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THE SOCIAL REPRODUCTION OF GENDER:

**A STUDY OF ADOLESCENT FEMALES
WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

by

Angela Suzanne Hill B.A. (Hons.)

**A Thesis Submitted To The Faculty of Graduate Studies and
Research In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For The
Degree of Master of Arts**

**Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton
University, Ottawa, Ontario March 31, 1989**

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THE SOCIAL REPRODUCTION OF GENDER:
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submitted by Angela Suzanne Hill, B.A.

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

Thesis Supervisor

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April 28, 1989

Abstract

This thesis argues that gender affects the experiences, interactions and aspirations of adolescent females through a study conducted in a secondary school in Ottawa, Ontario and through the work of previous studies. As well, age and social class in relation to gender are included as secondary factors. The middle class females of this study are shown to aspire towards professional/helping occupations consistent with expectations of gender and social class. The dynamics of the school and of friendship relations are revealed to be instrumental in the construction and perpetuation of gender roles in the present and for the future. Finally in view of this, young women are shown to be oriented towards gaining a female identity while concurrently, they value that which is male and masculine over that which is female and feminine.

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support kept me going, something that I will always remember and appreciate.

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Introduction

Young women's perceptions of themselves and their roles in society are crucial in determining their future aspirations (Porter et. al., 1982: 213). It is the argument of this thesis that the experiences and interactions which formulate these definitions often provide contradictory images of self and gender for young women; while being female is defined as an essential part of identity, it is also defined as a very repressive and subordinate condition. The examination will show how young women respond to these attributions and work them out in their day to day lives and in their choices for the future, reproducing their gender in the process.

Evidence of adolescent female experience, social interaction and aspirations were obtained through primary data obtained through interviews of young women in an Ottawa high school and through secondary data derived from previous studies. The school is utilized as the setting, since it situates the analysis to one generally shared phase in females' lives. Throughout the thesis, gender is presented as the common social status that is significant in affecting experience, interactions and aspirations. As well, the

influence of such variables as age and social class in relation to gender are discussed in several chapters.

It is argued that young women are learning normative assumptions of gender, along with experiencing personal understandings of gender within the school. Normative assumptions of gender are thought to be what proper definitions and experience of gender and gender roles should be (Prendergast and Prout, 1980). In contrast, the personal life experiences of young women may fall outside of these normative assumptions. This personal understanding has been termed as 'illegitimate' knowledge, since it, "...implicitly calls into question the core definitions of female identity and female roles (Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 522)." In this, it may encompass a realization that for females, aspects of roles and identity are often difficult and unjust. Therefore, these perspectives are often held privately (McHugh, 1968) and may be thought to be exceptional knowledge, differing from others definition of the situation. Thus, young women may feel that these personal experiences are unique, and not common, experiences (Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 522).

The thesis shows that young women may often incorporate these normative assumptions with personal understandings, even though they may contradict or another (Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 524). However, in patriarchal society, in order for social meaning and social order to occur, personal knowledge and understandings must often be contained or

overcome (McHugh, 1968: 29; Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 523). Consequently, personal understandings may only be expressed in a supportive context, or they may be ignored and denied (Spender, 1982). It also shows that, as a result of holding many normative assumptions of gender, young women may make many negative and denigrating generalizations about females, but may exempt themselves from such criticism (Prendergast and Prout, 1980; Hollway, 1984: 229).

Some of the assumptions in regard to how young women make sense out of their lives are: first, the past and present experiences and interactions of young women with family members, school staff and peers will formulate their future (McHugh, 1968: 26); second, young women's anticipation of the future continually informs the present (McHugh, 1968: 25). In other words, they have constructed a picture of their future and this acts to structure their present behaviours. Furthermore, an implication of this is that young women are compelled to conform to gender roles and expectations in the present due to their understanding of the negatives consequences of not doing so, both now and in the future. Therefore, young women, through experiences of the past and present, are shown to construct a future (Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 528) which often reproduces normative assumptions and ultimately their social position (Willis, 1977; Griffin, 1985; McRobbie, 1978; Stanworth, 1981).

Chapter One presents an overview of the methodology and social setting of this study. It details the thought processes involved in choosing the research methods, and consequently in compiling the findings. Finally, it provides an overview of the participants in the study, including the researcher, with the view that these identities and orientations are important in feminist research.

Chapter Two outlines the aspirations of middle class girls as found in previous research and in the current study. These aspirations are shown to be structured through the expectations of the female identity and consequently are found to be consistent with this. Social class and age are also examined in relation to gender and how these impact on the choices made. Professional/helping occupations are shown to be a career choice which effectively resolves the expectations of and for middle class girls.

Chapter Three examines interaction within the school and how this interaction continues to be sexist in that females and their viewpoints are often degraded, devalued or quite simply overlooked by teachers and peers. It reveals some of the dynamics in which female experience and their participation are reduced to invisibility. Finally, it shows how females themselves, learn to be participants in a process which reaffirms societal notions of the female gender.

Resistance to schooling is discussed in chapter four. Resistance is examined in terms of how it affects females and how it should be redefined with regard to females. The chapter initially, discusses adolescent males' resistance, its form and manifestation and how this acts to degrade and oppress females. The question of whether or not adolescent females resist schooling as males do is also addressed. It is shown that where females manifest opposition and accommodations, these are generally consistent with gender appropriate behaviours. These kinds of behaviours are discussed as being a product of the specific social constraints which girls experience in their avenues for expression. Finally, it is argued that these fail to create social change for females and instead simply perpetuate their present circumstances.

Chapter Five presents an examination of the social relations among young women. This chapter shows how female friendship groups are structured with orientations towards producing and reproducing female gender roles and understandings. It reveals how these groups provide a realm of the personal, in being supportive and understanding for each other. As well, orientations towards having heterosexual relationships are shown to be an integral part of these friendships. Finally, friendship groups are shown to produce isolation and alienation towards female peers outside of the groups. Thus, female friendship groups are

significant mechanisms in which gender roles are perpetuated.

Chapter Six outlines young women's aspirations and expectations towards marriage and children, in conjunction with their career ambitions. Attitudes towards the women's movement are also discussed. In this discussion, the contradictions and ambivalence which young women experience towards females and female gender roles are examined.

Finally, a summary of the research and conclusions are provided. The analyses again restates that these young women's experiences and conceptions of gender play an important role in its reproduction. While some changes towards social equality have been made, it is argued that society must begin to value females and female gender roles equally to that of males' for real social change to occur.

Chapter One

Methodology The Construction and Reconstruction of Research: A Social Process.

In the early stages of organizing ideas for this thesis, I began to realize that there was a gap in the study of adolescent females in Canada. The female experience has been and still is usually ignored, rejected and/or misinterpreted by patriarchal society and many of the researchers within it (Gilligan, 1982; Eichler, 1985: 629-630; Llewellyn, 1980: 42-43; McRobbie, 1978; McRobbie, 1980; McRobbie and Garber, 1983; Smith, 1975: 354; Spender, 1982; Stanley and Wise, 1983: 13). In particular the study of subcultures and resistance of adolescents have relied almost exclusively on males. Indeed, until recently little data have been available on females at all (McRobbie, 1978; Llewellyn, 1980: 42-43). Furthermore, while some recent insight has been gained through subculture studies in Britain, studies in Canada are still virtually nonexistent (Brake, 1985: 152). This then, proved to be an interesting area to pursue for my graduate thesis, for I realized that a Canadian study which provided an examination of young women's experiences within the context of the school would

provide insight into an area that has had little previous investigation.

This chapter will outline the aims of the study, the methods utilized and the difficulties involved with these. It will describe the research setting, the details of how the informants were obtained and interviewed and in addition, data organization will be addressed. It will present a profile of the research respondents: the young women, and staff members. As well, it will discuss the research obtained through classroom observations. Lastly, the influence of the researcher on the study will briefly be examined.

Directives and Methods

From the beginning of the research, my hope was to gain some understanding of adolescent females' experiences, primarily within a school setting. In this, the aim was to investigate whether young women's aspirations and their experiences within the school and of friendship relationships are linked; acting to perpetuate their position in society (Willis, 1977).

With these research directives, I decided to investigate for the basis of comparison female informants of the working class and of the middle class. The purpose of this was to highlight their shared oppression as females along with their differing social class (McRobbie, 1978: 108).(1) I also decided to study girls in grades 9 and 12

in order to get a sense of girls' experiences from the start of high school through to the end or almost the end of high school (depending upon whether or not they went to grade 13).(2)

Because this research was undertaken from a feminist perspective, the aim was to gather data which would reflect the ways in which young women experienced their world. With this aim, several considerations of feminist scholarship would be taken into account,

- 1/ that all knowledge is socially constructed;
- 2/ that what is accepted as a dominant ideology is the ideology of the ruling group;
- 3/ that there cannot be such a thing as a value-free science (and it is debated what constitutes objective science in contradistinction to value-free science); and
- 4/ that the perspective of people, including their insight into the workings of society, varies systematically with their position within that society (Eichler, 1985: 630).

In acknowledging these considerations, I realized it was necessary to conduct my research and present my findings in such a way that the subjects would have the opportunity to be heard, voicing their experiences of school and of their interpersonal relationships (McRobbie, 1978: 96). In selecting research techniques, several considerations played a role. I decided that I wanted to collect data in a way in which concepts would emerge throughout the process (Burgess, 1985: 9; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). As well, I noticed that of previous work on aspirations of young women in Canada (Porter et. al., 1982; Baker, 1985), little went beyond the statistics to explore relationships, and the meanings and

motivations of experiences and actions (Armstrong, 1983: 31-32). Hence, I concluded that if I wanted to obtain these sorts of data, the research methods which are flexible enough to allow girls to be central in an area which had been little explored are qualitative methods (Eichler, 1985: 633). Even though qualitative methods are still often regarded as less legitimate than quantitative methods (Malmo, 1984: 124), its advantages, such as its flexibility, overcome any of its shortcomings. As Pat and Hugh Armstrong have noted, qualitative research methods

...can look at the meanings of experiences in a way that cannot be measured by multiple-choice questionnaires that generate machine-readable answers. They can permit the investigation process to be an exchange which allows those being studied to participate actively in the description and definition of their lives (1983: 31-32).

Since qualitative methods can provide insight into the experiences of young women in an area in which there is an absence of research, it is the most appropriate method for the study.

Dilemmas in Gaining Research Access

A major part of conducting any original research is in gaining admittance to the research setting and to those one wishes to study. While many researchers have warned about the obstacles of "getting in" (Shaffir et. al., 1980; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Easterday et. al., 1987), I was still unprepared for the amount of time and discouragement

that I was to experience throughout the process.(3)
Nonetheless this provided some important insight into how
research obstacles have a critical function in the
formulation of research.

I was granted permission in October, 1986 by the Ottawa
Board of Education in Ottawa, Ontario to conduct research at
one of their schools. This occurred largely through the
help of my research advisor. Since he was known by the
committee in charge of reviewing research proposals this
status significantly aided in opening up access (Hoffmann,
1980: 47).

Acceptance to the research setting was conditional upon
fulfilling certain recommendations. These included the use
of a parental/student consent form. As well, there was the
expectation that the techniques would be formalized and
specific. This posed a problem. As mentioned previously, I
had designed my research to be highly flexible, in order to
allow the research questions to emerge out of the data
gathering (Burgess, 1985: 8-9; Glazer and Strauss, 1967).
The recommendations of the Board, however, necessitated that
greater structure be placed on the techniques (Schatzman and
Strauss, 1973: 30). In order to conform to the Boards'
requirements, my original intentions had to be restructured.
This meant a more formalized research relationship with the
young women. For example, before speaking to any student,
her parent or guardian had to grant permission and sign a
form which was to be returned to me, to then be given to the

principal. While I do not deny the elements of legitimacy of these recommendations, it is necessary to also point out how this acted to restrict my efforts, making the findings and the interactions more structured and less spontaneous.

While the various barriers to research which were experienced were disruptive and frustrating, they also allowed me to gain a sense of how research itself is subject to the constraints of social structures. As well, it allowed me to reflect upon how my social status and the statuses of those I wished to study, formed deterrents to the research. (4) Finally, these difficulties lead the research to be conducted with an awareness of how social institutions and structures play an important role in limiting research interactions and in maintaining young women's silence about their experiences.

The Research Setting

I finally began research in the school in January, 1987. The address of a school with what the Board felt was a mixed middle- working class school was provided. (5) The school was located in a suburb of Ottawa, Ontario. The area in the immediate vicinity of the school contained mixed housing, consisting of apartments, townhouses and single family homes. There was subsidized and co-operative housing in the area, as well. The school provided programs leading towards university entrance and programs leading towards community college entrance or employment after secondary school.

When I entered the school, the principal introduced me to the affirmative/positive action representative on the staff. This woman acted as an useful gatekeeper to the research, in that she initially helped me to find my way around the school and to learn the workings of the school. And what was more important, she helped me to make contact with the other staff members, providing me with the legitimacy that I needed.

After consultation with staff members, it was decided that I should primarily locate myself in the nurses' area where I could conduct my interviews. The nurses' area consisted of three rooms; upon entry the main room contained a desk, files, a washroom and a coffee machine for the staff, and attached to this room were two rooms designated for the sick, as they were equipped with beds. The main room was adjacent to the main office and a duplicating room. I was located in the entry room when I first met with the girls to set up interviews. Later for the interviews, I moved to the smaller of the 'sick' rooms, to ensure greater privacy.

The nurses' area, while segregated from the rest of the school, proved to be an interesting place to be stationed. It provided closeness to the main office where the normal day's operation of the school could be observed and where insight into the office staffs' various functions and duties could be gained. As well, the staffs' informal conversations could easily be overheard from the duplication

room or main office. This was of interest for not only I, but the students in the rooms could overhear conversations between teachers, secretaries and other staff which were often of a personal nature. Discussions ranged from a troublesome student in a class to a secretary's new pair of shoes (Field notes, January, 1987). This conversation revealed the staff to be human and less alienating than in the formal settings of the school such as the classroom or in the main office. This seemed to play a direct role in making the nurses' area a haven for students, particularly females, away from the institutionalized atmosphere of the school (6). In addition, since the nurses' area was also place where young women often went, it offered a place where their personal conversations and interactions could be witnessed and overheard which produced interesting data.

While the room in which I conducted the interviews offered some privacy, it was also subject to some interruptions due to external noise and the infrequent occurrence of staff members' intrusions. Even though this often interrupted trains of thought (Measor, 1985, 66-67), it also may have aided the research. This is because it must have become obvious to the young women that I did not have complete control over the research setting, causing my status as a researcher to be diminished and perhaps creating a greater rapport.

As previously mentioned, because I was stationed in the nurses' area there was close proximity to the main office.

This location allowed me to spend many hours observing the main office's everyday procedures. Of particular interest was the school's system of rules in regard to students being late or not present for class or school. I was able to document these rules as well as the ways in which they were played out. This helped to provide some evidence on students' methods of oppositional behaviours.

Sample and Interview Preparation

Upon entering the school, I began to organize a strategy in which I hoped to interview approximately twenty females from the academic stream, ten from grade 9 and ten from grade 12, as well as twenty females from the general stream, ten from grade 9 and ten from grade 12, totaling forty. In order to do this, I obtained the class lists of all of the grade 9 and 12 students in the school. I then, eliminated the males from the lists and proceeded to randomly sample the females obtaining a sample size of 60. Unfortunately, the lists gave no indication of which stream the girls were in and so the sample did not distinguish the distribution of girls in academic and general streams.

After sampling the names, letters were sent out through home form teachers to the girls that had been selected. In the letters, I described myself as a researcher who was doing a study on girls' experiences and who wished to interview them (See Appendix A1). I then, encouraged them to come to see me in order to set up an interview time, telling them, when and where I would be available. Finally,

I suggested that they bring along their girl friends if they wished to be interviewed as well. Through this, I hoped my sample would 'snowball' in size and would produce a set of friendship relations between the informants (Coleman, 1964: 444).

The following day after the letters had been distributed, I met with the girls and took the opportunity to explain a little more about myself and the study. Interview times were then set up, if interest was indicated. At that time, parental/student approval forms were distributed to be filled out and returned on the day of the interview.

When the interview times were arranged with the girls, I began to type up 'request for interview' slips as recommended by the school. Each of these slips contained the respondent's name, the time and date of the interview and the purpose of the interview. The slips had to be distributed first to the home form teacher, who then gave it to the girl that was to be interviewed. She then, finally gave it to her subject teacher in order to be able to receive permission to leave the class for the interview. The distribution of this slip as well as the parental/student approval form exemplified how the school and those within it, were entrenched in rules and bureaucracy. Furthermore in order to effectively function in this atmosphere I realized that I, too had to become a participant, obligated to follow certain rules.

The original success rate with the sample was low. Nineteen out of sixty sampled were interviewed and two of the nineteen were friends who had not been originally sampled. At this point, I decided that there was not enough time to wait for the original sample to continue to 'snowball' producing more informants and so instead, I opted to sent out letters to every girl who had not been previously sampled in grades 9 and 12.

The second letter was rewritten so that it was less formal than the first letter (See Appendix A2). This time I described myself as a student, not a researcher and emphasized that this would be an opportunity for them to speak out about their concerns and experiences. My hope was that this, less formal approach would be more applicable to those with whom I was trying to reach. Perhaps my initial lack of success was due to my first letter's more formal tone. This, I can only blame on my attempt to validate myself and my research in the face of earlier opposition. Luckily, I realized in time the possible negative consequences of attempting to legitimate and enhance my status with these young women.

Interview Organization

It was necessary for the interviews to be scheduled around the school's time periods of 50 minutes, so that students would only miss one class, spare or lunch period. Consequently, the interviews generally ran from 45 minutes

to one and a half hours (for some students wished to stay longer than 50 minutes). Each young woman was interviewed only once.

With this kind of scheduling, I realized that I had a limited time to create an atmosphere of relaxation in order to make the interviews a success. With this in mind, the interviews were arranged so that after each respondent arrived, approximately ten minutes were spent talking informally to them, ensuring they were comfortable with the interview situation before questions were asked. During this time, I again explained who I was - a student doing a study on aspirations and experiences in their high school and I proceeded to answer their questions about the study. Importantly, confidentiality for their responses was promised; ensuring that they realized that at no time would their name be revealed to anyone in the context of what they said (Oakley, 1981: 47). Further, it was particularly important to explain to them that I did not have connections with staff members or other students and so leaks of information would not occur. Finally, I asked permission to use the tape-recorder during the session; explaining that note-taking kept me too busy and took too much time and emphasizing that I was going to be the only one listening to the tape (Oakley, 1981: 47). All of the girls agreed to allow use of the recorder.

The tape-recorder was turned on only after this period of introduction in which agreement for its use was obtained.

This was extremely important since turning on the recorder immediately when the respondents first arrived would not only have intimidated them but it would also have been unethical (Measor, 1985: 63).

The interview began with warm up questions (Measor, 1985:69) on home life and proceeded along the interview guidelines (See Appendix B). The more sensitive questions on topics of school and resistance for example, were usually left to the last unless the informant brought these subjects up during the course of the interview. I did not strictly follow the interview guide, but instead listened to responses and allowed the research questions to evolve from the respondents' train of thought.

Feminist research should be a reciprocal process where informants should be permitted to have a say in the procedures (Oakley, 1981: 35). Thus, I felt that it was also important for the young women to have the opportunity to question me during the interview if they wished to. During the last 5 to 15 minutes of the interview I again asked them if they had any questions about the study or anything else to ask. Every informant without exception, took this time to ask questions. Many asked questions about the study such as: why I had picked their school to investigate and what I was going to do with the information that I obtained. Interestingly enough, however, most of the questions were of a more personal nature. These questions ranged from requesting advice on career and post-secondary

school such as what university was like, what certain courses were like, and if I preferred living on or off campus; to more personal advice on teachers and friends. As well, intimate questions about myself were asked such as if I had a boyfriend and what was I going to do in the future. When I told them that the interview was over, many seemed disappointed for I believe that for many, the interview was an enjoyable process (Measor, 1985: 6; Finch, 1984: 73). Proof of this is that many interviews lasted beyond the prescribed 50 minutes, and when I suggested ending the interview many requested that it continue.

Very often the young women came in pairs to set up interview times with me. Arising from this, the young women were invited to the interview with their girl friends. Consequently many of my interviews were group interviews (7). These interviews proved to be interesting in terms of group dynamics, since they presented an example of friendship interactions. These interviews were also the most fun for me personally because the girls relaxed more rapidly than in the single interviews. Perhaps, this was because in outnumbering me and having a friend for support, I was perceived as being less threatening. Naturally these interviews changed the responses in the sense that group interviewing has a reciprocal effect with participants responding and amending their accounts in accordance to their friends conversations and expectations of them (Lofland and Lofland, 1984: 14-15). This added to the

richness of the accounts and allowed for greater insight into the workings of friendship relations. However, it should be noted that the responses in group interviews may have differed from single interviews due to the presence of friends. Thus, a certain amount of candidness may have been diminished in these interviews.

Data Organization

It was very important to organize and maintain good record keeping techniques for the interviews, observations and my personal feelings in order to make sense of the findings. Therefore, after each interview, time was spent placing relevant quotes and personal and statistical data on cards. One card was kept for each person interviewed. These contained statistical information and personal information about the individual in order to make trends more visible and to trigger my memory about the person in later analysis.(8) As well, cards were labelled with a number of headings derived from questions in the interview guide. These cards contained important quotes from the respondent. Some data were recorded on tapes while other data were written up in notes, but, whatever the case, the material was reviewed as soon as possible after it was collected.

In order to organize my thoughts, a methodological journal was kept which was divided into several sections. In one section of this journal, the steps taken in achieving

access to the research setting were documented. In this section, I wrote out my thoughts and frustrations about the difficulties which occurred and kept track of the way in which my early intentions progressed and were reformulated. In another section, interesting occurrences or conversations, which I felt could redirect my questioning and aid in future analysis were noted. Lastly, a section was kept in which a record in which I, as the researcher, may have contributed to the interactions.

Profile of the Young Women

At the completion of the research, after nine weeks of being in the school, 24 grade 9 girls, 21 grade 12 girls, 1 grade 11 girl and 1 grade 13 girl to a total of 47 girls were interviewed.(9)

The young women ranged in age to 14 to the extreme of 21, but most grade nines were either 14 or 15 and grade twelves were either 17 or 18. While there was a small number of Asian and Black young women in the study, the majority were White. Since the young women generally defined themselves as being Canadian and sizable groups of definable races were not present, ethnicity was, therefore, not included in the analyses.

Of the 47 girls interviewed, the majority of girl's parents were presently married to each other. Of the grade 9 girls interviewed, 19 had parents who were presently married and of the girls in grade 12, 16 had parents who

were presently married to each other. As well, both girls in grades 11 and 13 had parents who were presently married to each other. In comparison, the number of girls with divorced, deceased and/or single parents was low. Of the grade 9 girls interviewed, four girl's parents were divorced and one girl had one parent who was deceased. Of the grade 12 girls interviewed, three girls had parents who were divorced, while one girl had one parent who was deceased and one girl had only one parent with no explanation. Of the seven girls, in grades 9 and 12, who had parents that were divorced, six girls lived with their mothers.

In general, most of the girls interviewed had a family with two children. Of the grade 9 girls interviewed, eleven out of twenty-four had two children in the family, while of the grade 12 girls interviewed, twelve out of twenty-one had two children in their family.

While I had been told that there was a population of working class girls within the school, I interviewed very few girls who could be described in those terms. I classified the girls' social class through Livingstone's (1985: 50-51) categories of class structure in advanced capitalist societies (10), by utilizing information about the girls' parents' occupation. From this information, it was determined whether their fathers and mothers were capitalists, intermediate workers, proletarians, or dependents. Where a father was a proletarian or a dependent and the mother was a proletarian or a dependent, the family

was classified as proletarian or working class. If either parent was an intermediate worker, the family was classified as middle class. Finally, where the father and/or mother was a capitalist and the respondent lived with that parent, the family was classified as capitalist. This only occurred in three cases and in each case the parents were small employers. From the total of 45 girls interviewed, 11 can be described as having parents who were working class. In grade 9, there were 7 working class girls interviewed, while in grade 12, there were 4 working class girls interviewed.

Since there is no actual breakdown of the proportion of working and middle class students in the school, it is indeterminate whether there was an equal number of working class girls to middle class girls. There really is no way of knowing then, if working class girls simply avoided me in large numbers (resistance to being interviewed) or whether they simply did not exist in large numbers.

Within the school, there were two academic streams in which students could take courses. The advanced level provided courses so that students would be prepared to go to grade 13 or to take additional courses with the ultimate aim of university entrance. In contrast, the general level prepared students for college or work. Of the eleven girls classified as being working class, 5 out of 7, who were in grade 9, were in the general level, while 2 out of 4, who were in grade 12, were in the general level. Of the remaining 34 girls, 2 girls in grade 9 were in the general

level, while 1 girl in grade 12 was in general level. In total, of the 45 girls interviewed, there were 35 girls in the advanced level and 10 in the general level.(11)

As well as general and advanced courses, there were enriched and special education courses. The girls interviewed were categorized as being general level if they had all general courses, general courses with two or less advanced courses, or general courses and special education courses. Girls were categorized as being in the advanced level if they had all advanced courses, advanced courses with two or less general courses, or advanced courses and enriched courses. It is evident that the majority of girls interviewed were in the advanced level. Whether this is due to the fact that the majority of girls in the school are in the advanced level or that advanced level girls were simply more interested in being interviewed is not known.

Generally, the students at the high school often took a mixture of general and advanced level classes as indicated by class lists. Thus, it was impossible to determine the proportion of girls within the entire school who were strictly in one level or the other. The reasons for the greater number of advanced level girls interviewed then, is not readily available.

