

Gender Differentiation in Education Prior to 1959

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Question

What did early classroom materials and teaching say and teach about gender between 1900 and 1959?

Hypothesis

The educational system during the early 20th century played a critical role in engendering young men and women through curriculum, classroom resources, and the hidden curriculum. The education system, particularly after 1930, engendered women into roles of passivity and nurturing and limiting their future choices. The education system streamed young men into traditional male virtues of bravery, strength, and aggressiveness.

Introduction

The school system is where gender is policed and enforced. This is shaped through a variety of processes in schools such as what Kehily calls “the hidden curriculum”, or the learning that extends beyond the intention of the curriculum.¹ This can be seen in pedagogy, student informal cultures, and the relationships between students and teachers, and the curriculum itself.² Pascoe extends this conversation to include homophobic jokes, as to normalize heterosexuality and create a negative space for students.³ He even mentions that schools are the driving forces that create gender binaries, and enforce the stereotypes of male dominance and female submission.⁴

This hidden curriculum can be found in the same places that feminist and feminist-historians have already critiqued. There are a plethora of examples throughout textbooks, curriculum documents, and even lesson materials.

1. Mary Jane Kehily, *Sexuality, Gender and Schooling: Shifting agendas in Social Learning*, 49.

2. Ibid, 37.

3. C.J. Pascoe. *Dude You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 35.

4. Ibid 3, 10.

Another important part of the hidden curriculum was the desexualization of schools, as discussed by Klein.⁵ To desexualize school means to remove sexuality from the forefront of education, and to replace it with the awkward grins and giggling that students are accustomed to today.⁶ This is very different from a lot of the post-feminist(s) notions of sex-positive mindsets. During this era, students, staff, and the curriculum distanced themselves from sexual education in school. The moral and religious institutions of the time helped this process through indoctrination and bowdlerized curriculum.⁷

Discussion and Analysis of Sources

Teachers and the education system in general are constantly sending messages, tacit and overt as to the behaviour expectations of their class. Historically, classroom materials such as posters and textbooks demonstrate gendered trends and behaviour models that encourage female children towards passive and nurturing behaviour, while males were encouraged into active play and leadership roles. Classroom lectures and the promotion of engendering concepts by teachers were probably had some of the most important effects on the engendering of children. However, there is a lack of evidence about teacher's voice and lessons therefore only textual sources remain. There are four textbooks in particular taken from various times in the focus period: 1920, 1930, 1950, and 1959 respectively (figures 1-4). Each textbook is from the primary level, focusing for the most part on the grade one and two level, during the early period of schooling for children.

5. Susan Shurberg Klein, "Why Should We Care About Gender and Sexuality in Education" *Sexuality and the Curriculum: The Politics and Practices of Sexuality Education*, Ed. James T. Sears. (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992) 172.

6. Ibid.

7. Mary Jane Kehily, *Sexuality, Gender and Schooling: Shifting Agendas in Social Learning*, 58-9.

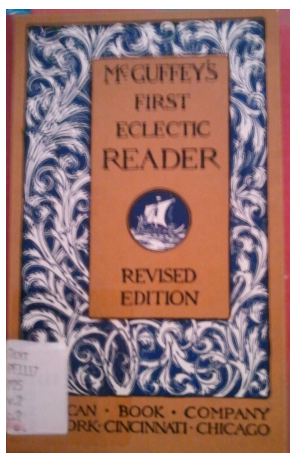


Figure 1

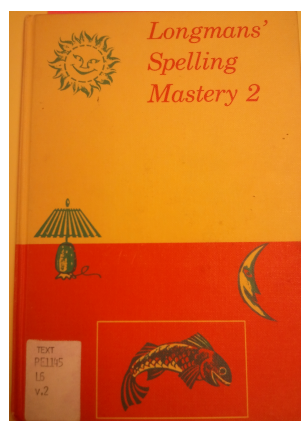


Figure 2



Figure 3

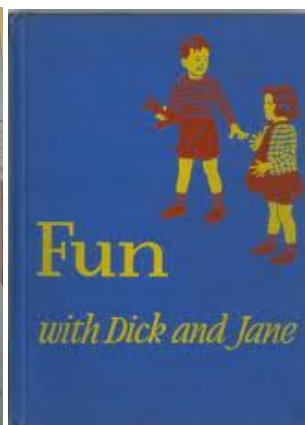


Figure 4

These texts through images and example problems express the cultural norm of the time period for the behavior of women. Even in the physical comparison of males to female the expectation is clear. In all five texts women are dressed in the typical 1930s fashion of full skirts and aprons regardless of the activity they were participating in. Males, on the other hand, were dressed in much more active clothing, reflecting the more “appropriate” form of male play. The actions the females take are also quite different. In *McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader* for example, there is a passage with children on the beach where James suggests “we will dig in the sand with this little spade. That will be fine sport.”⁸ However, Katie responds “I must make my doll's bed” therefore she cannot play with James.⁹ Also in the *Longman's Spelling Mastery*, the boys are portrayed playing hockey in several of the vocabulary pages (Figure 5)¹⁰, while in *Dent's Speller Grade 2*, the females are the mother's cleaning or the females helping (Figure 6).¹¹ Through the representation of male and female action in these images and example texts, the language lessons are implicitly telling children that they should follow these examples. By only

8 . *McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader*, New York: American Book Company, 1920. P.32

9. *McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader*, New York: American Book Company, 1920. P.32

10. Eds Philip A Hornick, *Longman's Spelling Mastery 2*, don mills: Longmans Green and co 1959. P. 53

11. Lillian Gordon, *Dent's Speller Grade 2*, Ottawa: Alger Press Limited, 1959. P. 7

representing women in nurturing, domestic roles these texts are giving no opportunity for women to picture themselves in the more active roles being filled by men.

