

BOYS' MASCULINITIES IN PLAY: IN DIALOGUE WITH ANTI-VIOLENCE
TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

by

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Abstract

Feminist and other scholars have begun to examine masculinity and boys' schooling, as well as the connection between masculinity and male violence. However, research that looks at anti-violence instructors' and their students' discussions about masculinity and male violence within the context of anti-violence education remains sparse. In addition, the limited work on boys' own views of masculinity has focused primarily on White boys' experiences with hegemonic masculinity. This latter research is also Australian, British, and American, with little in the Canadian context. The purpose of this study is to explore, through semi-structured interviews, the talk of a small multiethnic sample of anti-violence teachers, boys, and girls on masculinity and male violence within the context of their gender, culture, and "race." Twenty-six grade 10 students (12 male, 14 female) who completed a school-sponsored violence prevention program in two Canadian high schools and six (three male, three female) anti-violence instructors who taught the program were interviewed. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed for analysis. Drawing on a feminist poststructuralist framework in my analysis, four main themes emerged. First, many boys played hegemonic masculinity in certain situations due to their perception that it was necessary, while engaging in non-oppressive masculinities in other situations. Second, girls not only reinforced, albeit sometimes unintentionally, boys' hegemonic masculinity talk and practices, but many also struggled with challenging a dominant image of manhood. Third, "race" and culture were found to play a significant role in considerations of masculinity. Fourth, everyone's talk revealed the connection between hegemonic masculinity and male violence. The findings from this study suggest that drawing on feminist poststructuralism in developing a framework for conceptualizing masculinity would serve as a useful tool in teaching anti-violence programs to diverse groups of boys (and girls).

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Athena Wang, March 13, 2001

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my brother, Dr. John Chi-Lin Wang
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Thank you John for teaching me the virtue of patience and the enduring spirit of faith.

Chapter 1

Introduction

A pivotal experience in my doctoral program led me to pursue this exploratory study. Briefly, during my first year, I worked as a research assistant for my research advisor on her Young Fathers' Project. While observing my advisor conduct one of the focus group interviews, two of the themes that emerged from the young fathers' discussions piqued my interest in exploring boys' notions of masculinity. First, these fathers articulated and challenged dominant, negative stereotypes of young fathers that reflected beliefs about young men's masculinities. For instance, one of the stereotypes mentioned portrayed young fathers as being primarily interested in having sex with their girlfriends and becoming uninvolved (deadbeat dads) after their girlfriends either became pregnant with, or gave birth to, their children. Second, most of the fathers in this focus group seemed to adopt traditional views about gender relationships and bought into the breadwinner model of masculinity. Yet, a couple of them also subscribed to non-traditional gender notions, such as asserting that boys do not need to be raised with a male role-model in order to grow into "masculine" men. These two themes triggered me to think about how young men who were not fathers understood and constructed their masculinities and their relationships with dominant (hegemonic) masculinity.

All the young men in this focus group were White, except for one First Nations man. At the time of their interview, they lived in a small, conservative, and predominantly White community. However, I was interested in looking at how White and non-White boys from larger and culturally diverse neighborhoods (and who were not fathers) made sense of their manhood. Specifically, I considered whether there were cultural differences in a

multicultural group of boys' talk about masculinity, the extent to which these boys subscribed hegemonic masculinity, the nature of their (re)negotiations with this version of manhood, and how their interactions with girls influenced this relationship in diverse, multicultural school settings. After completing my work as her research assistant, my advisor presented me with an opportunity to interview Anastasia, the director of Anti-Violence Program, a Canadian-based anti-violence program that addressed hegemonic masculinity.¹ Interviewing Anastasia for my ethnography course inspired me to talk to male and female high school students who took AVP, as well as the AVP instructors, to get their views on masculinity, femininity, sexuality, and male violence.

Goals, Summary, and Significance of Thesis

My preliminary scan of the relevant literature unveiled several gaps, which I introduce now, but discuss in detail later in this chapter. First, feminist and other scholars have begun to examine the topics of masculinity and boys' schooling (see, e.g., Connell, 1996; Mac an Ghaill, 1994b; Nayak & Kehily, 1997), as well as the connection between masculinity and male violence (see, e.g., Jones & Mahony, 1989; Kaufman, 1993; Tuck, 1993). However, the research that looks at anti-violence instructors' and their students' discussions about masculinity and male violence within the context of anti-violence education remains sparse. Second, the limited work on boys' own views of masculinity has focused primarily on White boys' experiences. Third, this research is also Australian, British, and American, with little in the Canadian context.