Staff Interviews

Along with interviewing young women, I also interviewed eleven staff members. These staff members were the

principal (a male), vice principal (a male), three secretaries (females), two guidance/career counselors (females), one teacher-counselor (a female) and three teachers (two females and one male). All of these interviews were conducted through note-taking with the exception of two. This was due to the fact that I often visited them in their offices or classes where I did not wish to scramble about attempting to set up the tape recorder, and therefore note taking proved to be easier. The two exceptions were conducted in places where setting up the recorder was easily facilitated.

These interviews generally lasted from 15 minutes to 50 minutes. As with the young women interviewed, an interview guide was utilized, with some flexibility (See Appendix C & D). Time was spent before and after the interview establishing a sense of rapport, reassuring confidentiality as well as answering any questions the respondents felt they needed to ask.

I found that the principals in particular needed to be reassured that I was not in the school specifically to look for problems and attach blame on to them. Similarly, several counselors also needed the same reassurance. Thus, it was necessary to spend time reassuring them that I was not there to find fault with them. Even so, I do not know how effective this was, in that their responses were often limited. Quite simply, these respondents did not feel confident that their replies would not be used against them,

even though I assured them of the contrary (Hoffmann, 1980: 49). This is understandable considering that school staff's methods have often been the subject of criticism (Clarricoates, 1981: 193).

Finding teachers to volunteer for interviews was difficult most probably because of their busy schedules. However, the teachers whom I was able to interview provided me with some very interesting information. I think that this occurred because they had specifically volunteered for the interview, whereas other staff members had been individually requested to be interviewed and perhaps complied, due to a greater sense of obligation. My rapport with the teachers may have also been greater because I told them that I came from a family of teachers. This information probably reassured them of my sympathetic intentions (Hoffmann, 1980: 49), something that had not worked as well with the principals and counselors. Thus, the teachers who were interviewed tended to be very relaxed and generous with their confidences and time. I benefited from these interviews, because they provided an understanding of the stress and efforts involved in teaching.

The secretaries were interviewed during their breaks in the main office. Through these interviews, I was able to get a sense of the day-to-day operations of the school. The secretaries' perspective of students and school staff was also revealed. Many clearly aligned themselves with the

students saying that they felt sorry for them, while at the same time, they took seriously the disciplining procedure in which they were involved. These interviews were also important since they allowed me to gain a better understanding of the workings of the school.

Classroom Observations

In order to supplement the interview data, I decided to sit in on some classes in order to observe first hand, female students' interactions with members of the same and opposite sex as well as with teachers. Accordingly, I distributed letters to teachers of grades 9 and 12 and requested permission to attend their classes. The response was minimal; nonetheless I was able to attend four grade 9 classes, of which two were at the advanced level, one was enriched and one was general. I also attended one advanced level, grade 12 class. During the classes, notes were taken on the various interactions which occurred. Even though I did not attend a large number of classrooms, I did find that the information gained was profitable, in that it tended to support the interviews.

The Significance of the Researcher's Personal Identification

Certainly all scholarship is value-oriented (Eichler, 1985: 624) and so it is necessary to be conscious of the role the researcher plays in the social setting. It is important to emphasize that personal characteristics and

social background have an influence in the research process. Some of my personal characteristics which may have been important are: my gender, personal appearance, age, social class, and attitudes.(12) Although I entered the research setting with some expectations and positions as all researchers do (Eichler, 1985: 624), I attempted to maintain an awareness of these in order to not reduce my chances of finding the unexpected.

Throughout this methodological section, I have tried to emphasize that conducting research can be a difficult and long process. In view of this, it is important for the researcher to document and reflect upon the various stages of research, its organization, setting, respondents and the obstacles involved, in order to better understand the social forces which impinge upon the production of knowledge. Furthermore, attributes of researchers are significant in the process in that they can be considered a research instrument complete with limitations and vulnerabilities, yet able to document another human beings world (Jones, 1985: 48). Social research is a dialectical process where its beginnings, and its subsequent formation is formed through the interactions of the researcher, the gatekeepers and the subjects. With regard to all of these factors then, every researcher has a social obligation to reveal the many circumstances and influences which affect the way in which data are eventually gained (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 168).

1

Notes

Unfortunately this did not occur, since the majority of the young women who volunteered to be interviewed were of the middle social class.

2

Grade 9 and 12 girls were interviewed for comparison of the two grades, however it should be noted that grade 12 girls do not necessarily represent how grade 9 girls will be when they reach grade 12.

3

My original hope was to gather data on girls through participant observations and informal, partially structured interviews in the Hamilton, Ontario region. Since I had a sense of Hamilton's population and characteristics, because I grew up in the area, I felt that profitable data could be gained there.

I began steps towards gaining admittance to the research setting in April of 1986. A research proposal was designed with a flexible research framework and a local Board of Education in the Hamilton area was approached. After several brief communications, the Board refused the research request with little detail and no explanation.

After some thought and re-organization of previous directives, I decided to approach a local Community Centre in Hamilton, at which I had worked the previous summer as a youth employment counselor. Here, I felt that access to young women could be gained through the employment lists. Consequently, I approached the centre with my ideas and offered to negotiate my research intentions (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973: 30) in order to produce results which would be conducive to some of the Community Centre's objectives. Unfortunately, after several conversations with the Director of the centre, it was explained that the release of the girls' names without parental approval was problematic to the centre. The centre was extremely nervous of any controversies which might arise from the community. Thus, it wished to avoid any remote possibility of this and refused research admittance.

Meanwhile the summer had passed and I was still without a place for conducting my research. Finally in October of 1986, I approached a local Community Centre in Ottawa having heard about a Girls' Club formed out of the centre. Subsequently, I discussed with the club organizer the possibility of participating in the club events in order to collect data on the experiences of adolescent females. The

club organizer was very open to this possibility. I then, reorganized my objectives to make them feasible for the community centre setting and with the organizer's aid, attended a number of club meetings and gathered a small amount of interesting data. I went to club meetings for several weeks; however, within a short period of time there were problems with the girls' attendance at the meetings, as they had too many other obligations. The meetings became fewer and fewer and eventually the club organizer herself left the centre to work elsewhere and so my research was discontinued there.

4

With regard to my experience of restricted access at the Board of Education and Community Centre in Hamilton, there are several factors which probably contributed to my lack of success. In particular my status as a young, female graduate student certainly acted to limit my ability to gain access (Schatzman and Strauss, 1973: 27; Easterday et. al., 1987). This ascribed status of being young and female likely established an impression on the gatekeepers causing them to immediately regard the research as inconsequential. Being young and female is still not regarded as the status which is conducive to conducting legitimate and serious research (Easterday et. al., 1987). This is not to say that a male researcher would have had easy admittance, but rather that being female has a particular effect which may differ from being male.

Furthermore being a sociology student who was studying females may have immediately suggested that my results could shed negative implications on the Board or Community Centre's treatment of females.

The research methods may have also hindered admittance, for they were clearly presented as qualitative without fixed measuring devices and a statistical presentation which probably did not seem 'professional and scientific' enough (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 53; Glazer and Strauss, 1967: 16; Malmo, 1984: 124).

It is apparent that those who are granted easy admittance by gatekeepers are those who conform to the gatekeepers' expectations of a legitimate researcher utilizing legitimate methods and this is most often dictated by social institutions with patriarchal orientations. In discussing these difficulties, it is also necessary to consider the research subjects; young girls and why their social status may have also blocked entry. Girls and boys are well guarded by the social institutions of our patriarchal society. But of the two genders, girls are often regarded as more vulnerable, for example, while boys spend a great deal of their leisure time outside of the home, most often girls are less free to venture as boys do. Social institutions like the family and the school to mention a few, support the protection of girls and in doing so increase girls' invisibility to researchers and others

(Griffin, 1985: 63-71). In regard to young women, it can be argued that not only is there "...something about their culture which shuns outside interference of any sort...(McRobbie, 1978: 101)", but that their culture is also very much influenced by the social institutions which 'guard' them; organizing and perpetuating their isolation and restrictiveness. These institutions certainly aid in making adolescent females difficult to study.

5

This was based upon speculation rather than scientific data.

6

See Chapter Four.

7

Of the 24, grade 9 girls interviewed, 9 girls came to the interview alone, 12 girls came in pairs of two and 3 girls came together.

Of the 21, grade 12 girls interviewed, 12 girls came to the interview alone, 6 girls came in pairs of two and 3 girls came together.

8

At this time I placed a false name on the card beside the real name. The false name was later used in writing up the thesis.

9

I felt it was appropriate to interview the grade 11 and grade 13 girls since they had expressed an interest and desire to be interviewed and they were friends with the girls in grade 12 who had been already interviewed. Of the 47 interviewed, 2 of the girls had attended the girls' club where I had earlier conducted research.

10

Livingstone classifies the class structure of advanced capitalist societies as follows,

1. Capitalists, who own the major private means of production. Within this class, one can distinguish:
 - a. Large corporate employers.
 - b. Small employers, who continue to work alongside their employees.
 - c. Rentiers, who live off investment income without direct participation in the workplace.
2. Intermediate workers, who have some control over others' labour power and/or discretion over the use of their own labour but remain subordinate to capitalists' ownership claims or production decisions. Four broad types can be identified:

- a. The self-employed, traditionally called the petite bourgeoisie, who work for themselves without employing other paid labour; they are generally becoming less independent of corporate capitalist enterprises.
 - b. Managers or technocrats, those within capitalist firms and disciplining of the rest of the workforce and the conduct disciplining of the rest of the workplace and the conduct of technical design and planning.
 - c. Supervisors, who are beneath managers in capitalist firms and state organizations. They exercise immediate disciplinary control over subordinated workers but are assigned no control over production design.
 - d. Professional employees, who have no role supervising other workers but do have responsibility for the detailed problem-solving involved in the design and operation of production systems.
3. Proletarians, who own only their own labour power and have no real control over other workers. Two types are distinguished:
- a. Industrial workers, who are engaged in the fabrication of material goods and related transportation activities.
 - b. Nonindustrial workers, who are engaged in clerical, sales, and service activities.
4. The dependent population, people outside the employed workforce; many of them are, however, instrumental in its daily and generational reconstituting. The dependent population is comprised of homemakers, students, temporarily unemployed workers, and pensioners, many of whom live in households with members of other classes, as well as lumpen elements. Designation within the dependent population is not very informative for class analysis without specification of either the class positions of others in the household or the trajectory of the dependent people themselves into or out of class positions in the production process (Livingstone, 1985: 50-51).

11

The girls in grades 11 and 13 are not included in this analysis.

12

By sharing female gender affiliation with the young women studied, I had an advantage in gaining rapport and in finding out certain personal information. Had I been male, I may have missed out on gaining various insights (Oakley, 1981: 55; Finch, 1984: 78-79; Morgan, 1986: 48), for girls have been known to withhold information from male

researchers (Malmo, 1984: 126). Being researched by a female, may have enabled the young women to express their ideas comfortably due to the common gender position. Furthermore, since the personal is a legitimate form of interaction between females (Measor, 1985: 74), the girls were able to reveal intimate parts of their life without feeling that they would be demeaned or belittled (Gilligan, 1982).

Dress and appearance is an important factor in interaction, which can either hinder or ease rapport and thus, are salient issues in interviewing students and teachers (Measor, 1985: 58-60). It has been shown to be necessary to alternate clothing styles with teachers and students in order to keep the peace with both groups (Measor, 1985: 60-61). Appearance is particularly important to adolescents (Measor, 1985: 60), and researchers can easily be rejected on this basis. With this in mind, I decided to never overdress, and instead opted for comfortable informal dress. This seemed to be appropriate for the students. However, it was necessary to dress differently for the staff members in order to avoid being mistaken for a student. When I had interviews with staff only, I tried to dress up in order look more mature.

Associated with appearances, age also plays an important role in the research process. On many occasions, staff and students mistook me for a student at the high school or asked me how old I was and indicated surprise that I was older than they had thought. This both aided and restricted my research. In the case of my relations with the staff, since I was defined as young, this may have hindered a relationship on equal terms and caused me to appear less legitimate as a researcher. Conversely, in the case of the young women, my appearance supported a relationship on equal terms because I appeared to be a student. Where my age may have acted as an hindrance to rapport with the staff, I learned to emphasize my social status in order to gain an equal footing with staff members. I mentioned that I was a graduate student and that I had been given permission to do the study by the Board of Education. With the girls, I down played my graduate student status and instead tried to focus on our common experience as students. In both cases, I attempted to eliminate a hierarchical situation (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 112; Oakley, 1981: 41), so that the research process would be less constrained.

Along with aiding my relationship with the young women, my status of youth placed me in a position in which I could experience what being a female student might be like, albeit this experience was limited due to my inability to take part in all aspects of school life. This occurred when I was mistaken for being a student within the school by staff members and students. As a result, some interesting interactions took place. For example, I was on occasion harassed in the hallways by the boys, and as well I was once

asked by a secretary to sign a late book when I came into the main office. While these experiences were slightly intimidating, they also acted to enlighten me on what being a female and a student in this setting was like.

As with the other factors previously mentioned, my social class had a potential impact on the research. Being from a middle class background, I could identify more with the experience of middle class girls than with the working class. Thus, had I only interviewed working class girls perhaps my ability to establish a comfortable interview relationship would have been lessened.

During the interviews, I wanted the informants to feel that I was willing to open myself up to the way in which they saw their world (Measor, 1985: 62). Imposing my values on the young women or staff members was certainly not my intention or objective and so I did not do so. Thus, when I did disagree with the interpretations or opinions expressed, my disagreement was not expressed, so that I did not bias the interview (Oakley, 1981: 36). This was particularly difficult with many of the young women's anger towards feminism. In this case, I was faced with the dilemma of presenting my opinions about feminism or retaining neutrality. I decided to generally 'pass' as being without firm feminist beliefs rather than jeopardize the relationship and so my true position was only revealed when directly asked about my beliefs. This was because becoming labelled as a feminist might ruin my chances of attaining some interesting data (Stanley and Wise, 1983: 132).

Chapter Two

Middle Class Girls' Aspirations for the Future and the Influence of Social Identity.

Research has suggested that girls' beliefs about women's place in the world, specifically the gender roles and behaviours that females should exhibit, have strongly influenced their choices for the future (Gaskell, 1977-78, Griffin, 1985). Assumptions about gender, and gender in relation to social class and age have implications on young women's understanding of their abilities and the opportunities available to them. In turn, these assumptions are transformed into young women's own expectations for themselves.

The first section of this chapter will examine conceptions and expectations of the female gender. As well, conceptions and expectations of the middle social class and of adolescence will be examined in relation to gender. This examination will show how these often contain conflicting elements.

In the next section of the chapter, it will be argued that young women resolve expectations of female gender roles through choosing 'feminine' occupations. Secondly, it will show that in experiencing the additional component of expectations of class, middle class girls often choose occupations that are both 'feminine' and professional in

nature. Moreover, it will be shown that young women in the older age group make more traditional role and occupational choices. Finally, non-traditional occupations will be shown to be infrequent choices for young women. Throughout this section, evidence will be provided through the examination of two Canadian studies; that of Porter et. al., (1979, 1982) and of Baker (1985).

The final section of this chapter will present evidence from the current study, as it confirms previous findings. Here, it will again be argued that middle class girls tend to aspire towards professional, helping occupations.

Conceptions of Femininity, Social Class and Adolescence. Femininity: An Inferior Social Construct-

From an early age, females learn that their social world is oriented towards male dominance and the rejection of female experiences and things feminine (Chodorow, 1974; Chodorow, 1978; Chodorow, 1979: 102; Dinnerstein, 1976; Gilligan, 1982). Females also learn that attributes of femininity are an expected part of their identity. In our society, female and male gender identity is often described in oppositional terms. Some of the qualities commonly cited are; for females dependence, empathy, caring and passivity, and in contrast for males; independence, stoicism, individuation and aggression. All of these qualities embody the stereotypical conception of gender identity (Bardwick and Douvan, 1971: 225). Such stereotypes of male and female

gender are problematic for several reasons. First, while undoubtedly these qualities do differentiate masculine and feminine gender roles, the differences between the genders may not be so encompassing (Stoll, 1974: 80). Second, it is apparent that in the attachment of specific qualities to the genders, qualities which have been traditionally regarded as feminine are regarded as weak and inferior, while qualities attached to masculinity are regarded as strong, superior and essentially more valuable to society (Gilligan, 1982: 17; Broverman et. al., 1972: 61). It is this assignment of value and worth to things termed 'masculine' and the devaluation of things termed 'feminine' that is significant in creating ambivalence for females. Females learn that their gender and the characteristics of femininity associated with their gender are devalued, yet femininity is also a necessary part of their female gender identity. This is because femininity, though a devalued social construct, is desirable for the attainment of social acceptance and is a necessary part of self identity for females. Thus females' definition of self is contradictory since it both condemns and devalues femininity and being female socially, yet condones and values it on a personal basis. As a response, females may learn to deny that they, as individuals are the same as other 'devalued' females (Hollway, 1984: 229). Subsequently, as females develop their ambitions they must come to terms with maintaining

their feminine identity with the knowledge that it is an inferior social construct.

Conflicting Role Expectations of Class and Gender-

The demands of female sex role expectations and the patriarchal value placed upon achievement in areas of work in the public sphere creates particular contradictions for females, particularly for females of the middle and upper classes (Anyon, 1983: 20; Macdonald, 1980: 18). Achievement and economic success in the public sphere is an expected component of these females' class affiliation. Institutions such as the school system and the family promote the value of pursuing the patriarchal and capitalist roles of independence, competition and leadership (Anyon, 1983: 19-20). With the expectations and advantages of their social class, middle class females tend to aspire higher than females of the lower socio-economic status (Porter et. al., 1979; Porter et. al., 1982; Baker, 1985). The difficulty for middle class girls then, is that they are similarly encouraged (as working class girls are) to develop a feminine identity which revolves around responsibility and interdependence in relationships and nurturing behaviours (Gilligan, 1982; Hudson, 1984: 42; McRobbie, 1978: 102). Equal opportunity may be the overt ideology of society but for females, this is circumvented by the ideology of femininity (Macdonald, 1980: 18). The experience of middle class females is one of two conflicting social messages; one

to behave consistent with feminine roles and the other to fulfill capitalist expectations of achievement. These two social messages simply do not correspond with one another (Anyon, 1983: 19). As Sharpe has observed,

It is a double-bind situation: if girls go after what society deems most important, succeeding financially and academically in a career, then they may lose in 'femininity'; while if they concentrate on their 'proper' role, it is inherently of lower economic and ideological status (1976: 133).

In short, the career ambitions of females are inter-linked with the need to maintain femininity, potentially creating ambivalent positions.

Adolescence and Role Development-

The period of adolescence is a time in which society begins to make stronger gender roles demands as physical changes occur (Bardwick and Douvan, 1971: 230). Physical changes as well as social pressures and expectations affirm the roles and behaviours of the genders and the differences between them. In order to attain adult female roles during this time, females must conform to the norms and values of patriarchal society and accordingly adjust their aspirations to fit these norms and values.

Adolescence is a difficult period of time for the formation of identity and aspirations since young women are still very much in a transitional phase of social and emotional change (Parry, 1982: 16). It is a period of status ambiguity for the individual due to differing social

expectations (Coleman, 1974: 20). During adolescence, young women are expected to project qualities associated with the traditional adult female role. However their status of being still in youth does not yet fully allow them to be adult females. Furthermore adolescence, in being "...a 'masculine' construct (Hudson, 1984: 35)", is not an entirely acceptable status for females. Adolescence for young men is regarded as an inevitable but passing stage in which the wild behaviours of youth; specifically sexuality and aggression (Hudson, 1984: 35) can be legitimately exercised. In contrast, such expressions of behaviour by young women are regarded as unfeminine and hence socially unacceptable. The expectations associated with adolescence and of femininity are consequently subversive of one another each not allowing the other to be fully incorporated into self identity (Hudson, 1984: 31).

Undesirable behaviour which can be attributed to the status of youth with the expectation that it will be outgrown is acceptable. However youthful behaviour which is also gender inappropriate behaviour is regarded as improper and deviant (Hudson, 1984: 51). As a result, the genders learn that for males, opportunities and self expression are much more appropriate. In contrast, the necessity of maintaining feminine roles; in order to attain adult female status, reduces such opportunities and self expression for females. Consequently, as young women advance through adolescence they learn to come to terms with the

contradictions inherent in being female and youthful and they often lower their ambitions as a result (Porter et. al., 1982).

It is apparent that societal expectations of female sex role ideology impinge on the expectations of social class and adolescence to present conflicting social messages for young middle class females. Increasingly, these contradictions may come to the forefront as decisions are made concerning adult female roles. Aspirations are then, a reflection of how identity is regarded and how the contradictions of the normative system are dealt with. The argument to be presented further, is that pressures to maintain feminine roles in occupational spheres as well as to choose occupations with social status may consequently lead these middle class females to choose occupations which not only stress roles consistent with femininity but which are considered high status for women; that is professional/helping occupations.

Aspirations for 'Feminine' Occupations-

Feminine roles of nurturing and socioemotional behaviours are often reflected in the occupations which females most often choose (Fox, 1977: 814-815; Hunt, 1980: 22; Sharpe, 1976: 164). In Canada, young women continue to aspire in large numbers to areas which are characteristically feminine. Two fairly recent Canadian

studies exemplify this. Both studies indicate that young women generally channel their aspirations into specific areas; notably occupations and university subjects which conform to expectations of femininity.

In their survey of grades 8, 10, and 12 students in Ontario schools, Porter et. al., (1982: 98) have found that for the grade 10 aspiration levels, the proportion of females who wanted top jobs was as great as the proportion of males who did so. However, though their aspiration levels were high,

Girls aspired in greater proportion than did boys to level 3, no doubt because it contains a number of traditionally female occupations such as nursing, physiotherapy, social work, stenography and so on (Porter et. al., 1982: 98-99).

The conclusions drawn for females in grades 8 and 12 were generally the same with the exception that for grade 12 females the most stable level was IV, indicating aspirations for white-collar occupations at a lower level (Porter et. al., 1982: 99).(1)

While these aspirations for girls seem high, Porter et al., suggest that there are two categories in which choices for the future should be regarded,

...aspirations being what students would really like to do, such wishes no doubt having a degree of fantasy, and expectation being an adjustment of realistic ambitions in the light of circumstances in which they find themselves (1982: 95).

Porter et. al., findings indicated that for each grade examined a good proportion of students adjust their

expectations downwards as compared to their aspirations (1982: 96). Porter et. al., observe that,

... a lower proportion of girls expected to have high status occupations, which follows, in part from their lower educational aspirations. Over half the girls expected to have occupations in the middle range while the male expectations are more evenly distributed through the scale (1982: 215).

Finally the researchers state that,

When a man expects to have a high status occupation, he could be thinking of a variety of different types of employment; however, a woman with high occupational aspirations would probably be planning to be a teacher in elementary or high school, a librarian or a social worker. All the professions in which women predominate... generally gain the position of 'high status' because of the amount of education required, but they do not carry with them the same high social status or esteem as those in which men predominate (for example, law or medicine) (Porter et. al., 1982: 215).

Young women then, may aspire towards fantasy occupations which are at class level I; highly visible professional occupations (Porter et. al., 1982: 97) and are traditionally masculine dominated. This reflects the way in which they manifest societal expectations of desirable occupations through their aspirations. Nevertheless, expectations of the future generally conform to a greater extent to traditionally feminine occupations (Porter et. al., 1982: 212-215), providing evidence of their realization of the cultural and economic barriers towards reaching their ambitions (Porter et. al., 1979, 1982).

Similarly, the Canadian study of 15 to 19 year old females and males conducted by Baker (1985: 5) notes that

while the proportion of males and females anticipating university schooling were almost equivalent; the subjects that they anticipated enrolling in differed (Baker, 1985: 44). Baker states that,

The boys more often chose engineering, electronics, architecture, and science subjects. The girls focused on languages, the humanities, psychology, education, nursing and medicine (Baker, 1985: 44).

It is evident that young Canadian females predominantly choose occupations and university subjects which conform to societal expectations of female gender roles. These occupations are extensions of the roles in which females have been socialized into and therefore, do not threaten the feminine identity (Sharpe, 1976: 164). The problem inherent in this is not that they are occupations that are feminine in character, but rather that they are devalued because of this. 'Feminine' occupations simply fail to be granted the same social and economic status as 'masculine' occupations by society (Porter et. al., 1982: 215). Therefore, females are subject to continued devaluation through their occupational choices.

'Feminine' and Professional Occupations Choices for Middle Class Girls-

The higher aspirations of middle class girls (Porter et. al., 1982) are often channeled into occupations that have both an emotional/nurturing character and a professional status. Professional or managerial employment was a frequently chosen category for both males and females

in the Baker study, with 72% of the males and 53% of females selecting such occupations (1985: 79). Baker (1985: 80) indicates that females who have professionally employed mothers and were of a higher socio-economic status were most likely to aspire to this category. She indicates that the occupations that girls chose were "...nurse, physiotherapist, teacher, social worker, doctor, lawyer, veterinarian, pharmacist, marine biologist and astronomer (Baker, 1985: 79)."

Baker does not indicate if the types of occupations chosen within this category differ for males and females, however she does observe that of this 53% of females aspiring to professional or managerial employment, only 19% aspired to occupations which are non-traditional for women (Baker, 1985: 84). It can be inferred then that these females often prefer occupations which are traditional for females, since these careers allow for the expression of achievement motivations in an environment that generally does not reduce the maintenance of their female roles (Fox, 1977: 814-815) nor the orientations of social class.