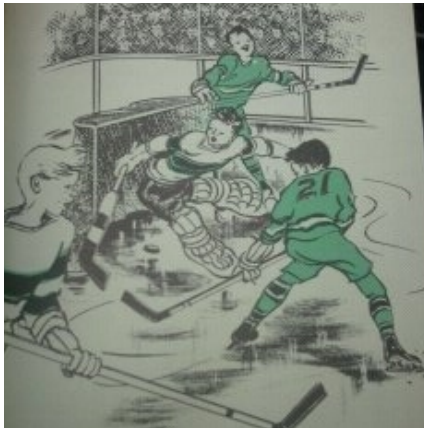


Figure 5



Figure 6

Furthermore, in *McGuffey's Eclectic Primer*, there is a juxtaposition of female and male roles:

Ann and Nell sat on the grass in the shade of the big tree. They like to rock their dolls and sing to them. The brave men are on their way to the ship. They will save the men in the ship if their can. They will not let them drown.¹²

By placing these two passages directly following each other, the authors of this text are placing a comparison, unconsciously or otherwise about the roles of males and females. The females are placed in the role of docility, play-acting the roles of mothers taking care of their babies while resting in the shade. Even the vocabulary and verbs being taught to the children are reflecting this message; the girls sat, rocked, and sang, all very traditionally feminine traits.¹³ Meanwhile, in the following passage the message the text is sending to boys is almost directly opposing the earlier one. The text uses active words like “brave” and “save” to represent the male characters. Furthermore by “not letting the men drown”, the text is highlighting a desirable trait these men possess, bravery and courage

12. *McGuffey's Eclectic Primer*, New York: American Book Company, 1909. P.30

13. *McGuffey's Eclectic Primer*, New York: American Book Company, 1909. P.30

By using such active words, the primer is telling young men that theses are the virtues to aspire to, thereby modeling the “proper” male behavior. This sets up assumptions for the character of the different genders even while teaching them grammar and spelling.¹⁴

On the following page, a boy falls on the ice while skating. It states that “he is a brave boy and will not cry.”¹⁵ Again this passage is associating the positive traits of bravery to the boy for not crying when hurt. By saying the boy “will not”¹⁶ instead of does not cry, also attaches a level of control and intention behind the boy’s actions, he is making a conscious decision not to cry.

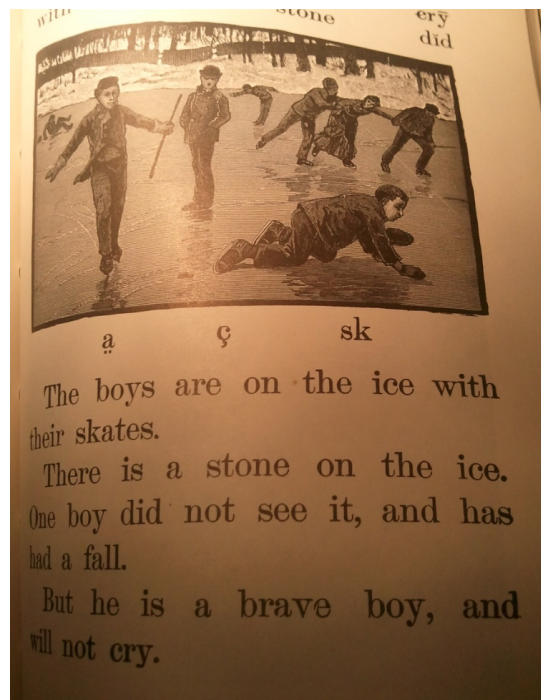


Figure 7

It is interesting to note the comparison between this and the representation in the Dent's Speller, when Molly's doll is stolen.¹⁷

14. McGuffey's Eclectic Primer, New York: American Book Company, 1909. P.30

15. McGuffey's Eclectic Primer, New York: American Book Company, 1909. P.31

16. McGuffey's Eclectic Primer, New York: American Book Company, 1909. P.31

17. Lillian Gordon, Dent's Speller Grade 2, Ottawa: Alger Press Limited, 1959. P. 21



Figure 8

Here, it is seen as almost an expectation that the girl is crying when her doll is stolen. Rather than chasing after the boy who stole her doll, she cries and draws the attention of an adult to deal with the problem.¹⁸ This not only contrasts the bravery of the expected male action of remaining calm when something unexpected or negative happens but it also instills the sense of helplessness of females for children to emulate. It is also interesting to note that these two texts were written 43 years apart, yet the representations of the roles of women remain the same. This representation can also be seen in one of the more popular textbook of the 1940s and 1950s *Fun with Dick and Jane*.



Figure 9

In this text, the father is portrayed as the “fixer” while the daughters emulate their mother in helplessness. Women are seen in these texts as nurturing, passive individuals compared to their more active male counterparts. These texts are, on the surface, meant for spelling and vocabulary, but are connotatively a model for behavior based on gender.¹⁹

Media in the form of magazine articles and movies became more widely used in the classroom in the 1940s and 1950s. One such magazine article used was Dr. Laurence H. Mayer’s article “*Coming of Age*.”²⁰ The article discusses menstruation in simple language that describes it as the beginning of a series of changes from girlhood to womanhood. Mayers advises girls on diet, exercise, and habits of cleanliness they should follow during their period. The article does talk about new “social interest” but rather than give youth any concrete facts about sex, it gives cautionary advice on new relationships. In the classroom the article does more than give cursory facts about menstruation. It teaches girls that their proper role in a relationship is passive, that they must wait for males to approach them not the other way around. Girls must always take care of their appearance and never strain themselves. Articles such as this reiterated lessons learned in primary education, reinforcing traditional female gender roles.

Another article found in *Chatelaine* magazine by Dr. Marion Hilliard was shown to students despite the intended audience being adult women. Titled “Woman’s Greatest Hazard...Sex” it predictably discusses sex but without going into specifics or details.²¹ This article, like the previous one, was likely shown to students in English or social studies classes. Most of the articles teenage girls were exposed to, such as this one, discussed their role as wives, mothers, or future mothers. This was a less subtle way of telling girls what their expected future role would be. The article impresses upon its readers the importance of a strong bond between a potential husband and wife formed only after a lengthy

19. *Fun with Dick and Jane*, Toronto:Gage, 1950 pp.22-23

20. Laurence H. Mayers, "Coming of Age," 1948: 2-6.

21. Marion Hilliard, "Woman’s Greatest Hazard...Sex," *Chatelaine* Jan. 1956: 9+.

acquaintance. However, according to Dr. Hilliard the main responsibility of maintaining this bond fell to the woman, while the man's responsibility was to provide for his family. The division of roles is very clear in this article, as in other articles and movies shown to teenagers in the 1940s and 1950s.

Several videos were shown to youth throughout North America usually with the intension of educating them about puberty, but also important was teaching youth how best to act. One such video called *As Boys Grow* was targeted to boys specifically.²² Even though this was a 1957 film, it is representative of beliefs in the earlier decades. A coach instructs the boys, already instilling in viewers that "normal" boys such be part of masculine activities like sports. Meanwhile *The Story of Menstruation*, a film intended for girls, painted an entirely different picture.²³ Unlike *As Boys Grow*, it was a short cartoon film produced by Disney in 1946. While giving the rudimentary facts surrounding menstruation, it portrays a cute little cartoon girl looking at herself in the mirror, brushing her hair, and only doing light exercise. The message to girls is clear: they should be concerned with their appearance and not strain themselves with dangerous pursuits such as sports or running. Media in the high school classroom gave students an image of what masculinity and femininity should look like.

