuality, whether from essential or constructed interpretations, is presented as fixed onto people as permanent, as a defining characteristic of identity, and as

¹⁰ I believe work is also being done on the genetic site of lesbian identity. That there are no searches for the "cause" of heterosexuality may provide an example of how a legitimation may still create an entrapment into subordination.

one of the two possibilities of orientation. When Karl Maria Kértbeny created the typologies of homo- and heterosexualities, they were included with mono and heterogeneous sexualities (Féray et al, 1990: 26; 29). The obvious question that arises is: what happened to the other two? Monosexuality [masturbation] became attributed to the subordinated identities of children (Foucault, 1978:41-42), and was usually dismissed as a harmless release when [normative] intercourse is unavailable. Heterogeneity [bestiality] was criminalized and, as it was attributed largely to myths of the rural working class, questionably enforceable.

Even these four types of sexuality assume discreet identities. In their landmark 1948 study, Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male, A.C. Kinsey, W.B. Pomeroy, and C.E. Martin wrote:

Since only 50% of the male population is exclusively heterosexual throughout its adult life, and since only 4% of the population is exclusively homosexual throughout its life, it appears that nearly half (46%) engages in both heterosexual and homosexual activities, or reacts to persons of both sexes, in the course of their adult lives

(in DeCecco, 1982:56).

Bisexuality, as a range of sexual attractions to the two sexes, eliminates sexuality from fixed identities. As it can shift in the same person at different times, it can neither be essential nor the designated categories of social ordination. If sexuality is a "choice", based on desire, then it requires

the self-consciousness of agency. It must now be asked under what conditions sexualities are chosen, and what the consequences of those choices are?

Heterosexuality is constructed as a norm, although not all heterosexual practices are normalized or legal (i.e.: rape, incest, paedophilia). Heterosexuality is not the norm because homosexuality is criminalized (although that was a strategy to [attempt to] suppress homosexual activity) because heterosexuals still have a dominant position in Western capitalist societies where homosexuality is legal. The laws of political society (that create criminals) have limited effect in controlling sexual activities, serving more as the political embodiment that enforces the ideologies deriving from the dominant institutions within society. For instance, while homosexuality is legal, regulations appear that limit (or do not protect), rather than criminalize homosexuality in particular social institutions (i.e.: the military, the Church, schools, marriage, hospitals and medical research on HIV/AIDS).

According to Foucault, power/knowledge works on and through the body, minds, and "souls": the "bio power" consisting of the regulation of the population (the "bio-politics") and of the discipline of the human body (the "anatomy-politics") that sustains the economic development indispensable to capitalism, and that segregates and

guarantees hierarchies and the effects of hegemony (1978:140-141). For Antonio Gramsci:

[T]he new type of man [sic] demanded by the rationalization of production and work cannot be developed until the sexual instinct has been suitably regulated and until it too has been rationalized (1988:282).

Male heterosexuality is that sexuality which regulates and rationalizes. It allocates social roles and spaces based on sex and reproduction (Whyte, 1993:30), and dominates through institutions which are male-defined and male-dominated (Connell, 1993:602). Certainly, not all heterosexual males have equal power: one can be both oppressor and oppressed, depending on the social context (Sedgwick, 1990:32) and the differences in degrees of dominance depend on the interweaving of sexuality and gender with other constructed identities.¹¹ Homosexuality signifies the absence of [masculine] power in a "patriarchally organized, capitalist world system" (E. Cohen, 1993:11).

Violence has an association with masculinity that "goes beyond the immediate personal and interpersonal relationship" and into institutional forms, such "as in the military, aggressive body-contact sports, ritualized t.v. killings, and hard-core pornography" (Whyte, 1993:27). The institutional and interpersonal forms mediate each other in legitimating violence as an "acceptable" masculine response in particular

¹¹ Marilyn Friedman reminds us that, in the same manner, women oppress other women (1995:59).

situations. While violence is not normalized, it is something that males, "traditionally", control, both in themselves and in others (i.e.: as wife-beaters and as police). Homophobia is a form of controlled violence, that can be institutional and interpersonal, and which controls heterosexuals, often, by controlling and violating homo/bisexuals.

1.3 Homophobia

Homosexuals do not, in and of themselves, have problems being homosexuals, for "sexual problems" are (re)produced onto those outside the dominant group by "experts", who are neither neutral nor "objective", and who are located within power/knowledge relations of institutions (Kinsman, 1994:165; Mohr, 1989:124). In order to understand how homophobia is deployed in dividing practices, what needs to be explored is how bi/homosexuality is produced as a "problem", how sexuality is perceived, and how agents live those perceptions.

The "compulsory" element of "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich, 1980) implies that heterosexuality is a reality against which other sexual identities must be measured.

It "normalizes" a heterosexuality which should be problematized. Furthermore, as homosexual activities are not illegal, heterosexuality is not compulsory.

¹² The term "homophobia" was coined in 1972 to refer to both heterosexual fear and hatred of homosexuals, as well as self-hatred by homosexuals (Elia, 1993:177).

"Heterosexism", which is defined as "the superiority of heterosexual over homosexual lifestyles" (Morin and Garfinkle, 1978:31) centres on the actions of the dominant, thereby marginalizing or erasing homosexuals, and homogenizing male and female heterosexuals as having equal power. Heterosexism also lumps male and female homosexuals together, despite their different situations: male homosexuals are attacked through homophobia; female homosexuals by homophobia and misogyny. Furthermore, male homosexuals may also replicate straight misogyny (Bristow, 1989:57-58). "Heterosexism", as a concept, does not merely decentre the problem of homophobia onto heterosexuals because, now that homophobia, and not homosexuality, is listed as an illness by the American Psychiatric Association (McNeill, 1993:118),¹³ homophobia becomes a pathological extreme, while heterosexism vaguely lays blame on history and ignorance, absolving personal actions and ethics. Heterosexism allows for a substitution of *lesbigay positive/homophobic* with the new binary of *lesbigays* and *politically-correct heterosexuals/bad heterosexuals*.¹⁴

¹³ "Homosexual panic", as a psychological disorder, was first posited in 1920, by Edward Kempf (Bagnall et al, 1984:499).

¹⁴ The *lesbigay-positive/ homophobic* dichotomy belies a range of responses towards sexuality. For instance, one may ignore sexuality. Yet in order to ignore this, one has to consciously work through the issue, which is already a response and, in a society where sexuality is prevalent, an ongoing one. Another position that would allow ignorance of sexuality is from belonging to, and accepting the dominant ideology, so that sexuality is normalized, and homophobia accepted. This dichotomy is not rigid, and what it sets are

Gary Kinsman prefers heterosexism over homophobia, as he finds that the latter has "individualist and psychological connotations" (1993:7). It does. But an individual's irrational fear of homosexuality is based on internalized social values, and is a consequence of the "truths" created around "panics". Where the outsider sees a phobia, the phobic individual feels a "real" fear. Homophobia lets us look at how the irrational in society can become a "truth" about the body through the body.¹⁵ Individual experiences with homophobia are not only internal, but are experienced through interaction with others, including the immediate relations with the aggressor(s)/ subject(s), those who witness, support, ignore, encourage within the space, and those outside the immediate environment who condone/reinforce certain behaviour and actions: the family, media, and other social institutions. In other words, homophobia is ideological, and is not separate from a normative heterosexuality.

Studies on homophobia show that males are more likely to be homophobic than females (Aguero et al, 1984:104). Males

the degrees to which one may be homophobic, which may also change with specific issues and over time (Plasek and Allard, 1984:24).

¹⁵ Deborah P. Britzman states that queer theory also moves away from the psychological explanations of homophobia, as it detracts from "examining how heterosexuality becomes normalized as natural" (1995:153). As with Kinsman, I would respond that heterosexuality is, in part, normalized as natural through the psychological explanations for homophobia.

¹⁶ One study found that males were less likely to be homophobic (Sears, 1992:57).

with "feminine" characteristics are more sensitive to criticisms of their masculinity, and are more intolerant of homosexuality, while females with "masculine" characteristics are more willing to go against societal norms and to accept homosexuals (Black and Stevenson, 1984:89-92). The best predictors of homophobia are beliefs in traditional family ideology and conservative attitudes towards women-- both predictors relate to Judaeo-Christian religious beliefs (Black and Stevenson, 1984:83; Morin and Garfinkle, 1978:31)-- and there appears to be a positive correlation between homophobia and lack of education (Sears, 1992:38). Dislike of homosexuals also relates to having little [known] contact with them (Aguero et al, 1984:104).

Problems found with some studies on homophobia are in the measurements: a tendency to treat homophobia as a unitary phenomenon (while people may have different attitudes towards different aspects of homosexuality and lesbian culture); viewing homosexuals as a type of person with "traits"; and without specifying whether those "traits" are psychological, social, or behavioral, and whether they are stable or phasic (Plasek and Allard, 1984:24).

In modern Western capitalist societies, homophobia is central to male dominance because it affects the relationships between genders and sexual orientations: men may establish relationships to other men through women, and women may gain power through accusing men of homosexuality (Sedgwick, 1990:2-

3). Women may be homophobic because they have internalized the normative ideology, are insecure or angry about their own subordination, or feel threatened about changes in society that make them examine the inadequacies of their lives (Doupe, 1992: 196-197). Concern over the interplay of sexual matters with production encourages the surveillance of workers outside the workplace (Gramsci, 1988:291). Homophobia requires the surveillance of "masculinity" both inside and outside the homosocial spheres. It requires that males police themselves, constantly, in order not to be "guilty". Fear becomes "a powerful and central dynamic" of homophobia (Morin and Garfinkle, 1978:29). Self-policing works economically, "permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its actions", and the subjugated are "caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers" (Foucault, 1979:201).

Along with surveillance, another tactic and consequence of homophobia is the legal defense plea of "homosexual panic": a homosexual [or someone perceived as one] triggers a violent psychotic reaction in a latently gay defendant (Bagnall et al, 1984:499; Sedgwick, 1990:19), which makes the [assumed] homosexual the "problem". By allowing this defence into courts of law, it legitimates the sites in which it can be deployed (i.e.: at work, in the military, at schools). Finally, this defence shows homophobes not as defending their male heterosexuality as much as questioning it (for the

violence can be read as repressed desire and socially-induced self-hatred), and it makes a homophobic incident a situation of potential "ouplings" (as the homophobe must conceive of same-sex desire in order to feel panic). For this same reason, homosexuals who are in the closet may also attack other homosexuals (Sedgwick, 1990:242).

Two overlapping and contradictory strategies of homophobia predominate: with one, homosexuality must be denied, silenced, forgotten in the margins; with the other, homosexuality must be acknowledged, discussed, used to enforce and restate the dominant. In regard to the first strategy, there is the "closet",¹⁷ which Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick calls "the defining structure of gay oppression in this century" (1990:71). The closet is a place for denying sexuality, for the silencing of identity. The closet is always on the margins. However, the closet also signifies the withholding of information and the power which that entails, for ignorance and silence are as powerful as knowledge (Sedgwick, 1990:4), because ignorance is not oppositional to knowledge, but is an effect of knowledge: its limit (Britzman, 1995:154). In the analysis of homophobia in education, the silences must be deconstructed as well as the discourses: What is silenced? How is silence defined? Who is silenced, and is silence the

¹⁷ I believe this term originates with having a terrible secret that one is frightened to reveal: having a skeleton in the closet.

same for the different groups involved? Is sexuality silenced or ignored?

The second strategy involves discussing the "unmentionable". Discourses need to be unravelled in order to examine how they support one another, and to locate the social institutions that entitle them.

1.4 Discursive Truths

Power/knowledge is deployed through discourse. Discourse "constrain[s] the possibilities of thought" as it constitutes objects and transforms words and concepts through their deployment within different discourses (Ball, 1990:2, citing Foucault, 1974, The Archaeology of Knowledge:49. London: Tavistock) and, as discourse is based on shared meanings, it "emphasizes the social processes that produce meanings" (Ball, 1990:3). Discourse defines marginality, and deviance, as a focus of attention, requires surveillance and repression. Discourse inquires as to who speaks, their positions, and the institutions that prompt speech, collect it, and distribute what is said (Foucault, 1978:39-40; 11). It questions the construction of "reality", "society", "identity", "public", and "private" not simply to "legitimate disadvantage, but [as] part of the mechanisms which institute disadvantage" and, as such, is crucial to the reproduction of society (Wetherell and Potter, 1992:78; 60).

The liberal discourse, which is prevalent in Canadian society, is a meritocratic one where society "supplies the conditions within which individuals, differently endowed, can make their mark. The outcome is fair because all are assumed to have begun with equal chance and equal opportunity" (Wetherell and Potter, 1992:182). This discourse psychologizes inequality as the individual's problem working with, and competing against others, and it ignores how social groups have different opportunities and powers. It is the discourse which defines freedom and equality based not on equality to benefit, but on commercial "free markets" (Apple, 1989:7).

Discourse constructs and implements "truths", and normalizes ideology as "common sense". "Common sense" is often imposed and passively accepted, oppressing through making subordination appear as "natural" (Gramsci, 1988:328). When male heterosexual ideologies around the dichotomies of gender roles, social spaces, and sexual orientation, are accepted as natural (e.g.: men are stronger; the purpose of sex is reproduction), male heterosexuals are positioned for dominance. This dominance is aided through the production of texts as "objectified" forms of social consciousness, particularly if the texts appear detached from their historicity (Smith, 1990: 216-217; 210. also P. McLaren, 1995; Apple, 1993). "Tradition", doing/believing something because "it has always been done/thought that way", provides a

security for the status quo, and impedes resistance as a fight against the inevitable and universal.

Discourse in modern Western society is personified in "experts" (Connell, 1993:613) of the educational, medical, psychological, and legal, among other, institutions that create discourses about sex. They make people more aware of sexuality, and incite more discussion of it (Foucault, 1978:43-44). Contemporaneous to the construction of sexual orientation was the development of psychiatry and, together with the popularization of the [male] medical institution, doctors exerted themselves as "experts" over the bodies and minds of the public. They established their power, partially, by working with the government on social policies of health and on the taxonomies of "sane", "healthy", and "normal". These new identities and institutions served to promote the male heterosexual ideology. The medical-psychiatric discourse includes:

a tradition where sexual relations are understood by reference to man's position in a "natural" biological world, in nature.... Medicine brands homosexuals as the Other when it sees it as an illness, a handicap, a retarded or frustrated psycho-sexual development.... The "causes" are multiple, possibly congenital, biological, natural (hormones, genes). More probably, it is thought to be acquired by contact: sexuality as contagion. Nature is given a fixed single objective, reproduction
(Moran, 1989:186).

This discourse is based on a conflation of sexual activity, which is natural, and sexual identity, which is not. Using

the medical-psychological discourse of contagion makes homosexuality unnatural and threatening to heterosexuals¹⁸, while the "nature" discourse is used often in contradictory ways: it is good when connected with heterosexuality, yet axioms of nature, such as "wild" and "bestial", are used to describe sexual practices that are discouraged; heterosexuality is natural because it is found in animals, yet what is most admired in humans is what separates them from other animals (Kahn, 1989:67; Boswell, 1980:12-13. also Dollimore, 1983:54-55).

In Western society, families are organized according to two systems: the order of nature and the order of law. These correlate to the same orders on which morality is dependent, so that "what is unnatural or illegal (criminal) is also immoral" (Franklin, 1993:30). The "tradition" of the family makes a particular form of family (heterosexual, monogamous,

¹⁸ This discourse sees children as "normal" until corrupted, and much of the moral panic around homosexual contagion, is based on confusing homosexuality with paedophilia. This is especially apparent in schools where children are taught by adults; where parents leave their children under the influence of others, with not much awareness of what is being taught. It is given a false history through overlapping confluences based on misconceptions of ancient Greek educational (pedagogy) and sexual (paedophilia) practices, and it is perpetuated in the media through fiction (such as "The Children's Hour") and fact (such as the Mt. Cashill crimes). Kinsman explains that focusing on homosexual/paedophilic abuse in school diverts attention from the home and the family as the site of male violence (1994:171). On paedophilia as mostly (male) heterosexual and familial: Magsino, 1995; Jenny et al, 1994. On paedophilia as male and heterosexual in Ontario schools: Curtis, 1994).

marital, reproductive) normal and moral, and makes all other forms of sexual relationships unnatural and immoral.

As schools are arenas where sexual education is taught and where sexuality is observed and regulated, they contribute to the construction of moral character through teaching as "normal" particular sexual practices (Prentice, 1994:1).

1.5 Private Parts and Public Education

There is an assumption that sex is private ("The State has no business in the *bedrooms* of the nation" -P. Trudeau, 1969. [my italic]) without questioning how sex became privatized or how it is also given a public sphere for different identities in different ways. This assumption pretends that sexuality is not seen/taught, directly or indirectly, in public: on the streets, in the media, in the schools.

Paradoxically, homosexuals are denied the private (yet publicly-sanctioned) union of marriage and, traditionally, have had to meet and maintain relations in public spaces (bars, saunas, parks), while private houses have been made "public" by police raiding and declaring them "bawdy" houses and those charged with public sex have had the addresses of their private homes publicly recorded in the media.

The private/public dichotomy relates, paradigmatically, to "the closet"/"coming out". While being out in public makes

one invincible to blackmail, it also makes one a more noticeable target for "gay-bashing". Being in the closet provides more public opportunities that discrimination precludes, although it necessitates the bifurcation of the body: the genital-emotive from the rest.¹⁹ Indeed, the genitals are designated as a private space on the body, and bodies are enforced by regulations on public nudity and exposure. Dominance is revealed in what parts of the body are defined as private in public (breasts on women, but not on men) and in which public situations (female nudity is acceptable in the male sphere of a strip bar; people can be nude or partially dressed in homosocial environments, but rarely in heterosocial ones). The border between private and public is subjective and controlled by those who have the discursive power to define it. As a consequence of that power, and as a means of maintaining it, spaces are created in which homophobia can be deployed.

The educational institution is a liminal site between public and private: between the private domain of the family, and the public domain of society; between the naivete of the child, and the ideologically-indocctrinated adult; between personal knowledge and social inquiries. It is a site of knowledge: both disseminated to, and collected from students; and of power: both through teaching knowledge and through

¹⁹ Admittedly, sexual relations are not necessarily or exclusively attached to the genitals.

observation, control, and discipline. It is a site of culture (where culture is produced), of governance (where ideology is reproduced), and of resistance (where ideology is contested).

Schools are central for teaching individuals "how to live" in society, which includes "how to work". Children are the (re)production of the forces of labour, and schools are deployed to promote the knowledge of capitalist relations that maintain economic production (Gramsci, 1988:306; 312). State education developed in the context of declining agricultural employment and rural out-migration, along with increased limits on child labour and mandatory school attendance. The changes in labour laws, industrialization, increased life expectancy, and increased wages for adults-- particularly males--played a significant part in bringing young people back into the family, while the decrease in birth rates made it easier for youth to live at home and attend day schools. Since puberty is delayed by early entry into strenuous work, the abolition of child labour and the introduction of mandatory education had a profound influence on the physical, as well as the social, development of youth, while the decreased age of puberty, along with an increased age of marriage made youth an expanding area for sexual regulation (Hunt, 1995:6; Curtis, 1994:104-105; Mitterauer, 1992:92-95; 5-6).

By the end of the nineteenth century, when homo and heterosexualities were being constructed, children were looked

upon as having "the seeds of divine life within them to be nurtured rather than moulded", and parents were expected to diligently and systematically provide the "appropriate home environment and suitable models of behaviour", and to control activities and conditions outside the home that could corrupt the fragile youth (Magsino, 1995:291-294; A. McLaren, 1990:36; Allen, 1975:21-22). As part of the "suitable models", gender roles were reproduced to tie the school to the "normal" family, through the female teacher/mother assisting to male principal/father to instill moral "family" values to the students/children (D. Jones, 1990:64-65). However, children were also reconceptualized as sexualized beings, whose sexual activity needed to be prohibited through surveillance (Foucault, 1978: 104). Surveillance was:

inscribed at the heart of the practice of teaching, not as an additional or adjacent part, but as a mechanism that is inherent to it and which increases its efficiency (Foucault, 1979:176).

Schools were [and are] constantly preoccupied with sex, which is evident in the architecture, dormitories, physical education, counselling, and silences (Foucault, 1978:27-28). Schools are also preoccupied with sexualities, particularly the construction of a normative heterosexuality. Heterosexual sex was repressed in co-educational institutions by the physical separation of the sexes, which only made homosexual sex more of a possibility. Boarding schools and teacher-

training institutions were seen as places where homosexuality and masturbation were possible and where surveillance was less effective than in private homes (Curtis, 1994:105-107).²⁰ "Sex experts", supported by the medical-psychiatric and educational institutions explained: if schools provided sexual knowledge and opportunities, and if exposure to homosexuality could be "contagious", then schools were "breeding grounds" for homosexuality (Smith-Rosenberg, 1989: 266-272), particularly due to its homosociality/homospaciality. The sexual education curriculum was developed to effect social control by responding to concerns about social issues, such as teen pregnancy and socially-transmitted diseases. These issues affected individuals, but they were presented as a "moral panic": a sign of social decay, and a route to poverty, promiscuity, and juvenile delinquency (Adams, 1994:61-64). These issues were promoted with the belief that informed ["official"] knowledge was better than misinformation (Hunt, 1995:18).

Many subjects in school were gender-specific, according to accepted notions of femininity and masculinity (Danylewycz, 1991:131) and, as appropriate sexual behaviour was connected with appropriate sexual orientation, the development of courses such as Domestic Science normalized heterosexuality

²⁰ Alan Hunt states that masturbation, and not homosexuality, was the topic of concern at boarding schools (1995:33). They are not necessarily mutually exclusive. One is a sexual practice, the other is a sexual identity. Boarding schools provided the opportunity for both.

(i.e.: women housewives dependant on husband's paid labour).²¹ Domestic Science classes started in Ontario schools in 1900 (Danylewycz, 1991:130). The term "science" gives this subject a false reality which worked towards regulating the "proper" behaviour of females. "Science" made classes on cooking, sewing, house cleaning the semiotic equivalent to the sciences studied by males. It associated a biological base for "feminine" behaviour and careers. Similarly, Home Economics gave a pretence of financial power to a full-time occupation that was [and remains] unpaid and, largely, a career without power.

Domestic Science/Social Hygiene contained class and race ideologies that reflected the Social Purity inspiration for the moral regulation in this course. While all females took this course, there were different expectations and outcomes based on the class and origin of the student. This did not, however, preclude an assimilation of females into a standardized form of domesticity, which was also the domestic culture of the dominant culture (Danylewycz, 1991:132; 140-141. also Sheehan, 1995:329-330).

²¹ Gender roles were tied to the economy. The "cult of the home" appears in society whenever there is a labour surplus (Richer, 1981-82:48, citing M. Benston, 1969. "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," in Monthly Review:21;4). This "cult" is reflected in "Domestic Science" classes. Benston's "cult" is worth applying to the contemporary debate over "family values" that subordinates homosexuals, feminists, and single mothers (and combinations thereof).