Age as a Factor in Choices Made-

As females advance through adolescence they increasingly subscribe to female gender roles. In learning to develop female roles, young women, correspondingly, change the direction of their aspirations to fit these new roles. Several Canadian aspiration studies (Porter et. al.,

1982; Baker, 1985) indicate that indeed, the age of the females has an influence on the direction of aspirations: with the older age groups conforming more to traditional choices. Baker has observed that the girls who choose non-traditional occupations tend to be in the younger age group which was 15 or 16 years old (1985: 86). Baker asserts that her findings may indicate that as young women reach the later grades of school they become more traditional in their career choices (1985: 86). Similarly Blishen in an examination of the Porter, Porter, Blishen (1971) study observes that by the time young women reach grade 12, they lower their occupational aspirations due to a greater awareness of discrimination towards women in the work force (1984: 296). This lowering of aspirations can be concluded to be indicative of the way in which females, as they mature, increasingly conform to the norms of adult female roles.

Non-Traditional Occupational Choices-

Women in Canada are beginning to gain access to occupations which have been traditionally male dominated. However, non-traditional occupational choices for young women still remain at low levels. The Baker (1985: 84-85) study indicates that 23 girls or (19%) aspired towards this category. Of these young women, 20 chose professional work, while only 3 chose non-professional, non-traditional occupations (Baker, 1985: 84-85). Evidently then,

occupations which are non-traditional and blue collar were particularly avoided by Baker's respondents (Baker, 1985). The Porter et. al., (1982) study also confirms this notion. They state that, "Only a small proportion of girls wanted to work at the two lowest levels, which generally are in the blue-collar world (Porter et. al., 1982: 98-99)."

The reasoning behind the avoidance of such occupations seems to be that there are sexist pressures against females entering them (Braid, 1979; O'Farrell and Harlan, 1982: 252-253). As well, these occupations may be particularly avoided since they connote unpleasant, dirty, working conditions and hard physical labour which could erode stereotypical images of femininity (Fox, 1977: 814-815; Braid, 1979: 17). Females must continuously confirm that they are feminine and 'nice girls', hence they make occupational choices that do not jeopardize this status (Fox, 1977: 809). Blue collar and/or non-traditional occupations are thus regarded as undesirable for they threaten the feminine identity which adolescent females are in the process of developing.

Evidence from the Current Study-

This study confirms the evidence of the previous Canadian studies. The results of this study indicate that middle class girls have a strong tendency to aspire towards occupations which are both professional and caring. First, the occupations that were chosen in this study definitely

can be associated with the social class of these young middle class females. Table (1) indicates that a large number of respondents; 27, aspired to occupations that were in the professional category. This tendency towards occupations which are professional is consistent with the high socio-economic status of these young women (Anyon, 1983).

The results showed that in answer to the question, "Who has the most influence on your future?", the response generally was that parents were the most influence for both grades, with the mother being slightly more influential. Most of the parents were classified as middle class (see methodology), and most mothers worked outside of the home; only seven mothers of the grade 9 girls worked inside the home, while only five mothers of the grade 12 girls did so, out of a total of 45 mothers. This may point to the social class pressures and the influence of working mothers which convinced most girls to chose professional occupations for the future. Middle class girls have greater encouragement as well as financial ability to aspire towards these occupations than girls with lower social economic status (Anyon, 1983: 20; Porter et. al., 1982: 221), therefore, these results are not surprising.

Occupations with nurturing/expressive qualities are conducive to the expectation that females maintain wife and mother roles in their labour (Hunt, 1980: 22). It was apparent that the occupations chosen had this nurturing

component: within the professional category, 19 out of 27 (2) responses were in the sub-category of helping professions. All of these, with the exception of Pediatrician and Veterinarian, are high on the female sex typing scale (Armstrong, 1984: 233-239). In the category of non-helping professions there was less interest, with a total of 8 responses out of 27. Thus, when professional occupations were chosen they were more often in the helping category. As well, in the skilled occupations category, 6 respondents out of 6 chose traditional occupations, which again are high in sex-typing. This shows that these young women predominantly chose occupations that conformed to gender appropriate roles.

These young women's explanation for choosing helping professions is exemplified in the following interviews excerpts:

Judy (grade 9): I want to be a child psychologist.

SH: Why did you decide that?

Judy: I don't know, it's just people always tell me that I'm good with kids and I like being around kids so I decided I like, I'd be good at a job where I have to work with kids.

(group interview)

Susan (grade 9): I want to be a nurse!

SH: So what made you decide that?

Susan: Florence Nightingale. (girl friends laugh) I'm serious. I just read the book and I thought I want to be like that person. And I like taking care of people, making sure they don't feel bad and stuff. Like I like doing that, when ever my dad was sick or something or my brother and sisters like I'd, I'd always be there I'd want to help my mom.

(group interview)

Colleen (grade 12): I want to work in the area of business, helping people. I really want to help people.
(individual interview)

Hence, the results clearly point to the fact that the females in this study most often desired occupations with characteristics of professionalism and helping behaviours, which satisfies the necessity of maintaining female gender roles at work with having high status in a woman's occupation.

This study confirms previous evidence; in that very few females chose non-traditional occupations. When occupations were chosen which were not under the professional category (i.e. skilled occupations), they were traditional in nature, with high female sex-typing. Of those who did choose non-traditional occupations, these non-traditional occupations were usually in the non-helping professions or in business/management. It should be noted that none of the respondents chose non-traditional occupations which were blue collar/or skilled occupations (Table 1). These young women definitely regarded these occupations as undesirable for them. This tendency is indicated in the following excerpts;

SH: Would you want to build houses like your father?

Rosalind (grade 12): No, I wouldn't want to do that (laugh).

SH: Why is that?

Rosalind: I don't know this may sound weird but (laugh) totally against what I just said but I

don't think women do those things (laugh) you know. I wouldn't want that.
(individual interview)

Adele (grade 9): I used to want to be a fireman for a long time, but now I know I can't do that.
SH: Why not?
Adele: It's just not done. Women don't do that. They can't.
(individual interview)

In this study, the aspirations for grade 9 and grade 12 females appear to be fairly similar to each other (See table 1). However, table 2 indicates that grade 12 girls anticipated going to university less often than grade 9 girls. This was despite the fact that there was a slightly greater number of grade 12 girls in the advanced level courses than grade 9 girls; with 18 out of 21, grade 12 girls in the advanced level, as opposed to 17 out of 24, grade 9 girls in the advanced level. This suggests lower educational ambitions for grade 12 girls which is consistent with previous research conducted by Porter et. al., (1982). An explanation for this is that,

As girls become more oriented toward their relationships with boys and their own future roles as wives and mothers, they apparently become less inclined to view higher education as a necessary or realistic alternative (Marini, 1978: 128).

Evidently then, grade 12 girls in aspiring to university less often, limit their future occupations to a greater extent than females in grade 9.

The evidence that fewer grade 12 girls have ambitions to go to university may indicate that these girls have conformed to the expectations of females roles to a greater

extent than girls in grade 9 (Baker, 1985: 86; Blishen, 1984: 296). These results may also have been influenced by the fact that more grade 9 girls had mothers with professional occupations; that is their occupations were classified under intermediate social class. Seven, grade 9 girls had mothers in this category, as compared to only one, grade 12 girl. However, both grades had a comparable number of mothers who were housewives or dependents; seven grade 9 girls' mothers and five grade 12 girls' mothers. Fathers may not have been as much of an influence in this case since most fathers' occupations were shown to be professional; either intermediate or capitalist for both grades. It was found that 18 out of 24 of the grade 9 girls' fathers were middle class, while 17 out of 21 of the grade 12 girls' fathers were. Mothers have been shown by previous researchers to be an effective role model in directing young women's aspirations (Baker, 1985: 97-98), and this may have had some effect in regard to university aspirations, in the current study.

It is evident that the occupations young women chose were consistent with socially defined feminine roles. These choices reveal the extent to which femininity and female roles are internalized and then subsequently displayed (Sharpe, 1976: 128). Unfortunately, the implications of this are not positive. As indicated previously, these occupations often continue to be devalued economically and socially (Porter et. al., 1982: 215). Where women enter

female dominated occupations, they often face difficulties in attaining vertical movement up the occupational scale, a lack of control over their work, along with low status and pay (Gerson, 1985: 105). Furthermore, female dominated helping professions often incur a high rate of burnout due to the differential between the needs of the client and the lack in availability of resources (Gerson, 1985: 105). Thus, women face many of the same problems and limitations in the paid labour force as they do in the private sphere of the home.

Evidently then, to be truly equal in contemporary patriarchal society seems to mean that females have to procure the valued qualities which males have access to and to essentially become like males (Hollway, 1984: 230). However, attaining masculine qualities remains self defeating for females, for the more they engage in masculine activities or have masculine personality traits, the more they are subject to negative social sanctions since they are deviating from their prescribed gender roles. A more favorable solution would be for society to begin to value femininity and feminine spheres of work (Markus, 1987: 107). However at present these values are not yet in the mainstream and so females must continue to be participants under the present conditions.

This chapter has presented some of the central factors influencing young women's identity, that is gender and social class and age in relation to gender. The following

chapters will examine some of the dynamics of the school and of friendship relations which have a significant affect in creating conceptions about gender, gender roles and ultimately about career choices.

1

Notes

Occupations were coded into six class levels;

Class I Higher Professions: physicians, lawyers, engineers.

Class II Other Professions and Higher Managers: actuaries, large business owners and managers, airline pilots.

Class III Lesser Managers and Technicians: surveyors, occupational therapists, small business owners and managers.

Class IV White Collar Clerical and Higher Crafts: bookkeepers, office appliance operators, toolmakers.

Class V Lesser Crafts and Semi-skilled Manual and Lower White Collar: stationary engineers, sales clerks, typists, farmers.

Class VI Unskilled: Truck drivers, longshoremen; janitors (Porter et. al., 1982: 44).

2

Note - There were 6 respondents out of the 45 who were undecided about their occupational choice. Thus, the actual total of respondents who made an occupational choice was 39.

Chapter Three

School Interaction: The Invisible and Objectified Girl

In many senses school experience duplicates the patterns present in wider society (Spender, 1982: 59; Clarricoates, 1981: 195). Forms of patriarchal control, domination and sexism outside of the school are also part of the 'hidden' curriculum of young women's education within the school. The treatment and behaviour of the genders within the school has been observed to differ in such a way that males gain from the educational system and girls, accordingly, learn that they, as females do not count in the ways that males do (Clarricoates, 1981: 195; Spender, 1982).

This chapter will discuss how interaction within the school acts as an important mechanism in teaching the genders the sexual hierarchy in which males dominate. It will do so, through examining sexism in interactions between boys and girls, between teachers and finally between teachers and girls, and how this further delineates the differences between the genders. Classroom participation will then, be examined in regard to how this differs for females and males. Finally, physical education and sports activities will be discussed, as they exemplify gender differences and attitudes in relation to these.

Male Student Domination and Sexism -

Sexism, sexual harassment and domination by male students has often been found to be present within schools (Jones, 1985: 28; McLaren, 1982). While this may occur through blatant forms of physical and verbal intimidation and violence, objectification and domination of females also occurs in more subtle ways. Clarricoates (1981: 197) work provides an example of this. She observes that, when asking students if males and females should do the same jobs,

... the boys talked more, and talked louder, and their conversation (if that's what it could be called) usually degenerated into yelling at the girls abusive suggestions, most of which were anatomically impossible. The boys tended to initiate talk, change and select topics, and manipulate gender to include or exclude others from participation (Clarricoates, 1981: 197).

In the present study, forms of sexism, harassment and domination were also found to continue to exist. This occurred through beliefs as well as through actions. One teacher acknowledged the sexist beliefs that many male students hold in the following excerpt,

SH: What is the largest problem for female students in the school?
Ms. Todd: Coping with and overcoming, adolescent males sexist attitudes. Adolescent males are still the most conservative and sexist group there is. Dealing with that and not falling into the traditional trap of things is their biggest problem.

Many of the young women discussed occurrences in which they felt boys had treated them in sexist ways. Implicit in this discussion was girls' realization that boys' actions

often exert social control and domination over interactions.

As one grade 12 girl stated,

SH: Do you think because you're female you'll ever have problems?

Sheila (grade 12): Well I have some of that already. In some of my classes, when we get into our groups and discuss things, a lot of what I say is either discarded or it's dropped for a few minutes and then one of the guys will re-arrange it a little bit and say "Heah, blah, blah, blah."

SH: Yeah?

Sheila: That's the thing you can't do much about it because in that class there are about six girls and the rest are boys.

(individual interview)

More visible forms of sexism and domination such as verbal and physical abuse have also been observed in schools (McLaren, 1982; Jones, 1985; Willis, 1977). Specifically, females have often been described as being the brunt of male sexual conversation, humour, and displays of physical ridicule and harm (Willis, 1977; Jones, 1985). Jones (1985) states that,

Every girl I spoke to gave the same list of words used against them 'cunts', 'slag', 'pro', 'bitch'. As girls walked into the class groups of boys jeered comments on the size of girls' breasts and on their appearance (Jones, 1985 :28).

In general, in the present study, grade 9 girls indicated occurrences of this type of sexism more often than grade 12 girls. As well, grade 9 girls observed that this sexism was mainly confined to boys of one ethnic group; the Italian boys. The kinds of behaviours displayed by these boys and the subsequent reactions of the girls are revealed as follows,

SH: How are boys different than you?

Angie (grade 9): Well, a lot of them are jerks, and they treat you differently 'cause you're a girl (laugh).

SH: How? (Both girls laugh)

Angie: I just had a bad experience. (pause) A lot of them are Italians, when you walk by them if they don't like a certain girl then they laugh or something.

Becky (grade 9): You know, bang on the heater if they like someone.

Angie: Yeah.

Becky: It's embarrassing walking down there.

SH: How does it make you feel?

Angie: When we walk by we always go like this.

(Angie bends her head down and looks at the floor)
(group interview)

Jackie (grade 9): Well some are nice and some are just, I don't know, rude, like, they like to make fun of you, like the Italian guys.

SH: How do they act?

Janice (grade 9): Well they always bug us, they hit the radiators or go, wooh, when girls walk by.

SH: Why do you think they are different from other guys in the school?

Janice: They act more hot, more hot shot.

SH: Why do you think they are like that?

Janice: They're just a gang so they think they are really macho or something, a big gang together, you know, they think they're something.

SH: So how do they make you feel?

Jackie: I try to avoid going by them and if I do, I don't look at them. I turn the other way.

(group interview)

These excerpts show how boys organize interactions which degrade and objectify girls. Girls dislike these behaviours nevertheless, they respond with passivity and avoidance. The behaviour of these males appears to be a display of male cohesiveness against females. Through this, these boys may be attempting to elevate their own status within the school (Willis, 1977: 43-47). Unfortunately, such behaviours often are at the expense of girls, as they

increasingly attain a negative, objectified view of themselves.

Sexism by Staff Members-

Studies have reported that female teachers are often exposed to sexual harassment by male staff members and students (Jones, 1985). The ways in which female teachers are treated within the school is indicative of how females, in general, are regarded. In the current study, female teachers, like female students, still report incidents of harassment. As one teacher indicated, "It's getting better but there's a long way to go!."

Several female teachers, in the present study, remarked upon incidents of sexist joking and remarks made by male teachers, which made them feel uncomfortable. As one teacher stated,

Ms. Todd: It's more of a subtle attitude that's there that (pause) a subtle attitude about working full-time and being a mother and whether or not you should be doing that, as opposed to being at home with your children and little comments about that. Putting up with a lot of jives, whether they are meant seriously or whether they are just meant in jest, they're still there and it gets tiresome when you have to keep dealing with this like, we'll have a staff or department meeting and "Well who's making the coffee..." or "Who's bringing the cookies..." and you keep smiling and you just want to tell them to go away. And you are tired of hearing this over and over again and your sense of humour is wearing thin with this.

It is evident that such interaction is frustrating to female teachers. As well, it is difficult to curtail due to the problem in exposing the sexist intentions behind the

joking remarks. As a result, male teachers can exert some social control over this interaction through active denial if female teachers respond in anger.

Since these forms of sexism still prevail in interaction with male and female teachers, it can be inferred that this behaviour is also present in some teachers' attitudes towards female students. The majority of the adolescent girls interviewed felt that their teachers did not usually openly treat girls in sexist ways. Nonetheless, a few young women still mentioned occurrences of sexist treatment by teachers, specifically male teachers.

SH: Is there a difference in the way male and female teachers treat boys and girls?

Mary-Ann (grade 12): Mr. Walters he really likes the girls in our school (laugh) he still thinks a girl should be at home washing the floors or whatever.

SH: How did you get this impression?

Mary-Ann: He talks about his home and how his wife stays at home and every time a pretty girl walks into the class he just sits there and he'll look at her and he'll watch her go to her desk. (individual interview)

Stacey (grade 12): My outdoor ed. teacher is kind of chauvinistic.

SH: Why is that?

Stacey: Well he always says, "Well the girls will have to do this and the guys will do that" and when we went skiing he did it at his pace and he said the weaker skiers go ahead and he was looking at all the girls 'cause like, so we all left and a couple of guys came and then they came up like ten minutes later and passed us and went on skiing at a pace that nobody like, only most of the guys skied at but the girls didn't. I guess he was just trying to prove that the girls are inferior to the guys. Which I don't really like.

Later-

Stacey: And also when we were making paddles. In my outdoor ed. class we have to make paddles, so I went down to the woodworking room and the teacher

said, "So how do you like doing a man's job?" and I said, "Pardon me". He goes, "How do you like doing a man's job?" and I said, "What do you mean a man's job?" He goes, "Well being down here with all these machines and stuff how do you like it? Well it's a lot different from going up to your Home Ec class and doing your sewing" and I said, "I've never taken Home Ec before," and he just looked at me, "Pardon me you've never taken Home Ec," and I said, "No" (laugh)

SH: Hmphmm

Stacey: "But you're supposed to, you're a girl." I said, "Not all girls do that you know."

SH: What did he say to that?

Stacey: He just kind of looked at me and walked away.

(individual interview)

Connie (grade 12): Well in Economics this morning my teacher picked four boys to go to the front and answer questions and then he said, "Next time I'll get four girls", so I don't know they sort of tend to group the guys together and the girls together.
(individual interview)

This type of treatment seemed to be aimed at emphasizing girls' differences to boys. These examples of sexism show how the equality of the sexes is effectively repudiated by males. Hence, females are put into their subordinate place through these interactions in ways in which they have little recourse to change.

Classroom participation

The amount of participation by males and females within the classroom is another important area which underscores the disparities in the treatment and behaviours of the genders. Many researchers have shown that boys, in general, play a more visible role within the classroom; receiving the greater share of attention and help from teachers

(Stallworth, 1981: 37; Spender, 1980; Spender, 1982: 54-59;

Clarricoates, 1978; Clarricoates, 1981; Russell, 1979-80). Russell's study of students in Ottawa, Ontario indicated that boys participation in the classroom was greater than girls; with the boys asking more questions and making more comments than girls (1979-80: 62-64). As well, she observed that both male and female teachers sought the participation of boys more often than girls (Russell, 1979-80: 62-64). Similar conclusions have been drawn in other studies. In Stanworth's (1981) British study, she observed that,

Boys are, according to the pupils' reports, four times more likely than girls to join in discussion, or to offer comments in class. They are twice as likely to demand help or attention from the teacher, and twice as likely to be seen as "model pupils" (Stanworth, 1981: 37).

Another British study produced similar findings (Clarricoates, 1978). Again, boys obtained more attention time from teachers than girls (Clarricoates, 1978: 358). This occurred through teachers helping them and listening and talking to them more often (Clarricoates, 1978: 358).

The same kind of trends became evident in my interviews and classroom observations. The young women interviewed generally indicated that boys were often the focus of attention. This focus of attention was enabled through asking and answering questions more frequently and through disruptive behaviours.

SH: Who asks the most questions in your classes?
 Jane (grade 9): Umph, maybe the boys. They are more outgoing. I haven't met very many boys who are shy.
 (individual interview)

Boys prominence in classroom situations is a product of their behaviours. However, girls collude in allowing this prominence to continue in that they refrain from behaving as boys do. The expectations are that girls will not demand a great deal of attention in the classroom. Social constraints support these expectations. Thus, not only are females constrained by the behaviours of boys in taking a greater share of attention in the class, but they are also constrained by dominant perceptions of proper female student behaviours. Young women then, may not press for an equal share of attention due to the anticipated negative consequences for such behaviours.

Confirming previous studies, the girls in the present study overwhelmingly preferred to take an inactive role in the classroom by remaining quiet and refraining from asking or answering questions. The following interview excerpts reveal that the part of the reason for this behaviour can be attributed to the young women's expectation of negative peer group and teacher reactions.

SH: Do you ask questions or prefer to be quiet in class?

Cathy (grade 12): I sit back and don't ask questions (laugh).

SH: Why is that?

Cathy: Because I'm embarrassed to ask questions 'cause I think they're stupid or people will always, other people in the class will already know the answer and it's just me that doesn't understand it.

(individual interview)

Mary-Ann (grade 12): I prefer to be quiet in class. It's just (laugh) I don't like it. It's

hard to just put up your hand and say something and then it's the wrong thing and sometimes you get criticism from your teacher or like people laugh at you in class or something like that and sometimes it's embarrassing, so you don't want to say, anything at all.
(individual interview)

Nathalie (grade 9): I ask a few questions but I don't like to sort of be singled out sort of because people (pause) I get the feeling that they sort of start talking about you and saying well is she sort of stupid because that's on the board.
(individual interview)

Danielle (grade 9): Sometimes when the teacher, just say there's a question that no one else can answer and I have the answer and I say it, I feel like everyone's staring at me and they think that I think that I'm a hot shot and they think that I think that I'm superior but I try like, after I answer the question I feel really self conscious and everyone's going to think that I'm, you know better than them (pause) you know (pause) I guess it's just, you have the answer (laugh), I don't know.
(individual interview)

Barb (grade 9): I guess I like other people to ask questions, because if I ask questions I feel like it's a dumb question that everyone else knows then I feel really stupid, you know?
SH: Why do you feel stupid?
Barb: I don't know 'cause it seems like sometimes when you ask the question you're the only one who doesn't know that (laugh), like say something in math or something, (pause), umph "Can you explain that again?" and everyone else is, "Come on. Why don't you know that." (laugh) "I'm sorry." (laugh) (imitates the voices).
(individual interview)

As they anticipate, young women's participation is often actively curtailed by others through their behaviours and associated expectations.

SH: Who laughs at you?
Cathy (grade 12): The guys more.
SH: Why do you think that is?

Cathy: Well they try to like know it all like
(pause) I guess they like to be (pause), how do
you say that (pause) be macho.

SH: Do you laugh at them if they make a mistake?

Cathy: No.

(individual interview)

SH: Who laughs at you the most?

Nathalie (grade 12): The other girls.

SH: Why is that?

Nathalie: I don't know.

SH: Do your girl friends laugh at you too?

Nathalie: Yeah basically (laugh) pause just
about all of them.

SH: Do you ever laugh at them?

Nathalie: Yup!

SH: Why do you do that?

Nathalie: It just seems funny because I know them
enough to know that they know that and why are
they asking that, so I'll start laughing.

(individual interview)

Girls indicated that this behaviour, on their part, was often created by and confined to the context of the classroom. Here a set of expectations served to structure their behaviour, diminishing their participation. This occurred even if they desired to behave differently and/or if this was not consistent with their usual behaviour outside of the classroom.

Doreen (grade 9): I'm different than what I am at school and at home. At home I talk a lot. I talk with my parents and my sister and at school I'm really quiet which I don't like because

Diane (grade 9): You want to express yourself

Doreen: Yeah and I wish I could say some of the things that I say at home, at school.

SH: Why do you think that is?

Doreen: I think it's because I know my parents because we get along and I don't know everyone here and I don't want to make a fool of myself.

(group interview)

While girls may know that they are capable of participating on an equal basis, it is evident that the negative expectations of doing so, prevent such behaviour.

Classroom participation has been shown to be highly valued both by teachers and students (Stanworth, 1981; Clarricoates, 1978). Girls' less visible role within the classroom then, is instrumental in regenerating the sexual hierarchy in which boys dominate (Stanworth, 1981: 44). Evidence from previous studies points to this. A number of researchers have observed that the consequence of girls' limited participation within the classroom was that teachers found boys more interesting and imaginative students to teach (Stanworth, 1981; Clarricoates, 1978). Russell (1979-80: 64; 1986: 355-357) has observed that women teachers generally find male students more fun to teach. Men teachers were found to describe female students as being 'overachievers', while male students were described as being better students (Russell, 1979-80: 64; Russell, 1986: 355-357). These descriptions were derived from teachers' beliefs about student differences in behaviour and achievement (Russell, 1979-80: 64; Russell, 1986: 355-357).

Females' lack of participation have often lead teachers to believe that girls are "able to follow instructions, but not capable of or interested in, breaking new ground (Stanworth, 1981: 54)", they are simply "...good at 'tagging along', lacking reason and clear logic (Clarricoates, 1978: 358)."

Boys have been shown to share these views of girls, in that they often label girls as "faceless" and therefore as little consequence as individuals due to their classroom silence (Stanworth, 1981: 46). In addition, "Boys constitute their female classmates as a negative reference group... (Stanworth, 1981: 47)."

Stanworth (1981: 44) has shown that both girls and boys devalued girls and value boys within the classroom due to boys' greater participation. Stanworth (1981: 44) asked teachers and students to rank the pupils of each class according to their success with the subject; with classroom interaction being the main element determining the estimation of rank. Stanworth results were as follows;

In the 19 cases out of 24 where pupils' rankings were different from those of their teachers, all of the girls under-estimated their rank; all but one of the boys over-estimated theirs. Furthermore, two-thirds of these errors involve only classmates of the other sex- that is, girls down-grading themselves relative to boys, boys up-grading themselves relative to girls (Stanworth, 1981: 44).