Specifically in our Western and North American definition, masculinity is connected especially to the public sphere, or workplaces.²⁴ Wherefore, masculinities are tied heavily to the public and private dichotomy, and to capitalism itself.²⁵ Tolson remarks on this especially, as this link to capitalism creates a hierarchy of achievement, where men stratify themselves on the basis of achievement and hegemonic masculinity.²⁶ To clarify further, hegemonic masculinity is a social construct that affirms a societal notion of essentialist gender binaries and stereotypes. Aggression, dominance over woman and lesser-masculine men, a polarity to "feminine attributes", a rejection to homosexuality, and any other

22. *As Boys Grow*. Video. Medical Arts Productions, 1957. *Prelinger Archives*.

23. *Story of Menstruation*. Video. Walt Disney Productions, 1946. *YouTube*.

24. Andrew Tolson, *The Limits of Masculinity*, 13.

25. Margaret Thornton, "The Public/Private Dichotomy: Gender and Discriminatory" *The Journal of Law and Society*, Vol 18 No. 4. (Winter, 1991), 448-463.

26. Andrew Tolson, *The Limits of Masculinity*, 14-15, 34-36.

deviations from a society's definition are examples of hegemonic masculinity.²⁷ This could mean a number of things like being perceived as, or being effeminate or weak, which is often incorrectly attributed to femininity and homosexuals.²⁸ Finally Judith Butler makes a critical point that masculinities are products of continual repeated practices and repudiations that demonstrate these efforts as masculine attributes, wherefore translating them into a guise of essentialist gender performance.²⁹ In other words, hegemonic masculinity is problematic because it is oppressive to masculinities, femininities, and any gender outside of its construct.

Contrarily, masculinity was also changing during this period because homosexuality was recognized as a mental illness. During the 1930's it was believed that effeminate boys developed into homosexuals, if they were not shaped properly by masculinity. This homophobic and uninformed rationale helped create the hidden curriculum, which exaggerated the contemporary masculinity; into the hegemonic masculinity we can still see today. Sports, gender roles, and schooling helped shape "frailty, modesty, and timidity" into masculinity; this is especially evident in Figure 5 on page 5, where the boys are playing hockey.³⁰ This can also be seen in other images such as in Figure 10, where we can see fully grown men with guns.³¹ Violence is another example of how masculinity shifts into hegemonic masculinity, as it demonstrates the power struggles associated with gender, and lesser genders.

27. Mary Jane Kehily, *Sexuality, Gender and Schooling: Shifting agendas in Social Learning*, 33-34.

28. Lois Tyler, *Critical Theory Today*, 88.

29. C. J. Pascoe, *Dude You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*, 14.

30. Eds Philip A Hornick, *Longman's Spelling Mastery 2*, don mills: Longmans Green and co 1959. P. 62.



Figure 10

Through the absence of sexual orientation education during the twentieth century, we can certainly see the implications of another process called “heterosexualizing”.³² This process involves the rearing of children in a heterosexist nature, wherefore they only understand sexuality in narrow and exclusive terms. It seems relevant to mention that these discussions of sexuality have a heavy bearing on the social construction of gender. There is a strong relationship between this sex-gender category, heterosexual and hegemonic masculinity. This is perpetuated because it fosters citizenship and deters deviations from naturalized concepts.³³ This also contributes to power relations, where the hyper-heterosexual culture oppresses other masculinities, and femininities, through homophobia and sexism.³⁴

Maternalizing women is prevalent throughout the 1920’s, 30’s, and 40’s according to Nancy Christie. The welfare state supported widows and mothers during the 1920’s, but not female education.³⁵ Furthermore, any financial and social freedom that women had as a result of the first and second World War was quickly met with hostility following the end of Canada’s conflict; public concern that women might prevent men from being the “breadwinner” complicated opportunities for women outside of the domestic sphere.³⁶ Female enrollment in Universities continued to increase despite this

32. C.J. Pascoe, *Dude You’re a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*, 27.

33. Mary Jane Kehily, *Sexuality, Gender, and Schooling: Shifting Agendas in Social Learning*, 49.

34. *Ibid*, 50.

35. Nancy Christie, *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare in Canada*, pg. 459.

36. Christie, *Engendering*, 458.

maternalizing, and is a trend that still continues today.³⁷³⁸ It is within this social context that Canadian Universities navigated the enrollment of women.



Figure 11



Figure 12

These are illustrations from the Queens Yearbook of 1911. The drawn picture on the left is a fairly accurate portrayal of female alumni as shown in photographs of female graduates: hair is put up, there are no worn accessories, and the female dress is only partially noticeable beneath the University garb. Men and women wear very similar robes, but they are worn differently; the men wear robes only slightly parted. Men are quoted in their yearbooks differently than women. They often choose quotes about honor, and academic greatness while women's quotes are more theological: prayer, praise, and

37. Lord Eustace Percy et al., *The Yearbook of Education: 1932*, Great Britain: Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd, 1932. Pg. 684.

38. Emily Davies, *If X, then Y the Gender Gap?* The Journal, website.

39. *Yearbook*, Ontario: The Graduating Year in Arts, 1911.

biblical figures are not uncommon. In one instance a female graduate quotes, “She’s fairest when she cooks.”⁴⁰



Figure 13

The robes are more different between genders in the Queens Yearbook of 1920, though still somewhat similar. University garb is still, to an extent, gender neutral while University sports teams clearly engender based on attire. Many female graduates keep their hair up and are sometimes poorly groomed. One poorly groomed female graduate named Helen quotes in her yearbook, “Helen’s fair and

40. Ibid, pg. 18.

41. *Yearbook*, Ontario: The Graduating Class in Arts, 1920.

Helen's bonnie," and is an example of a class of educated women who break free of social expectation that a young women's beauty is skin deep.⁴²



Figure 14

The Queens Senior Class Yearbook of 1930 indicates that the style for men is roughly unchanged while female styles have changed dramatically. University garb is less noticeable for female graduates in the 1930's photography compared to graduation pictures in 1910 and 1920. Increased female enrollment and post-war concern for men as breadwinners likely played a role in university engendering of women.⁴⁴ Many women were graduates in the Arts while none (that I found) were science or medical graduates, but the University may play only a partial role in the engendering of women. The

42. Ibid, pg. 19

43. *The Tricolor*, The Senior Class of 1930, 1930.