"Boys' masculinities in play" aims to expand on this research by exploring the talk of a multiethnic sample of Canadian anti-violence instructors and their students within the context of AVP, a school-sponsored anti-violence program. Specifically, it looks at the ways that these teachers', boys' and girls' discussions on masculinity and male violence shed light

on many boys' precarious hegemonic masculine plays.² I use the word "play," which has multiple meanings, to refer to the ways that boys either played or felt they had to play hegemonic masculinity in certain situations. However, I examine boys' struggles with playing (read: speaking or practicing) hegemonic masculinity by dialoguing with teachers, boys and girls, rather than observing boys' actual masculinity plays. My use of the term "play" works well with feminist poststructuralist theory, which I use to frame my analysis of focus group and individual interviews with the students and individual interviews with the AVP instructors.³ For instance, feminist poststructuralism views young men (and women) as actively constructing their identities and thus understands boys' negotiations with hegemonic masculinity as both active and mutable. The examination of the talk of these teachers, boys, and girls is discussed within the context of their gender, culture, and "race."⁴ I also draw on my observations of the AVP gender-separate workshops in order to illustrate how this program serves as the overall context for everyone's discussions. The themes that emerge from my analysis unveil boys' complex negotiations with hegemonic masculinity and the connection between this form of masculinity and male violence.

My research is distinct from the current work on boys and masculinity in three major ways. First, I explore the talk of anti-violence teachers and their students within the context of an existing anti-violence program that draws on feminist notions of gender and power. Second, I incorporate "race" and culture into my analysis in an effort to understand how "race" and culture informed considerations of masculinity. Third, I draw on both feminist poststructuralist and non-White conceptualizations of masculinity and power in developing a framework that can be adapted to a range of secondary education programs, including anti-violence education. In so doing, I am able to sort through and discuss the challenges I encountered in trying to include "race" and culture in my analysis and in attempting to create

a non-oppressive model of masculinity. In addition to the themes that come out of my analysis, my thesis will also offer advice for those interested in building on my work.

Literature Review

My review of the literature draws primarily on feminist educational research and recent studies on masculinity, sexuality, and boys' schooling. This section provides a synopsis and critique of this literature, as well as of the scant work on male violence and secondary anti-violence programs. The questions and themes generated by this review frame my primary research question and its sub-questions.

Feminist and Other Recent Work on Masculinity and Boys' Schooling

The earlier feminist educational literature focuses mainly on topics such as femininity, girls' schooling and writing women into the educational curricula (Acker, 1987; Connell, 1989; Gaskell & McLaren, 1991; Weiner, 1985). For instance, sex-role socialization theory was crucial to liberal feminists' efforts to launch affirmative action programs for girls in the 1970s (see, e.g., Acker, 1987; Connell, 1996). But this theory produces a view of young women and men as passive recipients of socialization and gives little understanding of the ways they might actively resist or participate in the process of identity formation (see, e.g., Connell, 1996; Davies, 1993). Although this research makes visible gender-based inequalities, it neglects to examine power differences within groups of young women and men. This research also does not address the importance of providing boys with access to information and frameworks for thinking about gender and sexuality.

Although feminist and other social science scholars have begun to examine masculinity and boys' schooling in recent years, the research on young men's talk and practices around masculinity from their perspective is sparse (Frank, 1994, p. 46). Studies that look at boys' notions or practices of masculinity generally draw on "expert" accounts rather than the boys'

own points of view. This work, albeit significant, does not make visible many young men's active role in either challenging, or conforming to, hegemonic masculinity. One of the few exceptions to this work is Blye Frank's research on masculinities and boys' schooling. In Frank's interviews with a group of White and anglophone, middle- and upper-class boys from a Canadian high school, he found that these young men were aware of "the social power and social privilege exerted by virtue of being (or perceived to be) heterosexual young men" (Frank, 1994, p. 48). Frank later conducted two separate studies with a more diverse sample (e.g., students and teachers from different high schools and neighborhoods), but he did not address class or cultural differences in young men's notions and practices of masculinity. Nonetheless, the findings from all three studies revealed that many boys experienced a conscious, everyday pressure to be a "real" man, and that they saw their body, their (hetero)sexuality and sports as the three key sites for expressing their manhood (Frank, 1996, p. 116).