Stanworth concludes from this, that boys' greater participation within the classroom is highly functional in creating the impression by both genders that boys have greater abilities than they may actually have (Stanworth, 1981: 44). Corresponding to this, the present interviews similarly suggest that girls evaluate boys' greater participation in the classroom as an indication of their own gender inferiority. Specifically, as in Stanworth's study (1981), in the current study, girls were found to often

undermine female intelligence. The following interview excerpts indicate that girls devalue the way in which other girls participate in the classroom,

SH: Who puts their hands up the most in your classes? Is there any difference between boys and girls?

Adele (grade 9): No, not really.

SH: The same?

Adele: I think that in most of my classes the boys are a lot smarter. They get better marks basically. I don't know why but they do so but it's basically it's the same.

SH: How do you know that they are smarter?

Adele: I know that they have better marks.

SH: You see their marks?

Adele: Yeah.

SH: Is there any other ways of knowing?

Adele: Oh they always have the answers and they always get, you know, they get good marks on tests and stuff. They're just, I don't know. They're smarter (laugh) you know (laugh).

(individual interview)

SH: Who would you say is the smartest in your classes?

Andrea (grade 12): Well (laugh) I know there is this particular case where there's these girls who get high marks but they're not that smart, and there's these guys who are very smart but they don't get high marks so I don't understand by smart what do you mean.

Later-

SH: When you say some girls get high grades but they aren't very smart why do you say that?

Andrea: Well mostly they study a lot they do a lot of work and ah, really they don't know very much about the topic they just like they read the books and that's it they don't know other things other than what the books say.

SH: So how can you tell that in class?

Andrea: They don't ask very intelligent questions (laugh). They ask like very easy, simple questions that you can think out yourself, but they can't do that (laugh).

(individual interview)

The lack of female participation and/or the style of female participation in the classroom can thus, be seen to confirm young women's acceptance of female gender inferiority.

Even where girls do participate to a greater extent, they are often reproached by members of their own gender. Stanworth has observed that,

"...many of the girls who were rejected by female classmates were more than ordinarily outspoken, and were condemned for "speaking out too aggressively" or "hogging the limelight" (Stanworth, 1981 : 48)."

This type of reaction towards girls when they participated was similarly indicated in the current study. The following excerpts indicate this reaction.

SH: How do you get on a teacher's good side, do you think?

Danielle (grade 9): Umph, I think you impress them first of all like by doing your homework and not talking in class and being on time and that sort of thing and you know, not always asking stupid questions or babbling on or whatever.

SH: What is a stupid question?

Danielle: Umph, if a teacher just repeats an answer.

SH: Do some people do that on purpose?

Danielle: Umph, sometimes they do it on purpose but a lot of times because they aren't paying attention.

SH: Who does that?

Danielle: Umph, usually girls. A lot of them are just... the teacher says the questions and then they say, "Which questions?" and they're written up on the board.

SH: Are they doing that to get back at the teacher?

Danielle: I don't think it's that they are getting back at the teacher, they're just not paying attention.

(individual interview)

Val (grade 12): The guys are more understanding than girls are.

SH: Why is that?

Val: I have no idea, I don't know, maybe because I don't know, they feel sorry for you (both laugh). I just find that the girls are always the ones that are (makes whispering sound) guys are like (bored expression). I guess they are bored with the class or something, I don't know.

SH: Who gets the most attention in classes?

Val: Guys.

SH: Who asks the most questions in class?

Marilyn (grade 12): In my English class, this girl Lilah she never shuts up (Val laughs). I hate it so much. I hate it when people just keep going on, going on and like the teacher always gets off topic when she go on like that and I hate it, 'cause she's just like the God and I don't know what's going on you know and to get back to it again, you just get lost. (Val laughs)
(group interview)

Herein lies a contradiction, for it seems that both being outspoken and being quiet are problematic for young women. Girls, generally, value class participation and regard it as an indication of intelligence; but this is only in regard to boys. In regard to girls, participation is often thought to be only a display of ignorance. Even though, girls can justify the reasoning behind their own lack of and/or fear of participation they can not transfer this understanding onto other females. The demands of classroom participation is, therefore, difficult for girls and further diminishes cohesion between girls.

It is evident that girls' tendency to refrain from participating in classroom discussion results in severely disadvantaging them (Deem, 1978: 50; Stanworth, 1981; Clarricoates, 1978; Clarricoates, 1981; Russell, 1979-80; Russell, 1986: 359). This occurs for several reasons. First, since girls do not actively participate in class,

teachers often feel that they are confident in a topic, as long as their written work is adequate (Stanworth, 1981: 53-54). As a result, confusions which go beyond the written may go undetected (Stanworth, 1981: 53-54). Furthermore, it has been found that teachers have a tendency to provide subject content which is geared to boys because they dominate the classroom with their disruptive behaviours (Clarricoates, 1981: 195). They also do so since they find boys to be more interesting and gratifying to teach than girls (Clarricoates, 1978: 35). Nevertheless, even if teachers attempt to create greater female participation, they often find that these strategies are curtailed through the behaviour of boys and girls (Spender, 1980: 150; Sarah, 1980: 160). Females lack of participation, therefore, serves to perpetuate their oppression, keeping them in their often silent and invisible place (Spender and Sarah, 1980).

Physical Education and Sports Activities-

Clearly, gender inequities are established and reinforced on a day to day basis within the classroom and the school. Physical education classes and sports activities provide a good example of how gender differences are played out within the school. This is because here the expectations of female and male 'physical' expression and capabilities emerge to reflect societal concepts of the masculine and feminine.

Within physical education classes, social boundaries of what is male and female are highly visible. Physical education classes embody subjective concepts of feminine physical capabilities and behaviours as well as elements of masculine power and domination in society (Scraton, 1987). The structure of physical education often differs for boys and girls, with boys and girls playing different sports and games. The reasoning behind this has often been attributed to the physical differences between the genders (Scraton, 1987: 176). Specifically, some physical activities were considered undesirable and unfeminine for young women. In particular, physical contact sports have been traditionally regarded as jeopardizing female sexuality, as they have been felt to be dangerous to the reproductive capacity of females (Scraton, 1987: 180-181). Further, aggressive physical exercise was often felt to injure the image of females as passive and feminine (Scraton, 1987).

Beliefs such as these are still often perpetuated. Scraton (1987: 179) findings affirm this. Scraton (1987) interviewed 56 people who were responsible for decisions in relation to the teaching of physical education classes. She found that of those interviewed, 53 held stereotypes which placed girls in an inferior position in relation to physical skills and capabilities (Scraton, 1987: 179). From this, she concludes that these attitudes act to develop classes for girls which differ from boys' (Scraton, 1987: 179), where

gender appropriate pursuits are emphasized (Scruton, 1987: 180).

Different activities in sports for the genders act to reinforce gender roles. Eder and Parker (1987) describe this, in their examination of school cheerleaders and football players. They observe that the values promoted for girls in this athletic activity are "...appearance and a bubbly personality conveyed through a smile (Eder and Parker, 1987: 207)." They observe that girls are encouraged to appear neat and clean and to smile to cover up feelings of nervousness, concentration and pain (Eder and Parker, 1987: 207). In contrast, the values promoted for boys in playing football are achievement, competition and aggression; winning in the face of pain and discomfort (Eder and Parker, 1987: 205).

As in other societal activities, physical education and activities are granted worth in terms of their content, with those activities regarded as feminine being dismissed as unimportant and those that are masculine being admired. Girls have a real sense of which sporting activities are socially valued and which are not. Moreover, they often share the social attitude that the activities girls are involved in and the behaviours of the girls in the activities are inferior to that of boys'. In the present study, it was found that young women often devalue their physical education classes and the activities within them,

over that of the boys'. The following interviews demonstrate this.

SH: Do you like phys-ed?

Barb (grade 9): Well, it's kind of wimpy, like no offense but we're doing weight training now and she goes like do 10 curl things or something and if 5 pounds is too heavy stop, I mean 5 pounds, it's not very heavy! Or okay girls do one lap around the gym, like one lap that's not going to do anything.

SH: Would you prefer to be in a class with the guys?

Barb: Yeah because they go outside and play soccer and they have to run harder, meanwhile we just sit inside lifting 5 pounds. There's seems more challenging.

(individual interview)

Andrea (Grade 12): The girls' phys-ed is not very challenging, umph, I would like to go to take a boys gym but umph you know, it's kind of difficult.

SH: What's the difference between girls and boys phys-ed?

Andrea: In boys phys-ed, the teachers are more strict, they'll make you do things that the girls will go "I don't feel like doing, I won't do it". They participate more and they get into it.

SH: Why do you think is it that their isn't co-ed phys-ed?

Andrea: Girls don't like to work that hard and guys, they'll take it for the enjoyment to have fun ...and it's kind of hard to mark girls and guys at the same level because they've got different (pause) different ah (laugh) ...ah they don't strive hard to work.

SH: Do you?

Andrea: Yes, I do.

(individual interview)

SH: How do you like just girls in your phys-ed classes?

Marilyn (grade 12): I'd rather have girls and guys than just girls 'cause you have more fun 'cause you have to be kind of tough or something like that you have somebody to challenge...

Val (grade 12): (interrupts) ...and they have more, they have better sports that they do, they do the better sports, they do stuff like...(Val and Marilyn at the same time) go outside.

Val: ...or play hockey and we have to stay inside as if girls can't do all those kinds of things.

SH: What are the better sports?

Val: We play broomball and they play floor hockey and they go out skiing, we do that too but not as much as they do and they go further than we do...

Marilyn: (interrupts) They go on cross country trips.

Val: And the girls don't get to do all those things...

(group interview)

Part of girls' devaluation of their physical education classes and sports activities stems from the associated devaluation of their fellow female classmates within these.

Natalie (grade 9): I liked it more when we had the guys in the class, it was more challenging (pause) Most of the girls don't (pause) they haven't really played sports before or (pause) the ones that are really giddy and (pause) and sort of, you're trying to play basketball or something and in the middle of the game they'll start HEE HEE HEE, ...SHUT UP!
(individual interview)

SH: Are the boys doing different things than you?

Ellen (grade 12): They do a lot more endurance ours is sort of wimpy, if girls don't want to do it, they don't do it, the guys are forced to do it.

Lynn (grade 12): The guys do it because they are told to. The girls go, "But I don't waaant to do it!"

SH: What do you think about that?

Ellen: The girls are wimpy.

Lynn: It's the way, not brought up, but they've grown up kind of with get what you want like a lot of girls, it's just like, "I want this" (high tones) okay but I've never been taught you get what you want, you just do it because you're supposed to, not whether you want to. Don't complain just do it. A lot of girls it's just like "I don't waaant to do this, it's too hard". (high tones) I think just go away (laugh).

SH: Why do they take phys-ed then?

Ellen: It's an easy credit.

SH: Yeah?

Lynn: Like we normally don't have to do anything, we show up at class and hit the ball a few times and you'll be fine.
(group interview)

Danielle (grade 9): I grew up with a lot umph, boys in the neighbourhood. I found that they liked to play outside and be rough and tough and that's what I like too, you know. I don't care. I'm not one of these, "Oh I broke a finger nail", that thing.

SH: What do you think some girls are afraid of playing sports?

Danielle: Umph, I think that a lot of them, umph, think that it ruins their, maybe, image and they'll get messed up, like their hair and everything like that. And a lot of them, they don't find the time or they, they think that ah, like a lot of them want to go home and watch soaps or something like that instead of staying and being on a team and I guess a lot of them don't like competitiveness or they're not good at it.
(individual interview)

Participation or lack of participation in physical education and sports activities contains contradictions for females, just as classroom participation does. Girls who do not participate in specific activities in phys-ed classes and/or who participate in what is considered a feminine manner are subject to hostility by other females. Yet when females participate in these classes with forms of behaviour that contravene definitions of femininity, they are also subject to hostility. Thus, girls are faced with the difficult task of balancing their feminine role identity, with participation in sporting activities.

Even though the respondents, in this current study, indicated that they felt boys' physical education was superior to their own, the majority (34 out of 45) preferred to continue having separate classes from the boys. This was

because many respondents felt that boys in co-educational phys-ed classes dominated the classes. Girls are aware that there are differing activities in sports for the genders. While they interpret the inequities in this, they are also possessive of their activities. As an excerpt from the current study indicates,

SH: Do you think in this school, the teachers believe in equality for boys and girls?

Jane (grade 9): (laugh) Well, I'm on the cheerleading squad, okay and there's one teacher who's a pain.

SH: Male or female?

Jane: Male. And he says, well if you don't get any guys on your cheerleading squad then there won't be one. Like he's really chauvinistic!

SH: Why does he say that?

Jane: He feels it shouldn't be sexist having just the girls as cheerleaders.

SH: What do you think about that?

Jane: It's pretty stupid, because the football team, it's just all guys and like we're saying if he feels that way then we're going to try out for football next year (laugh). You know, it's the same thing.

SH: And when you approached them about being on the football team?

Jane: They thought well go ahead and try it there's no way you can get into football. They thought it was pretty ridiculous. We have every right to have just girls on the cheerleading team. Football is just as sexist as cheerleading is, and they don't make a fuss about having girls on the football team.

(individual interview)

Thus, this young woman questioned the motives of the teachers in wanting boys to be involved with cheerleading. She, perhaps correctly, interpreted this involvement as a process whereby boys would take over the activity to consequently dominate a sport in which girls presently have control.

Young women described boys as asserting domination over sports activities through their physical control of these activities and their belittlement of girls' capabilities in this process.

Marcia (grade 12): They (the males) won't pass you the ball. You're not even there. You're right there and there's a friend behind them and they'll go (she indicates a pass) like this. They don't even see you.

Claudia (grade 12): Yeah (laugh).

Marcia: Or if you screw up it's really, you know, everybody, the guys will all cut you down but if it's their friend, it's oh, it's okay next time we'll do better.

(later)

Claudia: I prefer it with just girls. They don't even give you a chance to prove you can be just as good as them. Or even if we do show them you know it's like there was some reason, because the ref. wasn't fair, they favoured the girls, you know. There's always something. So I like it just females.

(group interview)

Linda (grade 9): In grade 8 the guys were always pushing you and stuff like that. They hog the field like, "Ha Ha we are going to get you" (imitation). They always take the ball.

SH: How did that make you feel?

Linda: Really angry. It's like, it's just not for them. It's for everybody and it's one of the more fun subjects and I just don't like them ruining it for you. It's just like they turn it into a real rowdy sport and nobody wants to play a real rowdy sport.

(individual interview)

Physical education classes with boys were perceived negatively, not only because of boys' domination in sports but because of their potential to create a situation in which girls would experience a greater awareness of their appearance and of the necessity to manage their behaviours for acceptance.

SH: Which do you prefer phys-ed with only girls or girls and boys?

Jane (grade 9): Girls' phys-ed is better.

SH: Why?

Jane: Well, you don't really feel self conscious that you're too skinny or anything (laugh), there's no guys looking at you.

SH: Is it different with the guys, if for example you were playing volleyball with them, how would they treat you?

Jane: Well say you missed the ball, they'd say "God why didn't you get that I mean I could have got that," and you know, you kind of feel (laugh) bad.

(individual interview)

Anita (grade 9): I don't like co-ed.

SH: How come?

Anita: Like say you're on your rag and you're in your gym shorts or something.

Anita and Donna (grade 9): Both laugh.

(group interview)

Paula (grade 12): Like grade 7 and 8, it was co-ed and I found that really tough 'cause they'd stick you together and you had to be just as good as the guys and I found that that was really tough. I think for phys-ed it's good there isn't any guys in there. Because I always felt so self conscious, because I couldn't do something and they'd make fun of you.

SH: Who would make fun of you?

Paula: Oh the guys, some of the girls but the guys would. "Oh you're a girl you can't do anything", and they'd make you feel awful. But if there's no guys in the class you'll feel a little better about yourself.

(individual interview)

Diane (grade 9): You can be your self more with girls, you can do what you feel or wear what you WANT and you don't have to worry about "Oh my God they are looking at me what do I do, go over and talk to my friends and stuff".

(group interview with Doreen (grade 9))

As stated previously, it is evident that these young women preferred to remain in girls' only physical education

classes due to the fear of male domination in these classes and the feelings of inadequacy and self consciousness accompanied by this domination. Nevertheless, these young women still maintained that boys' phys-ed classes were more interesting and strenuous, thus they regarded these classes with envy. The girls interviewed believe that teachers' attitudes and other girls' behaviours are the reason for their own less challenging classes.

The problems inherent with making physical education class and activities less sexist are difficult to resolve. Lenskyj has observed that there seems to be no easy answer to complete fairness for girls in physical education classes at this time (1987: 42). Both the integration model and the separate but equal model for physical education classes, do not provide viable solutions for equality for females (Lenskyj, 1987: 41-42). Lenskyj argues that the integration model for phys-ed is faulty in that female participation in male sports with their connotation of violence and competition, is not necessarily a good thing. Furthermore, with this model males enter female sports, and may as a result begin to dominate them (Lenskyj, 1987: 41). Lenskyj describes the separate but equal model as being faulty in that female versions of male sports are often regarded as being less difficult and therefore as being second class (1987: 41-42). It seems that the problems in attaining equitable classes remain unresolved, however as Lenskyj states, "...ability, age and the nature of the sport should

all be taken into account before sex, in order to promote equality of opportunity for girls and women in sport (1987: 42)."

Males can legitimately be physically assertive and strong. Their sweat and strain is regarded as conducive to masculinity. In order to retain their femininity, females must withhold from great physical exertion or channel their physical exercises into feminine acceptable tasks and activities (Scruton, 1987). Consequently, the negative attitudes towards physical contact for girls seems to have inhibited many young women so that they feel that, "...their bodies need protecting and they must remain enclosed within personal space" and this "...discourages a wider and explorative use of space (Scruton, 1987: 181-182)." Thus, young women may desire to retain their feminine presentation of self, yet in doing so they confine themselves to physical limitations. In inhibiting their physical self expression to retain a feminine image, their bodies become a site for their subordination (Scruton, 1987: 182).

Domination, assertiveness and physical power is associated with the male gender. This association which is perpetuated in the school later enables males to be granted access to occupations which females are not. Eder and Parker observe that through sporting activities which emphasize masculine and feminine gender roles, the genders are prepared for future roles (1987: 209-210). Males are

prepared for a stratified, hierarchical labour market in which they must accept competitive and achievement oriented circumstances and relationships (Eder and Parker, 1987: 209-210). Females, in contrast, learn that success for them comes through having an attractive appearance and friendly personality. These characteristics correspond to roles in many traditional female occupations (Eder and Parker, 1987: 210). Scraton similarly argues that, " ... through a monopoly on physical strength and technical capability, men maintain control over technology and manual occupation (1987: 173)." In contrast, the lack of physical power, and assertiveness which women come to anticipate for themselves through experiences such as in the school, steers them towards dependency within the home as well as to specific occupations outside of the home (Scraton, 1987: 173-174).

As long as the experience of school differs for the genders, with females being denigrated, males will be regarded as capable of handling the more skillful tasks in the work sphere and thus an egalitarian society will not begin to exist. Sexist interactions within the school exemplify how on a daily basis, attitudes are replicated. These have been shown to validate females' secondary position to males'.

The subsequent chapter will examine both males' and females' opposition to school authority and curriculum, and how both act to limit change in sexual arrangements.

Chapter Four

Resistance to School Process and Authority

From the previous chapter, it is evident that young women face domination and constraint in their interactions within the school. Forms of resistance or accommodations are ways in which females can struggle against or cope with these types of interactions (McRobbie, 1978). However, when discussing females' struggle, it is difficult to construct a framework of oppositional behaviours without challenging previous conceptions.

There contain a number of weaknesses in resistance theories (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 99-103). Amongst these, traditional perspectives of opposition to schooling, such as that of Willis (1977), have often been discussed and come to be defined through the examination of male counter-school cultures (McRobbie, 1980; McRobbie and Garber, 1983). In this, issues of gender and race have often been ignored (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 101).(1) As well, overt acts of rebellion have often characterized resistance theory, with less focus on covert behaviours (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 102). Through these definitions then, resistance has come to symbolize aggressive and disruptive behaviours; the epitome of brave masculinity. Researchers (particularly males) have been shown to champion and romanticize this kind of behaviour and in doing so have often failed to examine

other forms of opposition (McRobbie, 1980; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 102).

What constitutes girls' resistance may differ from that of boys'. Girls' reactions to schooling are a product of their experiences. While the genders share many elements of schooling, boys do not share the experiences of sexism that girls do. Thus, girls' reactions to schooling may be a product of and influenced by this aspect of gender experience. In examining, the forms of opposition to schooling manifested by girls then, it is important to recognize that just as boys' resistance is influenced by and perpetuates their social position, the ways in which girls oppose schooling are also a product of their social position and may perpetuate that social position.

This chapter will examine opposition to school authority, first as it has traditionally been discussed through the examination of working class boys and second, it will be discussed through recent British and Canadian studies of working class girls. In the current study, girls' observations of middle class boys' resistance will then be discussed. Finally, middle class girls of the present study will be examined in view of whether they manifest possible forms of resistance. Young women's reactions to schooling, which are sometimes oppositional, will be shown to be both the product of their gender position in the school and to be instrumental in reproducing female gender roles.

Working Class Boys' Opposition and Its' Consequences For Girls-

Previous counter-school cultural studies have generally focused on adolescent working class boys. In these, adolescent working class boys have been shown to oppose school authority and through the processes of this oppositional culture boys have been prepared for their working class position in the labour force (Willis, 1977: 3). The culture of masculinity in which physical and verbal aggression are displayed and asserted is the dominant theme of male counter-school cultural studies (Willis, 1977; McLaren, 1986). Willis (1977) describes 'the lads' as opposing school authority through a number of means. Maintaining a sense of personal mobility was one way which entailed, "...being free out of class, being in class and doing no work, being in the wrong class, roaming the corridors looking for excitement, being asleep in private (Willis, 1977: 27)."

Another means of resistance described by Willis (1977) is having the 'laff'. Willis states,

In a more general sense, the 'laff' is part of an irreverent marauding misbehaviour. Like an army of occupation of the unseen, informal dimension 'the lads' pour over the countryside in a search for incidents to amuse, subvert and incite (1977: 30)

It is evident from the previous quotation that the way in which boys create the 'laff' is described by Willis (1977: 30) in images of war which is associated with masculinity, aggression, and acts of heroism. Willis's (1977) field work

also highlights male aggression in other group interactions.

He observes that,

Of course 'the lads' do not always look to external stimulants or victims for the 'laff'. Interaction and conversation in the group, frequently take the form of 'pisstaking'. They are very rough with each other, with kicks, punches, karate blows, arm-twisting, kicking, pushing and tripping going on for long periods and directed against particular individuals often almost to the point of tears (Willis, 1977: 32).

Willis further argues that,

There is a positive joy in fighting, in causing fights through intimidation, in talking about fighting and about the tactics of the whole fight situation. Many important cultural values are expressed through fighting. Masculine hubris, dramatic display, the solidarity of the group, the importance of quick, clear and not over-moral thought, comes out time and again (1977: 34).

In McLaren's (1986) Canadian study of working class boys, aggressive masculinity is also shown to be an important part of their opposition. The following excerpt outlines some of McLaren's (1986) findings;

The most common instances of resistance were: leaning back on chairs so that students nearly fell over (and often did); knocking each other on the backs of the knees and other forms of 'masculine' jostling; leaning over the desk and talking to other students; lolling sitting at your desk and looking around the room with a bored expression; insurrectionary posing such as thrusting out the chin and scowling at the teacher; being in a restricted space without permission (such as a hallway or washroom) during a classroom lesson or activity; obeying a teacher's command but performing the required task in slow motion (symbolic stalling); 'horsing around' or fighting in class; and wearing 'intimidating' clothing. Occasionally students would wear stained sweatshirts with sleeves ripped off over the shoulders as forms of stigmata or symbols of self-exile. They would affect the

bravado and histrionic self-consciousness of the aggressive and 'macho' male (1986: 145-146).

One of the consequences of this aggressive behaviour, evident in both Willis's (1977) and McLaren's (1986) studies, is that in working class boys' opposition to school authority, aggression is not limited to intra-group behaviour. In Willis's study, the 'lads' targeted other boys who were considered to be school conformists ('ear'oles' or 'lobes') and other races for their verbal and physical violence (Willis, 1977: 14-17 & 47-49). What has been particularly noted however, is that in this masculine aggressive culture, sexism plays a large role in which females and the feminine are degraded and objectified as a product of boys' resistance and subversive behaviours (Willis, 1977: 43-47; McLaren, 1986: 145; McRobbie, 1980: 41; Spender, 1982: 58). It is important to point out that in their relationships with, and attitudes towards girls, working class boys have been shown to enact a sense of superiority over girls (Willis, 1977: 43-47; McLaren, 1986: 145). In discussing Willis's (1977) study, McRobbie observes that,

One striking feature of Willis's study is how unambiguously degrading to women is the language of aggressive masculinity through which the lads kick against the oppressive structures they inhabit- the text is littered with references of the utmost brutality (1980: 41).

In working class boys relations with girls, the contradictions of boys' attitudes towards girls as being both domestic comforters and sexual objects have been

observed to be played out (Willis, 1977: 43). Since these attitudes are a fundamental part of patriarchy, it is not surprising that little occurs to diminish them. McLaren's own exposure to such behaviour exemplifies how he, as a man was anticipated by the boys to collude in the subjugation of females.