44. Christie, *Engendering*, 458.

engendering of women may be why women applied or could only become enrolled in the Arts instead of a program that lead to a more profitable career.⁴⁵

Context of Education in Ontario

The broader historic trends of women in schools between 1920 and 1950 in Ontario and Canada were as such; by 1920, mandatory attendance of both males and females between the ages of 7 and 14 was in effect in Ontario. Therefore, women had a 100% attendance rate between those age ranges.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, the problem with attendance was retention, only 30% of the student population remained in school full time at the secondary level according to the 1931 census in the *Yearbook of Education 1934* (Figure 7).⁴⁷

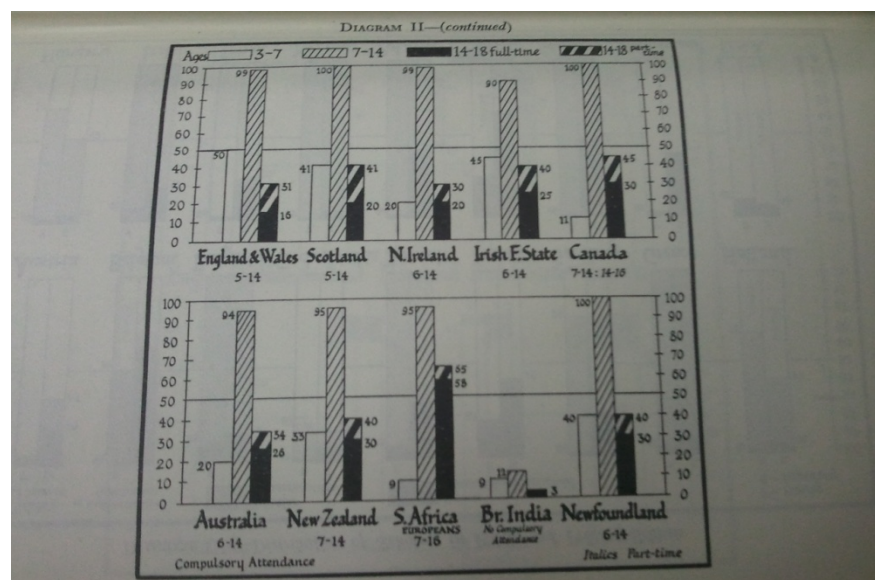


Figure 15

The retention factor did affect both genders, and the representation of women in the education system remained fairly equal in both the primary and secondary levels. In the diagram below, Canada

45. Ibid, pg. 20.

46. Eustace Percy, *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1935, p.173

47. Eustace Percy, *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1935, p.173

demonstrates a representation of 51% female in the primary level and 49% in the secondary level (Figure 16). Specifically in Ontario enrollment rates of the population were 285, 598 males and 269,605 females.⁴⁸ Specifically in Ontario enrollment rates of the population were 285, 598 males and 269,605 females.⁴⁹

These numbers remain fairly constant until 1949 where the female population continues to increase until we see a representation of 51% women in secondary schools.⁵⁰ However, this equality lasts only until the post-secondary level when we see a much larger gender disparity.

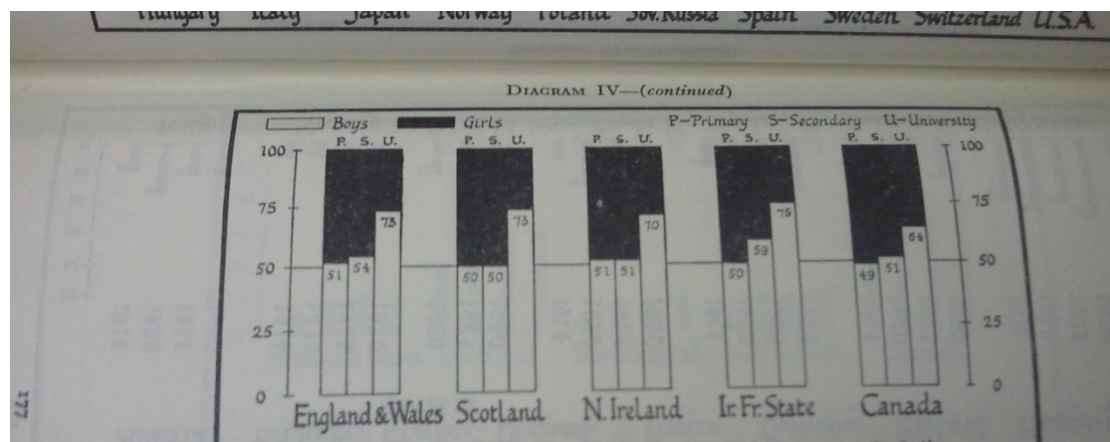


Figure 16

The disparity between genders begins to develop in the late secondary to university level where 64% of the population of the University is men, and those numbers begin to divide staggeringly when one looks closer at the division between subjects such as Household Science and Homemaking, when compared to Mathematics and Biology for example.⁵¹ This can be linked to the concepts of engendering discussed in the earlier source analysis. An example is the idea of “funneling” females into more passive and nurturing professions such as homemaking, compared to more “active” professions such as doctors or

48. Percy, *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1935 P.90

49. Percy, *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1935 P.90

50. Ontario. Ministry of Education. Report. Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 1920, Toronto: Clarkson W. James, 1921

51. Percy, *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1935 p. 177

researchers. The institutionalization of these ideas began in primary school and continued through secondary to effect female enrollment in university.

One of the significant changes that occurred in Ontario involved changes to the curriculum which greatly limited female students choices of vocation after their compulsory education had finished. Women who could not afford to study in university or those who did not intend to go were limited by the practical schools instituted in 1937.⁵²

One of the largest contributors to the change in curriculum since the late 1800s was Adelaide Hoodless. She effectively convinced the minister of education to change the curriculum which would affect women's education well into the post World War II period. Hoodless believed that "scientific understanding of food preparation and home management could curb some of the evils of industrialization."⁵³ She opened a series of manual education schools that catered to teaching women about domestic science in the hopes of preparing them for the future. She convinced the minister of education to add domestic science to the curriculum in 1894 for both the primary and the secondary level. Prior to 1937, the percentage of women participating in domestic science courses varied between less than 1% and over 30% depending on the grade level and rural or urban setting of the school. The following charts (Figures 17- 18) depict these changing trends prior to the institutionalization of the domestic science courses in 1937.⁵⁴

52. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. 1991, 127.

53. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. 1991, 127.

54. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. 1991, 129-132.