Domestic Science taught, in 1937, the importance of appearance and deportment, and "correct attitudes towards motherhood and marriage". It equated femininity with heterosexuality and reproduction. It not only led to domestic life, but also to "female" careers, such as teaching, nutrition, dietetics, and domestic service. Other gender separated courses, such as business and commercial training, led to nursing, seamstressing, clerical, and secretarial work (Danylewycz, 1991:132; 136-138). In all cases, the work was based on nurturing or domesticity. These careers were, ostensibly, interim jobs until marriage - or the destiny of the spinsterhood.²³

Towards the second half of the century, the upheaval of the Second World War and the subsequent Cold War created a general need for security, which translated as social conformity.²⁴ The political, psychiatric, and social attention to sex crimes and sexual perversions refocused

²² Female teachers, unlike their male counterparts, were not allowed to be married, as marriage made them sexual, and motherhood made them less capable of nurturing other people's children as students (Curtis, 1994:112).

²³ There must be countless unrecorded biographies of "spinsters" who were lesbians, who chose the pejorative asexual title over the danger of a homosexual label or the dishonesty of heterosexual marriage and economic dependence.

²⁴ Reports, during the 1950s, of homosexuals as spies in Canada, the United States, and Britain, made homosexuals not only individual ("molesters" of children) and community ("destroying the family unit") threats, but national security risks (Kinsman, 1987:109-116; 120-125; Katz, 1976:91-123; Bérubé, 1991: 263-270).

attention onto sexual education as prevention. The increase of single parent families, after the War, due to divorce, desertion, and widowhood, led to the promotion of the nuclear family and two-parent marriage, especially in the media and in "Family Life" education (Adams, 1994:69-70; 74). Sexual education was bifurcated into two courses that overlapped but had somewhat different approaches to sexual regulation. "Sexual Education", based on the earlier "Social Hygiene", focused on socio-sexual "problems" while "Family Life" education limited sexuality to sexual domestication and moral reproduction: sex as civilizing and pleasurable (Adams, 1994:72; Prentice, 1994:3-4).

In Ontario, a high school hygiene program was taught in London, in 1942. The Toronto Board of Education (TO BE) proposed a program two years later. The Toronto proposal was a response to the increase in venereal diseases among teenagers and the "weakening of morals". In the same year, sexual education was voted in as part of the provincial school curriculum (although it was not implemented until 1946) (Adams, 1994:63-65). When the Department of Education put out its teachers' guide on venereal disease, in 1945, some teachers felt that v.d. should only be discussed in its social and sexual context, and proposed that basic sexual education be taught first. According to the Report to the Management Committee of TO BE:

*The need for a high standard of moral conduct,
the normal girl and boy relationships, the*

significance of marriage and the conditions upon which happy family life is built will be emphasized in a normal and objective way
(Adams, 1994:67-68).

The teachers' proposal assumed that "normal" meant heterosexual, that reproduction in marriage was the constituent and goal of happiness, and that they could be "objective".

"Family Life" was dropped from the curriculum in 1952, to be reintroduced in 1966 (Adams, 1994:78), during a period when the Civil Rights movement, the feminist movement, and the youth counter-culture movement were reconfiguring Western society, and two years before the Stonewall Inn riots would initiate the Gay Liberation movement: resistance to the dominant groups.

1.6 Resistance

Resistance is integral to power, for power is not power unless there is an ability to resist it (Foucault, 1979:95), and it is resistance which the dominant silence or transform through their discourses (Bartkowski, 1988:48). While there is a "plurality of resistances" (Foucault, 1979:96), they derive from an awareness of social position, and they appear within the fractures of the dominant ideologies (Britzman, 1995:154; Gramsci, 1988: 192; 201). Resistance:

redefines the causes and meanings of oppositional behaviour by arguing that it has little to do with the logic of deviance,

*individual pathology, learned helplessness
(and, of course, genetic explanations), and
a great deal to do, though not exhaustively,
with the logic of moral and political
indignation* (Giroux, 1983:107).

These redefinitions reposition power, in that the capacity to redefine diminishes the dominant group's power of discourse and, if one is still in a marginal position, one is, at least, responding from somewhere else (Martin, 1988:10). Positions of subordination presuppose a difference from the dominant which is, itself, a vehicle for resistance. Coalition politics is possible when one belongs to different groups and can see similarities and differences of identities, providing that differences are seen as "a resource rather than a threat", when there is a multiplicity of sources of resistance (Sawicki, 1988: 184; 187), and when subordinated groups can ally themselves into stronger groups.

An important distinction needs to be made when assessing the practices of subordinate groups: not all opposition is resistance or reaction to domination. According to Giroux, resistance should be measured by the degree of critical thinking and reflective action it entails, as well as its potential for inspiring "collective political struggle around the issues of power and social determination" (Giroux, 1983:103; 111).

Community activism in the Canadian lesbian and gay communities did not focus on education until the 1980s, because many lesbigays believed they had to have human rights

protection before many, including teachers, students, and parents, could come out of the closet (Lenskji, 1994:280). Once "sexual orientation" was included as a prohibited ground for discrimination in the Ontario Human Rights Code (December 1986), large numbers of lesbians and gays took an active role in municipal affairs (Campey et al, 1994:84-85). However, this does not mean that the communities did not mediate policies prior to 1986. Rather, earlier activism influenced changes, and if educational policies were not directly affected, the other social changes laid the groundwork for changes in education.

In 1965, Gary Nichols, a gay civil servant, formed the Canadian Council on Religion and the Homosexual, in Ottawa, to promote understanding and tolerance for homosexuals (Hannan, 1995:A9). Two years later, when Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau decriminalized homosexuality (Kinsman, 1987:116),²⁵ the decriminalization increased the power of discourse for and about homosexuality. The popularization of a lesbian and gay movement occurred with the Stonewall Inn riots, in 1969 where, from June 28 to August 3, lesbians and gays resisted New York City police outside a gay bar, the Stonewall Inn, marking the beginning of a collective identity based on pride and a willingness to demand, rather than wait for, equal rights (Duberman, 1993).

²⁵ The law only made private homosexual relationships legal, so police were able to continue harassing homosexuals in public areas, particularly bars (Kinsman, 1987:144).

Gays of Ottawa was the first homosexual association in Canada, started in 1971, accompanied by its newspaper GO INFO (Abraham, 1995:B1). This was the same year that Ottawa homosexuals, along with a contingent from Toronto, protested at Parliament Hill for the end of discrimination, criminalization, and harassment (Hannan, 1995:A9), and, in Toronto, gays demonstrated for Criminal Code reform and equal rights. By the following year, when a protest was held at the provincial legislature for "sexual orientation" to be included in the provincial Human Rights Code, there were several gay and lesbian associations established in Toronto. The December 1978 police raids on gay bathhouses was followed by the creation of a defense fund for those arrested, demonstrations, media conferences, and a call to investigate police actions (T. Warner, 1995:17).

The first Race Relations Advisor for the TO BE, in 1981, made connections between all forms of discrimination (Campey et al, 1994:86), and prohibited sexual orientation as grounds for discrimination that same year. However, the board stated that it would not tolerate "proselytization" of homosexuality (Lenskji, 1994:280). Individual homosexual teachers were protected but they could not, in effect, identify themselves or discuss it as a topic (Campey et al, 1994:86).²⁶ The murder of gay school librarian, Kenneth Zeller, in 1985, by

²⁶ The "proselytization" stipulation was rescinded in 1992 (Lenskji, 1994:280).

gay-bashing high school students from TO BE refocused attention on what "normal kids" were learning at school. Despite school trustees and administrators denying responsibility, students at the school attended by the gay-bashers attested that homophobia was tolerated-- and even encouraged. A TO BE trustee, who looked into the matter, admitted that there was "considerable abuse allowed" in the schools, that teachers did not see it as their responsibility, and that the board's policies did not protect lesbian and gay students and teachers. In 1988 an openly gay social worker, Tony Gambini, was hired by TO BE to counsel lesbian and gay students and staff, to give classroom presentations on homophobia, and to provide in-service training for teachers and staff. One year later, lesbian and gay TO BE employees organized themselves to raise sexuality issues at the board. Along with a student support group, they made lesbian and gay issues internal to the school, and not the agenda of "outside interests" (Campey et al, 1994:87-91).

In 1991, John Campey became Toronto's first openly gay school trustee (Campey et al, 1994:90). That same year, a resource document was written on homosexuality and homophobia by a committee that excluded lesbians and gays. After it was critiqued and re-written, it was "significantly edited" by the board. The board criticized the connection of sexuality, gender, and power as "anti-family" and "anti-heterosexual", and they wanted a "middle of the road" approach based on

"scientific research". The final document was approved in 1992 (Campey et al, 1994:92-95; Lenskji, 1994:284-286).

In 1992, Tony Gambini held a public discussion, in Ottawa, on the work being done on anti-homophobic education at TO BE.²² This talk inspired several lesbian, gay, and bisexual teachers, students, and parents to form a local group, Pink Triangle Services' Schools Initiative, to try to improve the situation of lesbigay students and staff in the Ottawa-Carleton region schools. After one year of working on the Schools Initiative, the group dispersed, with a selection of teachers from the Ottawa Board of Education (OBE) reforming with other community organizations and board members into the Anti-Homophobic Action Committee (AHAC) of the Ottawa Board of Education.

In September 5, 1995, TO BE opened the Triangle Program, a transitional school for students who had been adversely effected by homophobia, with a curriculum based on English, and centred on understanding sexuality and dealing with homophobia (Bowness, 1995:23).

On May 9, 1996, the federal government passed Bill C-33, which made sexual orientation a prohibited ground for discrimination in the Canadian Charter. Arguably, this is an accommodation meant to quell resistance while maintaining

²² Following Linda Briskin's differentiation between anti-sexist and non-sexist education (1994), I have applied the same distinction to anti- and non-homophobic education.

hierarchic positions and a new point of entry for further community activism and resistance.

It is important to note that resistance and community activism are not based solely on belonging to one subordinated community and merely drawing connections with other subordinated groups, but also on individuals as composites of several fractured identities connecting them to several groups. In relation to this study, the respondents are subordinate not only as bi/homosexuals but, among other social constructs, as "youth". Adolescence is a cultural construction presented as essential: universal and biological, which negates that it changes, if measurements of puberty are considered, depending on periods of history, geography (both national and urban/rural) and class (based on nutrition and work) (Irvine, 1994:7; Mitterauer, 2005: 12; 32). As the ideology of this society is white and European, so too is that which is defined as "appropriate" gender behaviour (Monteiro and Fuqua, 1995:163),²⁶ which further complicates what and who is erased or constructed in sexual education. There is little incentive for students of sexual or "racial" subordinated groups to study a curriculum in which they are not included (Sears, 1995:150; Werner, 1995:130; Dei,

²⁶ This compounds "race" with sex, as Western culture's mind/body dualism attributes mind, reason, and civilization with men; and body, emotion, and nature with women (Prentice, 1994:5).

1994:291) or in which hierarchies are constructed, in part, through stereotypes about sexuality (Belyea and Dubinsky, 1994:27), and this is compounded by sex, class, and ability (Ward and Taylor, 1994:51), so that sexual education in schools contributes not only to the construction of youths, but to youths embodying the values, if not the characteristics, of the dominant group (Irvine, 1994:7)-- including adult and "white".

There is a perception that "race" is based upon visible characteristics and, therefore, unlike sexuality. However, the history of "race" discourses reveals that they have been based on hierarchies more than on visible "traits". Irish, Romany, Jews have all been defined as "races" by dominant groups from whom they shared no visible differences. Groups have also divided themselves as "races" to emphasize their supposed superiority, such as the "Aryan" race. People are "visible minorities" not because of an apparent identifiable trait, but because they are looked at, made visible by the dominant group.

One significant difference between bi/homosexuals and people of colour is that the families of bi/homosexuals do not usually have bi/homosexual parents, so the youth have little opportunity to develop the group identity and family support that is important for self-identity. An Afro-American child will not be thrown out of her/his house because of her/his

colour, while a homosexual child might be thrown out because of her/his sexuality.²⁹

The sexes are affected differently by education because education continues to subordinate females through official and unofficial practices (Sheehan, 1995:334-335). Michelle Fine found that standard sexual education curricula expresses a suppression of female sexual desire, the promotion of discourses on female sexual victimization, and the privileging of married heterosexuality (1988:30). Sexual education texts tend to describe sex from the male perspective (Whatley, 1988), and females are described as all thinking alike and thinking like men (Yates, 1993). Sexual education which explains that different amounts of hormones affect desire, constructs essentialist views of sex (men have a stronger "sex drive"), which effect gendered behaviour (females are responsible for saying no; males cannot control themselves) (Belyea and Dubinsky, 1994:23). For lesbians and bisexual women, this teaches that they are less sexual (than both gay and heterosexual males), that their sexuality is based on gentle emotions, and not on passion.

²⁹ In a study by Eremy S. Hetrick and A. Damien Martin, 1987, of the thirty percent of respondents who experienced violence due to sexual orientation, forty nine percent suffered violence from their families (hetrick and Martin, 1987:29; 33).

On "race", sexuality, youth, and education: O'Connor, 1995; Monteiro and Fuqua, 1995; Sears, 1995; Chan, 1994; Dei, 1994; Ward and Taylor, 1994; Whatley, 1994. On disabled teens and sexual education: Rousso, 1994; O'Toole and Bregante, 1992.

Didi Khayatt conducted her research exclusively on high school lesbians because their experiences are different from those of gays, particularly about public spaces and awareness of sexual identity (1992:3). Studies show that lesbians self-identify later than gays (Anderson, 1995:19), but I would argue that the differences may not be related to sexuality but to gender: males are socialized to be more conscious of their sex and to dominate public spaces. However, this does not negate that dividing practices work spatially and socially by sex, as well as by sexuality.

As was previously mentioned, masculinity is incumbent on subordinating by gender and orientation. Blye Frank, in his study of high school males, illustrated how masculinity is supported through homophobia and misogyny (1994). For the "lads" that Paul Willis studied in a British school, "masculine" traits included violence and homophobia. It extended beyond behaviour into the sphere of work, so that white-collar work was not "real" work, but that of women and effeminate men (1977:15; 34; 43; 149). Conformity to schools is perceived as passivity, and passivity is seen as a female and homosexual trait.

Of the 129 Ottawa teenaged lesbigays sampled in his 1991 study, Curtis Wade Magnuson reported that 79.8% felt their personal safety was in danger because of their sexuality; 37.6% because of sex (female); 9.3% because of their "race"/ethnicity; .8% because of their disAbility (1992:92). The

implications of this study play into a hierarchy of victimization, which is divisive and counter productive. What is salient is that identities are composite, and one's perception of danger is based on several variables. Unless a pejorative term is used, it may be difficult to discern if one is being attacked because of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, or any other attribute that constitutes the "Other". In fact, the "Other" is not fixed, but is dependent on the social context.

Studies have reported that males suffer more from homophobia than do females, because society is androcentric and, consequently, less flexible in allowing males to deviate from the gender norms (Elia, 1993; Klein, 1992; Sears, 1992; Hetrick and Martin, 1988). The 1992 study by Masters, Johnson, and Kolodny reported that the most frequent attackers in lesbian-gay-bashing are adolescent males. They attributed this violence as a means of proving their masculinity (Elia, 1993:178). From this it is apparent that homophobia is associated with adolescents as a component in their understanding of identities. As education is mandatory for most high-school aged youth, and sexual education is part of the curriculum, what needs to be explored is how sexuality is taught in schools, to help understand the effects of that education on the disciplining and normalizing of sexual subjects. To initiate this study, a methodology needs to be developed.

2. Authority

2.1 Surveys and Surveillance

Kinsey's 1948 study of the range of sexual behaviour in males created a percentage of the population which are homosexual. Numbers can "normalize", which, in the case of homosexuality, presents a paradox: statistics on the homosexual population establish the "normality" of homosexuality in society (i.e.: make it "real"), while the small percentage establishes it as a deviation from the norm of the majority. The figure of ten percent, which is widely accepted as the percentage of homosexuals in the population, is based on Kinsey's study, yet Kinsey never claimed this figure. Kinsey reported that ten percent of the adult white males whom he surveyed, many of them prisoners, and all of them self-selected, had been predominantly homosexual for a period of three or more years between the ages of sixteen and fifty. Fewer than four percent had been predominantly or exclusively homosexual all their adult lives (Hamer and Copeland, 1994:98; Kinsman, 1987:114).¹ Although it may be questioned why three years was a determining factor, how "predominant" was defined, what is the race and gender bias, what problems arise with self-selection, and why the statistics for "mostly" homosexual are rarely publicized (only

¹ Hamer and Copeland claim that Kinsey reported ten percent; Kinsman claims thirteen.

for "predominantly and exclusively" homosexual), the statistics from the Kinsey study have been used to prove, legitimize, and compare sexualities. This is not to belittle the importance of this study in terms of "realizing" homosexuality but, rather, to signal that the methodology used and what was taken or ignored from the study was used to normalize heterosexuality.

There is no accurate rate of homosexuality because there is no exact definition, means of measurement, or means of sample selection, as the subsequent surveys, recording a wide range in the percentage of homosexuals in the same societies, have demonstrated (Hamer and Copeland, 1994: 102; 99). Furthermore, as one can "pass" as heterosexual, the closet ensures that all surveys and censuses will be statistically inaccurate.

This project is not concerned with establishing the normalcy of any sexual orientation through the legitimating power of numbers, or of establishing the "fact" of sexualities as essential. This is, partially, due to my interpretation of democracy as "equal rights for all", regardless of percentage in the population, as opposed to the interpretation of democracy as supporting the "rights of the majority". Consequently, a qualitative, rather than quantitative, methodology has been selected to address my concern with how those who are identified as homosexual, regardless of their frequency in the population, perceive and respond to

homophobia. I am aware of my subjectivity: in what I hear and focus on and what I ignore; in my relations with the respondents as "researcher"; and in my situation vis à vis the topic.

My data collection is divided between the texts of the Ontario Ministry of Education and of the Ottawa and Toronto School Boards, and the collection of individual responses of homosexual high school students (and recent graduates) in Ottawa and Toronto. As the policies around sexualities and homophobia are in flux, only the most recent documents on these issues were studied, in order to explore how they are currently presented. Every recent Ontario Ministry of Education guideline that had any information or discussion on sexual orientation or homophobia was read, and local newspapers were searched for any announcement from the Ministry of Education on the topic. As provincial jurisdictions overlap with, and respond to, federal policies, attention was also paid to the policies and legislations of other provincial departments and to the federal government.

All Ottawa Board of Education (OBE) curricula pertaining to health, sexuality, social issues, physical education, and family studies were studied. Reports and policies of the school board that are available to the public were also studied. My research at the board was supplemented by discussions, mostly via telephone, with teachers, committee members, administrators, and trustees of the OBE. The

curricula and policies on sexuality of the Toronto Board of Education (TO BE) were studied, and discussed with the TO BE Counsellor on Human Sexuality, the trustee responsible for curricula, and with teachers at the board. Textual data was collected from October 1994 to December 1995, and student experiences were collected from February 1995 to February 1996.

As John and Lyn Lofland note, particular methodologies are determined by the topic and the location (1984:13-14). In that I am studying experiences within specific locations, participant observation could be an effective method, but homophobia is an "amorphous social experience", which the Loflands believe is best studied through interviews and limited observation (1984:14). In this study, I used questionnaires. As the social phenomena under study only happens for the observer through interpretation, there cannot be a non-participant observation (Smith, 1990:87).

The population of this study was self-selected, and was obtained through several sources. Some students in Toronto were interviewed at a school, but the majority of Toronto participants were located through the TO BE support group for lesbigay students. In Ottawa, the majority of respondents were obtained at the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth Group of Pink Triangle Services, a community organization for the lesbigay community, although the questionnaire was also distributed at the Ottawa-Carleton Youth Services Bureau, and

at lesbigay groups at Carleton University, the University of Ottawa, and Algonquin College. As well, an announcement about my study was advertised in the Algo News, a periodical for the Ottawa-Carleton lesbigay community, in the two summer issues of 1995. My study was also posted on the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual, the Youth, and the Feminist newsgroups on the Internet. No limit was set on the number of respondents, as there was a desire to garner the greatest range of experiences, and because there was a desire to avoid selecting an "authentic" or "representative" voice, which would trap the research in essentialism (Martin, 1988:15).

Not all the respondents were from the Ottawa or Toronto School Boards. Responses from students of separate schools in the Ottawa and Toronto area, as well as from public, separate, and private schools outside the Ottawa and Toronto School Boards were received, and their responses will be appended; however, this study will focus on the eleven female and thirteen male students from the Ottawa Board of Education,² and five female, six male, and one unspecified students from the Toronto Board of Education³.

² Three responded from the Carleton University Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Centre; one from the Algonquin College Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Group; four from the University of Ottawa Outlook Group; seven from the Pink Triangle Youth Group; and six via the Internet.

³ One responded from the Carleton University Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Centre; one from the University of Ottawa Outlook Group; nine from the Toronto Board of Education; one from the Internet.

The respondents from the two boards used for the basis of this study are not a representative sample, as they were self-selected. Rather, they are an illustrative sample, as are the school boards selected. Neither the practices of these boards nor the responses of the participants are generalizable. Any similarities between the policies and experiences in this study and the findings of other studies may only provide strong arguments for the pervasiveness of homophobia in education, and be used to stimulate future research of a generalizable nature.

In total, 55 students responded to my questionnaire: twenty-two females, thirty-two males, and one person who would not specify sex. Twenty respondents were from the OBE, twelve from TO BE, six from separate school boards in the Ottawa-Carleton area, and seventeen from elsewhere. Respondents were all given the same questionnaire, and were given the option of responding face-to-face, by telephone, mailing in the responses, leaving them with the coordinator of the lesbian youth groups, or of mailing the responses to me electronically. All interviews were private, for the purpose of ensuring confidentiality, although it is acknowledged that individual interviews may reinforce the subjects' sense of isolation (Roman, 1993:291). Reinforcing isolation was considered to be minimal, as the majority of participants came from lesbian youth groups and, as I stated my identity as gay, it allowed them to share their experiences with another queer,

rather than simply speaking as "other" to an inquisitive heterosexual researcher.

Verbal interviews tended to be more detailed than written responses, and lasted from fifteen minutes to one and one-half hours. These respondents seemed to enjoy discussing the issue, which may reflect their limited opportunity to talk about these experiences, especially with adults or educators. Written responses were from one-half page to three pages in length, and some had unanswered questions (all questions were answered in face-to-face and telephone interviews). Face-to-face interviews allowed for a study of body language (comfort/tension with the topic) which was unavailable through the other modes of research. Both face-to-face and telephone interviews revealed changes in tone that supplemented the respondents' discourses but, for consistency, only the textual responses of all the respondents were analyzed, as I did not want to misrepresent the frequency or range of tone and body language of respondents. (Only a small number of participants responded in face-to-face or telephone interviews.)

The following is the posting/questionnaire which is the research instrument used for all the participants:

I am a gay male doing research for a Master's degree (Sociology, Carleton University) on homophobia in education. I would like to hear from Ontario high school students, or recent graduates, who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual, about your experiences, if any, with homophobia in school. You do/did not need to be "out" at school.

This will be anonymous--no names or addresses are recorded, and once I have transcribed your responses, I will

not be able to reach you again. There are 16 questions, which you can respond to in as much detail as you wish (you also can choose not to respond to any). Furthermore, you can include any comments about homophobia in education that you believe this questionnaire did not cover. I need to learn from you:

1. What kinds of homophobia, if any, you have experienced in high school (i.e.: physical, verbal, psychological) and from who (i.e.: other students, teachers, administrators, coaches, graffiti, textbooks)?
2. (How) do/ did you deal with it?
3. Do you know other "out" lesbians, gays, or bisexuals at your school? How do you feel about them?
4. What happens/ happened when/ if homophobia is/ was reported in school?
5. Do you know if your school has an official policy towards homophobia?
6. Are there any teachers in your school who are openly gay/ lesbian/ bisexual? How are they treated by the other students? How do you feel about them?
7. Is homo/bisexuality ever discussed in any of your classes? Which ones, and how is it discussed? What are the responses of the other students?
8. What would have to change in your school to make you/ others more comfortable to come out? What would have to change in society?
9. Are/ were you out at school, and if so, what made you decide to come out? What were the responses of the other students and teachers?
10. Have you been allowed to include lesbigay issues into your independent studies/ projects? Which ones?
11. Age?
12. Sex?
13. "Race"?
14. City?
15. Private, public, or separate school?
16. How do you define your sexual identity?