I was tired at the end of the day. As I approached the subway entrance, yawning, I noticed Rocko standing near the door with a group of kids. He noticed me and came up to me, his tongue flicking like an Iguana.
 'Hey sir, wanna see some of these?' He flashed a set of cards in his hand.
 'What have you got there, Rocko?'
 'Nice, eh?' He started peeling the deck, card by card.
 There were various shots of nude women smiling and pinning their labia against their legs.
 'Donchya wanna see some more?' Rocko asked gleefully.
 'Sorry Rocko,' I said.
 Rocko shrugged. 'See you at mass on Friday, sir.'
 (McLaren, 1986: 145)

Such behaviours by boys have thus, often been ignored, rather than strongly curtailed or have even been encouraged by others (Spender, 1982: 63). As Spender states,

If boys do not get what they want then many of them are likely to be uncooperative and in a sexist society their lack of co-operation is often expressed in sexist ways. In a society where males are expected to be aggressive, to be authoritative, forceful and masterful, then in many respects boys are only doing what is expected of them if they act in an aggressive manner when registering their protests. Many teachers and students see it as quite legitimate for boys to make trouble, to prevent others from participating, to impose their values on others who may not share them, if they do not get what they want (1982: 58).

2

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A direct consequence of boys' opposition is that their disruptive behaviour imposes a classroom situation in which teachers must gear their class to boys; giving them more attention and encouragement with boys responding by questioning and demanding more and girls concurrently responding and making demands less (Clarricoates, 1978: 356-357; Spender, 1982: 59). This, Spender describes as being "...the process whereby the male experience becomes the classroom experience, whereby education duplicates the patterns of the wider society (1982: 59)."

It is apparent that boys' resistance has direct implications for how girls come to be limited within the school system. It is often through boys' opposition that girls learn to lower their self-esteem and self-confidence and learn that their gender is subjugated and that males are in control (Spender, 1982: 60-61).

Working Class Girls' Resistance-

The female gender has often been socialized away from physical and verbal aggressiveness (Bardwick and Douvan, 1971) and this affects how they manifest deviant behaviours (Cloward and Piven, 1979: 656). Females have learned that overt rebelliousness can result in greater punishment for girls than boys since such behaviour contradicts the traits thought to be associated with appropriate female behaviour (Llewellyn, 1980: 46-48; Clarricoates, 1981: 193).

Conversely, acts of rebelliousness by boys are regarded as

part of male gender identity, thus allowing greater permissiveness and understanding for such behaviours (McLaren, 1986: 167; Clarricoates, 1978: 363). As Clarricoates observes, "Girls' misbehaviour is looked upon as a character defect, whilst boys' misbehaviour is viewed as a desire to assert themselves (1978: 363)."

For girls, punishment for rebellious behaviours comes in the form of social rejection and powerlessness (Llewellyn, 1980: 46-48; De Beauvoir, 1952: 374; Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 102). Therefore, they may make an active decision to translate their opposition into alternate forms which will not harm their feminine identity (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 102). Girls' resistance to the processes of schooling then, may not manifest itself in the same displays of rebellion and hostility as traditionally described in male sub-cultural studies. Rather, it often emerges in less visible and confronting ways; forms which are more permissible for social acceptance (Cloward and Piven, 1979: 663).

Working class girls' resistance has been said to manifest in different forms unlike that of boys' (McRobbie, 1978). Their responses to school situations may often appear to be accommodation or conformity as compared to boys'. While girls may accommodate or conform more than they resist, this does not have to imply that young women always approve of the existing conditions of the school.

Since, girls experience different forms of repression than boys, they may consequently react to these in differing ways. One of the ways in which working class girls have been described as resisting the school system is through exaggerated displays of femininity and sexuality. In McRobbie's (1978) British study of adolescent working class girls she observed that,

...one way in which the girls combat the class-based and oppressive features of the school is to assert their 'femaleness' to introduce into the classroom their sexuality and their physical maturity in such a way as to force the teachers to take notice. A class instinct then finds expression at the level of jettisoning the official ideology for girls in the school (neatness, diligence, appliance, femininity, passivity etc) and replacing it with a more feminine, even sexual one. Thus the girls took great pleasure in wearing make-up to school, spent vast amounts of time discussing boyfriends in loud voices in class and used these interests to disrupt the class (1978: 104).

Comparatively, McLaren's (1982: 22) examination of adolescent working class girls, in Canada, also revealed a high level of interest in physical appearance and attractiveness. McLaren observed that for these girls popularity, physical appearance and attractiveness were much greater concerns than academic aspirations (1982: 22). Further he observed that these interests acted as challenges to teachers and wealthier peers and to their motivations (1982: 22).

Girls have also been described as opposing school authority and gaining student power through creating their own leisure (Griffin, 1985: 19; Llewellyn, 1980: 47).

Creating their own leisure included such behaviours as not attending school or classes (Griffin, 1985: 19; Llewellyn, 1980: 47; Everhart, 1983: 218-226). Within classes, girls were also found to create their own leisure through such behaviours as passing notes, talking to friends (Everhart, 1983: 203-205 & 216) or reading magazines (Griffin, 1985: 19; Llewellyn, 1980: 47). Removal from participation also included daydreaming and silent non-participation (Griffin, 1985: 19; Llewellyn, 1980: 47). Many of these behaviours occur both privately and individually (Llewellyn, 1980: 47), and so it is difficult to determine whether they constitute resistance or accommodation on the part of girls. In contrast, behaviours such as passing notes, or talking; characterized by a system of group co-operation and communication, can more obviously be determined as resistant (Everhart, 1983: 204).

In containing many elements of family life, romance, marriage, physical appearance and dress, working class girls' anti-school culture is often organized to resist patriarchal attitudes and institutions and authority figures but is also enabling conformity to these demands (McRobbie, 1978: 104). Thus this counter-school culture actually aids in reproducing these girls' present situation (McRobbie, 1978: 104).

McLaren's examination of working class girls in Canada, contradicts others in the sense that he highlights some of

the aggressive features of girl's resistance (1982: 22-23).

He observes that,

...it was not uncommon to witness numerous daily incidents in which girls are involved in violent physical clashes with boys or other girls. In fact, some of the girls were among the schools' most menacing and gifted pugilists. It was important for the girls to assert very early their capacity physically to defend themselves. For girls, as well as for boys, "bein' tough" was a way to win respect and a large coterie of followers... (McLaren, 1982: 22).

He continues,

...they managed to create and maintain a distinct subcultural resistance to the consensually validated norms of the school- norms which attempted to make girls into passive, pliable, docile, tidy, neat and diligent workers. In order to resist this "conventionalized" version of femininity, which is designed to nurture their "domestic instincts," the girls developed attributes which were drawn from working-class culture in general: toughness, aggressive sexuality, distrust of authority, rebelliousness (McLaren, 1982: 22-23).

Llewellyn's study concurs with McLaren's in that Llewellyn (1980: 48) describes a working class girl who is verbally and physically an aggressive troublemaker. However, Llewellyn's study also differs with McLaren's in that she exemplifies how this aggressive behaviour is an exception. She observes that this behaviour is not generally present amongst working class girls due to the social constrictions and punishments placed upon them (1980: 48-49). Llewellyn points out that the working class girl who deviated from feminine behaviour was isolated by her school mates and was considered a threat by other boys and girls (1980: 48). Finally, this deviant girl was a source

of distress and concern to the school administration since she was an example of the school's failure to transmit proper feminine ideologies (1980: 49). Hence, Llewellyn concludes that such aggressive behaviour by working class girls is limited due to these constraints (1980: 49). In contrast, McLaren emphasizes that this behaviour does exist even though it results in these girls feeling that they are failures (1982: 23-24). He, however, fails to observe whether or not aggressive behaviours in working class girls may or may not be diminished as compared to boys due to the differing social pressures that they experience. Nonetheless, these forms of girls' resistance are important to examine in that they provide an understanding of some girls' reactions to the conditions of the school, as well as, the reactions of others to these.

In the present study, it was found that three girls; one in grade 12 and two in grade 9, all in the general level and all working class, described some disruptive forms of resistance similar to that of the boys. The following excerpt indicates one kind.

Paula (grade 12): My friend behind me had raisins with her and she'd start throwing them at me to bug me and I'd start throwing them back. And a guy across the room would be bugging us so that's how it started. Everyday, "Do you have your raisins", everybody'd be asking her if she had her raisins. Because it was so boring! It was a very boring teacher and a very boring subject so we had nothing better to do.
(individual interview)

Even though this behaviour was interesting, it was the exception in the present study. Generally, in the classes that I attended, girls did not behave as aggressively as boys in their opposition. Whether these three girls' descriptions of their aggressive behaviours can be correlated as being a function of the general stream or of the working class is undetermined. However, Stinchcombe has observed that for girls there is a relation between social class and rebellion, in that working class girls tended to be more rebellious than middle class girls (1964: 81).

Boys' Resistance In The Present Study-

The adolescent boys of the present study, displayed many similar behaviours to working class boys of the studies which were discussed previously. Both classroom observations and descriptions by adolescent girls revealed these boys to manifest aggressive, disruptive behaviours. The following female respondents indicate how these boys oppose school authority,

SH: Is there any difference in the way guys act when they hate the class?

Nora (grade 12): Yeah, usually they say it. They say, "Oh this is a drag, what a boring class". You know they say it out loud. Usually the girls say it amongst each other (laugh)
(individual interview)

SH: What do the boys do?

Jane (grade 9): Well they slouch in their chairs and start talking to anyone (pause .03) just get the teacher really angry.
(individual interview)

Andrea (grade 12): Guys mostly will speak out. They'll make rude comments, while girls won't speak out but will talk to each other and they'll

make a little noise but it's nothing major, not as bad as the boys.
(individual interview)

SH: What do the guys do if they hate a class?

Cathy (grade 12): Be rowdy!

SH: Why is it that they do that?

Cathy: They're not secure, they need, they need to have people laughing at them or people who think they're funny.

SH: So whose attention do they want?

Cathy: Oh, the other students in the class.
(individual interview)

While the boys in my study were not observed to be as excessive as the working class boys in both McLaren's (1986) and Willis's (1977) studies, their behaviours do largely differ from the girls in that they are much more aggressive and vocal. It can be ascertained then, that as suggested previously, this behaviour has an impact on classroom dynamics and on how girls experience and respond to classroom life (Spender, 1982; Clarricoates, 1978).

Middle Class Girls' Resistance-

In the present study, it was found that one of the primary methods that middle class girls utilize to react to the directives and processes of the school is through disengagement from interaction with authority figures and their spheres of learning. Disengagement is an active process in which girls reject classroom interaction in a non-disruptive, non-aggressive way. This form of opposition and accommodation was achieved in several ways: individualized withdrawal from interaction during classroom activities, withdrawal through performing collective non-

classroom activities within the class and finally, through personal mobility; a physical withdrawal from the classroom (Willis, 1977: 27). Each of these methods, which will be further elaborated upon, had the potential to enable these young women to oppose and accommodate schooling without also jeopardizing the expectations inherent in their social roles. However, as it will be pointed out, it was not always clear whether these behaviours were resistance or instead, were accommodation to the school processes.

Resistance Through Non-Participation-

The middle class adolescent girls in this study generally did not express their dislike of classroom situations through confronting or outwardly disruptive actions but rather through private and inward forms (Anyon, 1983). However, even non-participation is an active process (Anyon, 1983: 33) and these girls were aware that they were making a choice to withdraw. Of the young women interviewed in my study, 44 out of the 47 described private and inward forms of behaviours in response to classroom or teaching situations which they disliked. Girls were aware of the relationship of their behaviours to their dislike of the classroom context,

SH: When there is a class that you hate or a teacher that you hate what do you do?

Marcia (grade 12): Sleep (laugh).

Claudia (grade 12): Umph if its a class I hate I usually just sit there and veg, like unconscious (both laugh). Like you're not aware of what's going on.

(group interview)

Rosalind (grade 12): I usually just sit there and be bored and not listen like if I'm, if I'm, listening or having something that doesn't interest me at all it's like I can't, I can't stay like, I can't concentrate on it you know, so I'll just daze off and daydream and stuff so (laugh) I guess I get pretty quiet and in the background sort of thing.

(individual interview)

Maureen (grade 9): I act bored.

Carm (grade 9): If the teacher gets on my nerves or if it's boring, I'll want to storm out but I'll just tune myself out or I'll think of other things I'm really good at that. I just wander off.

Maureen: When I was young I used to tell the teacher what was on my mind, I'd yell. I don't do that anymore because I know I'll get into a lot of trouble.

(group interview)

It is evident from the previous respondents' excerpts, that boredom within the classroom is dealt with through quiet withdrawal. Girls effectively oppose embracing the classroom curriculum through simply refusing to participate. Whether or not this is consciously resistant behaviour, however, is disputable (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985: 106). Rather, this behaviour may be regarded as an accommodation by girls to the disagreeable conditions around them, through a method which they may feel causes little disruption to them personally. Whatever the case, these reactions are important to examine in that they reveal that girls' passive behaviours do not always mean that they are happy with processes of schooling.

Girls and boys may share many similar sentiments concerning schooling, yet they may respond to them in very

different ways. In particular, the passive responses of girls may be the result of greater social constraints. Teachers' and peers' expectations significantly act to control and reduce girls' participation in the classroom and these expectations may also prevent girls from visibly expressing opposition to classroom learning and authority. One young women suggested this type of constraint in a discussion of a classroom incident;

Pat (grade 9): I just sit in class 'cause I don't want to get in trouble so but I like just talked to my friend once and she gave me a detention and then she took me in the back of the room and I go well like, these people are always talking in the room and they NEVER GET detentions, what am I doing here, I whisper one word and I get a detention but she just talked to me about like she said I'm a good student and everything and if I started talking then they'll start talking more because I have lots of noisy people all around me right and if they talk to me I don't usually talk back to them. I tell them to be quiet or whatever right. And if I start talking, she told me if I start talking all the time and not being quiet then they'll keep on being less quiet and everything like this.
(group interview)

This exemplifies how others, in this case a teacher, can effectively curb young women from behaving in manners which do not conform to the conception of female appropriate behaviours (Llewellyn, 1980: 49; Spender, 1982). Spender states that,

When boys ask questions, protest, or challenge the teacher (or other students) they are often met with respect and reward; when girls engage in exactly the same behaviour they are often met with punishment and rebuke. For boys who demand attention and explanations there is not even a term in the language to label their undesirable

behaviour, but here is for girls-they are unladylike! (1982: 60)

Hence girls learn through the expectations of others around them that disruptive, rebellious responses to schooling are not permissible avenues for showing their dissatisfaction and boredom.

Collective Resistance Within the Classroom-

Girls in the present study seemed to predominantly express oppositional behaviours to school authority and to classroom activities by individual inward behaviours; yet they also engaged in some collective behaviours. Similar to previous findings (Griffin, 1985; Llewellyn, 1980; McRobbie, 1978; Everhart, 1983), the young women in the present study eased their boredom or expressed their dislike of the class situation by talking to friends, or writing notes to each other. This was more clearly resistance, in that the young women were conscious that this behaviour constituted resistant behaviour. In short, they were aware that they, collectively, shared in a moment of power over classroom circumstances, which was not the case in regard to the individual non-participation that was previously discussed. An example of this collective form of resistance is evident in the following discussion:

SH: Do you mock the teacher as well?

Liz (grade 12): Oh yeah.

SH: How do you do it?

Liz: I don't know I do it a lot quieter like I don't make it known what I'm doing, just to the person beside me.

SH: Who is the person beside you?

Liz: A girl friend.

SH: What do you do?

Liz: It's hard to describe, just imitate his accent.

(individual interview)

Nevertheless, this type of outward resistance was scarcely visible in comparison to boys' resistant behaviour. This, however, seemed to be the intention of these young women. They created opposition, yet did so in ways that could not be easily detected and punished by teachers.

Collective and Individual Resistance Through Physical Withdrawal-

Young women in the current study were also found to express disapproval in another non-disruptive form, by controlling when they would physically withdraw from the classroom. This seemed to occur both individually and collectively. Physical withdrawal may have emerged in several ways: through skipping class, and through lateness to home form class.

Missing classes or 'skipping' classes was a common form of withdrawal used by girls. (2) The majority of girls, 33 out of 47 claimed to 'skip' classes occasionally to often. These girls skipped mainly because they described themselves as bored with classroom activities. This behaviour can be said to constitute resistance in that girls consciously acknowledged this method as a way of exercising power over where they would be and when. The following respondents indicate how skipping was a behaviour which enabled them to actively seek refuge away from the classroom,

SH: What are the reasons for skipping?

Paula: I'm bored with the whole thing. I just can't stand being here. It's a waste of time. I just really can't stand it. Don't want to be here at all. So I just write myself a note and get out.

SH: You're not 18 though, how do you manage that?

Paula: Very bad girl here (laugh). Well I just sign it myself and sign my mother's name. I know I shouldn't do that but everybody does. That's what I do. I just don't skip without signing out because you get nailed for that.

SH: So is it a big deal if you get caught for skipping?

Paula: Only if they drag my parents into it.
(individual interview)

SH: Do you ever skip class?

Jane (grade 9): (laugh) Yeah once or twice.

SH: Why do you do it?

Jane: Umph, if I didn't have my homework done or if there is something really boring going on in class.

SH: Where do you go if you skip?

Jane: In the washrooms mostly upstairs, there's not too many teachers roaming around the halls upstairs.

SH: What do you do there?

Jane: There's usually a couple of my friends and we just gossip.

SH: Are you safe there from getting caught?

Jane: Not really if a teacher comes in you just have to stand on the toilet seat, (laugh) and lock the door, you know.

SH: What are the ways you would get out of being in class?

Jane: Pretending to be sick, that's easy enough to do, umph well saying you have to get your book from your locker and never come back (pause) saying you have other appointments.

(individual interview)

Skipping classes entailed that the girls had to devise plans to convince school staff that their leave taking was legitimate. Even though school staff may have been deluded some of the time, it seemed that most of the time they knew

what students were actually doing. Nevertheless much of the time, students were able to continue this type of behaviour and remain in control of the interaction around it. The following indicates how even though school staff were aware of such behaviour, they often refrained from actively counter-acting it in an effective way;

Secretary: Were you in class last period?
 Female student: Ah, yah.
 Secretary: Your teacher said you weren't there. She marked you absent.
 Female student: (Pause) No, I wasn't in class.
 Secretary: Your father was called and he said you didn't have a reason for not being at school this morning. Do you have a note?
 Female student: I can get one.
 (She leaves and returns within a few minutes and hands the secretary a note)
 Secretary (to another Secretary after student has left): She just wrote her own note. She's lying about having a note.
 (After this conversation nothing further was done)

Hence, at some point, school staff may be indifferent to such behaviours and through this act to endorse the skipping of classes.

Only a small proportion of girls refused to skip at all. 14 of the 47 girls did not make excuses to withdraw from classes. Generally, these respondents indicated that the reason for this was the fear of negative reactions by others,

SH: Do you ever skip classes?
 Adele (grade 9): Actually no, I think I'm the only person I know actually I know one other person (pause). I have never skipped one class all year. I'm not ashamed of it. A lot of people say (groaning noise) but I have never, not one. And that's, that's really weird for my age. Like

most of the people I know, skip. Like say two classes a week or so.

SH: Umphmm. Why don't you skip?

Adele: I think basically I'm afraid of getting caught. Like you know, that's not what you need like especially in grade 9, you don't need the principal getting on your backside. I don't need the record or my parents getting involved with it.

(individual interview)

This young women exemplifies that the pressures to behave in an appropriate way had a great impact on her choice to not skip classes.

When girls and boys skipped classes, they were often found to go to the smoking corridor in the school or to the confectionary down the street. Importantly however, girls were also found to go to the washroom adjacent to the cafeteria, and to the nurses' area. The washroom was a safe and desirable place for girls to go in that it was rarely, if ever invaded by school staff or boys. As one secretary stated,

The washroom by the cafeteria is where the girls usually go to avoid classes. We don't like to go down there though because they're smoking in there and it's dirty.

Thus, the washroom provided a exclusive place for adolescent females away from normal school proceedings.

The nurses' area was also a place in which the young women skipped, in order to remove themselves from the authority and monotony of the classroom. Girls could claim sickness with more legitimacy than boys. This was because there was an often unspoken understanding that their illness was due to menstruation, which with its mysterious symptoms

was a permissible excuse to leave the classroom. Thus, girls could utilize the nature of their gender to remove themselves from aspects of the school that they did not wish to participate in.

The setting within the nurses' area paralleled a comforting, home-like atmosphere (see chapter one), where students could momentarily 'escape' from their role as student. It was a much more informal setting than other areas of the school, in its surroundings and in the interactions occurring within. It was a realm of the personal not the impersonal; a welcoming and accepting place for girls. In particular, the researcher found it to be a quiet area in which informal conversations between school staff could be overheard from an adjoining room. These informal, personal conversations revealed staff members' beliefs, interests, difficulties and joys. This contrasted with their more formal demeanor and language in the classroom and halls and/or when they were thought to be overheard by students. The nurses' area was also a place in which school staff, particularly the secretaries could legitimately be much more sympathetic to students. Since the nurse was only present on a weekly basis, it was the secretaries who most often administered care to the students. Furthermore, the nurses' area was a place in which girls could skip class and enjoy the informal nature of the school yet at the same time, have the school

administration endorse their behaviour. As the following field notes indicate;

Secretary to female student: Make sure you sign the nurses' book or we have no idea where you are. It's our only way to know you're not skipping your class.

Thus this area transcended the usual formal relationships that students experienced with staff members.

The action of withdrawing to the nurses' area was generally found to be confined to girls in the early grades, particularly grade 9. (3) Through the examination of the nurses' log book it was found that grade 9 girls visited the nurses' room much more often than girls or boys at any other grade level, and more often than boys at their own grade level. That these grade 9 girls were not going to the nurses' area for legitimate health reasons but rather were going to effectively remove themselves from the classroom situation, was highly evident in my observations of the nurses' area over a 9 week period. Remarks made by the girls, themselves provided evidence of this. For example, while I was informally conversing with one girl who was 'sick' in the nurses' area, she remarked;

Girl: I'm not really sick though, I'm fine. I just didn't feel like going to class, I've got sunstroke and I needed to lie down.

This student proceeded to spend the classroom period chatting with me, until she felt she wanted to attend another class. As well, on several occasions, girls were overheard discussing in hushed, laughing tones whether or not their teacher would believe it if they were sick.

Further, an examination of the nurses' log book found a significant tendency for girls to visit the nurse's room with other girls and to stay for almost entire classroom periods. Hence it was evident that girls actively left classroom situations by playing at being ill. This behaviour exemplifies how girls found methods to remove themselves from classroom situations that they disliked by utilizing non-confronting means and in doing so exerted both individual and collective power over where they would be and when.

Being late can be considered as another non-aggressive, non-disruptive means of avoiding the classroom (See table 3). This behaviour was found to be particularly prevalent amongst grade 12 girls. Through an examination of school records, grade 12 girls were found to be late to home form class in larger proportions than grade 9 girls and grade 9 and 12 boys. The exact reasoning behind this behaviour is not completely known. It may indicate resistance, or perhaps obligations to the family (4), part time jobs or other causes. Whatever the case, it does indicate a decreased sense of responsibility on the part of girls to being to home form on time in the later grades, which may indicate a decreased responsibility to and interest in school by females.

Thus in skipping classes, and possibly in being late to home form class, grade 9 and grade 12 girls respectively, could be said to be actively maintaining their own sense of

control over mobility within the school. These behaviours indicate a non-confronting but active withdrawal from the classroom.

It is evident then, that while girls do not resist in the same highly visible, aggressive ways in which boys resist and which traditional studies have highlighted, girls do indeed display forms of opposition. It is however, often difficult to determine whether all of these behaviours are opposition or whether they are accommodations due to their passive and often invisible form. The middle class females of this present study shared many of the working class girls behaviours as described in previous studies (McRobbie and Garber, 1983; McRobbie, 1978; McRobbie, 1980; Llewellyn, 1980; Griffin, 1985). However, even though these middle class girls utilized the character of their gender with regard to menstruation, to leave the classroom, they did not seem to utilize their femininity and sexuality to the extent that the working class girls did in McRobbie's (1978) study. The possible implications of this is perhaps evident in the following statement by McRobbie,

...working class girls are separated out from their middle class counterparts. So although both may be the targets of sexist practices in the school, there are also differences in the way these oppressive factors operate and in the way they are responded to. To put it crudely, middle class girls are directed to different kinds of jobs than working class girls although both may also be, indeed are, pushed in the direction of the home. ...In contrast, middle class girls, destined for even a short-lived career in the

professions or 'female semi-professions', will necessarily have a different and slightly less 'domestic' experience of schooling (McRobbie, 1978: 102).

Consequently then, the opposition that middle class girls exhibit (as opposed to working class girls) may emphasize femininity and sexuality to a lesser extent due to their less 'domestic' experience (McRobbie, 1978: 102).

Nevertheless, the ways in which middle class girls did respond to and oppose school authority and activities were generally consistent with expectations of femininity, and in being so did not threaten the middle class female social identity. The unintentional consequences of these girls' particular responses and oppositional activities is that they act to realign girls to conformity to the patriarchal structures of control and to the roles for middle class girls within them (Anyon, 1983: 34; Spender, 1982; McRobbie, 1978: 104). Unfortunately this has negative implications for girls in that,

By conforming to institutional expectations she will invite ridicule and criticism as a lesser being than the boys; she will be perceived as weaker and less intelligent. She will learn submissiveness and self-depreciation, qualities which society does not hold in great esteem. Self-depreciation is derived from her internalization of the opinions her teachers hold of her. She becomes convinced of her own inadequacy and lacks confidence in herself as a true being, hence her capitulation to the feminine stereotype (Clarricoates, 1978: 363).

Furthermore these girls' present behaviours simply do not draw attention to their frustrations with the existing system. Even though young women quietly display their

boredom and dislike of the system, this does not attract notice in the way boys' highly visible, disruptive forms of behaviour do. As one teacher succinctly observed,

SH: What are the ways that your female students try to anger you or resist your teaching?