Table 2—DOMESTIC SCIENCE EDUCATION IN ONTARIO'S COLLEGIATE INSTITUTES AND HIGH SCHOOLS, 1905-30

	1905-06	1910-11	1915-16	1920-21	1925-26	1930-31
Number of Girls Attending High Schools and Collegiate Institutes						
Collegiate Ins.	8,207	9,152	11,630	10,320	15,501	17,003
High Schools	7,419	8,264	9,091	8,605	12,086	12,466
Total	15,626	17,416	20,721	18,905	27,587	29,469
Number of Girls Enrolled in Domestic Science Classes						
Collegiate Ins.	1,192	1,628	3,108	3,277	2,997	1,728
High Schools	358	533	171	301	452	169
Total	1,550	2,161	3,279	3,578	3,449	1,897
Percentage of Total High School and Collegiate Female Population Enrolled in Domestic Science						
Collegiate Ins.	14.5	17.8	26.7	31.8	19.3	10.1
High Schools	4.8	6.5	1.8	3.5	3.7	1.5
Total	9.9	12.4	15.8	18.9	12.5	6.4

Source: The Ontario Department of Education Annual Reports

Figure 17

Table 1—DOMESTIC SCIENCE EDUCATION IN ONTARIO'S ELEMENTARY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, 1905-1930

	1905-06	1910-11	1915-16	1920-21	1925-26	1930-31*
Number of Girls Attending School						
Rural schools	112,120	103,761	102,979	101,338	104,687	
City schools	35,297	45,826	65,576	92,465	101,766	108,826 - Rural **
Town schools	31,788	32,660	32,120	34,961	35,920	158,802 - Urban
Village schools	13,711	13,612	12,942	12,174	11,270	
Total	192,916	195,859	213,617	240,938	253,643	267,627
Number of Girls Enrolled in Domestic Science						
Rural schools	492	431	2,473	6,673	11,648	
City schools	2,002	11,990	32,793	64,313	72,007	27,919 - Rural **
Town schools	484	1,613	2,967	3,565	2,474	31,433 - Urban
Village schools	172	10	110	680	694	
Total	3,150	14,044	38,343	75,231	86,823	59,352
Percentage of Girls Attending School Enrolled in Domestic Science						
Rural schools	.44	.42	2.40	6.58	11.1	
City schools	5.7	26.16	50.00	69.55	70.8	25.65 - Rural
Town schools	1.5	4.94	9.24	10.20	6.9	19.79 - Urban
Village schools	1.25	.07	.85	5.59	6.2	
Total	1.63	7.17	17.95	31.22	34.2	22.18

* The number of students enrolled in domestic science courses cannot be determined on the basis of 1930-31.

Figure 18

After 1937, domestic science courses became compulsory in Ontario. This was in part due to the rising unemployment rates with the Great Depression and the extension of compulsory education until the age of 16. This meant that students were staying in school longer, while more and more of the population identified themselves as working class.⁵⁵ In order to provide these students with an opportunity to receive “practical education” matriculation was delayed until after grade 9 where students could choose to continue on the academic path (primarily middle class students) or the practical studies: a variety of shop classes for males and domestic science for females.⁵⁶ There was no crossing between practical vocational schools, thus limiting females from entering many of the perceived male spheres of employment, and limiting them to roles in “household and personal service.”⁵⁷ Male students, on the other hand, were blocked from taking domestic science courses that would indicate that they had a place in the household sphere. This was a dangerous idea because males

55. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. 1991, 128.

56. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. 1991, 129.

57. *ibid*

who demonstrated perceived feminine attributes were labeled as “sissies” and it was feared that this would lead to “evils” such as homosexuality.⁵⁸

This curriculum trend continued into the post World War II period where domestic science became entrenched into the primary and secondary curriculum. Curriculum covered topics such as cross-stitching, mending garments, sewing handkerchiefs in primary. Higher-level primary students were able to expand their knowledge into food processing, table etiquette, general housework and home nursing.⁵⁹ Secondary curriculum was further divided into hygiene, sanitation, cooking, and needlework. The ultimate goal was to prepare women for their “life’s work”, and the 1937 reforms to the curriculum made at least one domestic science course compulsory for women.⁶⁰ Additionally, with the support and induction of the Technical Education act in 1919, domestic science curriculum was given great support in the vocational stream. The first technical education school was opened in 1902 and by 1940 there were over 63 schools, and 50% of the population in technical education were women studying domestic science.⁶¹

Broader Global Contexts of Education

The broader global perspective on women and education however, places Canada and the enrollment and participation of women on a different scale than that of the rest of the world. In *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, the diagram of percentage of women in primary, secondary and university is staggering when compared to its European and Asian counterparts.⁶² While in the pre-world war II era of the 1930s, the percentages of Canada, the United States and Australia were similar, and in many cases such as with England and New Zealand, the statistics demonstrate a larger representation of women in

58 Grant , p.831

59 Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press. 1991, 129-130

60. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press. 1991, 130

61. Eds., Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press. 1991, P.134

62. Percy, *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1935, p.178

Canada (Figure 19). Those of other western European countries such as Austria, Belgium and Spain are astounding in comparison. In some cases, there are trends that as few as 15% of women attend secondary school and less than 5% attend University (Figure 20).⁶³

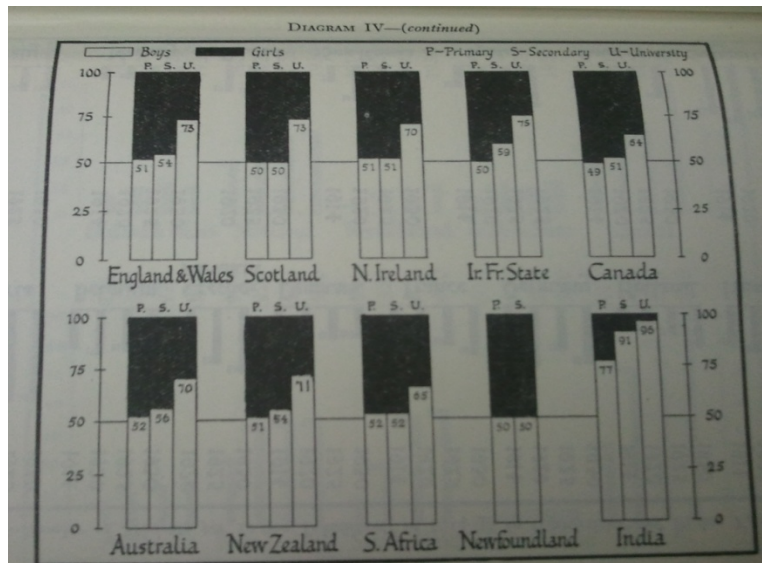


Figure 19

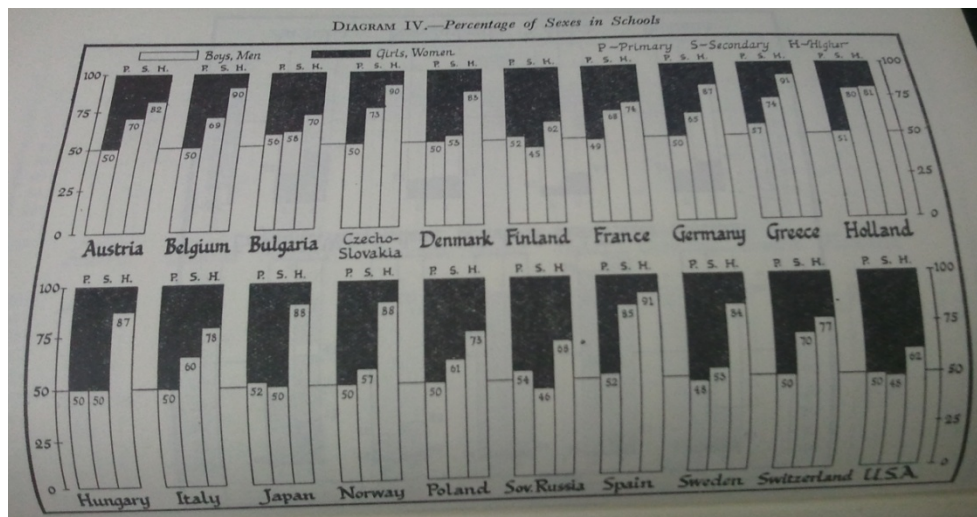


Figure 20

Education in Ontario was predominantly male-centric, which could explain why the University garb was indistinguishable between men and women in the early 20th century at Queens. The