I will consider that if you respond to the questions I can use that information (but NOT your name) for my research. With your help I want to make high schools a safer and more comfortable place to learn about and to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

oscar wolfman

A formal questionnaire was used to ensure that participants could all respond to the same areas of inquiry, although the questions maintained an open-endedness that

allowed individuals to focus or expand on areas that had more relevance for them.

Because this project aims to record the experiences of bi/homosexuals with homophobia, there was a need to contact both those in and out of the closet. It was assumed that those participants who responded via the lesbigay youth groups or the community paper would be those who identify themselves as lesbian, gay, or bisexual--if not, necessarily, at school. To reach those who would not read or appear at a site that would reveal their sexual orientation, the Internet was selected as a research medium.

The Internet also allows for the comparison of the same phenomena through different media, for targeting phenomena unique to the medium, and to see it as a medium embedded in the culture of the subjects (Black and Parks, 1995:2). There are homosexual students who were more willing to respond because of the convenience and anonymity of the Internet. These are subjects whose relationships and emerging conception of sexuality are developed and framed by cyberspace. It is also useful to assess the proportion of respondents who chose this medium to others, and to connect this to other areas of investigation (gender, age, city, type of school, "race", level of education, degree of comfort towards sexuality). The

Internet was used not only as a research tool, but as a means of articulating (sexual) expression.⁴

The Internet is a relatively new medium for research, and traditional methods for ensuring ethical research did not always work. As ethical guidelines for this tool have not been established at Carleton University, I have had to improvise a methodology for the medium and the topic to comply with ethical principles of research involving human subjects.

Three principles of ethical research are informed consent, freedom from harm, and privacy and confidentiality (Black and Parks, 1995:3). Three problems with research on the Internet are reliability, proper handling, and consent.⁵ My identity, the purpose of the project, the requirements of the respondents, and their ability to withdraw are all stated in the preamble to the questionnaire to inform for consent. A signed consent form, however, was not possible as anonymity was vital for many of the participants and requiring a document that had the potential of revealing identity would

⁴ It must be acknowledged that not all people have equal access to the Internet, which may affect the breakdown of who responds via that medium. Even when the Internet is available in public spaces, such as schools and libraries, knowledge about the Internet, knowledge on how to use computers, and the tendency to go to the sites where it is available may be limited to particular categories of people.

If recent proposals for privatizing the Internet and censoring/limiting newsgroups occur, they may serve to reduce space and voice for already closeted bi/homosexuals.

⁵ Dr. Andrew Patrick, Communications Research Centre; telephone interviews, September 28 and October 2, 1995-- hereafter, "Patrick, 1995".

preclude involvement of the population under study. Some subjects of this study are younger than eighteen, and the identity of many of these participants had to be withheld not only from the public, but from their families, which rendered parental consent impossible. In lieu of a consent form, permission to use their experiences (but not their names) is stated in the questionnaire as "given" through their voluntary responses to the questionnaire.

The respondents were free from harm, undue stress, or embarrassment from both the results and the process of their participation through their self-selection, their anonymity, their ability to withdraw or to refuse to answer any of the questions, and the variety of means by which they could respond. Privacy and confidentiality were maintained in face-to-face and telephone interviews and with mailed responses through not requiring names, addresses, or phone numbers of respondents.⁶

With the Internet, there were concerns over the security and confidentiality of the responses sent to my electronic mail (email). Alex Black and Malcolm R. Parks admit that there may be a threat to the privacy of posters on the Internet (they use the name "Usenet"); however, they are addressing responses in the public space of newsgroups. They

⁶ Unless they asked me to contact them, in which case their identification was destroyed after their responses were given. For those respondents who requested the results of the study, their names and address are kept in a separate file, where they are not identified with the study.

propose that this risk is reduced when the participants respond through email (1995:4).

This leads to questioning the security of the email. There is a risk with the security of the email, but what needs to be assessed is whether the risk is any larger than that with traditional research methods (Patrick, 1995). For the confidentiality of my respondents to be threatened, someone would have to either guess my personal access code or break into the Carleton computer system, both of which are highly unlikely. Furthermore, that person would have to seriously want to target my work, which is also unlikely, as those who break into restricted cyberspace tend to focus on major institutions (banks, military, etc.) with valuable information, not graduate students' theses. Finally, it is easier and more likely for someone to steal responses from my physical mailbox than from my email.

A problem around confidentiality and anonymity exists with the proper handling of the responses. Not only are the Internet responses within the personal space of my email, but they are also transcribed as soon as possible onto paper without the names of the respondents, deleted from the email, and stored securely with the non-Internet responses. As the responses are rendered anonymous, they cannot be harmful. As the email is used only as a mailbox, and not as a storage site, there is only a brief duration when respondents could be

identified (again, only if someone wanted to break in, and could break in).

Reliability is not an ethical issue, but one of research. It is problematic when the medium of research is the Internet, as the assumption is that the researcher cannot detect when false information is supplied. Reliability can be strengthened through the selection of sites where the research is posted, and through comparing the responses on the Internet with responses from other sources. As with the issue of security, one needs to compare the probability of false reporting among methods of research (Patrick, 1995). My questionnaire was not on a general posting, but on those that would target the desired population: youth; feminist; and lesbian, gay, and bisexual newsgroups. While people could respond who are not lesbigay and high school students, this presumes that they read newsgroups that they do not identify with, have read them shortly after I posted (postings get deleted), and were devious enough to want to intentionally skew my research. It is also possible that someone could infiltrate a lesbigay youth group and provide me with false responses in a face-to-face interview, or obtain my notice in the Algo News and offer invalid information through a telephone interview. As none of my Internet responses were significantly different from the others, this may mean that there were no false reports or that they were all false; as the Internet responses were similar to those from traditional

research methods, this may mean that I did not receive any false reports by the Internet or that everyone lied to me. I will assume the reasonable probability of reliable responses as opposed to a paranoia about unlikely possibilities.

The textual data will be investigated for the different forms of homophobia that they directly promote and/or indirectly cause; for the discourses/erasures that support homophobia, and the fractures and contradictions within them that allow for resistance; and for the responsibility of different agents that write/implement policies; and the jurisdictions and agents for which they are responsible.

The students' responses will be analyzed for the internalization and consequences of homophobia, and their resistance to it; for their self-identity and consciousness of agency; for the correlations of their experiences to the official policies, and the location of those policies (curricular/non-curricular; structural/agent); for how and where the students allocate responsibility for homophobia; and for cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses.⁷

Both texts and responses will explore the conditions, strategies, consequences, and the interaction among agents

⁷ Lofland and Lofland discuss the qualitative methodology of studying strategies (whether passive or active) and the object of their deployment (meanings, practices, episodes, encounters, roles, relationships), along with intentionality and causality (1984:104-105; 114-116); Richer marks the importance of analyzing the conditions (historical, structural, biographical) under which people respond, as well as the need to discern whether specific situations or actions relate to specific responses for particular people (1990:98).

(Strauss, 1987:27-28), with attention paid to gender, "race", public and private space and the similarities and differences between homo/bisexuality and other subordinated identities, and between school types and locations. The data will be interpreted, moving between description and explanation, to reflect on how the data informs theory, and how theory explains the data.

Social relations are mediated through texts (Smith, 1990:123), "immutable mobiles" from which are produced "truths" preserved and mobilized in multiple numbers (each repetition reasserting the "truth"), in simpler forms, and at greater cost. These mobiles allow those who can align them to dominate. In order to understand and create change one is obliged to use more texts and to argue through texts "superimposed, reshuffled, recombined and summarized" into new knowledge/power hidden from those from whom these inscriptions were exacted (Latour, 1986:7; 12-14; 17; 32). This project adds to the "cascades of immutable mobiles": a text that argues with other texts (official policies) through texts (the work of other academics) to deconstruct "truths" and to search for new power/knowledge hidden within the discourses. At the same time, this project adds to the discourses on sexuality, and can be used to subjectify the respondents as "homo/bisexuals", as those whose knowledge is transferred from them to the dominant institutions of education and science, so that what they say becomes "what we can say about them".

It is important to me that my survey does not become an exercise in surveillance; integral to the construction of my methodology was to reposition who and what is under surveillance. While the homo/bisexual respondents may be under a surveillance and a self-surveillance that is part of homophobia, in responding to my survey they are in the process of articulating a self-awareness. While they may be targets of homophobia, in this project they are "experts" in homophobia whose authority is culled. In this project, it is homophobic educators and homophobic education which is under surveillance.

2.2 Names

In naming same-sex relations, "authority over its definition has been distanced from the gay subject" (Sedgwick, 1990:79). "Homosexual", although created by a [suspected] homosexual (Féray et al, 1990: 40-46), has been appropriated by the medical-psychological and scientific institutions and disseminated throughout society as an "objective" clinical terminology. By using "sexual orientation" instead of "homosexual", the clinical discourse is removed, but so is the proud political identity of "gay" or the resistance of "queer", or any sense of pleasure. "Sexual orientation" belongs to a liberal discourse that implies that all sexual orientations are equally encompassed (and protected), although

the law does not need to protect heterosexuals, nor does science feel compelled to explain the origins of heterosexuality. As to other orientations, the others are either not taken seriously (transgender, bisexual, masturbator) or are criminalized (paedophilia, bestiality, incest). "Sexual orientation" means "homosexuality" without having to name it.

Identifying as "gay" initiates the rupture between desire and the *objective truth* of the scientific discourse (de Queiroz, 1993:58). In refusing the term "homosexual", and identification by others, there is a reappropriation of authority to name oneself. While there are ideological differences between "homosexual" and "gay", if the names are used interchangeably, particularly by heterosexuals, then "gay" is reduced to a synonym of "homosexual" and maintains a subordinated position to the dominant "heterosexual". Similarly, by using the term "heterosexual" without the quotation marks (heterosexual), the name may essentialize that sexual orientation.

Naming may be phasic: one may move among clinical, homophobic, and positive terms (or beyond terminology). Names may also have different meanings depending on the speaker and the audience: a group of lesbians calling each other "dykes" has a different connotation than a homophobe calling a lesbian a "dyke". Sexual discourse is localized with particular institutions and speakers, and for particular listeners. As

it is regulated in what can be spoken and how it is spoken, it leaves little room, according to Frances Bartkowski, for resistance. Those who listen and speak are often those in power (1988:45).

In this project I am in the ambiguous position of listener and speaker, of power (researcher) and marginality (gay). I am aware that the choice of words I and my respondents can use to define sexual orientation may limit or distort identity; that applying any name for sexuality may establish the "truth" of sexuality and fix an identity onto a subject. Even terms of resistance, such as "queer", if used to identify identities contribute to a "normalization" of that identity.

In this project I use the terms "homosexual" and "heterosexual" because these are the main terms in the discourses that I am researching, but when I discuss the respondents by sexual identity, I do not personally view them as "homosexual" or identify them solely by their sexual relations. More importantly, I am using their words: their names for their identities, rather than superimposing an identity onto them.

The names of the respondents were not recorded so that their confidentiality was ensured. In doing this, the methodology echoes the issues, as a consequence of homophobia is a fear of being named. This project provides access for

those subjects to voice their fears and frustrations over being denied a voice while still protecting those voices.

2.3 A Pen(is) Inscribes

Subjectivity is important to this work because part of the dominant discourse is to keep the subordinated other as "they". It is, therefore, a form of resistance and reaffirmation to say "I".

Discourses from academia privilege the brain. I want to inscribe this project with my entire body: to use my emotions and energy along with logic and creativity. This is because I have anger (towards homophobia) and passions (which make me a target of homophobia) that, if this work is limited to the cerebral, disembody me. I am also suspicious of the privileging of [traditionally male-defined] reason over emotion, intuition, spirituality; that relegates knowledge to only one facet of one organ, as evaluated by a [traditionally male-run] institution.⁸

I am aware that my writing involves my genitals, as they are objects of my sexual orientation and of my gender, and that my privileged experiences as a male (and white) are

⁸ In Reflections on Gender and Science (1985), E. F. Keller points out that "hard" science, based on objectivity, reveals a masculinist bias based on sexual metaphors (Morris, 1991:88). Science and education emphasize the objective penis even as they focus on the erect brain.

moderated by the marginalization of my sexual relations and my religious beliefs: the pen(is) is "bent" and "cut".

There is an intersection between being Jewish and being gay, in that both have been perceived by the dominant in modern Western society (heterosexual and Christian) as outsiders and as threats to society--particularly to children (Boswell, 1980:273; 283), and both have been "feminized" as a means of subordinating their power (which connects religion, sexuality, and gender) (M. Garber, 1992:226-233). Both are subject to violent attacks, often by the same groups (which connects racism and homophobia), and both, as minorities in many populations, have preferred democracy based on equal, not majority, rights.

Lofland and Lofland claim that an "intimate familiarity" is required with the area or subject under study (1984:11). My history and voice are embedded in this project, and in my experiences living, learning, and teaching. This is part of my "agenda" to promote a critical pedagogy for students and an anti-homophobic education.

2.4 Agency

Feminist work starts from the importance and validity of experiences, from an understanding that "the personal is political" (Driscoll and MacFarland, 1989:187) and that personal experiences are part of collective experiences. This

attitude informs my methodology: in striving to assess the effects of homophobia in education through the lived experiences of students, in accepting what the respondents perceived and related, and in viewing their experiences as embodying the deployment of something larger than what they, as individuals, experienced. Their experiences are also political, in that they become narrations of resistance in their telling; the narration moves them from the margins to the centre, and their experiences become a "counter-story": a story based on self-definition that undermines the dominant story. Just as reclaiming the authority to name oneself challenges the power of the dominant, countering the claims that there is no homophobia in education undermines the "truths" of the dominant and, as an effective counter-story, provides points from which the community may act (Nelson, 1995: 23; 37).

The premise that speaking or writing is liberating is not necessarily true (Martin, 1988:15). Narrating experiences can be a process of critical pedagogy, as it causes students to evaluate their social positions, but it may not be as comfortable or safe as ignorance and the closet. The challenge to dominance involves counter-attacks. The participants' responses to my questionnaire were counter-stories, exercises in critical pedagogy, and acts of coming out. They were involved in a relationship not only with the dominant, but with me.

I need to assess my relationship with them, due to my authority as researcher (Lofland and Lofland, 1984:16). While I established the issues and parameters of the study, and performed the analyses, I was reliant on their experiences, which helped select the theories, and directed the analyses and conclusions. They were not used to mask my voice because I have made my voice present, because I take responsibility for this work, and because I could have studied this issue without these agents (using my experiences, for example).

There are questions regarding my position as interviewer that may have shaped responses. As an adult, I may have been perceived as an authority figure, which may have caused some potential respondents to feel hesitant to take part or, inversely, may have caused some to feel the obligation to comply. As a male, I may have appeared threatening to some students, particularly females. These situations were possible during face-to-face interviews, but less likely with the other, more impersonal forms of surveying.

The respondents' cooperation was related to their education, intelligence, occupation, amount of leisure time, how important they felt the research was, and how important they believed their contribution to the research was (Forcese and Richer, 1973: 168). The reverse may explain those who did not participate, along with those who were too closeted to risk participating. Because the questionnaire was in English, those Francophones who may not have understood the

questionnaire or not have attended the [predominantly Anglophone] lesbian youth groups have been inadvertently left out.

According to Angela McRobbie, researchers need to account for the economic, cultural, and political conditions in which they labour (Roman, 1993:284). As was mentioned in the opening chapter, this work comes out of a period when lesbians are more visible and have more rights than before, yet society is moving to the political right. The university supports the subject of this research, and provides me with a scholarship (as teaching assistant) that allows me to survive while attending school, yet I am aware that government cut-backs to universities will increase tuition, reduce subsidies (including the salaries and scholarships for teaching assistants) and, consequently, reduce the population that can afford to attend school (while statistics show that Canadian youth cannot afford to not attend school). I am studying education and sexualities at a time when both are part of a social upheaval.

The final subject of the methodology is the intended reader. With this project I am speaking to educators and sociologists concerned with issues of power/knowledge acted on and through bodies, students (of all sexual identities) who may want to measure their school experiences or understanding of homophobia against those of the students recorded here, and

homophobes who do not understand how they are oppressed by their violence. (I am speaking for those homosexual students who are too frightened to talk, and with those students who were brave enough to share their experiences.)

What the intended readers will hear will differ based on their experiences, understandings, identities. You will shape it to your purposes, and hear what you need to hear (Smith, 1990: 88). In other words, the agents involved in this study include not only the respondents and myself, but also the responsible and active reader.

3. Practising Homophobia

If education is a site where a normative sexuality is (re)produced, this will be evident in the educational documents, the policies, laws, guidelines, reports, and curricula, that discursively construct education, including knowledge of sexuality and the regulations for the sexualized student body. If there are divisionary practices which define a normative sexuality, then homophobia will be part of those practices which exclude homo/bisexuality from the norm, and which support gender-roles that correspond to the normative heterosexuality. This chapter concentrates on whether homophobia is discursively deployed in education and how homo/bisexuality is presented by examining three types of educational practices. Official practices relate to sexualities as specifically mentioned in Ontario Ministry of Education documents, which are then disseminated through the school boards, while unofficial practices refer to the non-curricular "lessons" that subjectify students through social and spacial divisions within the school environment and daily experiences. Between these two practices I would like to insert a "semi-official" practice, in which policies and discourses external to education either are disseminated through the educational institution or re-route educational practices and responsibilities.

3.1. Official Practices

Standardized education is a means by which normality is established in education (Foucault, 1979:184) and, as standardization requires both legislation (what is standard?) and jurisdiction (who decides?), it is important to note that policies which discursively construct standardized education reflect the ongoing processes of multiple levels of conflicts and compromises by different ideological groups; that policies involve a measure of influence or coercion for compliance, such as "commitment" and "cooperation", or penalties for non compliance; and that policies restructure, redistribute and disrupt power by changing or narrowing the options or circumstances by which different people do, or do not do, different things (O'Reilly, 1995:138; Warner, 1995:127; Ball, 1993:10-13; Hunt, 1992:31; Apple, 1989:13). Policies of the Ministry of Education are often entitled "guidelines", which belies Ministerial power: the policies do not merely guide, but *must* be followed. According to the Ontario Education Act of 1889, only books approved by the OME and its school boards may be used (Richer, 1981-1982:59), which ensures that official knowledge is taught. Official knowledge puts all other knowledge into question, including knowledge from outside of school and that which comes, experientially, from the individual students (Richer, 1981-82:56-57). As official knowledge about homo/bisexuality, it will be shown, is largely

absent, the truth of identity and feelings of the bi/homosexual students tends to be negated. Ironically, the erasure forces bi/homosexual students to learn about their sexuality--or, at least, an affirming knowledge-- from outside of school.

The general public support for sexual education in schools becomes divisive and controversial when its content is considered. To avoid controversy, sexual education is presented as scientific and value-neutral under titles, such as "Family Studies" and "Human Growth", and they subsume it as sections of larger courses, such as Physical Education, Health, Society, and Life Skills. This scientific discourse hides a subjective attitude towards sex and sexuality that also spreads to divisions of race, class, and gender (Prentice, 1994:4-5; 12-13; Whatley, 1988:102).¹ What gets taught (or omitted) as "official knowledge" reflects those in power (Giroux, 1983:35)-- although, as discourses have multiple readings, what is read in these policies, and what they are transformed into by the subsidiary power of school

¹ Whatley's analysis of college level health textbooks reveals that scientific objectivity is morally tempered by censored drawings of anatomy and gender-biased descriptions of sexual activity. A salient example of subjective and dishonest "facts" is the presentation of sex hormones as gender exclusive, with testosterone stimulating an uncontrollable sex drive; this excuses exploitive behaviour in males, and makes the "less sexual" females responsible for moderating (frustrating) male passion (1988).

boards, are important processes in understanding the power of discourse.²

The erasure of bi/homosexuality from educational documents on sexuality contributes to the construction of heterosexuality. The OME Physical Education and Health Curricula, Intermediate Level, 1978, discusses the health curriculum from the primary to the senior levels of education, and nowhere is bi/homosexuality mentioned (OME, 1978). This omission is, partially, related to its date, and supplementary guidelines on Family Studies and Education about AIDS have addressed some of the legal and social changes that have occurred in the past nineteen years, although the extent that bi/homosexuality has been included shows that, if it is more acknowledged, it is not normalized.

In Family Studies: Intermediate and Senior Divisions and OAC, 1987, bi/homosexuals are excluded from the "diversity" of "Families in Canadian Studies" and the units on parenting (OME, 1987a:4-5; 62-66; 90-100). This is echoed in the OBE curriculum, Families in Canadian Society, 1991, which opens with the goal that students "appreciate the meaning and significance of alternatives in family living forms..."

² Giroux adds that official knowledge contradicts liberation. I would argue that it may frustrate liberation, but it may also be a source of liberation. Unlike semi and unofficial practices, which are difficult to direct action against, as they are diffuse, the authors of official knowledge are visible, and their policies are concrete. It is easier to work towards equality when one is aware which policies need to be changed and who is responsible for their implementation.

including homosexuals (OBE, 1991:3), although it never mentions homosexuality again until the appendix, as an option for an independent study. The homosexual family is not a real "alternative", but is diminished to a "non-traditional living arrangement" (OBE, 1991:6.1:9) that is optionally learned by students outside of the class.¹ In the TO BE interpretation of the Ministry guideline, Marriage and the Family, 1993, same-sex parents are not included in the definition of the family (assuming that the use of "spouse" refers strictly to heterosexuals) or as members of family units (TO BE, 1993:46; 49), but this omission is compensated for in their Sexual Orientation: Focus on Homosexuality, Lesbianism and Homophobia: A Resource Guide for Teachers of Health Education in Secondary Schools, 1992,² which will be discussed below. The OBE follows the OME in viewing the family as heterosexual, while the distinction made between the two TO BE documents is not that homosexuals are not part of families, but that the heterosexual evocation of "marriage" and "spouse" is enforced by a legal definition.

The legal definition is not the only means by which heterosexuality is normalized in the educational discourses. The presentation of heterosexuality as "natural" and normal is

¹ Homosexual families are placed in the "appendix", an organ that serves no function, paradigmatically equating homosexuals as dysfunctional in an ideology of family units as functioning for social reproduction.

² Hereafter, Sexual Orientation.

compounded by the presentation of homo/bisexuality as pathological.

In the senior division of the OME Physical Education and Health Curricula, 1975, the section for discussions includes "The Nature of Love" and "Sex and the Law" (OME, 1975:4). The opportunity for a critical understanding of sexuality depends upon the reading of "nature" and in questioning, rather than reinforcing, what and who constitutes legal sexuality and sexual subjects. The intermediate-level, grades seven and eight, units offer discussions on "appropriate and inappropriate expressions of emotions and feelings", families, "changing boy-girl relationships", and dating (OME, 1978:32). That which is "appropriate" relates to heterosexuals, as attraction and dating are "boy-girl", and there is a linear progression from attraction to dating to marriage and families. This linear path of heterosexuality, however, is insufficient, and specific forms of heterosexual relationships are presented as more "appropriate" than other. This is particularly prominent in the OBE documents, which suggests that their understanding of heterosexuality and marriage is part of a moral panic about sexuality.