Mr. Johnson: They withdraw. I have some girls who withdraw, they'll skip as much as even more so than guys do. They refuse to have anything to do with the contract. My view of teaching is that it's a process of negotiation between the teachers and students. Males are always willing to negotiate, it's just that teachers aren't willing to accept what the males put on the table. That's how boys frustrated with the system act. They'll offer something teachers aren't willing to accept. Girls will tend not to offer anything but to walk away from the marketing table.

SH: How does this bother you?

Mr. Johnson: For me it's as much a signal of frustration and rejection of what I'm offering them.

Hence, girls have learned that survival in the classroom and avoidance of social discomfort means being quiet participants and affecting quiet resistance (Anyon, 1983: 31). While this behaviour does not jeopardize the social expectations of these girls, it unfortunately also reinforces their inability to vocally and visibly express their discontent with the curriculum, school programs and school administration.

Girls' actions create a situation which Anyon aptly describes in the following way,

...the ideology of femininity reinforces a paternalistic dependency on men. The accommodation and resistance to that, by individual females, is often a defensive action (no matter how creative) that is aimed not at transforming patriarchal or other social

structures, but at gaining a measure of protection within these. Thus, not only femininity (as an ideological, practical limit on activity) but also the process of accommodation/resistance itself, traps women in the very contradictions they would transcend. It traps them because their daily accommodation and resistance does not seek to remove the structural causes of the contradictions (Anyon, 1983: 34).

Thus the school remains a place in which male experience dominates the classroom and is imposed upon females (Spender, 1982: 54-66). Boys' collective resistant behaviours unify and empower them against teachers, girls and other racial groups (Willis, 1977; McLaren, 1982). On the other hand, girls' passive reactions to schooling do not seem to unify or empower them in a largely collective manner. Even where girls do collectively resist schooling, they only unify in small groups and these groups denigrate other girls and their behaviours. (5)

In order to transcend the oppression within the school, young women must learn to ask questions, and effectively take a greater collective role to be unified in creating positive change (Spender, 1982: 66; Anyon, 1983: 34). This change can come through the school administration encouraging girls to challenge existing sexist structures. While this sort of action is presently occurring in school boards in Canada, it has a long way to go before it completely penetrates to all of the participants in the system.

1

Notes

Willis (1977) has failed to observe not only girls opposition to school authority, but that of conformist males' and other racial groups'; all of which are the object of 'the lads' subjugation. Certainly all of these groups may have ways in which they not only oppose the school authority but also oppose 'the lads' subjugation.

2

Boys were reported by teachers and principals to skip classes to the same extent that girls did.

3

Records taken from the Nurses' Log Book September 1986 to March 1987 indicated that of the gender identifiable names there were 239 female entries and 68 male entries (some were repeated names).

Amongst the female entries, there were 98 grade 9 entries, 81 grade 10 entries, 38 grade 11 entries, 18 grade 12 entries and 4 grade 13 entries, indicating a decrease in entries in the later grades.

4

Griffin (1985: 41) has indicated that, in her study, young women's school non-attendance was often caused by commitments to child care and domestic labour.

5

See Chapter Three.

Chapter Five

Girls' Culture and the Perpetuation of Gender Expectations and Roles

It has only been fairly recently that girls' distinctive cultural sub-groups have been examined and this has only been done by a small number of researchers (McRobbie, 1978; McRobbie and Garber, 1983; Deem, 1978; Griffin, 1985). Female subcultures have often been overlooked since the definition of subculture has become a product of the examination of male subcultures (McRobbie and Garber, 1983: 211; Griffin, 1985: 15-17). It has been observed that in the sub-cultural literature, girls are usually described (if discussed at all) as invisible or marginal to boys (McRobbie and Garber, 1983: 209). As well, they are often discussed in terms of how they play an appendage-like role to boys, in which they are measured and esteemed by their level of sexual attractiveness (McRobbie, 1980; McRobbie and Garber, 1983: 209-210; McRobbie, 1978: 96-97). However, recent studies have shown that this examination of females' participation in subcultures is more a product of the way boys and male researchers have come to perceive young women, rather than young women's own definition of the situation (McRobbie, 1983: 210). Masculine perspectives of the form and nature of subcultures have simply not been able to

encompass females and thus, female subcultures have appeared to not exist. Yet girls' cultures do exist but with differing forms and functions from that of boys' (Deem, 1978). Girls' cultures are inevitably different, due to females' structurally subordinate position in society and the limitations imposed by this. Just as male subcultures reflect the dynamics of their social class, age and masculinity, girls subcultures similarly reflect their perspective and orientation derived from their particular social position (McRobbie and Garber, 1983).

This chapter will discuss how young women form female friendship groups with their own distinctive characteristics which act as an important mechanism in supporting and perpetuating society's prescribed definition of the female gender and gender roles. In particular, through these relationships, girls learn interpersonal lessons and reinforce heterosexual interests. They utilize these friendships as a forum to reflect upon and experiment with normative conceptions of adult female roles. In this way, these female relationships prepare young women for their future relationships. Furthermore, it will be shown that within these female friendship groups young women share 'illegitimate' knowledge of their gender; the difficulties of being female. With these arguments in mind, this chapter will first, examine female friendship groups through a discussion of their various characteristics. Female friendship groups will be shown to be removed from male

subcultures. The fact that friendship groups are an emotional investment for young women, will then be discussed in that it serves as a source of noncritical support, for confidences and the working out of behaviours and roles. Restrictiveness of who can and can not participate within these groups will be demonstrated to be an important feature in their organization. Finally, aspects of appearance and dress which girls exhibit in these friendship groups will be examined in relation to how they support the motives of the groups. Secondly, the various limitations to friendship groups will be discussed. These include; the influence of heterosexual relationships as they disrupt girls' female friendships and how some girls simply avoid female friendship groups. In this, it will be shown that both girls inside and outside of female friendship groups have orientations towards achieving approval from their male peers which as a consequence, divides them from 'other' females.

The Preppies and Metal Heads-

While a distinctive girls' culture was not immediately evident within the school in which I undertook my research, what was highly visible was that there were two distinguishable groups of students; the preppies and the metal heads or the head bangers. These groups differed from each other in dress, music and behaviours. The preppies often wore neat, designer label clothes. They tended to

listen to mainstream pop music. They had a 'clean cut' image; in that they tended to avoid drugs and conform to middle class values. In comparison, the metal heads projected a tough image; often wearing leather, army surplus clothes and having 'off beat' hair styles. They tended to listen to heavy metal music which emphasized rebellion against society. Girls had some connection with these groups by having similar dress styles or music interests, nevertheless, they tended to remain on the fringes. These groups predominantly consisted of male members. The majority of the girls interviewed did not regard themselves as a member of either group. They did not recognize themselves or other girls as playing important roles or being fundamental elements of these groups. Instead, they emphasized that they were 'normal'; meaning disconnected from both groups. Of course, there were some young women who were affiliated with these groups, yet this membership was described as being peripheral, unlike their description of the boys'. The following descriptions of these groups indicate these girls' sense of disassociation from them;

SH: Are there lots of girl headbangers as well as boys?

Vera (grade 12): Not really. Some. There are some but they're not really headbangers, they're umph, it's hard to explain, they hang around with them but they don't dress like them.
(individual interview)

Sheila (grade 12): Metal heads just sit back and look cool and preppies will try to act cool. Its really funny 'cause metal head with leather and the shades and the spiky hair. Of course its

going to look cool (laugh) but the little preppie in Hawaiian shirts, you know and pink shorts, you know how can he possibly look cool. He has to act cool.

SH: So what about the girls? Are they the same as the guys in terms of Preppie and metal Head?

Sheila: Some of them, yah. Except for the girl Preppie, usually its the emphasis on being very lady-like it's trying to act grown up, I guess. (individual interview)

It is evident that when girls referred to these groups their notions of them were primarily confined to the male gender. Clearly then, both of these groups could not provide a focus for the study of a distinctive female culture. Further, an investigation of girls' marginal roles within these boys' subcultures would have been inadequate if one wanted a comprehensive picture of girls' culture. Therefore this necessitated an examination of the areas in which these young women felt that they were major participants. This was found within groups of female friends (McRobbie and Garber, 1983: 219).

Female Friendship Groups as an Emotional Investment-

McRobbie has observed that girls' cultures are "...characterized by a tremendous sense of solidarity between the girls and in particular between 'best friends' (McRobbie, 1978: 106)." Girls' culture provides a safe relationship in which developing roles and changes can be tested and played out. In particular, the girls' culture provides a context where both personal understanding and normative assumptions of attaining adult female roles can be shared.

In the current study, female friendships were an important part of many of young women's lives. A girls' culture was evident within small groups of generally two or sometimes three girls who defined themselves as being best friends. The relationship which manifested within these friendships was one of interdependence in which the participants identified strongly with their friend or friends as an extension of their self. One teacher discussed these relationships.

Ms. Jones: Girls have very monogamous relationships with each other. It's a lot like the first few romances in life. They try to be everything to each other and then they have fights and don't talk then, breakup and maybe come back together again.

The personalities of the female friends mirrored each other in such a way that they could provide emotional support to each other for the changes and discoveries in the transition between adolescence and adulthood (Douvan and Adelson, 1966: 188-189). The excerpts from several respondents indicate the strong sense of emotional interdependence between girl friends.

SH: Why is your relationship special with each other?

Val (grade 12): Umph, I don't know, because we can argue together and yell at each other and we know we are not doing it to hurt each other, we are kind of just, you know (looks at Megan)

Megan (grade 12): Yah

Val: Get mad at each other but I can call her up at any time and she's always there you know, and she tries to understand and she'll yell at me if

she thinks I'm wrong (both laugh). I don't know, she's always there.

SH: Can you add anything to this?

Megan: She's the only friend I have and anything I want to say I can say to her.

(group interview)

SH: So what would you say is special about having your friendship?

Darlene (grade 12): Well, we're all weird (laugh).

Moe (grade 12): Yah, that's one thing.

Darlene: We understand each other really well.

Bonnie (grade 12): We all think alike.

Darlene: Like you know, when you talk with your mouth full and your parents think "What did she say, what did she say?" (high tones) and like we can say "She said that and that", you know.

Bonnie: Yah.

Darlene: Or someone can start a sentence, and the other one can finish it.

SH: Is there anything else that you can add?

Darlene: I think we all like the same sort of hobbies and stuff.

Moe: I guess 'cause we've just known each other for so long.

Darlene: Yah

Moe: When you've known someone for so long, there's something like, there's a friendship there that just won't

Bonnie: go away.

(group interview)

SH: What makes having a friendship with another girl special?

Paula (grade 12): As long as you can open up to each other you know, when you can tell each other anything and everything you know, all your personal stuff like your secrets and hopes and dreams and you don't feel that they are going to turn around and laugh at you. You know.

SH: Umphm

Paula: That they really respect you and care for you.

(individual interview)

The respondents' remarks show that female friends focus a great deal of their emotional energies on their best friend (McRobbie, 1978: 106).

This allows friends to expose their private needs and desires without fear of reprisal or condemnation. Thus young women confirm that their changing identity is not deviant through becoming as homogeneous and interdependent as possible with their best female friend or friends (Douvan and Adelson, 1966: 188-193).

The emotional support which these young women shared was distinctive in the sense that problems in relationships and with the establishment of sexuality were confined and worked out within the group. McRobbie has observed that intimate relationships with a best female friend is important for girls to resolve the sexual pressures placed upon them by boys and by society (1978: 107). The characteristics of the girls' culture is influenced by the importance of boys for girls (Coleman, 1961: 37). Heterosexual relationships are a high priority for the adolescent females in the study as indicated by the fact that the majority of girls interviewed emphasized that boys were their most frequent topic of discussion with their best friends.

SH: What are the types of things you talk about to each other?

Carm (grade 9): Boys!

Maureen (grade 9): That's for sure.
(group interview)

Through female friendships, girls can work out the double standards of female sexuality. They can make choices about their own sexuality without greatly risking harming

their self esteem (McRobbie, 1978: 107). As one group of young women noted;

Moe (grade 12): I never talked to my parents. I always talked to these guys.
 Darlene (grade 12): It was like when we first had boyfriends. It was always have you done this yet? (laugh) 'cause I just did this. Oh good that's what I did (laugh). While all the while if it's wrong that's what she did too. (All three girls laugh).
 (group interview)

This exemplifies how female friendship groups provide a social interaction where shared confidences and understanding aid in the development of gender roles.

Girls' Social Restrictiveness-

Female friendship groups have been observed to be highly insulated, excluding, "...not only other 'undesirable' girls- but also boys, adults, teachers and researchers (McRobbie and Garber, 1983: 222)." Similarly, the present study also revealed that adolescent girls are highly exclusive and possessive of who may and may not belong to their friendship group. As indicated previously, these girls place a large emotional investment in their friendship groups. Restrictiveness towards outsiders seems to be a characteristic of the intensity of these relationships. McRobbie and Garber (1983: 222) have noted that adolescent girls are restrictive towards persons of the opposite gender and of different ages. This is evident in the following discussion with a respondent,

SH: How is your relationship with your best girl friends more special than with someone else?

Kate (grade 12): I don't know, I guess because they're the same age as I am and they are probably going through the same things as I am so its easier to turn to them.

SH: How is it different than with a guy as a friend?

Kate: I guess it's easier to talk to them, they understand what you're going through better than a guy would.

(individual interview)

McRobbie argues that sexist attitudes towards young women's sexuality initiates young women's exclusion, secrecy and mistrust of those other than their intimate female friends (1978: 106-107). Young women are faced with double standards concerning their choices for sexuality;

On the one hand boys naturally seek sexual experience but any girl who willingly participates sexually with them is branded and later denounced as a 'whore' or a 'tart' (McRobbie, 1978: 107).

It is evident that these double standards do not allow for young women to be open about their choices with anyone but a select group of people. Since boys, adults and other girls tend to impose sexist values and beliefs upon girls' sexuality (Kostash, 1987: 43 & 245-247), it is inevitable that they would confine their confidences to only a few intimate female friends (McRobbie, 1978: 107). Thus, the restrictiveness of female friendship groups enables a safe enclave in which choices and roles can be identified and divulged without fear of reprisal (McRobbie, 1978: 107; Kostash, 1987: 43).

As well as being restrictive towards individuals of differing ages and gender, young women are restrictive

towards female peer group members who are not within their friendship group (McRobbie and Garber, 1983: 222; Kostash, 1987: 44). Adolescent girls' sense of closeness with their female friends is carefully guarded by the exclusion of other girls. The female friendship group, being a source of emotional support built through time and trust, is not perceived as being easily accessible to any girl just through having the same gender affiliation. While, the adolescent females within one female friendship group were very much like that of females in another friendship group, part of the interaction in each group was based on perceiving girls outside of the group as different. Female in-group members reinforce their sense of closeness and sameness through heightening their sense of difference towards girls outside of their group, as these excerpts reveal,

Bonnie: And right now we're talking about that other friend of ours, that X friend. We're saying how whatever.

Darlene: yah there she is again (high tones) what's she doing today.

Moe: Talking about how she used to be our friend and now she's not our friend.

Darlene: (laugh)

Bonnie: Or how our other friend dresses really gross.

Moe: yah. Bad breath

Bonnie: We talk about other people that's what we do.

(group interview)

Adele (grade 9): I find guys are more casual about their friendships, girls are more possessive. Girls are very uptight about that sort of thing. Like if your friends goes off with another person they don't seem to like it that

much. With guys I don't know why they don't care as much. I guess they don't worry or something.
(individual interview)

SH: Do you prefer boys or girls as friends?

Carm (grade 9): I think guys, it's a lot easier, it's all straight forward whereas girls are more two faced.

SH: How?

Carm: They can be all friendly with you and then they can go and talk behind your back, like you would say " I don't like so and so and then they tell them behind your back, whereas with guys I find it's more straight forward.

SH: Why is this?

Carm: I don't know, I guess it's in our character you know, I'm not sure.

SH: Do you do the same thing?

Carm: Well I guess I probably do.

Maureen (grade 9): (laugh)

SH: When you say girls are two faced would you say that about Maureen?

Carm: No she's not like that. What I'm thinking about mostly is Laura and Denise (looks at Maureen and laughs)
(group interview)

SH: What is the difference between two best friends and other girls?

Linda (grade 9): Other girls, say if I'm walking down the hall , they'll say hi, or have a little chat with them about school work or something but I just don't talk to them about who I like or anything.

SH: Why is that?

Linda: I don't know, I think probably because I don't really trust them all that much.

SH: Why don't you trust them.

Linda: I just have two close friends and that's good. If too many people know someone could be... Like I like the situation with them at different schools 'cause they don't talk to each other a lot so I know that if they met each other on the street they wouldn't say, 'Heah, you know what, you know the guy Linda likes that's him' (low voice) and someone could be behind them that goes to my school. So I like the way it is. They don't hardly ever talk to each other. They are acquaintances but they're my best friends.

SH: If they were both together with you at the same school would it change things?

Linda: yah.

SH: Why is that?

Linda: Because well they'd see each other more often and they'd have a lot more to talk about here so they'd probably like, we'd all probably be a group, but like they say three's, umph, two's company three's a crowd. I think that would fall into that category.

SH: Why is that?

Linda: Well because if there's too many people too many other people hear things (pause) They might decide to be best friends with each other. Get really involved with each other and forget about little old Linda over there (laugh)
(individual interview)

One of the primary reasons these female friendship groups are restrictive towards out-group girls is due to the belief that they will betray in-group members' confidences. This stemmed from the belief that all out-group girls are potential competitors with their female friendships and in the attainment of relationships with males. Consequently, it is thought that out-group females, in being competitors, have an interest in gaining information to be used against in-group females. These feelings are clearly shown in the proceeding excerpt,

SH: Who laughs at you more, guys or girls?

Louise (grade 9): Girls, I think.

SH: Why is that?

Louise: Because I think they try to compete

Louise and Susan: with you

Louise: ...put you down whatever, so that they, they'll go up and you down and the guys will go for the girls that look the most popular, I guess.

Susan (grade 9): Yah. Like everybody has their own circle of friends and the circle goes all the way around. Like everybody's laughing at everybody else. And they each have a circle of friends.

Louise: Like if you're alone, like if I'm alone and a group of girls comes, they'll laugh at me. But if I'm in a group of girls I would laugh at them.

(group interview)

Thus, exclusivity of members is a prominent feature of female friendship groups. This exclusivity is function of their alienation towards others who threaten the intimacy of their confidences and their desire to attain heterosexual relationships without jeopardizing their image of sexual purity.

Gaining Identity Through Appearance and Dress-

Young women utilize dress and appearance in order to project particular images of identity in social interaction. These images are an important part of female friendship groups (Griffin, 1985). Specifically, young women can project their femininity through dress and looks (Gaskell, 1975: 455-456). Female friendship groups can also visibly express their close bonds of friendship with one another, by appearing the same to one another through dress (Griffin, 1985: 61).

In the current study, it was noted that young women who were interviewed in groups often dressed similarly. For example, young women wore identical school sweaters or had the same hair cuts. For these young women, appearance symbolized their sense of belonging to their specific female friendship group and it effectively emphasized the exclusivity of the group.

SH: What is special about your relationship?
 Donna (grade 9): 'Cause it's me (laugh). I think it's just because we get along together. We
 Anita (grade 9): Cut loose!
 Donna: We don't care
 Anita: We don't care.

Donna: Like most of the people we hang around with, like Sandy and Margaret and them. They're like

Anita: Like prim and proper.

Donna: yah and they're all little preps and you know.

Anita: (laugh)

Donna: Me and Anita heah jeans and t-shirt, heah look. Way to go. It's as simple as that.

(group interview)

In addition to expressing a sense of belonging, female friends' mutual appearance reflect shared changes in identity. Many young women regarded the alteration of their appearances as an indication that they were becoming more mature. They also felt a sense of reassurance that their female friends were changing along with them, when their female friends made similar alterations in appearance. Thus, they could be reassured that they were not deviating from the 'proper' female image. The following excerpts provide evidence of these feelings,

Becky (grade 9): We changed gradually, like she got her hair cut real short and I was thinking of getting my hair cut short (both girls laugh), then I got mine cut. I was going out with this guy and when I got my hair cut he said to her "Look what you did to her". She got her hair cut so I got mine cut. We wear cords now, not jeans anymore, just sometimes but.

Angie (grade 9): We wear them baggy like not really tight.

SH: How would you feel about yourselves if you dressed like you did before?

Angie: I think ... the guys like the way we look now better, we don't wear as much makeup, we look cleaner.

Becky: We don't wear so much makeup.

SH: Is it important for you what the guys think?

Becky:yah

Angie:yah

SH: Why?

Angie: I'm not sure.

Becky: Everyone likes to be liked.

(group interview)

SH: What is the difference between guys and girls in the way they behave?.

Barb (grade 9): I think girls are more conscious of what they wear and how their hair looks and everything and guys, I guess they care too but if they can't get their hair perfect they're not that upset (laugh) I don't know it's just that if it happens to girls they're like, Oh my God what am I going to do (laugh).

SH: Are you like that?

Barb: yah (laugh). I wear it down sometimes other times when it looks bad I put it up in a ponytail or something, that's what I did today.

SH: Why are you like that?

Barb: Well I don't know, because my friends, like they're all you know, they're really pretty and they, it seems like they're always perfect and everything, and they have really nice clothes. I guess it's just to be like everyone else.

(individual interview)

Moe (grade 12): You kind of want to be a little older.

Bonnie (grade 12): And you want to try and look nice for guys and stuff.

Moe: That was probably a big one.

Darlene (grade 12): But you know its hard at first because you know we always used to say, wear you're skirt tomorrow.

Moe: yah and we'd all talk on the phone about it. Then we'd go back to jeans the next day.

Bonnie: yah (laugh) exactly.

Darlene: There was one year we wore our skirts twice

Moe: Yup

Bonnie: (laugh)

Darlene: We knew how many times we wore it.

Bonnie: We all wore mini skirts too, it was just...

Darlene: ...the same make in different colours (laugh)

Bonnie: the same make.

SH: Why did you phone each other about that?

Darlene: Afraid of what other people would think.

Bonnie: yah we wanted to, like just too scared.

Moe: Its like "I don't want to be the only one", if someone else is wearing it I won't be the only one".

Moe and Bonnie: Laughed at.

Bonnie: If it's one person...

Darlene: Like we didn't mind if someone laughed at us when we we're all together but.

Moe: It's just when you're by yourself.

(group interview)

Finally, dress and appearance is often geared towards attracting and/or keeping members of the opposite sex (Coleman, 1961: 37). As such, it is utilized as an agent in the competition between other girls for masculine attentions. The previous excerpts indicate that the management of physical appearances is very important to these girls in order to gain acceptance from their peers, boys in particular. Both grade 9 and grade 12 girls indicated the importance of this phenomenon, but grade 9 girls placed a greater emphasis on it. The reason for this is perhaps due to their still fragile feminine identity within the school as compared to grade 12 girls. Grade 9 girls may have a greater sense that they must prove that they conform to the norms of being an adolescent female.

Limitations to Female Culture

Heterosexual Relationships-

Naturally, girls friendship groups are not stable entities. Girls fight with friends, find new friends or simply outgrow these relationships. In particular, it has been found that young women's female friendships are often eroded or replaced once heterosexual relationships were attained. At this point, the emotional energies once placed on female friendships were now turned towards males

(McRobbie, 1978; Griffin, 1985: 61-62; Stinchcombe, 1964: 164; Kostash, 1987: 35-37). Female friendships were altered often as a result of spending less time with their girl friends than they had previously (Griffin, 1985: 60-62). These changes in friendship groups are revealed in the following excerpts;

SH: Does your best friend have a boyfriend?

Connie (grade 12): yah.

SH: Does it change your relationship with her?

Connie: It's put a lot of strain on it lately, actually she and he only met last summer and ever since then I don't think the two of us have done, we've maybe done one thing together since school started and I don't know, we're just sort of drifting apart now so I don't know, it's sort of upsetting I guess.

SH: Why do you think this has changed things?

Connie: Well she wants to spend a lot of time with him I guess, but the way I see it is that a friend's for lifetime but a boyfriend is (laugh) you know it'll last two weeks, you know but I don't think she really realizes what she's doing to me, I don't know, I'm probably being really selfish but it's sort of bothering me right now. (individual interview)

SH: Does your best friend having a boyfriend change your relationship with her at all?

Barb (grade 9): Well, sometimes, like my friend Judy once had this boyfriend and whenever she was with me, he would get mad at her and he would get mad at me so it was kind of like, she'd have to sort of split her time up just so he wouldn't get mad.

(individual interview)

SH: Does having a boyfriend change your relationship with your girl friends?

Jackie (grade 9): Well you don't get to do as many things with them.

SH: With the boy or the girls?

Jackie: With the girls.

SH: Why is that?

Jackie: Well sometimes if like you wanted to go somewhere with your friends but you promised your boyfriend that you're going to go somewhere and then you don't know what to do.

(group interview)

In general, adolescent girls were aware of the fact that they and their female friends spent less time with each other once they had entered into these new relationships. Although, it often disturbed them, young women tend to regard the replacement of intense female relationships with heterosexual relationships as a natural and an inevitable process which signified their growing maturity.

SH: What about you if you had a boyfriend would you spend more time with him than your girl friends?

Kate (grade 12): Probably with him.

SH: Why do you think that is?

Kate: Umph, I guess you want to spend a little more time getting to know somebody else that sort of thing.

SH: Are guys more important to you than girls?

Kate: yah (laugh)

SH: Why is that?

Kate: Well I don't know they're good companions they're guys!

SH: What does that mean?

Kate: Sighs (pause) They're just people you're going to spend the rest of your life with.

(individual interview)

This is indicative of how these girls' anticipation of future relationships centered around men, acted to inform the meanings of their relationships in the present by emphasizing greater importance on males than females (McHugh, 1968: 24). Hence, even though young women place a strong value on their restrictive friendship groups, the prospect of having a relationship with a member of the opposite sex diminishes their commitment to female friendship.