63. *ibid.*

introduction of sports, or more specifically, basketball teams in the 1920 Queens Yearbook shows a renewed engendering of women from men; this proves that the University was not, by itself, a degendering or gender neutral institution. But, objective intellectuality may have been considered a gender neutralizer within higher education, and outside of the classroom this conditional gender neutrality was considered moot.

Universities became less of a male-centric institution as female enrollment increased, and yearbook pictures reveal that women who graduated from University became more concerned with the preservation of their youthful beauty during the 1930's. I have not found, in spite of research, motivations for the implementation of female University garbs, organizations/clubs, and a Dean of women. Women engendered in primary and secondary education may even have strived for ways to identify themselves as a growing population of students with the capacity to be both academically minded as well as feminine; women in previous decades appeared less feminine in their graduation pictures, as if the two were mutually exclusive.

Broader Social, Political, and Economic Context

Ideas about gender in first half of the 20th century were heavily impacted by the major events that took place at that time on both the local and world stage. The First and Second World Wars and the Great Depression were major military and economic conflicts that had huge social impacts at the time. The social movements of the period are also important to look at when considering gender in education since many changing ideas began with debates within and between these movements.

In the early 20th century different groups reacted to what were considered the social ills of the period, mainly prostitution and venereal disease, but also youth delinquency. The social purity movement was concerned with the moralism of society. The social hygiene movement was more

concerned with society's health particularly in regards to venereal disease.⁶⁴ Prostitutes were seen as the source of both moral and physical illness in society. Many groups viewed education of the young as a strategy to prevent youth ever becoming a prostitute or contracting a venereal disease. Others viewed juvenile delinquency as a major problem in and of itself, particularly later in the period. Delinquency and sexuality were rarely separated. Male delinquents were believed to reach the point of violence because of unrestrained sexual urges. Female delinquents were those who stepped out of the safe and innocent world of the home into the dangerous sexual world outside: prostitutes, girls who stayed out late and associated with men, or homeless girls.⁶⁵

Social reformers throughout North America tended to agree that education was a solution to these social ills; however they debated between home and school-based education. Ideally, sex was something which responsible mothers would educate their children about when they reached an appropriate age. However, many activists of the early 20th century worried about the success of mothers in this role.⁶⁶ Partially concerns rose over racist and classist beliefs that called into question the abilities of working class or immigrant mothers to have the desired moral knowledge to impart to their children.⁶⁷ Others were concerned about middle class mothers who were too busy to properly educate their young.⁶⁸ These reformers blamed mothers for society's ills. Reformers solution for this was publishing pamphlets and manuals for parents to help them in instructing their children. Some of these were geared towards the youth themselves and even available in schools.

64. Christabelle Sethna, "The Facts of Life: The Sex Instruction of Ontario Public School Children 1900-1950," (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1995).

65. Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997).

66. Christabelle Sethna, "Nature, Naturalist, Natural: Nature Study and the Teaching Of Biological Reproduction in Ontario, 1900-1930," *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 3.3 (1994).

67. Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*.

68. "Sex Hygiene in Schools Opposed," *The Toronto Sunday World*, 9 July 1914.

In the first half of the twentieth century, sex education often meant instruction about proper gender roles rather than information about the physical aspects of sex or the body. In Ontario sex instruction was made available to students at the beginning of the 20th century through a woman's group, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) who hired Arthur Beall to lecture to students. He did not discuss sex so much as proper behavior for young boys and girls, stressing control above all else, particularly for future men.⁶⁹ Unlike the WCTU, the social hygiene groups in Ontario did not support school sex instruction until WWII. During the war venereal disease rates amongst the soldier and civilian population rose so high that they felt further measures needed to be taken. By 1948 the Toronto School Board formed a panel of teachers who planned and debated a family life course for grade 7 and 8. The course was meant to instill in youth the ideal of a nuclear family unit as the best solution to the social ill of venereal disease. In the role of proper husband, father, and provider or wife and mother young men and women would be safe and build a healthy, proper society. Eventually the idea was abandoned in 1950 but the panic during the war was enough to inspire some thought over the issue and certain elements of the curriculum did reach students through other courses.⁷⁰

The World Wars were instrumental in shaping and maintain gender roles in this time period. Spikes in venereal disease during both wars caused moral panics, prompting an interest in educating the young to be morally sound members of society. A poster from World War II portrays a woman as the source of venereal disease and as much an enemy as the armies of the Axis (Figure 13).⁷¹ She is dressed in bright colours, make-up, and revealing clothing making herself a sex object rather than a demure housewife helping the war effort by knitting or temporarily working in a factory. WWI and WWII recruitment posters for men, however, work off of masculine ideals of strength, bravery, and protectiveness (Figure 14). It was a man's duty to go overseas, to follow the example of others who had bravely fought at

69. Sethna, "The Facts of Life."

70. Adams, *Trouble with Normal*.

71. *Venereal Disease Covers the Earth*, 1940, Poster, U.S. National Library of Medicine.

battles such as Ypres, also known as St. Julien.⁷² Propaganda posters from the period revealed deep rooted beliefs about genders. The ideal of a man was a brave soldier who went to war to support and honor his country. Women on the other hand, were a threat to the war effort if abandoned the feminine virtue of innocence.



Figure 22



Figure 23

Women began to work during the First World War outside of the home in large numbers, but the majority of them returned home willingly once the war was over. However, during the Great Depression many women had to get jobs alongside their men. Women volunteered as nurses during both wars. The wars were a period of the 20th century during which many women entered traditional male roles and some continued to push those boundaries after the wars were over. At the same time, men found themselves asked to continually uphold traditional masculine ideas. The war left no room for “sissies” who could not protect their country. The first half of the twentieth century was a period in history during which gender roles were both questioned and reaffirmed, but ultimately the education system turned towards traditional gender roles.

72. *Heroes of St. Julien and Festubert*, World War I, Poster, Canadian War Museum.