In Learning Outcomes for Self and Society, 1994, sex is presented negatively. Students learn "responsible sexual behaviour"; have the opportunity to explore "the feelings, pressures, and stresses with adolescent and developing sexuality"; and learn to describe sexually transmitted

diseases, to define teen-pregnancy, and to identify the "facts" about anatomy (OBE, 1994:5). There is no mention of pleasure or desire. Sex is responsible, stressful, and a biological function, an act of reproduction and morality. In Families in Canadian Society, 1991, the categorization of "traditional" and "alternative" families historicizes the heterosexual nuclear family and implies that, as "traditions" do not change, its future is secure.

The emphasis on two- [heterosexual] parent families occurs in Parenting NFB 3A/G: Family Studies, 1989, where parenting is "a relationship that involves the commitment of both partners....men and women...as partners in marriage" (OBE, 1989:6; 9). This is a moral, not a factual assumption, as well as an exclusivity: some people, by choice or circumstances, do not have, or want, the commitment of the other partner. In the discussions of "alternatives to natural parenthood" (OBE, 1989:6), the document implies that adoption is not as "natural" as any other social construction of the family, which privileges families by blood.⁵ By erasing homosexuals as parents and family units, it perpetuates the assumption that homosexuals do not reproduce, and it compliments the moral panic that homosexuals can only "reproduce" by "recruiting" and through "contagion".

⁵ This document does look at other cultural attitudes to gender roles, but that presentation can be used to reinforce the dominant ideology of gender and families as "real" and as the appropriate culture here.

The psychological-medical discourse around homo/bisexuals as pathological is perpetuated in education through the association of homo/bisexuals with AIDS/HIV. The OME guideline, Education about AIDS, 1987, contains twelve "case studies" for class discussions on AIDS, two of which describe homo/bisexuals. This guideline makes it clear that:

*[I]t is the behaviour of individuals
that increases the risk of contracting
HIV infection and AIDS, not their
sexual orientation (OME, 1987b:C37).*

However, the fact that this document is one of the only OME documents where homo/bisexuality is mentioned, and the only OME document that describes homo/bisexuals in any detail, allows for this pathological connection. Other OME documents describe heterosexuals and opposite-sex sexual activities, so that the associations from these "case studies" are understood as those of individual heterosexuals, and are counterbalanced by positive portrayals elsewhere, whereas the infrequent portrayal of minorities are often understood as representing the entire group (Whatley, 1992:199).

As these two case studies show, homo/bisexuals are not only pathologized, but are threats to heterosexuals. In one (case study 6), Michael, who had always been close to his younger sister, Betty, decides:

*to go with a friend to Vancouver where
he would find a better job. The two
men became roommates.... When Michael
called Betty to tell her that he was
very ill, she was shocked to learn he
had AIDS. She was also shocked when
Michael told her he was a homosexual....*

Michael told his roommate [he had AIDS], who was alarmed and forced Michael to move out. Michael called Betty again, and she arranged to send him money to come back home... (OME, 1987b:C37).

In the other study (Case Study 1), a concerned wife has a doctor examine her husband. The husband, diagnosed as HIV-positive:

admits to the doctor that he was a sexually active homosexual before he married. He married only because he was a business executive and felt that it was socially important for him to have a wife.

The man was told that if he intended to continue to be sexually active, he should take precautions, delay having children, and tell his wife immediately. His wife was planning to have children. He agreed to tell his wife, but he did not do so. He did not tell anyone. He failed to stop his homosexual liaisons.

(OME, 1987b:D30).

In both these studies, homo/bisexuals are presented as closeted, deceitful, and incapable of maintaining relationships. They are threats to heterosexuals, in that the husband's behaviour, it is implied, will infect his wife and their future children (and, as he does not practice safe sex with males, even to other homo/bisexuals).⁶ Bisexuality is presented as a disguise for homosexuality, and it makes sexual partners, even for heterosexuals, a source of suspicion. If

⁶ In the "Suggested Questions and Answers" following case study 6, the question, "Could Michael or his roommate have passed HIV to a female, too, if he had had sexual intercourse with her?" turns this acknowledged homosexual into a threatening bisexual.

this is used to promote monogamy and safer sex, it is not through love, but through panic. Homo/bisexuals are also presented, in these two studies, as isolated, which maintains the image of homosexuals as asocial: neither Michael nor the husband have any lesbigay friends, business associates, support groups for people living with AIDS/HIV, nor are they aware of lesbigay communities. The paradoxical message of these studies is that the "real" family are those of blood (Betty, who takes care of Michael when he is sick) or law (the concerned wife who wants to have his child), which homosexuals are prepared to ignore or destroy.

While the OME document distinguished between AIDS and sexual orientation, the OBE document written three years later, Towards a Healthy Sexuality, Grade 10: A Sexuality Unit for Grade Ten Students, only mentions homo/bisexuals as a "high risk group" for AIDS (OBE, 1990:36). The TO BE Sexual Orientation document warns that:

[t]he failure to distinguish between "group" and "risk behaviour" supports the homophobic view that being gay is dangerous and causes AIDS.... There are no "risk groups", only some behaviours that are "risky"

(TO BE, 1992:A25).

The document continues that, if homo/bisexual youth are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, it is because of the [internalized] homophobia which leads to high risk activities (TO BE, 1992:A25-26).

In the OBE's Health Education Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10, 1982, homosexuality appears only in the unit on "Psychological and Physiological Changes at Puberty". This unit maintains the pathology, but makes it psychological: homosexuality is a "phase", and:

[m]uch has been learned about homosexuality and much has yet to be learned. It is a lifestyle which we may not understand; however, the homosexual should be respected as a person (OBE, 1982:24).

Because the guideline does not state that much has to be learned about heterosexuality, it implies that heterosexuality is known. As "we" may not understand "the homosexual", this unit assumes that all the students and teachers are heterosexual," and that for "us", following a liberal discourse, tolerance, not equality, is sufficient. Homosexuality is a "phase" that, assumedly, "normal" people grow out of; heterosexuality is a "life", and not a "lifestyle", and it is real and understandable. In the remainder of this document, love and dating are discussed only in reference to heterosexuals. Homosexuals have sex; heterosexuals express love.

In "Friendly Fire: Homophobia in Sexual Education Literature" (Interracial Books for Children Bulletin:14), Katherine Whitlock and Elena Dilapi discuss the "homosexual disclaimer": it is normal for students to have homosexual feelings, thoughts, or experiences, but they will grow out of them. Whitlock and Dilapi have also noticed a tendency in Sex Ed. texts to refer to "you" when discussing heterosexuality, but to switch to "they" when discussing homosexuality (cited in Whatley, 1988:117-118). Both of these observations can be seen in the above-mentioned unit.

Heterosexual dating, however, is not always based on love and, again, educational documents support a particular form of heterosexual behaviour with moral panic and homophobia. The Dating Violence "workshop", 1993, similar to the Education about AIDS document, focuses on case studies of heterosexuals, in this case, of date sexual abuse (OBE, 1993b:31-37).⁸ This document creates a panic around heterosexual dating, with the male as always the violent one ("her abuser's violence or...his behaviour") (OBE, 1993b:20), possibly from assumptions that violence is hormonal and less controllable in men or, axiomatically-related, that two women could not be violent without the biological source of violent behaviour. Paradoxically, men are represented as the appropriate partner for women: their threat and their protector (Briskin, 1994:444) so, while heterosexual dating is promoted, sexual activity is made dangerous, promoting abstinence until marriage.

If non-marital heterosexual sex is dangerous, then even in a document focusing on heterosexual activity, homosexuality appears as a parameter to appropriate gender and sexual behaviour and as a threat to heterosexuality. This is evident in the one mention of a homosexual:

⁸ This document is not an official class unit, but a "workshop" created by the Nepean Community Resource Centre, but printed by the OBE, listed with their curricula guides, and used in their schools.

Male victims of sexual assault rarely report the incidents for fear they may be treated as homosexuals
(OBE, 1993b:20).

The sexual attack is by a homosexual, but the "victim" is assumed to be heterosexual, not gay, and not dating his attacker. Ironically, the threat to the heterosexual victim is less from the attacker than of being accused of homosexuality by heterosexuals. It is the fear of the heterosexual who accuses, and not of the homosexual, which causes the silence. However, the main concern of this workshop is for students to report violence, and the issue is not date violence in homosexual relationships, but that the person attacked will not be considered homosexual, only as a victim, while the homosexual will remain lurking as a threat, unless reported.

Reporting violence in schools is mandated by the OME. According to the Violence-Free Schools Policy, 1994:

The following serious violent incidents must be reported to the police: possession of weapons (e.g., guns, knives); threats of serious physical injury; physical assaults causing serious bodily harm; sexual assault; robbery and extortion; any hate-motivated violence (e.g., violence involving racism and homophobia); and vandalism causing extensive damage to school property or property located on school premises
(OME, 1994:20).

Violence is described as a continuum, with criminal acts at one extreme, but:

even those [incidents] which seem minor must be stopped or prevented. Threats of physical harm, bullying, or continual

verbal harassment (e.g., in reference to an individual's disability) can be as debilitating to the victim as a physical attack. If ignored, these incidents can escalate in severity (OME, 1994:12).

Two important methods of dealing with this violence, one proactive, one reactive, is to look for:

the underlying causes of the violence,
for example, racism, sexism, homophobia,
drugs, and gangs (OME, 1994:12).

and to provide a "Code of Behaviour" in every school which will:

provide clear expectations with regard
to acceptable and non-acceptable
behaviour for all members of the
elementary and secondary school
community (students, staff, and visitors).

The Code will:...state unequivocally
that physical, verbal (oral and written),
sexual, or psychological abuse; bullying;
or discrimination on the basis of race,
culture, religion, gender, language,
disability, sexual orientation, or any
other attribute is unacceptable...

(OME, 1994:19).

This appears as an excellent policy against homophobia. Problems related to the document are that the subjects of homophobia are discursively constructed to expect victimization, which constricts the opportunity for resistance; while homophobia is acknowledged to be manifested in schools, homo/bisexuals are not acknowledged; there is no evaluative process to ensure that the policy is enforced and that homophobic incidents are defined as such; and there is a distinction within the document between what "must" be done and what "should" be done, which allows for variations in the

degrees of anti-homophobic education in the curricula and in daily interactions.

According to the guide, homophobia is not to be tolerated, and violent incidents *must* be reported, but school boards *should* address the causes of homophobia, *should* find links within the community, and *should* provide the staff and administrators with the knowledge and skills to identify and eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation (OME, 1994:18-22). "Should" does not require school boards that are homophobic to remove the systemic element of their violence, only to respond to direct violence that they define as violent and homophobic. The "shoulds" and "musts" are the discursive parameters, the minimum and maximum, within which school boards deploy the degree of systemic and direct homophobia and anti-homophobic education.

Illustrations of these variations appear in the two boards under study. The OBE's Report No. 94-110 from the Administration to the Ottawa Board of Education, Re: Programs, Policies, and Curriculum that Addresses Issues of Homophobia and Sexual Orientation, 1994, recommends a three-point action plan:

1. The Ottawa Board of Education will review its Sexual Harassment Policy to address the issue.
2. The Human Rights Commission of Ontario curriculum resource package will be reviewed for possible adaptation into O.B.E. Self and Society Learning Outcomes.
3. Opportunities for staff development will be provided over the next two years

(OBE, 1994:5).

This plan is passively voyeuristic rather than active, as it looks again ("review"), but does not necessarily do. This is more evident within the body of the report, where staff development dealing with sexuality should be developed, and the Safe Schools Committee should develop a comprehensive policy dealing with personal safety, but the report:

*does not recommend the addition to
O.B.E. curriculum of any units dealing
with the issue of sexual orientation
(OBE, 1994:3-4).*

To the extent that a committee report cannot make administrative policies, the report cannot enforce a "must", and "should" may be more realistic. However, the report could "strongly recommend" more integration of lesbiquay topics into the curricula, rather than a "possible adaptation" into one subject--particularly as the report follows complaints by students, individual parents, and one Parent Advisory Committee about the feeling of alienation among homosexual students (OBE, 1994:2)-- and staff development immediately, rather than within two years, as a response to the report's committee study of high-risk self-destructive behaviours, homophobia in the schools, and school drop out rates of youth identified as homosexual (OBE, 1994:2).² By failing to address the alienation, homophobia, and risky behaviour of those OBE students perceived or identified as homo/bisexual,

² To date, neither the revised units on sexual orientation, the staff development, or the inclusion of "sexual orientation" into the harassment policy have been implemented.

and to limit discussions of bi/homosexuality to the "Healthy Sexuality" curriculum (for its "healthy" representation of homo/bisexuality, see above), the OBE ignores the systemic homophobia within the school practices, and is satisfied with responding to direct homophobia, if it is defined as such.

While the OME Violence-Free Schools Policy states that:

Curriculum must be free of bias and must reflect the diverse groups that compose our society (OME, 1994:18).

and the Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards document insists that the curriculum must enable "all students to see themselves reflected in [it]" (OME, 1993:13), the OBE does not allow their curriculum to be free of bias or to reflect all the students. Same-sex relationships are trivialized as less real than opposite-sex ones, not only in their Health Education Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10 (above), but in their Anti-Racism and Ethno-Cultural Equity Policy, 1993. Based on the OME document, which discusses discrimination as:

The practice or act of making distinctions between people based on such characteristics as race, ethnicity, nationality, language, faith, gender, disability, or sexual orientation... (OME, 1993:42)

the OBE document states that the curriculum should:

avoid discrimination or stereotyping with respect to sex, family type, life style... (OBE, 1993a:2).

Where the Ministry accepts "sexual orientation", the OBE reduces it to a "life style".

In contrast, TO BE has officially protected its staff and students from discrimination based on sexual orientation since 1990 (McCaskell, 1995:260), two years before it was mandated by the Ministry of Education. This inclusion exemplifies the board's interpretations of the "shoulds" as "musts" (interview, TO BE Trustee of Curricula, April 27, 1995).

The reflection of all students in the curricula is exemplified in the Sexual Orientation document, which identifies homosexuals not only as members of society, but as some of the students, and some of the parent of students, in the school board-- although the document also states that sexuality is a social construction (TO BE, 1992:A1-3). The document recommends that, while:

*Sexuality education is a health issue, ...
[c]omprehensive health education requires
that time and attention be given to...the
integration of health topics into other
subject areas from the perspective of a
particular subject (TO BE, 1992:v).*

This is evident in other course guides and policies. The Newspaper Clippings, 1992, is a file of articles related to homosexuality, to be used to integrate the topic into other subject areas (TO BE, November, 1992). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Fiction and Film, (no date), is an inter disciplinary course that merges English, Film Studies, History and Drama with the study of the representation and construction of sexuality and homophobia, the connections between sexuality with "race" and sex, and the dissemination of "counter stories" that allows

for resistance to the dominant ideology, as these examples relate:

If you are a heterosexual woman or man write a page defining what you believe homophobia is, when you might be acting in a homophobic way, and how you can confront homophobia.
If you are lesbian/gay/bisexual write a page defining what internalized homophobia means for lesbian/gay/bisexual people, how you might act when internalized homophobia is operating, and how you can deal with it (TO BE, n.d.:12).

We will be looking at the essays and speeches not only of Lesbians and Gay men, but of men and women from the Black movement and from the Women's movement.... We are doing this to reclaim a bit of our own history- which is often invisible, to draw parallels between our struggles and the struggles of other movements- because so often it seems we must struggle in isolation, and to acknowledge that some of us are struggling on more than one front- because so often we are asked to split ourselves and decide which part of our history is more important. Remember that history isn't just the past- we are at a moment in history, this course is a change in that history, and you are the agents of that change (TO BE, n.d.:1111).

Courses on Lesbian and Gay Studies are also available at other TO BE alternative schools, including the Contact Secondary School (TO BE, 1995:2), and the Triangle Program:

[A] transitional program for those students who have left school or are thinking of leaving school because they have been harassed by homophobia [where]
Regular group classes in English, History and Personal Life Management are specifically designed to let students see that the cause of their difficulties is not due to their

sexual orientation, but rather a result of the heterosexism and homophobia that makes their differences seem unacceptable and inappropriate (TO BE, n.d., n.p.).

Official discourses on homophobia are in the anti harassment policies (above) and in the Sexual Orientation document, which gives a detailed definition of homophobia, including differentiations of homophobic experience based on other social variables. For instance:

Homophobia has distinct and different implications for lesbians and for gay men, because women and men do not have equal power and privilege in our society.... Racism and classism may also interact with sexism and homophobia... (TO BE, 1992:B8-9).

An area that is problematic in this document is the advice to teachers not to encourage students to come out:

Teachers should not influence or encourage students to make public announcements about their sexual orientation and should caution them about the possible consequences of coming out. While any student who did come out in class might be supported and protected in class, there are no guarantees that such protection and support would continue in other classes or across the school environment as a whole or in their personal lives

(TO BE, 1992:B10).

This presents contradictory impressions of teacher and board responsibility. On one hand, it assumes that teachers have the influence to bring a student out of the closet, and if

TO BE also has a transitional program for Afro-Canadians who are harassed by racism, the Nigiana program (Bowness, 1995:23).

2

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students are naive enough to be unaware of the implications of coming out, while on the other hand, it dismisses the need for all teachers in all classes to support anti-homophobic policies and attitudes. While it is certainly true that "there are no guarantees" for the safety of out students, there are also no guarantees that the closeted homosexual, or the heterosexual, who is perceived as homosexual will not also be the target of homophobia. If homo/bisexuals must wait for those guarantees, they may never be able to come out, because their erasure is part of homophobia, and this denies their agency to change policies and to resist. However, this advice may simply be a way of the board denying legal responsibility, or shifting it onto the individual teacher.

3.2. Semi-Official Practices

There exists a liminal space of "semi-official" practices which, I propose, takes three forms: policies that mediate education but that are not, technically, official educational policies, and discourses from other institutions that infuse both "official knowledge" and the practices of daily life in school; gaps between policies which, just as silence, the refusal to speak, becomes a form of power - a non-discourse - are deployed to maintain power; and effects of the multiple levels of bureaucracy--within and between schools, school boards, the Ministry of Education, the provincial government,

the federal government, and international interests-- which diffuse and relocate responsibility as a technique of maintaining power and of subordinating homo/bisexuals and perpetuating homophobia in schools.

Education in Canada is directed by the state through legislating curricula, mandatory attendance, and the licensing of "experts" (teachers). The state is a site of a governmentalization which blurs the borders between state and society (Gordon, 1991:3) and, while different groups and institutions may influence policy formation and may participate in multiple readings of policies, this does not negate the fact that, despite any government rhetoric of "participation", ultimate decisions are made by the state's bureaucratic mechanisms, whose processes, like the policies developed within them, become a form of social control (Lawson, 1995:361-362). Because governance is a process, policies are always in real or potential transitions, which allows the "experts" in government to frustrate resistance and manage consent because only these "experts" truly understand the policies' current state and (as many policies are intra-textual) scope.

The process that Ken Hatt, Tulio Caputo, and Barbara Perry discern for how consent is managed through shifting jurisdictions, in "Managing Consent: Canada's Experience with Neo-Conservatism", 1991, serves as a template for a semi-official deployment of homophobia in education. The essay

reveals how an overlap of jurisdictions allows different levels of governance to shift responsibility of an issue onto other levels. The overlaps fluctuate, and create gaps through which issues plummet into a void, claimed by none. The shifting of responsibility is not dependant on the issue, but on how the issue can be reconceptualized to make it another issue, and the relocations that take place or, rather, refuse to be placed, support the status quo that privileges the dominant group.

At the level of the federal government, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the basis of the Canadian State, states in section 15 that "all Canadians" are entitled to equal rights (Government of Canada, 1991) but, until May 9, 1996, it did not include "sexual orientation" as a prohibited ground for discrimination, a movement towards equal rights. It is too early to detect what changes Bill C 33 (the inclusion of "sexual orientation" into the Charter) will have on education, as the Bill only effects federal employees (Patrick, 1996:1), and it does not alter the laws and exemptions which give special rights to heterosexuals (Bell, 1991:8-11).¹¹ The inclusion is a form of accommodation that

¹¹ According to Robert Connell, the State regulates sex through "family policy, population policy, labour force and labour market management, housing policy, regulation of sexual behaviour and expression, provision of childcare, mass education, taxation and income redistribution, and the creation and use of military forces" to which Susan Prentice adds immigration policies, prohibitions against same-sex marriage and adoption, censorship, age of consent laws, parental notification requirements, criminal sexual assault legislation, police activity, and abortion restrictions (Prentice,

does not change the hierarchies of power, but maintains the same deflections of responsibility, as it is up to the judiciary to apply this Bill to other areas of governmentality, and up to lesbians to take cases to the courts.

Section 93 of the Charter states that education is under the "Exclusive Powers of Provincial Legislatures", and that the federal government cannot create laws, in respect to education, without the approval of all the provinces. This allocation of jurisdiction is not total, as elements of education are determined, if not established or subsidized, by the federal government: bilingualism, multiculturalism, education for First Nations people on reserves, some of the constitutional reforms established in the Charter relating to women, youth, and minorities (Ghosh, 1995:8) and the ceilings for government spending on education which create the parameters in which the provinces, and consequently school boards, can afford the price of education (Harp, 1988:6).

Because the federal government does not accept same-sex marriages, homo/bisexual teachers and administrators are not entitled to the same benefits as heterosexuals. Companies, unions, and associations that have attempted to give same-sex spousal benefits to their lesbian employees have had their

students (temporarily) from classes upon written request from the parents (telephone interview with the OME, Ottawa office, October 14, 1995). This gives parents¹⁴ the right to excuse their children from sexual education classes-- it also means that if the parent(s) allow(s) the(ir) child(ren) to attend the classes,¹⁵ it is not the responsibility of the teacher or the school-- but if the child wants to attend and the parent refuses, the parent has the final say as long as the child is under "legal" age.¹⁶ As sexual education classes tend to occur in the early years of high school, students under the legal age do not always have the choice to learn the sexual knowledge they need at school (or, at least, not the "official knowledge" within the classroom).

Teachers may be held responsible for teaching subject matter that offends community standards (Dickinson, 1995:265), although "community" is defined by those in power. Lobby

¹⁴ Although I am using parents as plural, I am not implying that all students have, or should have, two parents.

¹⁵ Discourses on parental choice and responsibility construct two types of families: the nuclear family, which is the guardian of morality, central to the social system, and concerned about their children's education; and the single-parent or two-income family: symbolizing social breakdown and moral decay (with women in the workforce as both the cause and effect of social decay) (Kenway, 1990:196).

¹⁶ "Legal" age is problematic, as it differs depending on the context (drinking, voting, being tried in adult court) and between provinces. Furthermore, as the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits discrimination based on age (with certain exceptions), it may be illegal for parents to censor what their children may or may not learn at school. The age of consent for sex is also different for heterosexuals and homosexuals (Belyea and Dubinsky, 1994:26).

Secondary School Teachers' Federation, also ignores. The union suggests that a teacher discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation would be dismissed for a different reason, so there is no need to change their by-laws to include sexual orientation. The union also does not provide spousal benefits for teachers in same-sex relations because they are waiting for the Charter to be changed first (telephone interview, OSSTF representative, November, 1994).