This diminishing of commitment seems to be a characteristic of girls' friendships which does not equivalently affect boys' friendships (Griffin, 1985: 61). Moreover, this has been found to occur to a greater extent as girls get older (Griffin, 1985: 61). It was found in the current study that the replacement of female friendships with boyfriends occurred more often with the grade 12 girls, since they and their friends more frequently had had relationships with males. However, where girls in grade 9 had boyfriends there was a similar change in the female friend relationship. Evidence that girls alter their friendships and become more directly involved with males as they get older may be part of the explanation of why grade 12 girls become more traditional and realistic in their aspirations (Porter et. al., 1982; Blishen, 1984: 296). For the older girl, traditional roles may simply become more important than other aspirations, due to the focus around heterosexual relationships.

Girls Who Dislike Girls-

Most of the young women interviewed had a female best friend or friends, however there were exceptions to this. Two, grade 9 girls and four, grade 12 girls did not have a strong female friendship relationship. They, instead affiliated themselves with males, valuing male friends over female and in the process denigrating other females.

SH: What is difference between a girl as a friend and a boy as a friend?

Maria (grade 12): There's not much competition between a guy and a girl. But with a girl friend and another girl there's a big competition between looks ah, weight, your figure, clothes, changing of things. There's a big (pause). I find there's a big competition between that.
(individual interview)

Sheila (grade 12): I find that guys, I get along a lot better with guys because girls, I find too frivolous mostly. They are more concerned with their grooming and appearance and that sort of thing and personally I couldn't give a damn. You know, look at me. I look awful. Well that's the thing.
(individual interview)

Vera (grade 12): I find that I, a lot of times I relate better to my guy friends than my girl friends like if I want to talk to someone, I find I can trust the guys a lot better than the girls.

SH: Why do you think that is?

Vera: Girls are very catty (laugh) very plain and simple and I find it a lot easier sometimes to talk about things with guys.
(individual interview)

Diane (grade 9): I don't want to offend anyone here, but I find girls are really immature to talk to, guys are immature, but when you talk to them alone they can be really mature I like talking to guys about different things like fast food stores for example. A guy will give you a different opinion than your own. They have different ideas about things.
(group interview)

Young women, in general, shared certain specific negative stereotypes towards other members of the female gender. For girls within female friendship groups, these were most often applied to girls outside of the friendship, with in-group members being the exception. However, for girls not affiliated to a group, these stereotypes were applied to all girls with themselves being the exception. In general, whether inside or outside of the female

friendship groups, these young women tended to formulate generalizations about what being female represented and placed themselves or themselves and female in-group members outside of these. In doing so, they effectively transferred unfavourable information about being female, outside of themselves and onto other females.

The ways in which female culture is organized; with its small number of girl members and its orientation towards utilizing femininity with the hopes of attaining male interest, is a product of girls' active choices. These present choices are, in effect, formulated through the anticipation of future adult roles. Female friendship groups allow support for girls in developing a female identity, yet they also have negative effects in that they alienate young women from those females who are not in the same friendship group. This does not enable young women to share 'illegitimate' knowledge of their personal experience of being female and of the difficulties of this status in a collective sense. Young women's orientation towards placing heterosexual interests before female friendships and other interests and ambitions, further acts as a division between members of the female gender. Thus, young women perpetuate the attitudes, expectations and roles of their gender through their social organization.

Chapter Six

Happily Ever After? Girls' Attitudes and Beliefs Towards Women's Roles.

The feminist movement has since its origins created many societal changes, both structural and ideological. For example, such structural changes as affirmative action programs, have created greater opportunity for women in non-traditional occupations and have consequently, changed beliefs towards the capabilities of women. Alternately, changes in beliefs have initiated structural changes. Even so, traditional beliefs and institutions still co-exist with these changes. Consequently there may exist a certain confusion over social roles (Porter et. al., 1979: 86). For women, this confusion concerning roles is not a recent phenomenon. As early as 1915, researchers like Jessie Taft argued that,

...women, whether they wish it or no, are necessarily affected by all the changes in education, industry, and government that are in the process of remaking society. Women find themselves as a matter of hard fact in the equivocal position of being neither one thing nor the other, neither in the home nor out of it, neither wholly mediaeval nor wholly modern. The world to which women have been accustomed for centuries and to whose patterns their minds have been shaped is not for the most part the world of the modern man. His world is not only different, it is even hostile and antagonistic in many respects to the world of the woman; so much so that women who attempt to conform to both worlds, as many are compelled to do, find themselves face to face with conflicts so serious and apparently irreconcilable that satisfactory adjustment is

often quite impossible on the part of the individual woman (Taft, 1987:19).

Society continues to change today and as it does, females correspondingly adjust to social changes and often construct roles for themselves from both the old and the new. There remains conflict in choices, however, and as such, conformity to gender roles is often regarded as the path of least resistance.

This chapter outlines young women's aspirations and attitudes towards marriage, children and the responsibilities involved with each. Attitudes towards the feminist movement will also be examined. Each of these will reveal how even though young women regard equal opportunity and egalitarian relationships favourably, their choices and attitudes are leading them away from this. In the future, young women wish conform to many traditional female social roles, yet they conceptualize these as being different for them than for other females, in that their personal choices will be postponed or handled better (Prendergast and Prout, 1980). This satisfies their orientations towards equality, while it diminishes their interest in feminism.

Attitudes towards Marriage

For young women, marriage and children are both still anticipated to be important parts of their future. In 1971, Porter et. al., (1979) asked high school girls in Ontario what they might want to do in their lives. The possible

responses included: having a career, a relationship with a man, and having children, amongst others (Porter et. al., 1979: 85). The findings indicated that,

First in importance to the girls was a rewarding relationship with a man. To 72 percent this meant a great deal and to 93 percent it meant a great deal or a fair amount. Next in importance was raising children. To 59 percent this meant a great deal and to 84 percent a great deal or a fair amount (Porter et. al., 1979: 85-86).

Yet along with these results, the researchers found that 39 percent felt having a career meant a great deal and 79 percent felt that it meant a great deal or a fair amount (Porter et. al., 1979: 86). This, the researchers concluded likely reflected uncertainty over women's roles (Porter et. al., 1979: 86).

The current study provided similar results to Porter's et. al., (1979) in that the majority of girls foresaw having relationships with men; resulting in marriage, and having children, as being desired and inevitable parts of their future lives. However, they were also able to anticipate to some extent the impact of both in restricting their lives (Griffin, 1985: 53). Specifically, they could conceptualize the effects of early marriage and/or having children on diminishing their priority for a career.

Young women worked out these mixed feelings through strategies of postponement (Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 526), that is through hoping to delay marriage and having children until career aspirations were attained. Such sentiments are exemplified in the following excerpts,

SH: Would you like to get married?

Kate (grade 12): Yah.

Sh: At what age?

Kate: Around 28 or 29, I want to live a little first before I get tied down.

SH: What do you mean by tied down?

Kate: Well, to get married and have kids you can't always go away whenever you want to you can't just take off without telling anybody, that sort of thing. I guess that's the main issue there.

(individual interview)

SH: Do you see yourself as getting married in the future?

Vera (grade 12): Yah, not until later in life, I don't know I can't see myself as getting married right away (pause) and I can't, if I was to get married I couldn't see myself getting married until (pause .05) I'm not saying I'm a feminist and I want to get established and working first but just for my own personal interest I couldn't see myself wanting to be married to someone until you know for quite a while.

(individual interview)

Thus, the 'illegitimate' understanding of marriage and children as restrictive, was resolved through making decisions to postpone both (Prendergast and Prout, 1980: 526).

Generally the young women interviewed anticipated being productive in the public sphere of the work force, rather than in the private sphere of the home. Gradually the desire for the traditional housewife role is being exchanged by young women for aspirations to work in the public sphere (Baker, 1985: 81). Nonetheless some girls, particularly in grade 9, still conceived of marriage as being a state in which their future would be secure and could provide wealth

as well as happiness. This idealized vision of marriage is indicated as follows,

SH: What do you think your parents think will happen to you when you are twenty?

Nancy (grade 9): Well they think I'm going to be a millionaire (laugh). Well I want to marry money. I don't want to work.

SH: So what do you want to do?

Nancy: I don't know. I don't think I'll be poor I don't think I'll be rich. Just starting off in the business world.

(individual interview)

SH: What do you see for yourself when you are thirty years old?

Adele (grade 9): I think I'll probably have lots of kids, a big family, I'll probably be working part-time and hopefully I'll be very involved in the community and I'll have a nice house, fairly rich you know (laugh) I wouldn't mind being rich. Just have a nice relationship with somebody. Have nice kids you know basically and maybe taking classes in my spare time and stuff like that.

(individual interview)

Whether or not these girls believe that this will actually occur is questionable. What is evident is that in these girls tendency to glorify some aspects of traditional roles, they reveal their ambivalence towards the alternative of having to be independent and financially responsible for themselves. They obviously want the positive elements of being married and do not want the negative elements of a career, yet they are failing to admit the negative and positive respectively, of each.

Household Responsibilities

In the current study, most girls felt that having an equal relationship with their future spouse was very

important to them. This egalitarian relationship was anticipated to involve such things as the sharing of household responsibilities.

Judy (grade 9): I'd want it to be really equal like not me always in the kitchen. He'd have to be in the kitchen sometime too. Everything like, I could do work like hardware and everything I could do that. I want it to be like equal, not woman in the kitchen and man going to work and coming back.
(group interview)

Rachel (grade 9): I still want to be independent and like, I want to still be my own person you know and I don't want to have to be home all the time doing housework all the time and him being the boss. I want everything to be equal.
(group interview)

While young women may wish to have egalitarian male/female relationships in the home, patterns of the division of labour in the household established in their present family conditions may be difficult to change in future relationships. As Hunt has observed,

It is far from unusual for daughters to be drawn into housework and childcare to a greater extent than sons, and for most girls, domestic science lessons in school are backed up with practical experience in the home (1980: 20).

In the evidence obtained in the current study, presently in their households, 39 out of 47 of the young women reported that their mothers were mainly responsible for housework. In addition, female children were often reported as doing the second most housework, while fathers and brothers were reported to help out the least. Sharpe's (1976) British study concurs with this. She states,

...housework is still clearly women's work, despite some husbands being willing to help out with peripheral things, like washing up and doing the vacuuming and occasionally going to the launderette. The emphasis is very much on 'help' rather than share (1976: 223).

The following remarks made in the current study illustrate this kind of gender division of labour.

SH: Who does the most housework?

Nora (grade 12): I think my mom does. We all like have to pitch in and that, but I honestly think that she does, like the laundry and stuff like that. My dad does it when he can but he always messes it up somehow or another.

SH: Do you and your brother do the same amount?

Nora: He does less. He does less. Like he doesn't do it voluntarily. My mom has to ask him and ask him to do the dishes, to do his room. He doesn't do his room.

(individual interview)

SH: Who does the most housework in your family?

Cathy (grade 12): Me! (laugh) My mom actually.

SH: Do you and your brother do the same amount of housework?

Cathy: No I do more, definitely do more (laugh)
(individual interview)

Angie (grade 9): My mom does it, and I help out.

SH: Does your brother help?

Becky (grade 9): Sometimes (both laugh and exchange looks)

SH: Do you do more than your brothers?

Angie and Becky: Yah, laugh.

(group interview)

Barb (grade 9): My mom.

SH: Do you help out at all with the housework?

Barb: Yah, I help out.

SH: Does your sister and brother help as well?

Barb: Well my sister does but my brother doesn't.

SH: No?

Barb: It's (laugh) it's kind of like you know the males are male chauvinistic (laugh) I don't want to say that, but we're supposed to do all the cooking and cleaning.

SH: So you say the males are chauvinistic. Are you just aware of that?

Barb: My sister thinks that too, if there's say a glass or something downstairs, he'll go 'Someone go get that glass' and he'll call me or my sister to do it but he won't call my brother or he won't bring it. Like we have to go down and we have to do like, dishes and our bedrooms and washrooms and my brother is supposed to take out the garbage. But if he doesn't take out the garbage it's okay. It's just my dad, you know.

SH: So is it just you who doesn't feel it's not fair?

Barb: Yah. My mom doesn't really care, you know, it's just 'Okay' (laugh).
(individual interview)

Thus, the responsibility for housework is still women's work in many of these girls' homes and girls tend to be highly aware of this fact.

As the first of the previous excerpts indicates, even where men do take on domestic labour, they often end up creating more work for women (Luxton, 1986: 27). This occurs in several senses; in 'helping out' with domestic labour men may disrupt certain patterns of labour already established in the household, they may be demanding of their wives' time for instruction in tasks, and finally it may take a great deal of work on behalf of women to get men to do domestic labour at all (Luxton, 1986: 27). In taking on household tasks, men may also prefer to work at the more interesting or fun aspects of household labour such as working with machinery and consequently avoid the less interesting or fun aspects leaving them for the women (Luxton, 1986: 27-28). In short, where men do participate in the household, usually this participation still does not equal that of women's.

The present gender division of roles in the family experienced by young women and young men may influence future patterns; negating their chances for an equal relationship based on shared labour within the home. Egalitarian relationships can only be attained if awareness of present inequities in domestic labour is translated into change by both females and males in future patterns.

Child Care Responsibilities

Child-rearing and care taking continues to be a woman's job (Luxton, 1986: 29; Griffin, 1985: 36-37). As Luxton states,

...for the vast majority of women in advanced capitalist countries, the two aspects of having children- bearing them and raising them -are inseparably linked (1980: 81).

At the same time, there are increasing numbers of women who are continuing to work in the public sphere after the birth of their first child (Eichler, 1983: 247). As the role of child care taker has been traditionally women's, it is often they, who must choose between leaving the labour force after birth or not. If they do not leave, it is generally their responsibility to find alternative forms of child care (Eichler, 1983). The implications are that in having children, women must make a number of difficult choices concerning the welfare of their children and the continuation of their careers.

Adolescent girls are already beginning to evaluate what their choices will be if they have children. Previous

findings indicate that girls' concerns about having children centre around the welfare of the children, not on the welfare of their careers (Griffin, 1985; Baker, 1985). Both Griffin's (1985) British and Baker's (1985) Canadian, research indicate that adolescent girls anticipate leaving the work place after having children for some amount of time, in order to provide care. These studies indicate that, many young women anticipated staying out of the public sphere of work until their children were approximately five years old or school age, while others anticipated staying out or working part-time, until their children were in their teens (Baker, 1985: 87; Griffin, 1985: 50-51).

The present study reaffirms this previous evidence in that young women generally felt that in the future, child care would be mainly their responsibility. The majority of girls interviewed anticipated staying at home with their children until the children were around school age.

Donna (grade 9): I'm going to work and when I have kids, until they start school, I want to be with them. Like, I don't think it's right that I be working and have somebody take care of my child and have them watching them grow up.
(group interview)

SH: At what age would you get married?

Angie (grade 9): It depends on if I was to go and get a career, I'd rather have a career before I got married (laugh)

Becky (grade 9): So would I, I'd rather have my job before.

SH: If you and your husband both had jobs when you had children would you want to stay at home or keep working?

Becky: At first I'd want to stay at home with them but when they went to school, like kindergarten then I'd go back to work.

Angie: Nods.

(group interview)

Megan (grade 12): I would want to stay home sometimes then later go to work.

SH: Would you like to stay home permanently with your kids?

Val (grade 12): I don't think so, no I mean maybe for the first year or two years but after that I want to go back to work and I'd probably hire a nanny or something or give him to my mom (laugh).

(group interview)

Girls felt that there was little alternative to them providing the major responsibility for child care in the initial years.

Few women want the father of their children to remain at home to provide child care while they work in the labour force (Gerson, 1985: 174-175). The reasoning behind this is because many women depend on the economic support of the man working and a role reversal, where the woman worked and the man did not is often not feasible due to the disparity in earnings. Moreover, even where women have indicated that they want greater equality, staying at home and providing child care is still not considered appropriate for men (Gerson, 1985: 174-175).

Consistent with this, the young women, of the current study, also do not anticipate their future husbands staying at home to provide child care.

SH: What about your husband staying home?

Megan (grade 12): Wow (laugh)

Val (grade 12): (laugh) I don't think he'd want to. I doubt very much that my husband would want to stay at home.

Megan: I know! (both laugh)

Val: I doubt it.

SH: Why?

Val: I don't know, men don't, they don't want to be the person at home they want to be the breadwinner going out and working and being out of the household so, I don't think they'd want to stay at home.

(Group interview)

These young women's expectations are quite real. Even though men are participating more in child care (Luxton, 1986: 28), they are not taking over women's traditional role as the predominant care taker. In fact, when women do work outside the home and have children, they have been found to be still generally responsible for finding alternative forms of care for their children (Luxton, 1986: 29). In addition, women are usually the parent who stays at home from work when child care necessitates a parent to stay at home (Luxton, 1986: 29). Generally, males are not expected by females or themselves to take positions of major responsibility for child care (Kostash, 1987: 407).

In anticipating to take the primary child care responsibility, the majority of girls did not foresee day care as an option. Even if girls felt they would like to continue working while they had children, they preferred a sitter to day care. Day care was generally regarded as a negative alternative. (1)

SH: Would you consider sending your children to day care?

Cathy (grade 12): No.

SH: Why is that?

Cathy: Well I know a lot of kids that have gone to day care and they pick up like lots of bad habits and stuff so I would rather take care of them myself.

SH: What kinds of bad habits?

Cathy: Like language and pushing around and stuff.
(individual interview)

SH: Is there any reason to be suspicious of day care?

Mary-Ann (grade 12): Yah (laugh) because I don't think that (pause) there is a lot of money in day care and I don't think that everybody goes into it just because they like kids. There's a lot of money in it and they may not be good to the kids. It kind of scares me.
(individual interview)

SH: What about day care?

Rachel (grade 9): I would feel guilty. I wouldn't be able to, see I want to be really close to my children because me and my parents aren't close at all and I want, I want to know what's going on in their life because, since my parents don't know what's going on in my life I have to do things behind their back and they don't know what I'm doing so, If my children and me are close I, I don't want them to do things behind my back.
(group interview)

These negative attitudes towards day care indicate that young women still feel that their role is to be with their children, specifically in the children's early years. Day care is not regarded as able to replace this role. However, day care is a growing necessity if women want to maintain a career and children. With a growing number of single mothers today, day care may be the only solution for some young women if they also wish to be employed. Being the predominant caretaker of children then, may not be realistic for young women in view of their career desires and their economic circumstances. Yet beliefs concerning gender roles continue to direct young women towards regarding child care as their responsibility.

Girls have not fully realized that they may not be in a position to care for their children without assistance (Kostash, 1987: 402). Without equal participation in child care by husbands and/or help from social services, such as day care, combining family and career remains difficult (Gaskell, 1977-78: 47).

In general, young women feel that not only will they participate in the labour force but they would also marry and have children (Kostash, 1987: 399). They usually view their future marriage as being based upon equal relations. Yet these hopes seem to be offset by the reality that girls have a greater sense of responsibility for domestic duties and child care. Young women have failed to realize how their current gender roles and beliefs conflict with their future hopes of equality in marriage and in career development. It seems that girls want to have careers but they also grant priority to their spouse's job and to child-rearing (Baker, 1985: 91). In this sense, young women define success in a very different way than males (Markus, 1987: 101). Young women are disinterested in solely concentrating upon their careers, for they do not wish to exclude themselves from the caring behaviours and human attachments in family roles (Markus, 1987: 106). Concurrently, they reject having only family roles (Markus, 1987: 106). Unfortunately, as long as our society's standards of success include offsetting concerns for the

care and help of others, women's chances for success within this criteria will be inequitable (Markus, 1987: 106).

Attitudes Towards the Feminist Movement

How young women perceive the feminist movement exemplifies how they regard their gender and opportunities for their gender in a broader and collective perspective. The feminist movement connotes non-traditional female roles, beliefs and values. Attitudes towards the movement then, also reveal attitudes toward that which the movement represents.

Research has often shown that while females want equality, they do not personally affiliate achieving this through the women's movement (Gaskell, 1975; Andersen, 1987). Gaskell's research on working class girls in Boston, "...revealed that a movement for change did not interest many girls. Some felt things were getting better anyway (1975: 458)." Yet paradoxically, Gaskell findings indicated that,

Most girls (99 per cent) agree that women should get equal pay for equal work. Seventy per cent also agree that we need women in what are now men's professional jobs. However, these girls are less anxious to have women in manual occupations (32 per cent agree) or to have men in what are now women's jobs (23 per cent agree) (1975: 458).

The implications of this are that girls wanted better opportunity but did not want any corresponding change in many traditional gender roles (Gaskell, 1975: 458). The

feminist movement may not have interested them because it represents such a change in gender roles.

It was found in the present study, that the majority of adolescent girls either knew little about the feminist movement and/or had a number of negative stereotypes regarding it. Consistent with the work of Gaskell (1975), they generally argued that equality for women was important, but this was usually contingent upon women not losing their image of femininity and men not losing their position of overall dominance. Resentment and anger were often expressed towards the movement,

SH: What about women's equality, do you know what that means at all?

Adele (grade 9): Yah, that's when women want to be equal to men. I, I agree with that. but I don't agree with women trying to, ah totally wipe out anything that was before.

SH: What do you mean by totally wiping out what was before?

Adele: Like, ah how women used to do the dishes and the cooking and everything, like I don't agree with that but I think that some of these women are getting too hyped up about it and they think that they, that they, some of them I think want to be better now than men and they think that if a man does (pause), if a woman does umph housework and that, that she's going against it, like that she's living in the past and they're trying to make it so that the men do everything.

(individual interview)

Many young women feel that the feminist movement jeopardizes traditional roles of chivalry and femininity; roles which they wish to maintain (Kostash, 1987: 142). These attitudes were present in the discussions with the young women about feminism,

Connie (grade 12): I think that, a man and a woman are just people it doesn't matter what sex you are but everything should be equal. I guess I'm really a feminist but I also believe that a man should open a door for a woman. I believe in stuff like that too. I think that men should sort of look after women.

SH: Why do you say that? A man should look after a woman?

Connie: Umph, I don't know, just, I don't know just protect women because I still think women they're the ones (pause) I don't know (laugh) (pause) I don't know, I can't think what to say.

SH: You started to say they're the ones what?

Connie: Well women, they're the ones who have children and everything and I guess they're a lot more delicate, I don't know.

SH: Do you see yourself as being more delicate?

Connie: Yah.

SH: So would you like to be looked after?

Connie: Yah.

(later)

Connie: What I'm really saying is that men seem to have some roles that I think they should stick to and so do women and that's been around for you know, like hundreds of years or whatever. So I don't think just because it's the 1980's we should start changing everything, you know I believe that women should be equal to men but you know, we shouldn't you know, sit back and let them do all the work, you know.

(individual interview)

These young women expressed contradictory beliefs and misconceptions concerning the movement and its conception of women's position and roles in society. In doing so, they presented their own conflicts concerning roles for themselves and for young women in general:

Anita (grade 9): I think it's okay like equal opportunity but like some people are fighting so women can get jobs in construction, as construction workers. But most women don't really want to work as a construction worker. You know because women are built that way, like men are built with big muscles you know and even if you work at it you won't get that strong.

SH: What do you think?

Donna (grade 9): I think it sucks!

SH: Why is that?

Donna: Because it's I don't know, it's hard to explain it's good but it's bad. It's like, it's okay when you're just talking about it but not when you start though with things like picket lines because somebody wouldn't hire you or something like that. I think that's stupid. If you're not going to get hired you're not going to get hired and that's the way it is. Why cause a fuss.

(group interview)

Linda (grade 9): I'm not all for it but I'm not against it either like, women are always saying well I think we should, like not all women, but the people who are in women's lib, they always say well we should be allowed to get into this and this and this but if they (angry tones), (pause) like try to get into men's clubs, but if a man ever tried to get into a women's club they'd just be SHUT UP they wouldn't even think of listening to the argument. Whereas women's lib they say oh well ah, there's women's lib you know, I think there should be a man's lib or whatever (laugh) too. Like if I was a man and the job was like a waitress, like in a little shop it wouldn't be that... It would be pretty difficult for a man to get that job because they probably want a woman waitress. You don't see very many male cocktail waitresses, you know.

(individual interview)

Ellen (grade 12): I don't know, everything has to be equal. It just bugs me.

Lynn (grade 12): Everything has to be equal.

Jobs and pay (pause) and the husband should stay at home sometime but I think that's okay but like here they are they are going, (imitating voice) women only have you know, 40% of the management, stuff like that, it's just like well what about the guys. Like women might say now we have 60% and now the guys are down to 40. I think that gets a little too much when they say we only have 40 well 40 is a heck of a lot and it's kind of like they're, they're putting guys down and you know like I don't, I don't see the purpose of it.

SH: Are you thinking the same way?

Ellen: I think guys are superior to women and that's how I think it should be, I don't know.

(group interview)

Generally then, there tended to be confusion and anger regarding the feminist movement. Moreover, there was a trend in which the negative reactions towards feminism seem to be derived from these girls' belief that feminists were too aggressive; behaviour which simply did not fit into their perspective of femininity and which was therefore, undesirable.

Associated with this aggressive image of feminism, was the opinion that women in the feminist movement were not in it for legitimate reasons. There was the view that the need for the women's movement has now disappeared. In short, feminism is no longer a necessity and thus, women involved with it were simply causing trouble.

Carm (grade 9): Well I don't think there is as much need for feminists as there was. Most people take for granted that women are equal. I don't think feminists should be so aggressive and shove things down people's throats saying no I'm right.
(group interview)

While these young women often had some perspective on gender inequities, very few girls felt the need to translate this into collective change. More often girls felt that women are increasingly being treated equally in society and that they, themselves would have few problems upon their entry into the work force.