Relation or Significance of Study for Education in Ontario Today

The study of engendering in Ontario schools prior to 1959 has an impact on education today in many ways. Many feminist organizations are still trying to overcome the stigma of “traditional” female and male roles in society and are constantly seeking equality in all aspects of life. Gender equality education therefore often begins in the primary level and is present through to post-secondary education. Textbook producers and classroom discussion often focus on equality as an important topic and about the roles and relationships of men and women now compared to how they were treated in the past. By understanding the engendering process of the past, we can avoid gender-biased comments and instruction in school today. One drawback is that with the realization of the amount of tacit instructions children have received in the past about “proper gender roles” teachers may be tempted to overcompensate and try to eliminate gender entirely in the classroom or refuse to acknowledge any gender differences.

Understanding the trends of the past in education is also significant for the preparation of instruction in the future and understanding trends such as participation and enrollment. For example, university originally existed as a gender-neutral institution, but the assertion of the female gender became more prevalent with an increase in the realization that universities were no longer male-centric. Today, the number of female students in universities exceeds the number of males in universities in Anglo-Western society.⁷³ If this trend continues, then Universities may eventually become female centric institutions. Davies claims that trades are well paying and are typically favored by men, which makes university one of many possibilities for men to find a good career whereas women “don’t see any choice but to go to university.”⁷⁴ Social depictions of gender and the ratio of a gender in a university are what caused Queens to begin to acknowledge engendering in the beginning of the 20th century, and this begs the question about how universities might change if the male population becomes a minority.

73. Davies, *If X, Then Why the Gender Gap?*, website.

74. Ibid, pg. 27.

Conclusion

Engendering did exist towards women in all levels, Primary Secondary and in University. Though initially, it was projected that women were engendered into ‘traditional’ passive feminine roles, it is interesting to see the transition in behavior and how it was in the 1920s and 30s that represented the height of female passivity and tradition and not the earlier 1900s or late 1800s.

To our surprise, Queens was used as a representation of other Universities and found that gender neutrality existed more commonly at the start of the 20th century than in 1930. Social expectations that women belonged in the domestic sphere, and engendering in Primary and High School may have had the necessary impact to keep women out of Science and Medical programs at Queens and other universities.

A more accurate search of university enrollment for women in the 1930’s would lead to the discovery that many women were denied acceptance to programs leading to “breadwinning” jobs due to social, political, and economic concerns made by traditionalist women and veteran soldiers. This trend stems from the “funneling” of students at the secondary level, and voluntary enrollment may be due to the belief that women have a specific role in society, learned from primary education.

Though it was surprising to learn that the height of female passivity and male hegemonic ideals took place in the 1930s and was not a slow growth towards equality. For the most part, our hypothesis regarding the past engendering of women and men was correct and it was not until the 1960s when women began to aggressively assert their equality and suitability for previously male-dominated roles.

Annotated Bibliography

Secondary Sources

Adams, Mary Louise. *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1997.

Adams' work is invaluable in any research to do with youth and gender or sexuality in Canada. She discusses a later period than Sethna but still well within our time frame. Her work gave us great information on the debates over a sex instruction course in Toronto, rife with information about gendered ideas. It also leant great historical context in terms of ideas about the "youth problem" of the post war period.

Christie, Nancy. *Engendering the State: Family, Work, and Welfare in Canada*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2000.

Maternalizing women is still a strong phenomenon through the 1920's, 30's, and 40's according to Christie. The welfare state supported widows and mothers during the 1920's, not female education (176). Furthermore, any financial and social freedom that women had as a result of the first and second World War was quickly met with hostility following the end of Canada's conflict; public concern that women might prevent men from being the "breadwinner" complicated female independence outside of the domestic role (175). This secondary source provides insight about the kind of atmosphere that would impede female enrollment, especially in revered and profitable professions requiring higher education such as doctors.

Davies, Emily. *If X, then Y the gender gap?* The Journal. Accessed November 5, 2012.

<http://queensjournal.ca/story/2009-09-29/features/if-x-then-y-gender-gap/>

News article about an increase in female enrollment in Universities, including Queens. Common reasons for an increase in female enrollment are mentioned, such as career driven women breaking away from the domestic sphere.

Doucet, Andrea "It's Almost Like I Have a Job, But I Don't Get Paid: Fathers at Home Reconfiguring Work, Care, and Masculinity", *Gender Relations: In Global Perspective* ed. Nancy Cook. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2007.

This article is an extremely useful piece of academia, because it places the discussion of hegemonic masculinity and gender formation in today's context. Namely, it examines the way that gender is constructed within the public and private spheres, and how achievement and hierarchies of hegemony form masculinity and deter "effeminate" jobs or attributes.

Grant, Julia. "A "Real Boy" And Not A Sissy: Gender, Childhood, and Masculinity, 1890-1940," *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 37, No. 4. Oxford University Press, 2004.

This article is another insightful work, as it examines masculinity during the mid twentieth century as it begins to polarize itself (into hegemonic masculinity) in the post war mindset. Namely, it examines a lot of the practices and rituals of masculinity that we still employ today.

Heap, Ruby and Alison Prentice, *Gender and Education in Ontario*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press. 1991

This source was extremely useful as it was a series of articles written specifically to address the topic. It focused primarily on female teachers and education and the workforce. However it did address great concepts such as the institutionalization of Domestic Science Courses into the curriculum and the limiting of female post-secondary options. Though for the most part it focused on the late nineteenth century, hopefully I can find further sources to address the post 1930 trends and periods. This source covered both the trends in education as well as a description of many of the curriculum reforms that occurred within our focus time period.

Kehily, Mary Jane. *Sexuality, Gender and Schooling: Shifting agendas in Social Learning*. Great Britain: Routledge and Falmer, 2002.

Kehily's book is a critical and comprehensive guide to the ways that gender and sexuality is constructed in schools. It's critical discourse covers a range of theories and theorists, wherefore, it is a suitable source to examine the school system.

Klein, Susan Shurberg, "Why Should We Care About Gender and Sexuality in Education?" *Sexuality and The Curriculum: the Politics and Practices of Sexuality Education*, Ed. James T. Sears. New York: Teacher's College Press, 1992.

Another important article that outlines the ways that sexuality is taught in schools, and especially towards desexualizing education and tabooing, or bowdlerizing, important content that would otherwise lead to a comprehensive and inclusive experience.

Pascoe, C.J. *Dude You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*. Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2007.

Pascoe's book is the product of a study in a high school, where Pascoe himself has studied the various masculinities, hegemonies, and identities of an average secondary school. He spends the majority of his time examining masculinity, and it's repudiation rituals against effeminate men and homosexuality.

Sethna, Christabelle. "The Facts of Life: The Sex Instruction of Ontario Public School Children 1900-1950," PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1995.

Sethna's thesis focuses on sex instruction but provided a lot of relevant information on the social and educational movements of the time. It was particularly useful because it dealt directly with our period of study. Sex instruction necessarily includes a lot of information on gender and is a good place to look for what a society felt was appropriate for girls and what for boys.