With unequal protection from either the unions, the provincial Ministry of Labour, and both the provincial and federal Human Rights Codes, it becomes more apparent how teacher-training institutions, influenced by the provincial Ministry of Education and Training terms of teacher certification (Harp, 1988:34) and guidelines, become sites of normalizing and disciplining the teachers who, in turn, are supposed to normalize and discipline their students.

Educational policies are provincially mandated, but school boards are elected locally, and trustees are semi-independent from the Ministry. School taxes are decided municipally, although the municipal government cannot control school expenditures (Selby, 1977:467). Few boards of education will pass a policy that would be opposed by their principals, while few principals will attempt to implement a policy that would be opposed by the teachers (McCaskell, 1995:257). This provides the impression that teachers have

the final say, and that the movement of power in education is from the bottom of the hierarchy upwards.

Despite the apparent responsibility given to teachers, they, like students, are under surveillance at schools, and may be disciplined for not following the school, board, or Ministry policies. Teachers are often in an ambiguous position: they are ultimately responsible for what happens in the classroom, yet have little control over what is taught, as the Ministry and boards create the units from which they only select;¹¹ they are "experts", yet they are often deskilled because curricula on "sensitive" issues, such as sexual education, requires that:

department heads, principals, and supervisory officials must be made aware of the content and processes within the expanded course of study for each school. Parents should also be made aware of the general content and processes and the purpose of the course (OME, 1978:26).

Not only does the responsibility for teaching "appropriate" sexual education become less the jurisdiction of the teacher, but the students' choice on what to learn about sexuality is also removed from them. The Ontario Education Act section on compulsory education (section 21:2) and the duties of principals (regulation 298:23:3), allow principals to excuse

¹¹ Deflecting responsibility for sex ed has been part of Ontario educational practices since its inception. When Social Hygiene, the precursor to sexual education, was first agreed upon as a formal curriculum, in 1944, the Superintendent of Schools wanted the Department of Health, and not the Department of Education, to be responsible for organizing the training of the teachers (Adams, 1994:63).

students (temporarily) from classes upon written request from the parents (telephone interview with the OME, Ottawa office, October 13, 1995). This gives parents¹⁴ the right to excuse their children from sexual education classes-- it also means that if the parent(s) allow(s) the(ir) child(ren) to attend the classes,¹⁵ it is not the responsibility of the teacher or the school-- but if the child wants to attend and the parent refuses, the parent has the final say as long as the child is under "legal" age.¹⁶ As sexual education classes tend to occur in the early years of high school, students under the legal age do not always have the choice to learn the sexual knowledge they need at school (or, at least, not the "official knowledge" within the classroom).

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¹⁶ "Legal" age is problematic, as it differs depending on the context (drinking, voting, being tried in adult court) and between provinces. Furthermore, as the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms prohibits discrimination based on age (with certain exceptions), it may be illegal for parents to censor what their children may or may not learn at school. The age of consent for sex is also different for heterosexuals and homosexuals (Belyea and Dubinsky, 1994:26).

groups, which are also involved in educational policy-making, are seen as special interests groups--although who gets labelled as "special interest" and who gets labelled as "the voice of the community" relates to an already-existing power of discourse. Policy-makers view public involvement as divisive rather than helpful (Lawson, 1995:361), while lobby groups are aware that "social and institutional change does not come out of the good will of those in power", but through the intervention of communities (Mukerjee, 1992:73).

The OME Policy Memorandum 122 states that school councils will be in place by April, 1996, for each school. According to the Ministry, these councils will represent the "community" and consist of parents, the school principal, a teacher, a non-teaching staff of the school, a student elected by the student body, and community representatives (telephone interview with the Ministry of Education, Ottawa office, October 13, 1995). The school councils will only be able to select from guidelines already approved by the Ministry, yet the image of school councils will reduce criticism of the Ministry, as responsibility over school curricula has now been shifted onto the community. In the process of "speaking for the community", school councils will also reduce responsibility over what is taught from teachers, students, parents, parent-teacher associations, and teachers unions.

This policy on school councils does not address or involve the community as much as it discursively constructs

"THE COMMUNITY": those with the time (and money) to afford to be on the council; those who are parents; those who are school employees (and who may feel coerced to follow the authorities); those businesses that can influence education through donations and co-op programmes; and other social institutions that have the population to demand representation. As representatives must be voted in, the voting process establishes a democracy based on majority, not on inclusion.

Exclusionary practices of homo/bisexual students are indirectly effected by discourses from other institutions which influence educational practices. Scientific discourses on "facts" limit official knowledge to what is claimed as "objective" and "observable", while religious discourses on "morality" makes sexual activity a moral act-- and one of the few "moral" subjects in school.¹⁷ Medical and psychological discourses on "normal" are basic to the current dividing practices of sexuality. Economic discourses surrounding global competition and fiscal responsibility get transformed in education into "standardization" and "core-curricula" (Livingstone and Hart, 1995:16). "Core-curricula" provokes questions as to what knowledge is basic and important, and who decides (Werner, 1995:127), while management discourse

¹⁷ Morality is not a subject of business, economics, or science classes, nor is the competition promoted in physical education and throughout the grading system considered "immoral".

presents a chaotic, subjective, inefficient system that it claims to replace with order, efficiency, neutrality and meritocracy-- although who the system is efficient for is hardly neutral (Ball, 1990b: 154; 1577).

Economic cut-backs threaten to close early schooling, forcing families to pay for day-care and, as those who cannot afford to pay may require one parent, often the mother, to quit work to stay with the child(ren), this re-establishes a "traditional" family arrangement. Single mothers, often in the lowest income bracket, may have to go on welfare to raise the child(ren), which may reduce their opportunity to further their education. While some schools have day cares for teenage mothers, cut-backs to education may reduce these facilities, which will reduce the education not only of heterosexual females, but of the teenage lesbians who get pregnant in order to prove they are not homosexual (Hetrick and Martin, 1987:33). The abandonment of the Employment Equity Bill, while never protecting bi/homosexuals, diminishes the chances for females to find work in male-dominated fields, making females more dependant on men or enforcing a gendered division of labour. This may effect school subject choices, as well as further marginalize lesbians, who do not see their future as male-associated. Schools can officially reduce the choices of subjects or areas of a subject to be taught, but semi-official practices are also effective, as they deflect responsibility. To under-fund programs and schools, as

happens with "school-based management", creates the appearance that it is the board or school that cuts courses and resources out of economic restraint, not from the ideological interests of those who distribute the money (Connell, 1993:615).¹⁸ A reduced job-market and higher tuition limit the number of students who enrol in universities, as well as redirect students to fields that are more career-oriented and marketable--and less politically threatening. Opportunities to study gender and sexuality will have less currency. These financial-management concerns are not necessarily the reasons for changes in educational policies and practices, but they can be used to establish a "core curriculum" that limits official knowledge, and a "standardization" that maintains the standards that encompass dividing practices.

3.3 Unofficial Practices

The "hidden curricula", according to Giroux and Penna, are "those unstated norms, values and beliefs that are transmitted to students through the underlying structure of classrooms, as opposed to formally recognized and sanctioned dimensions of classroom experience" (Richer, 1988:272, citing "Social Relations in the Classroom: The Dialectics of the Hidden Curriculum", 1977, in Edcentric:40-41;39-46). Formal

¹⁸ On cut-backs effecting education for adolescent mothers: McDade, 1987; for "non-white studies": Dei, 1994.

recognition and sanction may be directly absent, but the norms, values, and beliefs are embodied in other indirect discourses that make certain practices not hidden, but unremarkable.

The basic element of the hidden curriculum is the subject that is made visible: the student. In learning how to be a student, the individual becomes both the disciplined subject and the subject of surveillance: the student who knows and is known. Just as individuals are disciplined to become students -- to act as students, to comply through rewards and punishments to behaviour that fits the typologies of "student"-- individuals are disciplined into gender and sexual behaviour defined as "normal". In the process of conforming, students observe each other, in order to establish that their behaviour is normal or that another's is not: individuals reproduce dividing practices. Surveillance is done on students by students through peer-pressure, punishing and disciplining each other in place of, or alongside of, the institution which lays the groundwork, provides the arena, and calls the shots.

When teachers and administrators choose to dismiss comments as "jokes", and to see homophobic violence as unrelated to sexual identity, it is an unofficial condoning of homophobia and, if only physical violence is reported, then this teaches the students that verbal abuse or psychological stress are neither significant nor the responsibility of the

administration. Violence may be used to warn heterosexuals of the consequences of sexual transgressions, but it does punish bi/homosexuals. This fear of violence, ostracism, and loathing leads many homo/bisexuals to stay in the closets: a self-surveillance. The closet becomes a panopticon: a prison that others may see into, and one that makes you always aware that you may be discovered. The closet may create self-hate as well as self-surveillance.

Homo/bisexual students also discipline each other, as well as themselves. As a means of appearing straight, some homo/ bisexual students attack or accuse others perceived as being homosexual, which reinforces self-hatred. They demonstrate how the disciplined subject does not need official policies, and how normalization can be unofficial, working through the body. They, along with heterosexuals, also show that normalization can be a form of violence.

Fear of being discovered, of homophobic violence, and of internalized self-hate causes some homo/bisexual students to remove themselves from schools entirely. Thirty percent of all teen-aged suicides are by homosexuals, and homo/bisexual students also have a higher tendency to skip school or to drop out (Tremblay, 1994; Elia, 1993; Magnusson, 1992; Schneider, 1988; Hetrick and Martin, 1987). OME studies mention that students who have low self-esteem and feel alienated are more likely to drop out of school, yet the Ministry does not consider homosexual students as a high risk group for suicide

(OME, 1987:C:72; 85; Karp, 1988; Lawton et al, 1988; Sullivan, 1988). Although studies that report homosexuals at high risk of dropping out came out after the initial Ministry study (but concurrent with other Ministry sponsored reports), no later Ministry documents have discussed the issue. Ironically, the OME report recommends that those at risk should not be identified (OME, 1987:C:103), although this erasure is what leads some homosexuals to have low self-esteem and alienation. Instead of a positive identification of homo/bisexuality, the report recommends that teachers be assigned to monitor students (OME, 1977:C:112). Students are individuals at risk, rather than connected as part of a group that is made at risk; students become the subject-- "problem" students-- requiring surveillance.

Schools, except, arguably, for single-sex schools, are places for adolescents to meet and develop sexual relationships: the social practice of dating, the visible practice of exchanging high school rings or jackets, and the spacial practice of going to (and being seen at) school dances and the graduation "prom" are school "traditions". Schools limit where sexual activity occurs, so that halls and dances become acceptable spaces for limited heterosexual contact that is both private and public, open to surveillance and approval, while homosexual activity, usually, is not tolerated in the public spaces of schools. While two heterosexuals kissing in the halls are often ignored or thought of as cute, two

homosexuals kissing are described as "flaunting it"; the heterosexual couple may be teased, while a same-sex couple may be physically attacked. Heterosexuality is made visible and acceptable, while homosexuality is both hidden and searched for because it is made unacceptable.

Stephen Richer details four typologies of "unofficial curriculum": authoritarianism, the fragmentation of physical and social reality, an ethic of inter-individual competition, and the reinforcement of traditional sex differences (1981-1982:46-7). These are discerned in the unofficial homophobic practices that subjectify homo/bisexual students.

Authoritarianism relates to the power/knowledge of authority, to the subjectification of the student as a "docile body", and to punishment, including homophobia, as social control. These elements have been discussed above. For Richer, authority is embodied in the teacher. Authority also may be outside the teacher (e.g.: in students who resist) or school (e.g.: in homophobic laws, traditions, and social institutions), and teachers may subvert or bring into question authoritarian practices and official knowledge (e.g.: the lesbian and lesbian-positive teacher; critical pedagogues). In part, the agency of teachers is conditioned by official policies (curricula guidelines; Education Act) and semi-official practices (teacher assessments and/or the lack of legal protection for openly homo/bisexual teachers).

Similarly, authority outside of teachers relates to the official and semi-official policies and discourses that interweave, and sometimes contradict, different institutions of governmentality (i.e.: the family/teacher *in loco parentis*).

The student as agent of resistance will be discussed below. This agency, like that of teachers, is also conditioned by semi/un/official practices. One of the unofficial practices that contributes to the disciplined student (diminishing agency) is the fragmentation of reality.

The fragmentation of physical and social reality teaches that knowledge is external to the individual student and that real knowledge is official knowledge. The feelings of bi/homosexual students and the truths of their lived experiences outside school ~~are~~ negated by the official knowledge and daily practices inside school. This can lead to a fracturing of identities within school (in the closet) and outside, but it can also lead to a denial and resistance to official knowledge.

Schools make sexuality confusing through contradictions and gaps in official knowledge, and through making students doubt their intrinsic knowledge: their feelings and experiences. Official knowledge focuses on cognition and skills, which peripheralizes emotions. Unofficially, traditional gender attributes devalue most emotions as "feminine" (except for the "masculine" anger), connecting

education to constructing a gendered knowledge. When sexual education presents sex as functional and moral while ignoring desire and pleasure, students may question their understanding of sex and knowledge of themselves while accepting the authority of official knowledge.

The reinforcement of traditional sex differences, associates sex with traditional gender roles and, by extension, with heterosexuality. The OME Sex Roles study admits that adults in schools are role-models for gender representation (OME, 1977:25). Heterosexual teachers can speak of their spouses and have their company at school dances and graduation ceremonies. The sexual relationships of female heterosexual teachers are announced each time they are addressed ("Mrs."), and legalized heterosexual relationships are visible with wedding rings. The silence imposed upon bi/homosexual teachers makes their sexuality the object of a suspicion and surveillance that they can neither confirm nor deny, and teaching students that there are either no bi/homosexual teachers or that homo/bisexuality is something hidden and anti-social.

Gender and sexuality are often taught simultaneously. The Sex Roles study reports that 32% of females in school books are represented primarily as the wives, lovers, or mistresses of men. While only six percent of men are represented primarily as husbands or lovers, this does not imply that the other 94% are bi/homosexual; they are primarily

identified by their occupation (OME, 1977:141). Women are presented as dependant on men (negating lesbianism), and the [inferred] heterosexual male works for the domestic female, reinforcing gendered work and a specific family formation.

Gendered work and family relationships are not only presented in the curricula but in the allocation of school duties. According to the 1990 Education Act of Ontario, the principal is "to maintain proper order and discipline in the school", and the teacher, under the direction of the principal, is to do the same in "his [sic] classroom" (s.265b; 264[1]e) (Dickinson, 1995:267). While the male teacher enforces discipline, he does it under the authority of the paterfamilias. The teacher becomes the wife, feminizing the profession and replicating traditional gendered forms of power and family relationships.¹⁹

Competition is integral to the dividing practices that compare, differentiate, and hierarchize. A consequence is that difference is seen as antagonistic, and the "other" is given a moral value. Paradoxically, competition assumes equal opportunities to succeed, which promotes a meritocratic assumption of social relations. Success, both moral and financial, is related to individual competition that both ignores and relies on unequal opportunity against the other,

¹⁹ This is more evident at the primary school level, where the majority of the teachers are female.

who is less good, but more threatening. Competing requires inclusion in the competition, and while the occasional inclusion of homo/bisexuality in the official curricula portrays homo/bisexuals as unequal and threatening, their general erasure from the curricula removes them from the competition.

Educational policies reproduce dominant social values and identities by disciplining subjects towards a particular form of heterosexuality. These dividing practices preclude an equality to benefit based on homo/bisexuality identity, yet several educational policies discuss unbiased teaching, a promotion of social tolerance, and an insistence that all students see themselves reflected in the curricula. Gramsci warns that structures should not be looked at hypothetically, but after the processes have happened, in order to see their actual consequences (1988:191). In order to analyze the effects of these dividing practices within the schools, and the conditions by which certain practices are used over others, this work must now look at agency.

4. Sexualizing the Student Body

It would be naive to assume that all policies are implemented simply because they are written and, as the semi-official policy section alluded, the deflection of actual responsibility may preclude implementation. Even if the bureaucratic chain manifests the policy into practice, there is no assurance that it maintains its integrity or that the receptor, the student, will accept it (Richer, 1990:94). If the previous chapter illustrated how the Ministry of Education and the school boards discursively constructed sexuality as it should be taught and regulated in theory, this chapter looks at what actually happens in practice for the student-respondents of the two boards under study. What happens is that homophobia is practised not only through "official" curricula and school policies, but through semi- and unofficial practices that divide students by sexuality and normalize a particular form of heterosexuality; that these practices are equally part of the students' education; and that students do not passively accept these practices but resist, transform, implement, and generate policies and practices. Students are social, and sexual, agents, active in educating.

4.1 "Official" Sexual Education

Two areas of education need to be assessed in their official capacity of teaching and regulating homo/bisexuality: the curricula and policies towards homophobia. According to the OME, sexuality is part of the Health/Physical Education and Family Studies/Society courses, so these should be the subjects where the respondents learned about bi/homosexuality and, if the boards follow OME guidelines for "reflecting all the students" and avoiding systemic discrimination, where bi/homosexuality is given an equally balanced representation, if not time allocation, as is given to heterosexuality. Following OBE board recommendations, sexuality is to be restricted to these subjects while, at TO BE, it is to be included in other subjects when applicable.

According to the thirty students who responded to the question of whether homo/bisexuality was ever discussed in any of their classes, thirteen responded that it was never discussed. If the five students who attend the TO BE Triangle Program and Contact alternative schools are excluded, as lesbian/gay studies is integral to the former and is the basis for courses in the latter, then slightly more than half the respondents (52%) could not recall any discussion of homo/bisexuality. As one student articulated:

*Lack of discussion was certainly
the most homophobic aspect of high school.*

It is arguable whether erasure is "the most" homophobic aspect, as degrees of homophobia cannot be measured objectively; what is salient here is that homophobia is perceived by the students in erasures. The lesson of absence is: this is not to be learned here, which, as one of the premises of the "unofficial" curriculum is that only knowledge from school is legitimate (Richer, 1981-82: 46-47), implicitly becomes: this does not need to be learned, it is "illegitimate".¹

For those respondents who stated that homo/bisexuality was discussed in their high school education, two students from the OBE and one student from TO BE were adamant that it was never mentioned in their sexual education classes. Six students, all from the OBE, reported presentations of bi/homosexuality that correspond to these examples:

Homosexuality wasn't part of the important stuff. It was left to the end, and the teacher asked if there were any questions about it, but in a way to stop people from asking any questions.

The phys. ed. teacher said, "I'm required to discuss homosexuality. Does anyone in the class know a fag?" That was the end of it.

Homo/bisexuality is only one area of Sexual Education, yet respondents claimed it was peripheralized to virtual non-

¹ As will be discussed below--the official, semi- and unofficial categories are not discreet-- the erasure is not only perceived in the curricula but in the absence of spaces and agents.

existence; left to the end, it is easy to imagine that extended discussion of other topics or unforeseen events would have eliminated this topic. As it was, the presentations were begrudging and constructed in a manner to preclude discussion--although the lack of questions could then be rationalized by the teacher as the students' lack of interest. The teaching method also made the students the experts ("does anyone know...?"), which could make the student who knows an assumed homosexual or guilty by association, as well as absolving the teacher from accusations of homo/bisexuality. This was evident from the account of another OBE student:

In phys. ed., the teacher answered questions about homosexuality. He answered them well, but he said he didn't know enough to really talk about it.

It is the responsibility of teachers to know about the subjects they are required to teach and, in this response, the teacher is clarifying that his knowledge is theoretical, not experiential, and that failing in his responsibility as a teacher is compensated by his established heterosexuality. The first two examples, like the erasures, present homo/bisexuality as something not worth knowing (and if the student knows, or expresses interest in knowing, the student becomes known and someone to be watched), while the last example keeps the subject as theoretical and outside the school body.

Not all teachers avoided discussion of homo/ bisexuality: one respondent from a TO BE alternative school mentioned that homosexuality was brought up in a positive manner, and two students from the OBE reported teachers discussing homo/bisexuality, although misinformation was provided:

The teacher taught us how to identify queers. It was based on stereotypes. It was seen as a joke by the students.

The sex ed. teacher said, "Lesbians all have sex with dildoes".

Besides their fallaciousness, the first illustration perpetuates stereotypes and makes homo/bisexuality something to be watched for and laughed at, while the second illustration maintains a stereotype that sex is phallocentric. This focus on the penis as defining sex was echoed in a response from another OBE student:

Our sex ed. class was taught by the school nurse, an elderly woman. No one was going to discuss anything about sex with her. Not only was it heterosexual, it was only penile-vaginal intercourse. It was totally useless for me.

This quote also echoes complaints about the lack of presentation and the teacher as precluding discussion. Furthermore, it draws attention to the presentation of heterosexuality as a "how to" of vaginal-penile intercourse, connected to reproduction and, therefore, presenting heterosexuality as essential for society. Classes about

homosexuality were not reported as presenting a "how to" of same-sex acts.

The other area of Sexual Education/Health where homo/bisexuality is included in the Ministry guidelines is on AIDS. Only one respondent (OBE) mentioned homo/bisexuality discussed in this connection:

In sex ed. it was in relation to AIDS, but the teacher said anyone could get it.

This sole response begs an explanation; after all, AIDS/HIV is associated with homosexuality in Ministry and school board documents. As no responses come directly from the students interviewed, possible explanations that can be based on their other responses, include: the discomfort teachers had with homosexuality precluded discussion of homo/bisexuality with AIDS/HIV, for transmission would have been difficult to explain without describing [high risk] same-sex sexual acts; the promulgation of reproductive, monogamous, heterosexual marriage, combined with the increase of HIV-infection among young heterosexuals, peripheralized homo/bisexuals; the increase in knowledge of AIDS/HIV since the publication of the educational documents have provided teachers with the understanding (and responsibility) to update the Ministry and school units.²

² Teachers may not feel the same responsibility to update knowledge in their presentation of sexualities because AIDS/HIV can be presented "objectively" as medical "facts", while sexualities are still debated as constructs or essential.

In Family Studies/Society, five of six OBE respondents mentioned discussions of bi/homosexuality, although not as part of families:

*Canadian families were discussed.
They talked about progressive
types--except homosexual families.*

Rather, the recent governmental debates over same-sex couples and the inclusion of "sexual orientation" into the Charter of Rights and Freedoms made mention of the subject anecdotal:

*The teacher mentioned homosexuals,
briefly, but she justified it as
part of the legal issue.*

Unlike updating information on AIDS/HIV, this form of inclusion of homo/bisexuality, while making it alive for the students, did not mean that it was integral to the unit; students who were not taking this subject this past year did not have same-sex couples included in their discussions on families and, as the above quotes illustrate, homo/bisexuals were not part of families, but part of a legislation.¹ This was reflected in how these current affairs were presented to the students in both Family Studies/Society and other subjects: *Should homosexuals have equal rights? Should same-sex couples be allowed to adopt?* While they stimulated critical thinking, the questions were phrased so as to assume that homo/bisexuals were not already part of, and

¹ As will be discussed below, homo/bisexuality often was included in the classes not because of the unit, but because students introduced the topic, as was the situation of one of these five respondents.

constituting, families, including the families of some of the students.⁴

Family Studies/Society and Sexual Education/Health should have been the only subjects where bi/homosexuality was introduced, according to the OME and OBE, yet fifteen of the seventeen students who stated that homo/bisexuality was discussed in their classes mentioned homo/bisexuality appearing in subjects other than the mandated ones.