Studies that addressed non-White, especially Asian, boys' notions of masculinity are particularly scant. Mac an Ghail's research on sexuality, "race," and the schooling of boys in English secondary schools is particularly significant.⁵ In his interviews with 16- to 19-year-old South Asian and Afro Caribbean boys, he found that South Asian boys were generally seen as either "not real men" or "hard-working and ambitious" (Mac an Ghail, 1994b, p. 158). Afro Caribbean boys, however, were viewed as being "low [intellectual] ability, aggressive and anti-authority" (p. 159). Consequently, South Asian boys were more likely than Afro Caribbean boys to be attacked by White students. Further, straight boys who were deemed "feminine" and gay boys, regardless of their "race," were perceived to be a threat to many students' and teachers' efforts to maintain a dominant, heterosexist masculinity (p. 168). Mac an Ghail's sample focuses on South Asian boys' experiences and

does not include the experiences of Chinese, Filipino or Japanese boys. Yet, his research is important because it shows that boys not only actively constructed their masculinities, but that they were seen and treated differently based on the “racial” and gender stereotypes placed on them.

Frank’s work is particularly significant because he reveals young men’s struggles and negotiations around masculinity and heterosexuality from their perspective while expanding on the scant Canadian research on this topic. Mac an Ghaill’s research is important because it elaborates on the limited work on non-White ethnic boys’ own views of masculinity. Reviewing their work triggered me to consider the extent to which non-White ethnic boys struggled with the heterosexist masculinity discussed in both studies. Do Chinese, Japanese and Filipino boys, for example, also locate their body and sexuality as major sites for the expression of their masculinity?

Some scholars have also focused on how secondary schooling serves in part to perpetuate the hegemonic masculinity produced in the broader society and on the impact of these masculinizing practices on boys’ schooling (see, e.g., Connell, 1989; Davison, 1996; Solomon, 1992). For instance, in his 1989 study of Australian secondary schooling and masculinities, Connell found that by institutionalizing academic failure via competitive grading and streaming, urban and rural schools imposed differentiation upon the young men (Connell, 1989, p. 295). That is, young men perceived to be academic “successes” were given access to higher education and entry to professions, whereas many illiterate working-class boys were deemed “failures” and streamed into the lowest-level courses. Because the school represented a power in which the “failed” working-class boys could not participate, they generally sought power through non-academic sources such as sporting prowess, physical aggression, and sexual conquest. Although acting or talking sexually was seen as a

defiance of order and a form of trouble, these acts were also “a means of maintaining . . . the patriarchal order via the subordination of women and the exaltation of one’s maleness” (Connell, 1989, p. 294).

In a Canadian study, Solomon (1992) examined the culture of a group of working-class West Indian boys called “Jocks,” who attended a vocational high school in Toronto (p. 33). He found that not only did Black male (and female) students make up the majority in the lowest academic stream, but that Black male students predominated in sports (p. 76). The “Jocks” developed a (hetero)sexist macho masculinity in opposition to school authority and engaged in behaviors such as disrupting classroom sessions and playing their “ghetto blasters” at high volumes (pp. 42-48). Further, they communicated verbally to each other in a unique language form that included “Jamaican profanity,” which teachers either misinterpreted as they tried to understand these cultural phrases using Western definitions or perceived as “a reflection of these immigrant students’ unschooled background” (p. 38). These “Jocks” also disassociated themselves from students from other ethnic groups and treated girls and women—including their mothers—with a male chauvinist attitude (p. 59). Solomon (1992) reported that these boys attempted to “reassert the power taken away from them through racial subordination” by creating and practicing a macho masculinity that was rooted in West Indian cultural forms that paralleled those of Western patriarchy (p. 61).