Carm (grade 9): When I get in the work force the older employers will hopefully be out of the work force so there won't be so many problems.
Maureen (grade 9): I really don't see that there is going to be any problems when I'm working, if there was I'd be assertive about it, not intimidating.

(group interview)

SH: Do you think that you will have any problems because you are female in the work force in the future?

Vera (grade 12): Well I can't see that I'll have a great deal of problems. You know things like that, I guess things you know things have changed and if a problem did occur I couldn't see it being so horrible that it couldn't be handled very simply.

(individual interview)

Young women do not sense that they will face inequities in the future, instead that is something that 'other' females experience. Even though young women generally dislike discrimination towards women and wish for its removal, they also resist changes which have the potential to alter their immediate situation. Feminism represents this potential for change and due to this it is often denounced (Andersen, 1987: 186).

Only a small number of girls had positive views about feminism or women's liberation. However there seemed to be some hesitation in appearing too radical concerning this; likely due to social constraints imposed upon them by others. This is well illustrated in the proceeding conversations,

Marcia (grade 12): Well I'm a well (both girls laugh) I'd like to think of myself as a feminist.

SH: How would you define feminism?

Marcia: The liberty to do what you want and not have anybody impose their ideas on you and equal rights that you can do...

Marcia and Claudia: ...whatever you...

Marcia: ...want

Claudia: I don't (clears throat loudly)

Marcia: Shut up (laugh).

Claudia (grade 12): (clears throat loudly again) You do not think that.

Marcia: I do too (laugh).

Claudia: You just want
 Marcia: So do you (laugh)
 Claudia: Equal rights yes (laugh) but any other
 time it's females are up (meaning Marcia's
 beliefs).
 Marcia: (laugh)
 Claudia: Yah that's about it.
 SH: What do you mean by females are up?
 Claudia: She thinks that females are better than
 males.
 Marcia: (laugh)
 Claudia: I think it's equal
 Marcia: (laugh) I just have an aggressive nature
 and I've always thought of myself as the best and
 I consider other women the same thing. We can
 achieve, I think that since we are always put down
 I think it's time for a change and that we should
 be put up. And I feel that men's attitude of
 revering us as inferior, I really hate that and
 for that I resent them and I make myself up more,
 the whole human race for accepting it.
 (group interview)

Nora (grade 12): Don't feel inferior to anyone.
 To feel equal to feel that you're capable of doing
 anything you want to do, no matter what sex you
 are. (pause). Sometimes it takes an extra push
 because, the males see us as, you know they always
 feel somehow superior to us because they are
 always more demanding and stuff. And I think what
 feminism is, is trying to be demanding, our views,
 our goals. I think it's good in that way. But
 sometimes they go overboard and they don't like
 men at all (laugh).
 (individual interview)

These young women present many contradictory and
 stereotypical ideas concerning the feminist movement. It
 seems that, in general, young women positively regard the
 efforts of the feminist movement in assisting women to play
 a greater and more equal role in the paid labour force.
 Yet, the feminist movement is also regarded with a number of
 misgivings. The movement, in being a proponent of visible,
 collective action by women for social change, seems to
 threaten young women's beliefs about how women should

behave. It is evident through the interviews that young women's present social organization and behaviours which emphasize competition amongst females for heterosexual relations and opposition to authority through non-confronting means are very much contrary to their image of the women's movement.

Andersen (1987) has indicated in her study on corporate wives in the U.S.A., that these women were not unhappy with their traditional female roles. Like the young women in my study, these women supported equal opportunity for women, yet they dissociated themselves from feminists whom they felt did not appreciate them and they felt were too radical (1987: 180). Andersen concludes that since these women benefit from their attachment to men and the system that supports this condition, they have little need to want to change their current position (1987: 188-189). Moreover, due to this position, they felt that they had no need to become feminists or affiliate themselves to the movement (1987: 189).

Comparatively, the young women in the present study may believe that embracing feminism could potentially harm their gender roles and their relationships with males in the present and the future (Kostash, 1987: 370-371). The message of feminism of breaking free from the stable, secure male breadwinner may be something that they simply do not want to hear (Dubinsky, 1985: 39). The way in which young women have come to experience their every day life may seem

to be inconsistent with the expectations of the feminist movement or have little relevance to it (Andersen, 1987). Feminism may be rejected on the basis that it appears to threaten the legitimacy of these girls' own present experiences as well as threatening a way of life in the future which appears to provide security (Dubinsky, 1985: 39).

In understanding how girls come to reject or accept feminism, it is necessary to examine how they have learned what constitutes feminism. It was found that beliefs concerning the feminist movement had developed through the media, friends and largely through the family.

SH: Where have you gotten that from?

Nora (grade 12): My mom in a way. This way of thinking too.

(individual interview)

Vera (grade 12): I talk about it with my friends and my father. I've talked about it with my parents.

(individual interview)

However, teachers as well, are influential in attitudes towards the feminist movement. Women teachers were found to be important in creating positive attitudes towards feminism.

Jane (grade 9): Women, who want to be equal with men and get the same paying jobs and do the same jobs as men do.

SH: Where did you hear about it?

Jane: Uh, last year in english (laugh), we did, we did a whole term on it, we read a book on it.

SH: Was it a male or female teacher?

Jane: Female.

SH: Did you like it?

Jane: Yah, it was really interesting.

(individual interview)

SH: Where have you gotten these ideas from?
 Claudia (grade 12): Ms. Steele (whispers)
 Marcia (grade 12): Oh I think it was before that
 teacher, I guess.
 Claudia: She encouraged it.
 Marcia: Yah.
 (group interview)

This indicates that how girls learn about feminism can determine their beliefs towards it. The school can aid in changing negative conceptions and in formulating positive beliefs about the feminist movement and its corresponding perspectives.

Young women can actively choose to reject conditions of gender inequity. This is not happening however. It can be said that many of these young women have chosen the continuation of conditions as they are, by the kinds of behaviours that they anticipate in their future (McHugh, 1968: 25) and by the attitudes which they hold at present. Quite simply, the world that adolescent females experience has not changed their minds about maintaining many existing gender roles and attitudes in which women are still subordinated.

Kostash also reports in her Canadian study that young women have an, "... ambivalence about the appropriateness and benefit of day care...(1987: 403)."

Chapter Seven

Summary and Conclusions

This thesis has attempted to provide an overview of some of young women's experiences and interactions and how these influence their future aspirations, through an examination of young women within schools. The methodology section of chapter one shows how the thesis goes beyond statistics and male perspectives of what young women are and do, to provide an understanding of the reality of young women's lives through their own social expression and interpretation (Gilligan, 1982: 172-173). In this sense, this thesis provides a significant contribution in supplementing previous Canadian studies of adolescent aspirations and school interactions. As well, it provides insight into the workings of Canadian girls' subcultures and resistance, areas which have been researched little. Finally, it enables young women's own voices to be heard in describing their attitudes towards gender and gender roles. As such, it uniquely demonstrates how gender is being reproduced daily in social interactions.

There are, of course, many variables affecting the choices young women make in regard to their futures. However, what has been argued here is that, at this particular stage in their lives, gender in its linkage with other variables has a significant role in the formulation of

experiences and choices. The second chapter established this, through examining how the young women of the current study aspired to occupations which tended to be female dominated, helping professions.

One of the central arguments of this thesis was that, while contemporary females have made great strides towards gaining social equality in that they are attending post-secondary schooling in equivalent numbers to males (Department of the Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1985), and have greater access to male dominated non-traditional occupations due to affirmative action programs, they still have not attained social equality in the sense that females, the behaviours associated with being 'feminine' and finally the tasks and jobs that females do are still socially denigrated.

Chapter three's examination of interactions in the school underscored how females often continue to be subordinated. Expectations of teachers, parents, boys and the girls, themselves, were shown to make it difficult for girls to behave in a way in which they could gain social approval in the school. Thus, these expectations were shown to aid in the perpetuation of inequitable beliefs and attitudes towards females.

The ways in which young women oppose schooling was presented in chapter four. It was demonstrated that definitions of resistance should be changed in regard to young women, since females may experience and respond to the

processes of the school differently from males. Boys' resistance was shown to often be disruptive and aggressive. In contrast, girls' oppositional behaviours were shown to be non-disruptive and non-confronting. Thus, both boys' and girls' opposition conforms to gender expectations. As a result, it was shown that boys' resistant behaviours denigrate females, while girls' resistance does not alter their repressed conditions.

Female friendship groups, as discussed in chapter five, were shown to provide a supportive context for young women in dealing with normative expectations of gender and gender roles through shared personal understandings. Young women whether inside or outside a female friendship group were shown to orient themselves towards attracting members of the opposite sex. With males being central in importance to these females, members of their own gender were revealed to be regarded as competitors for male attentions. This culture then, was demonstrated to be a product of gender and the expectations of gender, at a period in young women's lives in which it is highly important to gain adult female roles.

In presenting attitudes and beliefs towards marriage and children, the final chapter again examined how young women see themselves and their roles in the future. It showed that while they may desire social equality some of their conceptions of their future are not leading them towards this condition. As well, attitudes towards the

feminist movement exemplified how young women hold contradictory and hostile perceptions of females who are attempting to gain social equality. It was pointed out that while young women want to be regarded as equals in society, concurrently they fear the loss of many traditional gender roles. Thus, the women's movement does not appear to these young women as having relation to their present lives and, indeed, it may be thought to be potentially harmful to their current female roles. Therefore, young women often reject the women's movement. Through these beliefs young women were presented as actively colluding in the continuation of gender roles and conditions as they are.

This thesis has provided evidence, in each chapter, that young women continue to live and experience a world in which normative assumptions often denigrate females, and their roles and behaviours. While young women can often see the personal injustice of this in regard to themselves, their desire of approval from males and their consequent competition with other females for this, does not allow them to see that all females share in this subordination, nor does it allow them to unify in a broad sense, on the basis of this.

It should be emphasized, however, that the findings were not all negative. In particular, it was found that all of the young women with the exception of one, anticipated having careers. This indicated a change of increasing numbers from previous studies (Breton, 1972: 279-294; Porter

et. al., 1979; Porter et. al., 1982). Furthermore, all of the young women, with the exception of two, anticipated attending a post-secondary institution, either college or university. As well, a small number wished to enter occupations which have traditionally been male dominated, such as engineering or architecture. Hence, the findings indicate that these young women are beginning to wish to take advantage of new career opportunities.

Along with these career aspirations, young women are also anticipating changing patterns in future relationships. Many young women wished to postpone marriage and childbirth. They hoped for egalitarian relationships in which males would participate in household and child care tasks to some extent. Finally, it should be noted that it is significant that young women, themselves, are aware of the discrepancies towards females in the school. This means that even though they may not have interest in working towards social change at present, as they grow older their awareness has the potential to increase perhaps creating such an interest.

It is necessary to also point out that the Ottawa School Board has taken initiatives towards building a greater awareness of gender disparities with the directive of changing these. Amongst these initiatives, the Board produced a report on Sex-Role Stereotyping, in 1980. This report recommended that, each school develop it's own Positive Action Plan. Within this plan, the school

principal and/or superintendent and school staff are to achieve such objectives as,

... be receptive to staff concerns re- sex-role stereotyping, ...examine school and classroom organization and practices with reference to sexism and sex-role stereotyping, ...examine activities in the school with an eye to sexism. e.g. extra curricular groups, sports programme, field trips, guest speakers and ...increase the number of women applying for positions of responsibility...(Source: Report No. PR80:37: Re-Sex-Role Stereotyping, 1980, Appendix A1 & A2).

Furthermore, an Affirmative Action Officer has been hired to implement affirmative action for teaching staff. Finally, a three day conference has been held on career motivation for young women, which was aimed at encouraging interests in the sciences and mathematics and occupation in these and other areas. Thus, it is evident that this Board of Education has an active interest in creating social equality.

Many school staff members are also trying to produce positive changes within the school. One teacher discussed this:

SH: How have you helped?

Ms. Todd: I have posters up in the room and comments are made and if comments are made, I stop and talk about them. If I hear comments whether, they are sexist or racist, in the classroom, I don't let them go by. We stop and deal with them and talk about why I'm upset about what I've heard. (pause) I make a point of going after female students in particular, who I feel have ability and are not using it.

Therefore, it is important to note that there have been many efforts and achievements towards attaining equality, even though the present study still indicates many inequities.

A recent public attitude survey which asked questions on issues of gender inequality has found that respondents were often optimistic in regard to this (Livingstone et. al., 1988: 43-45). A great majority of respondents were shown to agree that girls and boys have as much encouragement to pursue mathematics and science (Livingstone et. al., 1988: 43). While the majority of respondents did not feel that female postsecondary graduates get jobs with the same salary levels as males, those in the 18-24 age group were more likely to agree that the salary levels were the same than those in the 35 and older range (Livingstone et. al., 1988: 43-45). The optimism present in the responses perhaps reflects some changes that have occurred in the educational system. However, it should be emphasized that this optimism is problematic, in that there may be a certain complacency concerning gender disparities arising from the belief that it is no longer an important issue. This study has shown that gender inequities are still being reproduced, consequently, there is necessity for continued initiatives.

The findings indicate that it is important for society to not only ensure equal opportunity for females in male spheres, but to also ensure that females and their roles and spheres are equally valued to males'. While females are increasingly being encouraged into non-traditional areas, this encouragement may be reaffirming the devaluation of what females have traditionally done. Gaskell (1988) has

presented some considerations in regard to this. She observes that,

Much of the struggle of the women's movement has been for equal access to high wages and positions of power at work, and it has been a difficult and important struggle. But to argue that women should go into male areas risks holding up what men have done as the model of excellence, and to argue that women must be like men if they want money and power. It continues to devalue areas where women have achieved, and to accept the fact that women who continue in these areas get fewer rewards (Gaskell, 1988: 26).

She observes that young women continue to make traditional career choices for reasons that make sense to them, therefore it is important to increase the economic and personal rewards for what women do, while also encouraging access to spheres in which males dominate (Gaskell, 1988: 26). Finally, with the hope of providing an agenda for feminist content in curriculum, Gaskell states that, "We must ensure that what is taught and learned in schools does not degrade women, does not misrepresent our experience, or interpret it through the categories of "malestream" scholarship (1988: 26)."

In conclusion, this thesis has shown that it is necessary for the educational system and society to restructure the present power relations of males over females to create equal relations and to truly validate females' equal place both structurally and conceptually.

Table 1

Occupational Aspirations of Adolescent Females1. Professionala) Helping Professions

i. <u>Health</u>	Female Sex Typing*	No. of Responses		
		gr. 9	gr. 12	total
Physical Therapist	89.0	1	0	1
Respiratory Technician	71.3	0	1	1
Dental Hygienist	71.3	0	1	1
Dietician	71.3	0	1	1
Nurse	89.0	1	1	2
Pediatrician	18.8	0	1	1
Veterinarian	18.8	1	0	1
Total		3	5	8

ii. Counselling/Teaching and Related

Social Worker	61.9	2	1	3
Teacher	65.5	2	1	3
Child Care Worker	59.3	0	2	2
Psychologist	61.9	2	1	3
Total		6	5	11

1. b) Non-Helping Professions

Lab Technician	71.3	0	1	1
Writer/Journalism	47.2	2	1	3
Actress	28.9	0	1	1
Aviator	----	0	1	1
Engineer	6.7	0	1	1
Architect	6.7	1	0	1
Total		3	5	8

Total Professional- 272. Skilled Occupations a) Traditional

Secretary	98.7	1	0	1
Interior Decorator	72.1	1	0	1
Hairdresser	87.4	1	0	1
Fashion Designer	72.1	1	1	2

Housewife	----	1	0	1
Total		5	1	6

b) Non-Traditional

(none)

Total Skilled Occupations- 6

3. Business/Management

Advertising(other sales)	22.5	1	0	1
Real Estate(sales commodities)	41.5	0	1	1
Hotel Management (lodging)	65.6	0	1	1
Self Employment	----	0	1	1
Management	38.5	2	0	2
Total		3	3	6

Total Business/Management-6

<u>Undecided</u>		4	2	6
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Total Number of Subjects- 45

*Female Sex-Typing- Taken from Armstrong, (1984: 233-239), Table 4.21. This indicates the proportion of employed workers in each occupation who are female according to Statistics Canada 1982.

Table 2

Aspirations to go to University, College or Work
by Grade 9 and 12 Females.

	University	College	Work	Total
Grade 9	15	7	2	24
Grade 12	9	12	0	21

Note: In each grade, there were a comparable number of girls in the advanced level; the entry level for university. Specifically, for grade 9, there were 17 girls in advanced, and 7 in general, while for grade 12, there were 18 girls in advanced and 3 in general. Therefore, academic stream did not seem to be the factor in influencing grade 12 girls away from going to university.

Table 3

Late to Home FormNumber of Girls (late once or more times)
and percentage portion

Grade 9

Grade 12

38 out of 96= 39.6%
n= 61 times

40 out of 79= 50.6%
n= 73 times

Number of Boys (late once or more times)

Grade 9

Grade 12

37 out of 115= 32.2%
n= 96 times

31 out of 84= 36.9%
n= 49 times

Taken from the school records of September 1986 to March 1987.

Appendix A1

Dear (Student's Name);

I am a researcher at Carleton University and I am presently in your school doing a study on Young Women's Aspirations and Experiences. If it is possible, I would like to interview you for this study.

If you would like to be involved, please come and see me to pick up a form and to set up an interview time. I will be available in the Nurses' room across from the main office on (dates and times). If you feel that any of your female friends would like to be involved too, they can come to see me as well.

The interview will take approximately 50 minutes. Your participation is voluntary and all information obtained is confidential.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Hill

Appendix A2

Dear (Student's Name);

Hi! My name is Suzanne Hill. I am a student at Carleton University and I am presently in your school doing a study on Young Women's Aspirations and Experiences. I am very interested in meeting you in order to find out what it's like to be in High School in 1987.

If you would like to be involved in this study, please come and see me to pick up a form and set up an interview time. I will be available in the Nurses' room across from the main office (dates and times). If you feel that any of your female friends would like to be involved too, they can come to see me as well.

The interview will take about 50 minutes, whenever it's best for you. Your participation is voluntary (it's up to you) and what you say is confidential. I really hope that you will be interested! What you have to say is important so give yourself the chance to say it!

Hope to talk to you soon!

Suzanne Hill

Appendix B

Interview Guide for Young Women

1) Introduction

Outline the purpose of the research.
Discuss confidentiality of the research.
Ask permission to use the tape-recorder.
Ask if there are any questions before beginning.

Ask about their grade, are they in general, advanced.

2) Family Life

1. What do your parents do? i.e. occupation.
2. Do you have any brothers or sisters- how old?
3. Who do you think makes the major decisions in your house, your mother or father?
4. Who does most of the housework?
5. Do you help with the housework?
6. Do your brothers, sister help? Who does the most between you?
7. Do you ever talk to your parents about your future?
8. What are your plans and do your parents agree with them?
9. When you get a job in the future do you think you'll still help out around the house?
10. How do you get along with your parents?
11. Do you think your relationship with your parents will change when you leave high school?

3) Friendship Relations

1. With who do you spend the most time with outside of school and within school? (If female is named and is within school ask if she would like to come to an interview)
2. What kinds of things do you do with these friends?

3. Do you like to get together with large groups of girlfriends or small groups?
4. Do you have a boyfriend?
5. How does this affect your other friendships?
6. Have your friends or boyfriend influenced what you would like to do after you leave high school?
7. Do you prefer boys or girls as friends? Why?
8. How long have you been friends?
9. When did you start being friends?
10. Do you share a lot of classes?
11. Do you see each other outside of school?
12. Why is your friendship important to you?

4) Summer employment

1. Have you ever had any summer jobs?
2. What did you do and about how much did you make?
3. Did you like your jobs?
4. How did you find your summer job?
5. Did you find the employment centre was any help?
6. How did you get to your job?

5) Future

1. When you are working permanently what do you think will be different about it as compared to school?
2. Do you think you can get a job through family connections?
3. Who has the most influence on your future?
4. What do you think your parents imagine for you in 6 years?
5. What do you imagine for yourself?
6. Do you think this will really happen?

7. What kind of job do you want in the future?
8. Do you want to go to university or college?
9. If you want to keep going to school after high school how will you pay for it?
10. Do you want to get married- how old?
11. Will you continue your work or schooling after marriage -or after children?
12. Who will look after your children if you continue working?
13. What do you think about day care?
14. Will your husband help out with child care and housework?
15. What do you think you'll do if you can't find a job after your schooling ends?
16. How do you feel about looking for a permanent job?
17. What to you makes a good job- a bad job?
18. How important is it to you to have a career, marriage, further education? Is one more important than the other?

6) School experience

1. What do you think about school?
2. Did you ever take any auto/techn/carpentary courses?-If no, why not?
3. Do boys tend to take different subjects than girls?-If so why?
4. Do you have much contact with the boys?
5. How do you feel boys are different than you in school?
6. Who do teachers pay the most attention to in class?
7. Do boys take subjects like typing, family studies? What do you think about it?
8. In general, how do you feel about the teachers, the counsellors and the principal in the school?

9. Do you feel they are supportive of you and your interests?
10. Is there a difference between male and female teachers in the way that they treat you?
11. Do you think there is any difference in the way boys and girls are treated in school?
12. Is there any difference in the ways boys act as compared to girls?
13. How do you feel about the career counselling in this school?
14. Have the counsellors, teacher, or principal helped you in any career decisions?
15. How was it decided that you take the courses that you are taking?
16. Do you ever wish you could be taking different courses- and do you think its possible for you to change?
17. Do you ask questions in your classes or do you prefer to remain quiet?
18. Who is it that asks the most questions in your classes?

7) Feminism

1. What do you think about equality for women?
2. What do you know about feminism?
3. Do you think the teachers, counsellors etc. believe in equality for women? Explain.
4. Where did you learn about feminism and equality?

8) Resistance

1. When you don't like a class or teacher what do you do?
2. Who spends a lot of time in the washroom by the cafeteria? Why?
3. Have you ever skipped classes?
4. What do you do when you skip them?

5. What are some of the ways that you can get out of class?

6. If a teacher or subject isn't liked who gives the teacher the hardest time?

7. When a teacher or subject is not liked by you or girls in the class what are your ways of giving the teacher a hard time?

9) Co-op

1. What made you decide that you wanted to be in the co-op program?

2. Why do you think you were selected?

3. What do you do on your co-op placement?

4. Do you think it will help you to find a future job?

10) Physical Education Classes

1. Do you like phys.ed?

2. Did you have co-ed phys.ed in public school?

3. If yes, how was it different?

4. Do you prefer or dislike phys. ed. with just girls? Explain.

5. Do you think your phys.ed classes are the same as boys? Explain.

6. Is there any difference in playing sports with girls or with boys?

11) Conclusion

Ask if there are any questions or if there is anything they want to add.

Do they know any other girls who would like to be interviewed?

Thank you.

Appendix C

Interview Guide for Teachers

1. How long have you taught at this school?
2. What subject and grades do you teach?
3. How do you feel the school and teaching has changed since you became a teacher?
4. Do you feel students are treated equally in the school?
5. What is the biggest problem for young women today?
6. How do you feel you can help?
7. What sorts of initiatives are occurring in the school towards creating gender equality?
8. As a teacher have you ever experienced or witnessed sexual discrimination?
9. Do you feel girls participate as much as boys in the classroom?
10. If not, why do you think this happens?
11. How do male and female students resist classroom or school activities?
12. Where do they go to skip classes?
13. Do males and females behave any differently in their resistant behaviours?
14. How do you feel about this behaviour?
15. What can you do about it?

Interview Guide for Vice Principal and Principal

1. What are the types of functions/duties that you have as a v.p/principal?
2. How long have you been at the school?
3. How much time do you spend talking to and/or disciplining the students?

4. As the principal how does your work differ from the vice principals'?
5. How often is it that you see male/female students in order to discipline/talk to them?
6. With whom do you have to take disciplinary measures the most- males or females? Why?
7. What are the common types of problems that you have to deal with?
8. How would you say that females and males differ in terms of the problems that they may create in the school or in terms of the problems that you have to deal with in the school?
9. What does hall duty consist of?
10. If students are missing their classes where are they going?
11. If female students are spending time in the washroom in order to skip class what can you do about that?
12. The schools policy is that both gender have equal access to all courses- Other than this policy what types of encouragement is provided?
13. Do you think that students take advantage of this policy?
14. Do you think it would be useful for the boys to take family studies more than they do now in order to learn housecleaning etc.?
15. What do you think may inhibit boys from taking family studies or girls from taking woodworking for example?
16. What type of function does the students' council have?
17. What is your relationship to the students' council?
18. Do you feel that the positive action rep. is a good idea for the school? How?
19. What criteria are used to place students into particular programs ie. advanced, general, enriched?
20. How do students get placed into co-op programs?
21. What criteria is used in order to select students?
22. What types of placements are available?

Appendix D

Interview Guide For Counsellors

1. How long have been a counsellor?
2. How long have you been counselling at this school?
3. Is counselling your primary function or do you do other things as well?
4. What kind of educational background do you need to counsel and what do you have?
5. What types of counselling do you provide?
6. Who comes to see you?
7. Do you find that certain people come to see you more than others i.e do people in the advanced stream come more often-do girls come more often etc.
8. What types of resources are available for the student?
9. Do you ever find that some students are interested in careers they are not capable of entering into?
10. Do you find that some students are capable of entering into university or college but do not wish to do so?
11. If so, how do you deal with these instances?
12. What criteria do you use to counsel your students?

Interview Guide for Secretaries

1. How long have you worked at this school?
2. What is a typical day like for you?
3. What is your job like and what do you do?
4. How has working here changed over the years?
5. Please explain how you handle late student or students who want to leave early.
6. What are the rules concerning skipping or being late?
7. What do you think about students who skip?
8. Are male and female students treated fairly and equally within the school?

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