English class was most frequently mentioned (eight respondents from the OBE; five from TO BE) as the site for discussions of sexuality. The five TO BE responses can be explained due to the "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Fiction and Film" course given as part of the English curriculum at Contact school, and English Literature as the "heart" of the Triangle Program. Respondents from the OBE did not explain why sexuality appeared in their English classes-- although one respondent recommended it as a better place than Family Studies or Physical Education, as English is a required subject for all students at all grade-levels-- although some suggested that many of the authors currently in the syllabus are homosexual, suspected of homosexuality, or reported to

⁴ For one OBE respondent whose teacher mentioned lesbigays raising families and who reported positive responses from the other students, it may be relevant that the respondent was attending an adult high school. The two TO BE respondents who listed a positive discussion in Society class did not elaborate on the presentations, so nothing can be surmised from their responses.

have had same-sex sexual relations, which is conflated with homosexuality--

In English class we talked about Shakespeare possibly being gay.

Furthermore, methods of teaching English, other than literature, such as creative writing, essays, media studies, debates, and journals, provide the opportunities for students to discuss sexuality, both as a given and individually-selected topic. Of those respondents who mentioned English, the only one who mentioned a negative presentation described one of erasure:

When the literature was about homosexuals, when the sex wasn't mentioned but it was written by a gay author, or it was written as heterosexual but you knew the author was really writing about homosexuals, it would just be interpreted as heterosexual.

All twelve others experienced a positive representation and a positive response from the other students. As three respondents mentioned that it was discussed in relation to human rights or the connection between homophobia and other forms of oppression, I draw from this and the illustrations from the Sexual Education classes that how the topic is framed strongly effects the responses, and that the teacher is not merely a conduit for "official" knowledge, but a mediator of "official" and "unofficial" knowledge. None of this, though, explains why those English teachers the respondents encountered were more lesbian-gay-positive than teachers of other subjects.

Other subjects that mentioned homo/bisexuality were Law, History, Drama, French, Politics, and Geography, wherein there was a range of presentations, including peripheralized, stereotyped, conflated with pre-homosexual relations, and appended due to current affairs:

Even when plays had gay content, it was dismissed as not important.

In Politics we discussed the Human Rights debates.

In History we talked about the Spartan army.

In one of our school plays, the director challenged homophobia, yet the gay character was still played as a "queen".

Gay characters would be acted out stereotypically, even though acting out other stereotypes was not accepted.⁵

For one respondent:

Homosexuality was always discussed in scientific terms. It was never homosexuality as gay culture, only homosexuality as something to be analyzed; a subject, not people.

I agree with this respondent to the extent that homosexuality tends to be presented as outside the student body-- even in Drama, it is the persona put on, not the actor-- but what

⁵ Several respondents mentioned that, despite negative portrayals of homosexuals in Drama presentations or classes, many males enjoyed the opportunity to play homosexual characters. Acting provides a safe space for males to transgress social conventions in a similar way that sports allows them physical contact with other men that is not otherwise acceptable. The only respondent who mentioned females playing lesbian characters did not mention a similar enjoyment but, rather, a homophobic response from the audience.

emerges from the above responses is an ambivalence which is less apparent in the responses about the negative portrayals in Sexual Education and the positive ones in English and, for some respondents, in Family/Society classes. It is that, while they were aware and critical of the negative aspects of the representations and misrepresentations, there was within those representations, at least some positive elements which could gave a [questionably false] sense of history and community ("the Spartan army"; homosexual authors and gay characters)--and, therefore, a lesbian culture outside the school-- and hope (Human Rights legislation, challenging homophobia). Within that ambiguity the students have had to evaluate what knowledge to accept or reject.

The inclusion of homo/bisexuality into a wide range of subjects does not mean that sexuality is a part of the "official" curriculum but that there is a discrepancy between what is mandated and what takes place. In part, this relates to the mediation of teachers but, more so, to the mediation of the students. More so because students introduce the topic when it is erased, challenge its presentation when it is not erased, and moderate the presentation and the responses:

Homosexuality is only discussed if asked by the students.

Since I've come out to my Law teacher, she's started introducing the topic of gay rights into the class discussions.

In Family class people are more positive because they know there are openly gay

students in the class who will challenge them.

The problem with this is that it relies on students to introduce, complicate, or decentre the curriculum, yet this is also its benefit: it encourages, sometimes forces, students to think critically and to actively participate in the content of their education.

One area of their "official" education which is more reliant on the mediation of the teachers and administration is in the enforcement of the anti-homophobic violence policy. This bifurcates into two issues: Is it known? and Is it enforced? Regardless of whether or not it is included in each school's Code of Behaviour, unless students are aware of it, those who are attacked would be unlikely to report it to the school, while those who are homophobic would not have the warning that their behaviour is unacceptable. If the policy is known but not enforced, then those who are attacked might feel less safe in their schools because those who are homophobic may believe that their behaviour is condoned.

There was a remarkable difference between awareness of the anti-homophobic policy between the two boards under study. While ten of the twelve respondents from TO BE were aware of a "zero-tolerance" to homophobia, none of the twenty respondents from the OBE knew of a comparable protection.

Within TO BE high schools, there was a difference between schools in the degree that the policy was known. Respondents from the regular high schools included the two respondents who

were unaware of the policy, along with two respondents who questioned the degree of awareness:

If they did it wasn't general knowledge.

I know that the Board has a policy about homophobia, but I'm not certain that it is put up at our school.

Three respondents were well-informed, as this student specified:

In our harassment policy (in the student agenda), discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation is prohibited and clearly outlined.

Respondents from the alternative schools were aware of the policy, as well as their school's protocol for enforcement:

They have to write a written apology, or they are kicked out.

Homophobia, for obvious reasons, was not a problem at the Triangle Program.

In terms of the policy's enforcement, one TO BE respondent questioned whether it would be enforced, although, as that respondent was attending the Triangle Program, it is unclear whether the comment was cynical of the regular schools or based on previous experiences. From the OBE, one respondent who was unaware of any policy supposed that, as an ad hoc response:

Homophobia is treated the same as racism or any other hate crime,

*but with more hesitation.*⁶

This comment reveals faith in the school system, although "with more hesitation" becomes the optimal phrase. It may be looking too hard to claim that "more hesitation" means that racism and other hate-crimes are also acted upon with hesitation, and in the hierarchy of subordinated groups, those attacked as homosexuals are at the bottom, but what this response leaves open-ended is why is there any hesitation. In this, the seemingly positive response does not differ much from the cynical comments of the other OBE respondents, which corresponded to this student's claim that:

*A homophobic incident would be swept under the rug.*⁷

One of the possible explanations given for a lack of enforcement was that:

If there was homophobic violence reported, the school wouldn't report it as such. They'd just say it was a violence problem, not linked to anything.

This is an acknowledgement of the power of discourse, that the students who reported homophobia did not have officially the final say, although the interplay here is with the power of discourse of adults and "professionals" as well as of

⁶ What makes this respondent's comments particularly remarkable is that this well-informed student has a parent who is a principal and who discusses sexuality issues with the youth.

⁷ A pertinent metaphor, as sweeping homophobia under the rug, axiomatically, forces homosexuals back into the closet.

heterosexuals. The other possible explanation respondents gave was that the school's reputation would be tarnished by the acknowledgement of homophobia:

When I reported [the homophobic comments] to the principal, nothing happened because he didn't want to cause problems.

It was a politically-correct school-- except when it came to homophobia.

It is unclear whether the "problems" stem from admitting that homophobia exists or from admitting that there are people perceived as homosexual in the school; in either case, those perceived as homosexual became the problems. What was, figuratively, "politically-correct" was the facade of concern and, literally, only responding to what was politically-legal (as "sexual orientation" was not under legal protection at the time).

The problems with homophobia, for the respondents of this study, were not only with the "official" educational practices, but also with the deployment of homophobia in semi- and unofficial practices.

4.2 Semi-Official Sexual Education

Semi-official practices were infrequently mentioned by the respondents. According to one respondent from the OBE:

We wanted to have peer-counselling in the school to deal with issues that students didn't feel comfortable talking to teachers or counsellors about, but the principal said there

*wasn't enough funding to start it,
or people with enough expertise to
deal with certain issues.*

This comment illustrates how responsibility for dealing with student problems gets deflected into the problems of another jurisdiction (not enough money from the Board, the Ministry, or the public tax base), and how the economic and management discourses of "under-funding", "expertise" and, underlying them, "efficiency" and "accountability", replace the educational needs of the students.

Respondents connected homophobia in their schools with other social institutions. Eighteen of the thirty-two respondents from both boards wanted more of their homosexual teachers to be out, yet, as one of the respondents stated:

*If I was a teacher I would not come out,
because authority doesn't protect you
always.*

Several of these respondents acknowledged that teachers were unlikely to come out until sexual orientation was protected in the Charter and there were more positive portrayals of homosexuals in the media.

For one TO BE respondent, the well-being of the student was related to welfare and housing, which implicated other provincial Ministries in that student's access to education:

*I came out because I needed to accept myself.
It helped that I left home. I'm living in a
group home now.⁸*

⁸ This was more clearly articulated by a respondent from a separate school board, who was concerned that cutbacks to student welfare would seriously effect the opportunities of

Eleven of the thirty-two students specified that, in order for them to feel more comfortable being lesbian in their schools, they had to be given equal rights based on government policies, that what happened to them in school was a reflection of societal practices. As one respondent recommended, change has "to start in the world, then go down into schools."

Some of the homophobia these students experienced was perceived as systemic to society. This systemic homophobia was also perceived in the "unofficial" practices that divided students by sexuality.

4.3 "Unofficial" Sexual Education

There were the usual homophobic jokes.

"Fag" is used as an insult, even when the person's not homosexual. They are not even aware when they use it."

youth, who have been kicked out of their homes due to their sexuality, to attend school: a concern that the respondent quoted above experienced, if vaguely expressed. Susan Belyea and Karen Dubinsky have noted that the economic dependence on parents affects adolescents' behaviour, including their willingness to come out (1994:34). John Campey et al report that approximately half the students in the TO BE student support group were on welfare due to family difficulties based on coming out, while those who lived at home tended to be in the closet (1994:91).

⁹ It was unclear whether "fag" was used to refer to both males and females. Respondents did not mention a specific term for females used in a similar manner and, as female respondents often mentioned that homophobia was often directed at males, the blending of sexes in the term "fag" or the lack of concern for lesbians supports the argument that homophobia directs gendered

Seventeen of the twenty OBE respondents and nine of the twelve TO BE students experienced homophobic remarks from other students, usually in the form of "jokes" which, if they become "usual" do not become less demeaning or serve as a constant reminder, for all students, of the subordinated position of homosexuals. When not used as "jokes", these remarks would often be pejorative critiques. Looking or acting "like a fag" was often synonymous with looking or acting "effeminate", so the slur served to regulate "appropriate" forms of masculinity/femininity as well as to connect and subordinate homosexuals and females. The conflation of gender roles and sexuality was also apparent in comments by some of the respondents, which illustrates that homosexuals have also been taught the same expectations and, particularly with males, being gay does not mean being non-sexist:

*I kind of called it upon myself by
being so effeminate.*

*There was this stereotypically gay
student in the school. I was glad
I wasn't as effeminate as him....*

Homophobic slurs were also used by and towards females, but several respondents noted that the majority of accusations came from and were directed towards males, which points to homophobia as used predominantly to regulate males. According to one female respondent, threats towards lesbians were

relationships primarily through masculinity.

"always from males", which further supports the argument that homosexuality is perceived as a threat to male dominance, as lesbians do not need men.¹⁰ These terms have been incorporated into the youth lexicon and become synonymous with "abnormal" (e.g.: "That's so gay"). As two TO BE respondents from Contact, a lesbigay-positive school, also reported pejorative terms used, this demonstrates how homophobia has become normalized, just as it demonstrates how sexuality pervades social discourse--even when the subject is non-sexual-- and how judgements of normality are on the edge of cognition, ingrained and cued for enforcement.

Homophobic comments were not exclusively from the respondents' peers. Teachers were reported by three OBE respondents joking about homosexuals, ignoring homophobic comments in their classes, or not reporting complaints about homophobia:

*In History class the teacher joked
about "those boys" while lisping
and waving a limp wrist.*

*I've been called "fag" by other students,
had things thrown at me. When I've
asked teachers why they don't stop it,
they say they didn't see or hear anything.*

Administrators were accused by four OBE respondents of homophobic comments although, as one respondent claimed, the

¹⁰ Which may explain why some homophobic comments against lesbians insert a phallus ("Lesbians all use dildoes") or "castrate" women ("failed men").

refusal to acknowledge lesbigays in the student body was also recognized as a form of homophobic violence:

Being ignored by administrators is as bad as being beaten by other students.

Guidance counsellors were reported as offering homophobic advice to three OBE respondents:

My guidance counsellor tried to discourage me from coming out. She said that I might get beaten up or hurt, and that it would be easier for me if I stayed in the closet.

The guidance counsellor says that they can't control homophobia because it can't be proved without a student complaining, which can cause more violence. The counsellor told me to "deal with it".

Counsellor training was lacking. My counsellor told me, "School's not right for you".¹¹

Verbal homophobia from administrators was experienced by only one TO BE respondent, and none mentioned teachers or the guidance department, which reflects a better training of staff and better enforcement of policies at TO BE than at the OBE. This can also be the result of TO BE protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation in staff policies, support groups for TO BE's lesbigay staff, and a counsellor specifically for sexuality issues at the board's head Guidance Department.

Eight respondents (seven from the OBE) reported vandalism and graffiti, including slurs painted on lockers, pages torn

¹¹ On responses of, and towards, guidance counsellors and homosexual students: Telljohann and Price, 1993; Sears, 1992.

out of library books dealing with homo/ bisexuality, pro-lesbigay posters destroyed, students' lockers damaged and books stolen, and a pen-knife stabbed through a student's graduation book photo. Classroom desks, stairwells, and bathrooms were common sites for graffiti, although one respondent claimed:

*You don't pay attention, after a while,
to the graffiti.*

Deciding what to ignore requires a continuous judgement and, therefore, attention. Homophobic graffiti is not ignored as much as it is normalized, made "usual", like the jokes.

Physical forms of homophobia, if not unusual, were rarely expected:

*In Grade Ten, a student came up to me
and started choking me, for no reason,
and calling me "queer".*

Five of the OBE sample were physically attacked because of their sexuality, and four witnessed other students being attacked due to their perceived sexuality. Two respondents from TO BE, both from regular high schools, experienced physical violence, while none mentioned witnessing physical violence to others perceived as bi/homosexual. The difference between the attacks at the OBE and TO BE's regular schools and the lack of violence at the TO BE alternative schools, I would suggest, is based on representation and policy enforcement: those schools which acknowledge lesbigay students (and staff) have anti-homophobic policies which are known and enforced or, possibly, those schools which include lesbigays into the

curricula encourage homophobic students to change their attitudes (or, at least, their behaviour).

For one OBE student:

*The only physical abuse I got was
from my ex-lover, who thought that I
might blow his cover...so he beat me
up at the bus-stop.*

This attack illustrates that homophobic violence is not exclusively from heterosexuals, that homosexuals can internalize homophobia, which can lead to a self-loathing or violence towards the subject of same-sex attraction ("homosexual panic"); having furtive same-sex relations and hiding in the closet; using public displays of homophobia to deflect suspicion; and the fear of blackmail.¹² Although homosexuals are not immune to homophobia, this is not to suggest that most homophobic violence comes from homosexuals; of the eleven respondents who commented on physical violence, this was the only instance where the attacker was homosexual.¹³

Internalized homophobia is experienced in the liminal space between social and spacial divisionary practices. Half

¹² It is more common for the homosexual to be blackmailed by the person s/he had, or offered to have, sex with, in order that the blackmailer not reveal the homosexual. In the above example, it is the acknowledged homosexual who is forced to remain silent through violence--and, assumedly, the threat of more violence-- so that the "blackmailer's" sexuality remain unknown.

¹³ Or known to be. The possibility exists that all the attacks were by closet homosexuals, but this could be extended to the conjecture that all homophobes are closet homosexuals.

of the OBE respondents did not know any other bi/homosexuals in their schools and the isolation made fear of exposure and violence a motivating factor in their behaviour. This fear was compacted by not being included in the curricula or being negatively portrayed and unable to respond:

*I quit school. I had no place there
none of what was being taught was
pertinent to me.*

*I kept to myself so no one would find
out. I dropped out of school for
17 years.*

*Until a person can be sure that no one
will "bash" them (physically, verbally...) they
will be afraid to come out.*

*It was the isolation that hurt the most,
the sense of being alone with no support.*

From both boards, six respondents mentioned feeling excluded from the curricula and the student body. Another reason for alienation related to the unofficial education that uses teachers as role-models of appropriate sexuality. Seven of the OBE and two of the TO BE respondents mentioned that they would feel more comfortable to come out if they had lesbigay teachers as role-models:¹⁴

*If a teacher isn't prepared to come out,
why should I? The students learn that
homosexuality is something to hide;
that's bad. The teachers may assume
we know they are gay, so they don't feel
like they need to say it but, don't forget,
for young lesbians and gays, who don't*

¹⁴ The small number of TO BE respondents who made this request can be partially explained by five of the eleven students who responded to this question attended the Triangle Program or Contact school, where they had lesbigay teachers.

have much experience with gay adults, or know all the signs and culture, we don't always know or, even if we suspect, if it isn't confirmed by an open discussion, we see it as hiding in the closet, and giving us a bad image of how we should act. Teachers can't assume we know. They are either out or in the closet.

I know one teacher in my school who's out to his older students. I've met other teachers at gay bars and events. I have a profound respect for teachers when they are out. I feel sad for teachers I know are gay but won't come out.

I'd like role-models who are close to everyday life, not just famous people.

If there were openly gay teachers in my school, I would have approached them first, but they would not have made much difference to my coming out.

Homosexuality should be included any time a heterosexual example is brought up--and they're brought up all the time.

Eighteen of OBE respondents and seven of the TO BE respondents--all those from the regular high schools-- did not know any teachers who were out. Regarding TO BE teachers, the lack of lesbian teachers in the regular schools limits role-models to only students attending the alternative schools, and disadvantages bi/homosexual students and heterosexual in the mainstream schools-- as it does at the OBE-- and that, despite board policies, teachers at regular schools may not feel comfortable being out.

This did not mean that students were unaware that there were bi/homosexual teachers, only that the closeted teachers

set an example of bi/homosexuality as something to hide. Two OBE respondents mentioned seeing teachers in gay bars or at lesbigay social events, which confirmed the separation of "official" truths in school from the "unofficial" knowledge elsewhere. Most of the respondents mentioned that there were teachers "suspected" of being homosexual, which demonstrates their need for finding role-models, assumes that particular behaviour relates to sexuality, and interprets teachers as sexual beings.¹⁵

Non-curricular school activities and media were mentioned as sites of social and spacial divisions. Two OBE respondents mentioned that they were not allowed to start a lesbigay group in their school which, as a student quoted above stated, kept homosexuality as a subject to be analyzed and outside the student body, rather than a cultural group within the school. High school drama presentations represented homo/bisexual characters as effeminate or as the target of humour or villainy, as three respondents from the OBE remarked, as did this one from TO BE:

*When another female, at the end of the scene,
joins hands with me, the [school] audience
hoots and hollers as though we were about to
take off our clothes or something--all we
do is join hands!*

School newspapers were mentioned as part of the unofficial curricula where bi/homosexuality was (favourably)

¹⁵ Only one respondent stated never considering teachers as sexual or hearing them discuss their families.

discussed, while school announcements were mentioned as a place where homo/bisexuality was omitted.

Spacial divisions were reported where homosocial activities allowed for-- and, therefore, precluded through homophobia-- homosexual possibilities. Changing rooms for gym and drama classes were mentioned by two OBE respondents as places where verbal and physical homophobia occurred. One OBE respondent mentioned overnight trips as troublesome, not because of sexual desire, but because of fear. One OBE student hoped that the guidance department could be one place in the school that would promote coming out, although most respondents agreed that "it's very uncool" to be seen there, as it implies that one has a problem. These students are correct, in that making guidance a site for homo/ bisexuality makes bi/homosexuality a "problem" (even if the department serves other functions). Another OBE respondent was pleased that, at his school, the guidance department, aware of the stigma of entering their offices:

*puts gay-positive pamphlets in the
toilet-stalls, so that they can be read
without someone having to go into guidance
and asking for them, or be seen
reading them.*

Relocating homosexuality from the guidance department to the toilets is hardly an improvement. While it may serve to maintain anonymity, it associates homosexuality with furtive sex in public spaces and "dirty" sex in rooms for excrement.

School dances were mentioned as spatially dividing sexuality by two OBE male respondents:

I went to a politically-correct school, so it was accepted. The guys danced together at dances. There was no problem. Even football players danced together.... I never did. I was in the closet.

I went to the school dance with my boyfriend. Everybody was "dirty dancing", including us, but the principal comes up and tells us to stop. He said things he shouldn't have said, and when he tried to cover it up, he screwed up. He said, "He's just trying to flaunt it". No, I'm not. Or was not, rather. I was making my case and I wanted to be there with no discomfort on the staff side, but apparently he had a problem.¹⁶

For one respondent, acceptance of same-sex dancing was attributed to attending a "politically correct" school, although the dancing by football players may be read as asexual and as a joke, as the implied heterosexuality attributed to "jocks" negate any suggestions of sexual interests, and his own closetedness suggests that he, as a homosexual, did not feel the same comfort in dancing with a man. For the other respondent, he was accused of "flaunting" his sexuality, although the dancing was identical to that of mixed-couple pairs, revealing that sexuality was allowed to be flaunted at the school dance, but only by heterosexuals. Same-sex dancing among females was not mentioned. This related to different social acceptance of the same activities

¹⁶ This quote is a synthesis of a face-to-face and Internet interview with the respondent.

dependant on the sex of the agents and the phallogentric concept that an activity of two women cannot be sexual.

TO BE has initiated school proms for lesbigay students which (providing that lesbigay-positive heterosexuals can attend, and lesbigay students can also attend "regular" proms) equalizes school dances as unofficial spacial practices (although it can still be used as a surveillance and regulatory technique to gain knowledge of students).

The Triangle Program is, itself, a spacial division, as it divides those harmed by homophobia from the regular schools. It is also a social division, as these students are problematized as at risk of dropping out of school. However, intent must be considered in this context. Not all bi/homosexual students nor all students affected by homophobia (all students) are made to attend this school, nor is this a school for "special" students. The Triangle Project is a transition to mainstream education, with both regular and alternative schools working towards inclusion, not division.¹⁷

¹⁷ Future study of the Triangle project will be better able to assess the success of its goals. Will the present students be incorporated into regular schools, or will it be more common for lesbigay students from the regular schools to move to the Triangle program? Will lesbigay teachers be more interested in working with lesbigay students or becoming role-models for heterosexual students? Will the Triangle program be used to exclude lesbigay content from the regular curricula? Furthermore, from where will opposition to the project come, and what will be the rationale?

While dating is an unofficial practice of schools in the development of adolescent sexuality, bi/homosexual students did not mention schools as a place where they could meet others for the purpose of dating. Unlike heterosexual students, dating took place outside school. Dating was only mentioned by two respondents from the OBE, and they had met outside of their schools at lesbigay functions.

The spatial divisions of sexuality within the schools was also reported to extend outside:

Even if I'm okay at school, the school's near my house, so teachers can't do anything off of school property. When I'm walking home from school, or at night, or on weekends. I'm not out to my parents, and I don't want them to find out from neighbours or hearing "fag" yelled at me.