-----, "Nature, Naturalist, Natural: Nature Study and the Teaching Of Biological Reproduction in Ontario, 1900-1930," *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 3.3 (1994): 191. Sethna's later article focused on an earlier period but her feminist slant in the paper makes it useful towards a study of approaches to gender in Ontario's early education. She discusses gender in the context of nature study and the brief reproduction instruction that went along with it.

Tolson, Andrew. *The Limits of Masculinity*. London: Tavistock Publications, 1977.

Tolson provides an important perspective of men, who write about their own experiences with masculinity. His book examines masculinity similarly to Kehily's critical discourse.

Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide, Second Edition*. New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2006.

Finally, Tyson's book on Critical Theory is a useful guide to critical and gender theory in terms of vocabulary, terminology, and theorists/theories.

Primary Sources

Fun with Dick and Jane, Toronto, Gage, 1950.

Fun with Dick and Jane is a great source as there are books published by the early 1930s to the late 1960s so they really help to demonstrate the change in representation over time and not just the differing opinions of differing publishers. Unfortunately there was only one edition of Dick and Jane available, therefore further research must be done to look at this change.

Hacker, Rose. *The Opposite Sex*. 2nd ed. London, Pan, 1957.

An educational resource in the form of a book which offers practical relationship advice for girls. A relationship with the opposite self was healthy and encouraged, as long as it was a non-physical relationship with the end aspiration of marriage if the two got along and formed a bond. There is lots of information about young women's and men's appropriate place in society during the 1950s.

Hilliard, Marion. "Woman's Greatest Hazard...Sex," *Chatelaine* Jan. 1956: 9+.

Magazine article found in the Ontario Archives which was used in classrooms in the 50s and later. Even though it is almost out of our period of study, it is representative of articles which would have been provided for students throughout the decade. The article's intended audience is married or soon to be married women, however it seems that teachers felt it would be useful for students to look at perhaps because the older ones would be on the path to marriage fairly soon.

Hornick, Philip A. *Longman's Spelling Mastery 2*, Don Mills, Longmans Green and co 1959.

Longman's spelling represents an interesting dichotomy where the comparisons between the genders are not direct but the boys and girls are almost always pictured separately. The source is from 1959 so it represents the beginning of the changes to the gender representations. It also has more disassociated vocabulary words so the interpretation of the text is based more on inference than on direct evidence.

Laurence H. Mayers, "Coming of Age," 1948, 2-6.

This is an article by a doctor that was made available as a resource for students to look at in family life or English type classes. The article offers practical advice for girls during their first period and was therefore most likely shown to younger girls, but this may not necessarily have been the case.

Lillian Gordon, *Dent's Speller Grade 2*, Ottawa, Alger Press Limited, 1959.

The Dent's speller was interesting. It is a grade two spelling textbook from 1959. It often asks for the child's interpretations of images and passages, therefore allowing students to use what they have been taught (tacitly or overtly) in their interpretation of the images.

Lord Eustace Percy et al. *The Yearbook of Education: 1932*. Great Britain: Hazell, Watson & Viney Ltd,

1932.

The Yearbook of Education briefly mentions Canada universities, but in that limited space it notes a growing increase in female enrollment. In particular, female enrollment had increased to 26.4 percent and was increasing in areas outside of professions (684).

McGuffey's Eclectic Primer. New York, American Book Company, 1909.

The primer is the introduction to spelling and grammar for primary school students. It is an excellent source because it contains several images, passages and quotations that are apt for analysis.

McGuffey's First Eclectic Reader. New York, American Book Company, 1920.

The first reader is a slightly more advanced reader as well as from 10 years after the publishing of the primer. It represents similar trends in female/male behaviour as the earlier primary but with more complicated texts for exploration.

Percy, Eustace. *The Yearbook of Education 1934*, London, Evans Brothers Limited, 1935.

The yearbook of education demonstrated many of the education trends leading up to its year of publication. It is from the British perspective and views Canada as a colony therefore the interpretation of facts and statistics are often done in direct comparison to their British counterparts. However it was still a valuable source to get the national statistics as well as some of the growing trends in Ontario when compared to other provinces. In order to expand this category I would like to look at more yearbooks inter-dispersed between 1920 and 1959 to get a fuller perspective of enrolment and vocational trends.

"Sex Hygiene in Schools Opposed." *The Toronto Sunday World*, 9 July 1914.

Article in a Toronto newspaper accessed through Google news archives. This is a good source to look at in order to see what some individuals in 1914 felt about sex instruction and the mother's role in the family. Without such an article, we may have felt that most of the concern over parenting was targeted at the lower classes, but this article rants specifically about "spoiled" middle class woman.

The Tricolor. The Senior Class of 1930, 1930.

This yearbook illustrates pictures of female and male graduates, and includes brief biographies for individual graduates with selected quotes. Includes graduates from arts and sciences with a complete lack of females in medicine and the sciences.

Yearbook. Ontario, The Graduating Year in Arts, 1911.

This yearbook illustrates pictures of female and male graduates, and includes brief biographies for individual graduates with selected quotes. This book is used to contrast any observations about engendering from illustrations in the Queens 1920 and 1930 yearbooks.

Yearbook. Kingston, Ontario; The Graduating Class in Arts, 1920.

This yearbook illustrates pictures of female and male graduates, and includes brief biographies for individual graduates with selected quotes. This book is used to contrast any observations about engendering from illustrations in the Queens 1910 and 1930 yearbooks.

Media Sources

Videos:

As Boys Grow. Video. Medical Arts Productions, 1957. *Prelinger Archives*.

This video was made specifically for boys and rarely, if ever, shown to girls. A coach gives boys advice on sex matters which are troubling them.

Story of Menstruation. Video. Walt Disney Productions, 1946. *YouTube*.

This was a great resource for looking at some of the ways in which girls were taught to act through the school system. The video does impart knowledge about puberty and the menstrual cycle, but also spends a lot of time advising girls on healthy ways to act and to keep their appearance and way of acting beautify and femininely at all times. Despite the fact it discusses a girl's first period, it was often shown too much older students and therefore perhaps the secondary messages were more important to the teachers since those girls would probably have already had their period for several years. The video was shown to mixed and all girl classes as well which is another thing to consider.

Images:

Heroes of St. Julien and Festubert. World War I, Poster, Canadian War Museum.

An example of a WWI recruitment poster printed in Montreal during the war found on the Canadian War Museum's website under resources. The poster encourages men to hold up masculine ideals and help their fellow men in the war effort.

Venereal Disease Covers the Earth. 1940, Poster, U.S. National Library of Medicine.

A poster from the Second World War which exemplifies some of the ideas held about female sexuality and the threat in that sexuality.