High school attendance is determined by catchment areas, so the public life of school and the private space of home become fluid as sexuality and homophobia in the schools affect relations within the neighbourhood. Students' sexuality becomes public knowledge and, if they are not out to their parents, this can cause further anxiety. Students may choose not to come out in school because they do not want their parents to know, or the parents do not want their neighbours to know. As was mentioned in the "semi-official" section, who one lives with (parents, alone or in groups on student welfare) can contribute to the willingness to be out at school. Three respondents from the OBE and five TO BE

respondents mentioned changing towns or schools as a means of dealing with homophobia.¹⁸

Much of this analysis is based on the respondents' interpretations of homophobia. This basic assumption splinters into several questions: How is homophobia perceived and experienced? How do I know that they are all interpreting homophobia in the same way as I? How do they know what they know?

The first question has already been answered in some detail, above. In some cases, it may be argued, what was perceived was not really homophobia. For instance, it was mentioned that words like "fag" are used pejoratively, regardless of the perceived sexuality of the target and, just as some Afro-[North] Americans call themselves "niggaz", some lesbigays also use words that were originally pejorative, either as a way to decentre the terms or through their own internalized homophobia. Clearly, then, the words in themselves, are not homophobic, but may be used homophobically, dependent upon the speakers and context. Homophobia was also perceived as such when no other variables changed: students who lost friends after declaring their sexuality. Homophobia is not an ontological concept, and

¹⁸ On quantitative studies of lesbigay students in American schools: Elia, 1993; Telljohann and Price, 1993; Hetrick and Martin, 1987. On Ottawa lesbian and gay teenagers: Magnusson, 1992.

there is no homophobia beyond what can be perceived as homophobia, with which the perception can be measured. Consequently, students are perceived as homo/bisexual, and experience homophobia, whether or not they are homo/bisexual, whether or not their sexuality is known. Likewise, homo/bisexual students act and react in certain ways based on the perception that their sexuality determines particular social interactions. How homophobia is perceived and experienced among homo/bisexual students must be paired with the question of how heterosexual students engage in and perceive their homophobia.

This is not to say that all homo/bisexual students perceive themselves as victims because they experience homophobia. Victimization is a process which is enacted upon others. It is passive. As will be discussed below, most respondents, in one form or another, resisted victimization through resisting the normative practices of homophobia. To the extent that some respondents did feel victimized, it was not due to the actual verbal or physical violence directed at them, as those who were passive tended to be those who were in the closet and whose sexuality, they claimed, was not known, but there was a fear of being discovered, compounded by an internalization of the normative discourses: some students became the victim of their own self-policing. This victimization was supported in schools where students were told, usually by the guidance counsellors, that if they came

out, they might get hurt. Because homophobia is constructed as a consequence, homo/bisexuality is identified as morally irresponsible, taking risks even when warned. Of course, as homophobic attacks stem from perceptions, one can be a victim without the orientation, and without being warned or feeling vulnerable. Rather than questioning how people think of themselves as victims, a more pertinent question is to ask how people believe they have the right to victimize.

4.4 Naming the Student Body

Did all the respondents understand homophobia and define it in the same way as I? In my survey I did not ask for an encompassing, articulate definition. Rather, I would let my definition be grounded in the experiences of the respondents, as well as my own and of other lesbian/gay researchers. This is not to imply that because one belongs to an attributive group, one has a complete understanding of that group (Stasiulis, 1995:166). I was attentive to the possibility that the term may be unknown or misunderstood, yet I suspected that none who identified as bi/homosexual in this society could not know what homophobia was. Not surprisingly, none asked me to define the term and, based on the similarity of responses, everyone understood the term in the same way as I.

This was also tested by comparing the responses to homophobia with their responses to defining their "race".

"Race" and racism are common topics both in school and in society, more so than homo/bisexuality and homophobia. It would seem logical that the respondents would have at least as good, if not a better, understanding of "race" as homophobia, yet, based on the variety of responses, there was not the same unified understanding of "race" as "homophobia". At both boards, the majority, defined "race" by colour (45% from the OBE; 50% from TO BE), while 30% from the OBE and 33% from TO BE listed ethnicity, country of birth, or country of origin.¹⁹ Unlike the question on homophobia, several respondents asked me to define "race" for them.²⁰

Much of this study is based on socially constructed labels, identities, perceptions, collective behaviour, and socially mediated practices, which symbolic interactionism could explain--had I stopped my research here. Symbolic interactionism relies on individuals to understand and share the dominant values and beliefs of the social world, and it places structure over agency (Richer, 1990:92). It does not explain how agents resist the dominant values or create new ones, nor does it give credit to how, and under what conditions, agents contest and change structures. Sexuality goes beyond acts, goes beyond genetics to incorporate the mind and choice in its construction, and it is my contention that

¹⁹ The remainder did not answer the question.

²⁰ Of course, I did not define it. Unfortunately, I also did not keep count of how many students asked me to define it.

bi/homosexual students are neither totally passive nor victims of homophobia, but are taking an active role in resisting homophobia and changing the practices and policies of education.

Lesbian? I do not, nor do I intend to engage in sex with men. I really like women. I placed a question mark above because I have never been out with a woman but I believe that sexual acts do not define sexual orientation. Whether I am lesbian or bisexual, either way I am definitely not straight!

When asked how they defined their sexuality, the majority of students labelled themselves as lesbian or gay, with only one student per board using the term "homosexual" (Table 2).

Table 2: HOW RESPONDENTS DEFINED THEIR SEXUALITY¹

	<u>OBE</u>		<u>TO BE</u>	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
"homosexual"		1		1
"lesbian"/ "gay"	6	3	3	4
"bisexual"	2		2	
"queer"	1	1		
"dyke"	1			
"fluid"		1		
"blend"	1			

This shows that they see themselves as part of cultural/political communities, rather than as clinically-defined individuals. It also reflects the pervasiveness of

¹ Not all respondents answered this question; some gave more than one response.

the terms "gay/lesbian" in mainstream culture, as opposed to the terms generally used in the sexual education curricula, and it shows that students are receiving knowledge about their identity from outside of school.

The Sexual Orientation document of TO BE does use, and distinguishes between, the terms "homosexual" and "lesbian/gay", which should make a difference in how the students accept their sexual identity. Initial calculation showed that 56% of students from the OBE and 70% from TO BE identified themselves as gay or lesbian.²² The different percentages should take into account that some of the TO BE students attended lesbigay and alternative high schools, where the inclusive curricula and supportive environments would have a stronger effect in the students' identities than would a single document and, when those students are factored out, the percentage of students from TO BE that identified as lesbian/gay was only slightly higher (58%) than that from the OBE. This would imply that the terms used to discursively present homosexuals do not relate to how the students perceive themselves, but that the type of school effects self-identification.

²² The data from the respondents is not intended to be generalizable. Similarities to responses from other studies only support the argument that the experiences of these students are not unique and that further studies need to be done to assess the prevalence of homophobia in education. When percentages are used, they are intended only to simplify comparisons between two unequal samples.

Delving further into the namings revealed that more respondents from the OBE than from TO BE would resist both the terms "homosexual" and "lesbian/gay". One student from the OBE defined herself as a "dyke", which not only resisted an identity defined by the majority, but reclaimed a term that was meant to be pejorative. Four OBE students identified as "queer", "fluid", or "blend"-- a further resistance of sexual identification and a contestation of norms and limits. Despite the larger percentage of resistance to common labels among the OBE students, there was no correlation between alternative labelling and identity politics, as only 30% of the OBE students who self-identified other than as "homosexual" or "lesbigay", compared with 62% from TO BE, felt comfortable enough about their identity to be out at school. While this cannot measure the correlation between labelling and the influence of the schools' terminology, it does hint at the parallels between the comfort levels of the students and the schools' presentations of sexuality.

As some students identified themselves in more than one category, this can be explained, partially, by my presence: the students may have assumed that I used the terms interchangeably or they may have felt that, as an academic investigation, "homosexual" was the correct term. "Heterosexual", as a term, was mentioned in reference to school subjects ("Homosexual [characters]... would just be interpreted as heterosexual") or to society as a concept

("Society is so intolerant of difference that it's hard for anyone who isn't heterosexual to be open about their sexuality"), whereas "straight" was used to refer to actual people and places in society ("Straight guys get turned on and start bugging me"; "It's like a straight gym locker-room"). Despite an ambiguity in their terminology of bi/homosexuality, the respondents were aware of what constituted heterosexuality, and that heterosexuality was related to, but not the same as, a "straight" identity and culture. Based on the responses, both in how heterosexual sex was distinguished from a type of behaviour and in how there was more flexibility between having opposite- and same-sex relations, that what the respondents objected to, and related to homophobia, was not "heterosexuality" as sexual practices, but heterosexuality as straight culture. This, as the discursive chapter has shown, is what gets presented as normative in educational practices: not simply heterosexual acts, but a straight lifestyle.

Only two students from each board identified themselves as bisexual, an identity not frequently discussed in the curricula. All these students were female. From four students generalizations cannot be made but, particularly as one student responded:

Queer, lesbian, dyke. Bisexual is more accurate but, when I say that, straight guys get turned on and start bugging me. They leave me alone when I say I'm lesbian...

it is important to investigate the interplay of sex, gender constructions of sexual knowledge, and sexual identity as an area for further research.

4.5 Re-Minding the Student Body

Steven Richer has assembled a typology of student resistance under the rubric of active/passive involvement within formal/informal practices (1990:96).²³ This typology will be used to illustrate if, when, and how the respondents have chosen to resist the favourably-presented straight identity, to critique concepts of the normal, and to interject sexualities of their choosing.

Passive Informal

*I quit school; I had no place there.
None of what was being taught was
pertinent to me.*

*I kept to myself so no one would find
out. I dropped out of school for 17 years.*

*I kept switching schools, so I didn't know
many people, and people didn't have time
to find out about me.*

*I was the target of a lot of physical
abuse in gym class. Eventually I just
refused to go back.*

I attempted suicide twelve times.

²³ I understand Richer's "active" and "passive" categories to relate to Giroux's "overt" and "latent" resistance (1983:106).

The one student from the OBE who skipped physical education classes, where the formal approval of aggression made it easier for that student to be a target of abuse, and the one respondent from the OBE and two from TO BE that quit school, and the one TO BE student who attempted suicide fall into Richer's description of passive informal resistance. Martin Carnoy (1989) considers those actions as personal escapes from painful situations and do not become a form of resistance, for Carnoy, until community awareness of those acts make them political (Davies, 1995:1471).²⁴ I find it hard to agree with Carnoy because of his distinction between personal and social awareness. Certainly, if one student quits school because of homophobia it is a personal response, but it is a response to a social identity; it is a choice to leave a public institution where a social act, homophobia, is publicly condoned.²⁵ Rather than considering whether or not a personal act is resistance and part of a socio-political

²⁴ Giroux expresses a similar idea by distinguishing resistance from self-indulgent behaviour (1983:106).

²⁵ Dropping out is also political because, if the student is under 16, laws make it mandatory to be in school and because school boards must report the number of students who have dropped out to the Ministry. This last regulation has become less important to the Ministry, as the September Enrolment Form, Section E, combines the number of drop-outs with the number of students who transfer to different schools. This lack of detail may be a form of deflection, as the Boards and the Ministry can claim that the majority of students have merely changed schools, making them less accountable for discerning why students may drop-out. School boards deflect responsibility by citing government cut-backs: boards can no longer afford to maintain staff to study school retention, as in previous years.

consciousness, it is more relevant to study how resistance is individualized and rendered insignificant and psychological as a means of deflecting the collective struggles against institutions and practices (Stasiulis, 1995:171, citing A. Sivanandan, 1989) and how resistance by students is seen as negative, as self-indulgent and as a rejection of education, rather than as a dissatisfaction with how school is but not how it can be.

Passive Formal

Just as dropping out can be a form of resistance, so can staying in school. Conforming does not have to be simply a thoughtless acceptance of social expectations, but a purposive decision to conform (Richer, 1990:91). With all of the respondents experiencing some form of homophobia, and with 18 of the 32 respondents in the closet, leaving school can be an extreme consequence of educational dividing practices. That all the respondents completed, or are completing, high school demonstrates that homosexual students are not prepared to lose their education because of the harassment and anxiety they experience. However, not all the students had the option of attending schools where they felt comfortable to be out and, as education makes students knowable, denying knowledge by choosing the closet is a form of resistance (Sedgwick, 1990:4). By denying their sexuality, bi/homosexual students

lessen the probability of direct homophobia. This sounds like what some guidance counsellors suggest; the difference is that a counsellor's recommendation relieves the school from having to deal with homophobia after the student has already chosen to "confess" and expect support, while a student who decides to remain in the closet actively decides. This decision is based on an awareness and mistrust of the institution, and a refusal to relate information that the institution may use against the student, a compliance with a feigned sexuality in order not to comply:

Invisibility is a queer's best defense.

This is simple to do because, despite the constant surveillance of normative sexual behaviour and the pejorative accusations of homo/bisexuality, there is an assumption that:

Everyone thinks you're straight.

While none of the respondents who were in the closet claimed to be so as a form of resistance, many expressed an awareness that they were fooling others. To the extent that they control the ignorance of others, they subvert the dominant group's knowledge/power.²⁶

²⁶ Those who knew of my study but chose not to respond may have been resisting my desire to know, to collect, to record and reveal.

Active Informal

Richer lists laughing and mocking humour as a active informal resistance. Much school humour is targeted at homosexuals,²⁷ yet humour was seen also as a form of resistance by homo/bisexuals students through the lesbigay parody of stereotypes known as "camp". Camp takes two forms: overemphasizing "appropriate" gender behaviour, leading to hyper masculinity or femininity, or playing on assumptions of homosexual behaviour, so that males become "queens" and women become "dykes":

There was a stereotypically gay student in the school. I was glad I wasn't as effeminate as him but, on the other hand, I envied him because he didn't need to hide-- it was obvious--and he had no trouble.

With both forms, bi/homosexuals critique rigid divisions of sexuality and gender, give heterosexuals what they want or expect, and refuse to take the straight world seriously. Four of the twenty respondents from the OBE claimed that they dealt with homophobia by joking about it, exaggerating the camp or sexual interest in the homophobe, or questioning the interest of the homophobe about homosexuality:

If they asked me if I was queer, I'd turn it back on them. I'd ask why they were so interested in me.

²⁷ A 1985 study by Bibby and Posterski found that homosexuality was the number one target of teenage humour (1994:35).

These responses have the possibility of turning against the homo/bisexuals:

There was this gorgeous guy who sat in front of me, once, during a detention. Just for fun I decided to say to him, "Well why don't you turn around and kiss me?" And he turned around and beat me up.

It can be argued that students who controlled their closets by acting straight were parodying, rather than complying with, appropriate behaviour, although this was not disclosed by the respondents.

Two male respondents mentioned wearing make-up, which resists gender assumptions. Although none of the respondents mentioned wearing clothing as a sign of resistance, it was noted that many of students interviewed face-to-face were wearing clothing, jewellery, or buttons that signified their sexuality or lesbian-gay-positive politics. That none of the respondents thought to mention these may be because, like informal passive resistance, the respondents have "normalized" these forms of resistance to the point where they are no longer conscious of them as resistance.

One respondent from the OBE and three from TO BE mentioned fighting back physically when provoked:

I stayed passive when I can, and when I had to defend myself I did. No bull and that was it.

I was out at school. Most of the people I knew were very cool about [it] but I did have to beat a couple of people to shut them up.

Physical violence was not a common response, but it does point out that not all students respond passively or restrict their responses to verbal retorts.

Active Formal

In grade ten, a student came up and started choking me and calling me "queer". A teacher stopped him, but when I made a formal complaint to the principal, nothing happened.

Four of the OBE and one of the TO BE respondents reported homophobia to their teachers or administrators, with the responses ranging from perceived indifference, from the OBE respondents, to a written apology for the TO BE respondent. Based on the cynicism of many of the OBE respondents towards reporting homophobia in their schools, and their lack of knowledge about school protection against homophobia, it seems unlikely for homophobia to be reported to the administration, although it is unclear whether the students' cynicism is based on earlier responses by the administration, or whether the administration's lack of appropriate response is based on rarely having homophobia reported to them. Students from the OBE were willing, however, to make formal reports to other agents. This demonstrates that other forms of resistance are deployed other than those within Richer's typography. For instance, Richer's list of active formal student resistance (student council, ombudsman [sic], PTA, and parent-teacher meetings) all focus on the students' dependence on a form of

school-based authority, which would appear to have only limited effect if the students' problems were with the institution. Grounded in the responses of the students interviewed, the active formal resistance that was more prominent was based on using authority figures or support from outside the schools. This outside support helped the students resist even when they appeared to act alone:

Gay, Les, Bi support groups.

I wrote newspaper articles.

The principal had a problem, and my boyfriend took it to the media. We got our apology, and that's all I wanted.²⁸

One respondent from the OBE reported homophobia to the police and to the media, and the public exposure of homophobia may have propelled the school to deal with an issue it may have, otherwise, ignored. Thirty-five percent of the OBE and 58% of TO BE respondents were members of lesbian youth groups, where they received support from their peers and the larger lesbian communities, and where they could meet other students. Three respondents from the OBE reported meeting other students from their schools through these groups. The connection outside of school supported their interactions and activities within the schools.

²⁸ This is a synthesis of an Internet, and two face-to-face interviews (with two of the people involved).

Forty percent of respondents from the OBE and 50% from TO BE bring up lesbigay issues in their classes or include lesbigay issues and themes into their school work:

I bring it up in all my classes. I like to be inclusive, so I include other groups as well as lesbians, gays and bisexuals.

I'm doing a class presentation on the Equal Rights Bill 167 for Canadian Studies.

I did a project on lesbian mothers. The presentation went okay in front of the class, and the teacher was reasonably supportive.

Since I came out to my Law teacher, she's started introducing the topic of gay rights into the class discussions.

I did an essay for English on: Should homosexual parents be allowed to adopt?

Regardless of the subject, some respondents are taking the initiative to challenge the official discourse of their sexuality by defining it for themselves in and through their work.²⁹

Other areas of Richer's typography also need expansion. For instance, while dropping out of school is considered a passive informal form of resistance, it should be noted that all the respondents that dropped out of school also dropped back in:

Denial sucks. I left school because of the bad reaction and enroled in the Triangle Program.

²⁹ What Dollimore calls the "reverse discourse" (1986:7) and what Nelson calls the "counter-story" (1995:23) in their analysis of resistance.

One student from the OBE returned to an adult high school (where the maturity of the students was expected to relieve the homophobia experienced in regular school), and five respondents from TO BE enrolled at the alternative programs. Dropping out is not a passive individual escape, but an active decision to select the appropriate education with a desired set of peers.

Richer's active informal list does not encompass all the forms of resistance used by these respondents. Thirty percent of respondents from the OBE and 42% of those from TO BE would oppose homophobic comments from peers or authority figures:

In Family class people are more positive because they know there are openly gay students in the class who will challenge them.

I try to make it [homophobic comments] a learning experience, to make them understand what the words they're using means.

I get really angry. If the "joke" is made in close proximity to me, I say that I find it unacceptable and cruel and I point out that it is perfectly normal to be gay.

Active informal resistance could be in speaking and in being attuned to what is said. Active formal resistance also appeared in being role-models for other students:

I came out the last couple of months at school. I felt there was nothing to be ashamed of. I felt safe. Most of the responses were neutral or fairly supportive.

We wanted to have peer-counselling in our school to deal with issues that

students didn't feel comfortable talking to teachers or councillors about...

I wanted to be honest and not hide. I wanted to be a model to help others who are coming out. Also, to show straight students that not all homosexuals are stereotypical, cause I don't fit the stereotypes.

There were other lesbians, gays, and bisexuals in my school. Lots are friends. I think it helps to change the attitudes of other students when they see there's more than one.

Fifty percent of respondents from both school boards knew students who were out, and claimed that those students gave them pride, support, and incentive to accept their sexuality, that they became role-models when teachers could not be. Six respondents (30%) from the OBE and seven (58%) TO BE respondents were out at school. Three respondents from the OBE stated that they wanted to be role-models for both homo/bisexual and heterosexual students. Whether or not any of the out students stated it, they are role-models.

Richer's typography should be expanded to include a semi-passive, semi-formal form of resistance: choosing or avoiding certain classes, subjects, or teachers during course selection preempts the need to resist. If skipping a class is a form of resistance then, theoretically, avoiding an entire course is a more dynamic form of resistance-- although the latter can be contested as a form of self-discipline that maintains subordination: a self-streaming into "acceptable" or tolerant fields of study. Perhaps future study, particularly a longitudinal study, might reveal whether students who define

themselves as bi/homosexual stream themselves into particular courses and whether that streaming has changed over time and political/social changes. At this time, based on the limitations of my study, some homo/bisexual students are resisting by going to schools where their sexuality is respected (six respondents from the two boards), but more students are resisting by opposing the homophobia they encounter and by including their sexuality into courses; if they are not being (self-)streamed, they are going against the tide."

Scott Davies maintains that for resistance to be "authentic", it must be self-conscious and inclusive (1995:1469). Were the respondents involved, then, in acts of resistance? Certainly, in defining oneself as bi/homosexual, one is already self-conscious of a subordinated social position, which makes any acknowledgement of identity and inclusion acts of resistance. Whether each instance was self-conscious would depend on the extent to which one is constantly aware of one's position, whether or not one can disconnect one's identity from one's actions, and whether or not the perception of one's identity is conscious for others even when not for oneself. The respondents to my

" I have limited my expansion of Richer's typologies to those areas where my respondents' experiences of resistance went beyond those established by Richer, which is not to say that other sections of his model cannot be expanded-- something future research will do, hopefully.

questionnaire stated or inferred that their awareness of their sexuality played a large part in determining their daily activities in the school and their involvement with the curricula, regardless of their techniques of resistance.

As to the inclusiveness of their acts, the extent that their acts of resistance conjoined their sexuality to other oppressed groups cannot be determined from my study, nor can the extent that their race, gender, class, or ability influenced their awareness of their sexuality always be determined, although two OBE students mentioned the interrelationship between their "race" and their sexuality:

We have to continue educating ourselves, even after we're out, including gender and identity politics. There are assumptions about sexuality and race, partially because of stereotypes in the media, but people assume homosexuals are white. It makes it hard for me, because I'm not white, so I must be straight-- on the other hand, it makes it easier for me to "pass"-- and I don't have the Asian role-models for myself, so what's attractive to gay men is white.

I think of myself as a "blend", which is more positive. I like to think I have the best of both worlds. People don't know if I'm black or white, lesbian or straight. It makes them think when they can't tell what I am.³¹

³¹ One respondent from TO BE described her "race" as "mixed", but did not elaborate. One person, also from TO BE, refused to specify either sex or "race", which I interpret as an intentional statement against the limitations of both categories.

While at least two respondents' remarks revealed racial privilege,³² and another two students revealed gender discrimination, four OBE and one TO BE respondent specifically mentioned the connection between homophobia and other forms of discrimination, that discrimination happens within subordinated groups, and that what "society is so intolerant of [is] difference". Several more respondents included homophobia, as one of many forms of oppression, in their school work. These examples demonstrate that many of these students were conscious of the interconnections between subordinated groups, which made their attitudes and actions those of resistance. Resistance can take on multiple forms, which can contradict each other as well as occur at the same time as internalized homophobia and other forms of [self-] oppression. People are not always calculating or rational, as some sociological theories, such as exchange theory and behaviourism, assume (Richer, 1990:93), nor is the division between compliance and resistance clear and permanent. Resistance and compliance need to be understood not as polar opposites by unchanging agents, but as a range of expression

³² One was quoted above, stating that the media portrays the sexually-desirable as white. The other statement was from a respondent who, when asked to state "race" claimed to "have never thought about it. Caucasian". The respondent's ability to not have to think about it, I believe, is based on the privileged position in this society of "white" people. On asking to state "sexuality", this student did not claim to have "never thought about it".

among fractured identities contingent upon their awareness of their social conditions.

The variations in forms of homophobia and resistance, and the range of institutional interpretations and mediation make the responses to homophobia in education appear random. How the students self-identified did not relate to their being out at school, as some respondents who identified as "homosexual" were out, while some who identified as "queer" were in the closet. The enforcement of anti-homophobic policies, in itself, was not a determining factor, as some students who attended schools where much homophobia was experienced were out, while some respondents who attended schools with a known and enforced anti-homophobic policy were in the closet. The strongest correlation found among the responses, regarding compliance and resistance to homophobia was with role-models. Inclusion in the curricula, while important, was not sufficient, as respondents who attended classes where homo/bisexuality was favourably taught and who were allowed to include the topic in their work did not always do so or feel comfortable to come out. Of the nineteen respondents from both boards who internalized homophobia or resisted it passively, none knew any lesbian teachers or other lesbian students in their schools, and only three respondents included lesbian topics into their work.³³ Of the fourteen

³³ One student did not respond to enough questions to determine her/his position.

respondents from both boards who were out at school, seven knew lesbigay teachers, and twelve had lesbigay peers. Of the thirteen respondents who mentioned that role-models were important for making schools and society a safer place to come out, nine were in the closet.

The unofficial practice of teachers as role-models played a stronger part in the respondents' identity and, consequently, behaviour and experiences, than did the official curricula. In situations where there were no teachers to fill that role, teachers were replaced by students. It can be argued, then, that the visibility of the resistance was related to the support the students felt from people, not topics.

The question that arises is, given a school where there are no teachers as role-models, why do some students, and not others, fill that position? Social identity, activism, and a concern for education were common features in the thirteen students who were out in school.¹⁴ Five respondents switched to alternative schools because of a concern for an education that was relevant to their identity, that foregrounded their sexuality, and focused on social relations. Four other students specifically mentioned that they wanted to be role-models for other homo/bisexual students, for heterosexual students, and for the teachers, which defied the assumption

¹⁴ Fourteen students were out, but one did not supply enough responses to draw any conclusions.

that "official knowledge" comes from outside the student body. Four other students connected their sexual identity not only with the lesbian/gay communities but with other subordinated groups. In becoming role-models for other students, these students were imposing an intersection between knowledge/power of their bodies, the school environment, and the outside world of identity politics. They embodied the "counter-story" that is continued by others.

5. Homophobia in Education

Normalizing sexuality creates truths about the body which is compounded in schools by the emphasis on educational knowledge as true knowledge, so that sexuality is not only reproduced in educational arenas, but through educational discourse. Based on the experiences of the student-respondents from the Ottawa and Toronto School Boards and an analysis of the policies and course material of the two boards in question and of the Ministry of Education, it is evident that homophobia is used in high schools to construct a normalized heterosexuality, although there is a range of compliance and resistance to homophobia, which is predicated on the students sense of inclusion.

Heterosexuality is presented as functional and essential for social reproduction, with families presented as heterosexual, monogamous and ,preferably, with children through "natural" biological methods. Relationships are a source of responsibility and, while heterosexuals express love, there is little educational attention paid to pleasure. Outside of marriage, heterosexual men are portrayed as threats to heterosexual women who can cause date violence, teenage pregnancies, and sexually-transmitted infections. Heterosexual women are often represented as dependent on males, which, historically, the sexual division of educational courses supported. Women are also subordinated to men through

the subordination of homosexuals as "effeminate" and, in learning to be homophobic, women also practice misogyny.

Bisexuals are rarely presented except in relation to AIDS/HIV, where they are closeted homosexuals and a conduit for HIV into heterosexual society.¹

A limited heterosexual sexual activity is permitted at school functions, such as dances, and school spaces, such as corridors which, with the presentation of [heterosexual] teachers as role-models are all unofficial practices in normalizing heterosexuality.

For the OBE, homosexuals are pathologized and are portrayed as outside of family relationships. They are shown to threaten heterosexuals individually (through attacks and "contagion") and collectively (through disrupting the social structure based on male-dominated society)-- although "they" still should be "tolerated". As an unofficial practice of education is the fragmentation of reality, with "legitimate" knowledge coming from inside schools, the lack of [positive] representations of homo/bisexuals in both the official practices and in the lack of role-models makes the identities of homosexual students less legitimate, as does the accusations of "flaunting it" when acting in the same manner as heterosexuals. The lack of money, expertise, and shifts in

¹ It is true that bisexuals are not presented as the only conduit for HIV into heterosexual society (in Canada), but the presentation of those who are infected through blood-products reinforces a division among hetero/bisexuals between "innocent victims" and, unstated, the "guilty".

priorities are used to excuse the implementation of lesbian and gay positive programs.

TO BE, on the other hand, presents homosexuals in the same way as they do heterosexuals, except that homosexuals must also deal with the heterosexual problem of homophobia. TO BE protects lesbian and gay students and teachers, and supports them with a known anti-homophobic policy, various support groups, Lesbian and Gay Studies classes, and alternative schools.

The aim of this study is not to illustrate two extremes of education for, despite major flaws in the OBE's efforts at inclusion, by attempting to follow TO BE's example, they are still more progressive than many boards; and despite the massive efforts at inclusion at TO BE, there are many similarities in the responses between students from the regular TO BE and OBE high schools. At both the OBE and TO BE regular high schools, homo/bisexuality did not tend to be presented in classes other than those mandated by the OME -and even in those classes, they were not always presented, or well-presented. When the subject did appear in other subjects, it was usually because the students brought it up or included it in their independent studies, or it was anecdotally-related to current legal debates. Most of these respondents found that, when homo/bisexuality was introduced by the teachers, it was misinformed, slurred, or joked about.

except when it was connected with other forms of subordination.

Sexualities are not presented equally or neutrally in education, and schools do not provide for equal experiences for all students, either in being "reflected" in the "official" curricula and policies or in the semi- and unofficial practices. Homophobia is deployed to (re)produce a normative heterosexuality, and homophobia is experienced in several ways, by different people, under different conditions.

Homo/bisexual students were more likely to deploy self-surveillance and to participate in verbal and physical violence when schools condoned homophobia, when there was a fear of violence, and when those students accepted official discourses that pathologized or created moral panics around non-procreative heterosexuality. Heterosexual students were more likely to participate in homophobic practices when anti-homophobic policies were not enforced and when homosexuality was taught as contagious and threatening. Heterosexual students were more likely to practice surveillance when "appropriate" gender behaviour was encouraged and was, itself, under surveillance, and when there were no lesbian/gay role-models for the students.

Teachers were more likely to joke about bi/homosexuals, erase bi/homosexuals from the curricula, or ignore reports of homophobia, and guidance counsellors were more likely to see bi/homosexuality as a problem and to encourage homo/bisexuals

to stay in their closets or to leave school when there was no sensitivity training, and when there was a lack of enforced policies. Administrators were more likely to ignore bi/homosexual students, not enforce anti-homophobic policies, and deflect responsibility elsewhere when anti-homophobic policies were not taken seriously and when they did not feel accountable to the students and parents who were homo/bisexual or lesbigay-positive.

Erasure is integral to the homophobic discourse. It was the most prominent form of homophobia, evident not only in the lack of inclusion of bi/homosexuals in the curricula, in official policies, in acknowledging the presence of, and providing equal rights for the lesbigay students, staff, parents, and communities, but also in the lack of educational research on the issue of homophobia in education.

Differences in the homophobia experienced related to sex, as most of the homophobia reported was by males and, often, directed to males. This points to homophobia as primarily concerned with the regulation of male power in society.

Specific divisionary practices related to specific acts of resistance, providing certain conditions for resistance were also available. When there was violence and oppression and the bi/homosexual students were not aware of community support, students were more likely to remain in the closet, to stream themselves out of certain subjects or into others, or to quit school. When support was available, students were

more likely to challenge the homophobia and to join lesbian/gay youth groups. Furthermore, if the homophobia was conjoined with a deflection of responsibility by the institution, while there was community support, homo/bisexual students were more likely to assign responsibility onto the institution through contacting the police, media, or other community groups.

The presence of a homosexual panic among the dominant group countered by a sense of support, identity, and pride resulted in "camp" responses to the fear. When teachers, due to lack of official security, did not feel able to present themselves as role-models for students, bi/homosexual students filled that function. When there was an erasure of sexuality in the curricula, yet educational practices allowed for independent studies and social issues to be discussed, bi/homosexual students created a reverse discourse. The presence of alternative schools countered the exclusionary practices by allowing students to drop back into school.

This research confirms that homophobia is deployed in education and that it is resisted by bi/homosexual students. It also has been demonstrated that students do not resist or comply as discrete or fixed actions, but that they may do both, either at different times or simultaneously. While all inclusive practices are beneficial for an anti-homophobic education, role models were found to be a determinate factor in the type of resistance that takes place.

Schools are queer spaces. They are sites where bi/homosexuals spend the majority of their youth and where they learn how they *should* think about their sexuality--even if what they are taught does not correlate to their feelings or experiences. Schools are places where heterosexuals learn about homo/bisexuals--even when they are taught that homo/bisexuals are not worth knowing or discussing. Schools are places where many bi/homosexual students never feel included, even as words like "queer" and "fag" reverberate through the halls. Homo/bisexuals tend to be erased, subordinated by social and spacial dividing practices that also keep them under surveillance, suspended in the lacuna of deflected responsibilities, and muted in the power of discourse that defines homophobia, but, in the spaces where structure and agency mediate each other, within the multiplicity of practices, there may be not just obstacles, but opportunities to create points of entry for resistance, to become the agents that challenge or limit official knowledge, the role-models that replace the void, the authorities that implement new discourses and practices. Lesbian and gay students have the power to oppose their subjectification, and to deconstruct the politics of normalization.

heterosexuality, but to focus on possibilities, consent, and desire.

There are areas of this work that have been omitted, that require further research, or could have been written differently. Heterosexuals need to be studied more. My respondents did not express anger at heterosexuals or conflate them with homophobes, even though homophobia contributes to normalizing heterosexuality. Instead, heterosexuality was seen as an act, and what my respondents reacted to was the homophobia of the "straight" community. Lesbian culture is different from homosexual identities, and it deserves inquiry as to whether a heterosexual/ straight difference is perceived by heterosexuals/ straights.

Differences by sex deserved more attention in this work. Only at the final stages of analysis did I recognize that females were experiencing homophobia differently than males, and that, with one exception, all the respondents who identified as "bisexual" were female. I need more knowledge on the construction of femininity and on bisexuality before I begin to draw connections on this. Similarly, I used "race" in my questionnaire to test against the respondents' understanding of homophobia, and I was not expecting differences to be experienced by "race". It was a revelation when a respondent told me that homosexuals are assumed to be "white", which was heightened by the Sears (1995) and Monteiro

and Fuqua (1995) essays that supported my respondent's statement. After another respondent identified herself as a "blend" for both her sexuality and her "race", I need to inquire how "race" is sexualized and sexuality "racialized", whether they are "blended" or hierarchized, how they are "fixed" and mobile.

More work is required to substantiate or negate my findings in this study, as well as to fill the gaps I have left, and to continue where I have stopped. Among the many points of future research are: the degree of identity politics among students who serve as role models; the degree to which having lesbigay teachers and peers determines the comfort level and experiences of students over the inclusion of the curricula; the influence of teachers as role models for other subordinated groups; the comparison of educational practices on sexuality between Ontario and other provinces and countries; the processes and agents involved (and excluded) in developing educational policies; how the media informs different groups about sexuality and homophobia in education; how homosexuality is conflated with paedophilia; homophobia in private schools; sexual education in primary education; how the addition of "sexual orientation" into the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms will affect changes in policies, including educational policies; a comparison of sexual education between schools predominantly of different economic classes; homophobia in same-sex and boarding schools; how gaps

in policies and the deflection of responsibilities affect other marginalized groups, both in education and in other institutions; the dividing practices of homophobia in other institutions.

Sexualities cannot be measured quantitatively, as they are not real and cannot be verified. This means that I cannot make any of my findings generalizable with a larger sample and, while this may make my work flawed for some, I would argue that there can not be any quantitative proof of heterosexuality, as well. Methodologically, my work has expanded the compliance/ resistance and official/unofficial binaries into continuums. This expansion was grounded in the responses to my questionnaire, to what appeared, at first, as contradictions. My use of the Internet as a research tool was grounded in resolving the contradiction of interviewing people based on their homo/bisexuality when they were in the closet.

As a medium that has developed contemporaneously with these youth, computers are embedded in youth culture and, as the largest number of respondences were via the Internet, and from as far away as Australia, computer networks may be seen as a site of lesbian/gay cyber-communities. Four times as many males (12) as females(3) contacted me by the Internet, which poses questions about the Internet as a gendered-space. To the question of defining their "race", one answered "Canadian (a political statement)", ten specified "white", and four

identified as "Asian" or "Oriental", so that cyberspace may be a racially-segregated space as well as gendered.

Because I neither expected my respondents to have an income or to know that of their parents, I decided to avoid "class" in my analysis. I am aware that the normative sexuality presented in education is an ideal of middle-class values, and a different thesis could have been written on this topic, based on the "values" attributed to the respondents' sexuality and to the discursive construction of class within sexual education. A behaviourist approach to homophobia in education would have also supplied a very different paper, particularly as homophobia is a form of conditioning but, as homosexuals have been the victims of shock therapy, I found this sociological theory offensive.

Using theories based on dividing practices and queering the normal may have been most suitable to study students who identified as different, but what my work lacks, based on my understanding of these theories, is a study of similarities. I examined how bi/homosexual students resisted homophobia but I did not look at how heterosexuals also resist homophobia; or how similar my respondents were in their attitudes towards sexuality and school with heterosexual students; or, without trying to essentialize youth, to what extent were these bi/homosexual youth just acting like youth? I do not answer how queering an identity could be so associated with making connections (to role models and other subordinated groups).

Schools are queer spaces. They are sites where bi/homosexuals spend the majority of their youth and where they learn how they *should* think about their sexuality--even if what they are taught does not correlate to their feelings or experiences. Schools are places where heterosexuals learn about homo/bisexuals--even when they are taught that homo/bisexuals are not worth knowing or discussing. Schools are places where many bi/homosexual students never feel included, even as words like "queer" and "fag" reverberate through the halls. Homo/bisexuals tend to be erased, subordinated by social and spacial dividing practices that also keep them under surveillance, suspended in the lacuna of deflected responsibilities, and muted in the power of discourse that defines homophobia, but, in the spaces where structure and agency mediate each other, within the multiplicity of practices, there may be not just obstacles, but opportunities to create points of entry for resistance, to become the agents that challenge or limit official knowledge, the role-models that replace the void, the authorities that implement new discourses and practices. Lesbian and queer students have the power to oppose their subjectification, and to deconstruct the politics of normalization.

Appendix

Respondents from Outside the Area of Study

Twenty-three responses were received from students who did not attend the Ottawa or Toronto Public School Boards: eight from elsewhere in Ontario; six from Ottawa-area separate schools; three from Quebec; five from the United States; and one from Australia. Of the thirteen male and ten female respondents, eleven knew about my questionnaire via the Internet; four through the Carleton University Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Centre; three from the Pink Triangle Services Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth Group; two through the ALGO NEWS; two through the Toronto Board of Education Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth Group; and one from the Algonquin College Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual group.

Of the eight students who defined their sexuality, four identified themselves as lesbian or gay, one male was "not sure", and one male and two females identified as bisexual.

Eleven respondents attended public, ten went to separate, and two were in private schools. Their experiences with homophobia will be reviewed by school type. It is acknowledged that different regions and boards will have different practices, however, similarities in experiences may help to support arguments on the prevalence of homophobia and on the effects of the type of school on those experiences.

Public schools:

Seven males and four females attended public schools in Ontario (six), Quebec (two), and the United States (three). Seven identified themselves as white, while four named their heritage. One student of colour connected racism and homophobia although, as it was stated that the respondent's school was mostly non-white, the issue around homosexuality as a "white" attribute had a different dimension than for the respondent from the largely white OBE school.

Of the homophobia they experienced, six mentioned verbal harassment (four directly, and two indirectly), mostly in the form of jokes from other students. One specified that the harassment was mostly from "jocks", a specific type of heterosexual male. This relates to the enforcement of gender roles and the homophobia that allows males to have physical contact with each other without acknowledging homoeroticism. Other examples of verbal homophobia from students included students booing at the mention of homosexuality at a school presentation, and refusing to talk to a student who came out. Teachers were also indicted for verbal abuse by two respondents, who considered teachers laughing at students being called "fag" and making fun of lesbian/gay insignias as condoning homophobia. One teacher reiterated the "passing phase" element of the psychological discourse by telling a student who was trying to come out "not to decide yet", while

another teacher expounded the "(un)nature(al)" discourse by claiming that homosexual sex was "like having sex with a pig".

Physical violence was recounted by one student who witnessed the beating of a friend perceived as homosexual. Another respondent mentioned that those in the school who attack homosexuals only attack strangers downtown, and not the students in school they know are homosexual. Anonymity was important, either so that the homophobes could not be identified, because homophobia depended on not knowing the person as a person (with feelings, family, etc.), or because the attacks elsewhere could not be substantiated while proving masculinity through "gay-bashing" could still be claimed.¹

Respondents mentioned graffiti, vandalism to lockers and books (including library books on homosexuality), and curricula texts as "heterosexist".

None of the students knew of a school policy to protect them and, while two stated that teachers and administrators ignored complaints of homophobia, three stated that the administration would blame the victims.

Only one respondent knew a teacher who was out at school, and that teacher got fired. One respondent, who came out at school, was expelled for "flaunting" sexuality, which relates to the differences in unofficial expressions of sexuality and the power of discourse. One respondent came out only after

¹ This is not to imply that physical violence is not real but that, just as not all incidents get reported, not all macho claims exceed bravado.

graduating from school and leaving the town, while another respondent was planning to come out after graduating and leaving town: these relate to the public/private space of high schools in neighbourhoods and a cynical perception of who constitutes "the community".

Unofficial spatial divisions affected a respondent who, after coming out, was not allowed to use the gym changing room, and an official spatial division was reported in a school policy which specified that couples at school dances had to be of opposite sexes.

Only two respondents mentioned homo/bisexuality in their sexual education classes. One mentioned that it was joked about by the teacher, the other mentioned that anyone who asked about homosexuality was looked at accusingly. There was even less mention of bi/homosexuality in other subjects: English, Law, History, and Psychology; with all the presentations negative. This, however, did not stop five respondents from including lesbigay issues into their History, Public Speaking, Biology, Health, and Sociology independent studies.

Few forms of resistance were mentioned: three students introduced lesbigay issues into their classes, two joined lesbigay groups (including trying to form one in the school), one wore lesbigay-rights slogans on clothing, one would fight back, and one switched to the TO BE Triangle Program.

Respondents mentioned that student were more responsive to lesbigay issues if the topics were introduced in the class by students rather than by teachers, and when it was done with humour--but not making fun of lesbigays it was less threatening. Equal rights legislation in society and protection against homophobic violence in the schools were stated as most important in improving their comfort in school, followed by more out teachers as role-models.

Separate schools:

Five females and five males attended separate schools: in Ontario (eight), Quebec (one), and the United States (one). Five defined themselves as white; one by nationality; and two refused to answer "[a]s a political statement".

Eight respondents received pejorative comments from other students, while four received pejorative comments from staff. One female stated that the abuse was always directed towards boys, which relates to the stricter conformity for males. Physical attacks were experienced by two respondents, and one other respondent witnessed an attack. A student who attended the Ottawa school where a fellow student was convicted of murdering a man perceived to be gay found that the support for

the murderer by many other students and the silence of the administration made the idea of coming out terrifying.²

Eight of the respondents stated that their schools had no policies to protect homo/bisexuals, although one mentioned that "hateful acts are not tolerated", and another claimed that the school condoned homophobia, as that student was threatened with expulsion for coming out. Two respondents stated that if the schools had to have an anti-homophobic policy, they would never announce it.

None of the respondents reported homo/bisexuality included in sexual education classes, which may be because sexuality is included in their Religion or Moral Education classes. According to one respondent, the teacher said the [openly lesbian] respondent would go to Hell. Homo/bisexuality was mentioned in the discussions on AIDS (which corresponds with OME guidelines) and along with birth-control as an unacceptable practice (which corresponds to Church policy). One student reported that homosexuality was in one paragraph of a Grade Twelve text that they were required to read, but not to discuss, while another said that questions could be written anonymously for discussion, but that "they were never really answered". As it was reported that females were more accepting of homosexuality than were males, when the subject

² As the victim in question, Alain Brousseau, was not homosexual (Kalagerakis, 1989:A1; A3), this is a chilling reminder that homophobia is not directed at homosexuals, but to enforcing specific gender behaviour and sexuality.

of homosexuality came up in classes, this points to homophobia as being more concerned with, and the concern of males in a male-dominated society.

Only one respondent cited homosexuality being discussed in another subject, French, where it was discussed negatively. However, five students included it in their class discussions and independent studies.

None of the respondents knew any teachers who were out, which is not surprising, as teachers are hired based on their perceived adherence to Church policy. Five respondents knew students who were out at school and, while six of the respondents stayed in the closet, four respondents came out. Two respondents quit or changed schools, and one left the town: a resistance to the total environment and religious ideology. Resistance was also evident by wearing lesbigay clothing and insignia, joining lesbigay youth groups, bringing in posters and pamphlets that went against Church policy on sexuality, and by inviting lesbigay-positive guests to speak to the school.

The students did not focus on semi-official practices relating to other social institutions, except for connecting homophobia to the Church: four respondents wanted separate schools to be less ecumenical, and three believed the Church had to rewrite its policies on sexuality.

Private schools:

Two students, both males, attended private schools: one in the United States, the other in Australia. One defined himself as "white", the other as "oriental". Neither were out. As one did not experience any homophobia, and stated that homo/bisexuality was not part of the curricula, I can only be pleased with the former and regret the latter. The other respondent only heard verbal abuse--and he admitted using it himself, so as not to appear gay.

Neither respondent knew if their schools had policies which specifically mentioned sexuality, but the respondent who was in a school run by the Society of Friends (Quakers) mentioned that everyone was accepted, and that their anti-harassment policies were taken very seriously.³

Three of the teachers in the Friends' school were out, and the school also had a lesbigay discussion group. Homo/bisexuality was included at school events when other forms of sexuality were discussed. The respondent reported that homosexuality was part of the History course, when they discussed groups that were the victims of hatred, and homophobia was presented as a problem of heterosexuals. It is surprising that, with such a lesbigay-positive school, the

³ The Society of Friends wrote Towards a Quaker View of Sex in 1963, one of the earliest lesbigay-positive responses from a Protestant church. In this book, the Friends relate homophobia with racism as both being based on fear and ignorance (Ellison, 1993:154).

student would be in the closet. The only explanation I can garner from his responses is that, as it is a boarding school, the respondent may have felt that the comfort in discussing sexuality theoretically in class did not extend into the dormitories.

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