These two studies illustrate how Canadian and Australian secondary education has perpetuated societal masculinizing practices by marginalizing non-White ethnic and working class boys from academic rewards. In particular, they show that class and cultural differences exist among certain groups of boys who are disadvantaged in terms of their non-White ethnicity, lower socio-economic status, or both. They also demonstrate that diverse understandings of masculinity could be found within a given cultural setting, such as any

neighborhood, peer group, or socio-economic class (Connell, 1996, p. 208). Equally significant is their shared finding that although these young men were marginalized by virtue of their "race" or class, they also actively sought ways to practice masculinities—such as sporting prowess or heterosexual conquest—that would simultaneously place them within the dominant patriarchal culture.

Feminist and other scholars have also pointed out the need to provide boys with access to alternative, non-oppressive understandings of masculinity (see, e.g., Connell, 1996; Davies, 1993; Jackson & Salisbury, 1996). For instance, in their article on boys' schooling, Jackson and Salisbury (1996) describe a session that they had with a group of 11 ninth grade boys from an English working-class comprehensive school. These boys had been meeting as part of a personal and social education school program, discussing relationship issues among boys and between boys and girls (p. 110). The authors found that some boys believed that a group of men whistling at a woman or a man touching-up a woman in a crowded train were acceptable male behaviors. Yet most of them also agreed, "though grudgingly," that staring at women was a form of displaying power over women and thus inappropriate (pp. 111-2). In addition, several boys admitted to having harassed girls in the past but reported that after this session, they would now consider the consequences of their actions. Jackson and Salisbury argue that with "the demise of the traditional model of the male breadwinner, in regular work, bringing home a 'family wage,' the old incentives to become a respectable, working man—status, pride, security—are collapsing" (p. 104). They assert that many boys today are left with an aggressive, often violent, masculinity that not only hurts other boys and girls, but also fuels their own underachievement in academics.

Jackson and Salisbury's 1996 article is particularly important as it draws attention to the need to offer young men alternative, non-destructive notions of being male. Yet, they

do not address the problematic nature of the traditional male breadwinner model, which serves to maintain many men's economic control over many women. Further, although the authors mention working-class and Black boys in their critique of secondary education's perpetuation of traditional notions of masculinity, they do not include Asian boys' experiences. Their article prompted me to consider the extent to which the White, Black, and Asian boys in my study linked sources of male power (such as economic or physical dominance) with masculinity. It also led me to contemplate how these boys' relationships with girls might have influenced their (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity.

Research on Sexuality and Boys' Schooling

Recent work on sexuality and boys' schooling has revealed the society-wide homophobia perpetuated by many students and teachers in secondary schools (Connell, 1996; Frank, 1994; Mac an Ghaill, 1994a, 1996; Nayak & Kehily, 1996). This research has also shown the inadequacy of sexuality education programs in North American schools (Fine, 1988; Frank, 1992/93; Irvine, 1994; Sapon-Shevin & Goodman, 1992; Sears, 1992; Trudell, 1993). For instance, Nayak and Kehily (1996) examined the ways homophobia was expressed by young men in schools by making problematic the ways that many teachers and students normalized homophobic talk and practices (p. 212). Their findings revealed that in many English secondary schools, an aggressive male heterosexuality was "the focal point around which other sexual behaviours [were] located [and this heterosexuality's] source of power [was] its taken-for-grantedness [and] the fact that it [went] unexplained [and] unchallenged" (p. 224).

Other studies found that topics such as female sexual desire, sexual identity and birth control negotiation were generally absent from school-based sex education programs (see, e.g., Fine, 1988; Mac an Ghaill, 1996; Noon, 1997; Trudell, 1993). The message for young

men in these classes appeared to be “don’t get girls in trouble,” without addressing traditional attitudes toward masculinity, which valued the importance of male heterosexuality and sexual conquest. For instance, in a study conducted by Pleck and his colleagues (1993), boys who held these traditional attitudes about being male were found to have more sexual partners and less favorable attitudes toward condom use. These boys also used condoms less, had less intimate relationships with their female partners, and had a greater belief that relationships between men and women were antagonistic (p. 26). Furthermore, in a Canadian study, Frank (1992/93) found that many adolescent males felt sex education reinforced rather than problematized heterosexual masculinity. Silencing discussions about non-hegemonic masculinities, alternative sexualities and sexuality issues such as birth control negotiation, secondary sex education denied young men (and women) access to this information and sent the message that such talk was taboo (Mac an Ghaill, 1996; Phillips & Fine, 1992; Sears, 1992).

More recent studies have also begun to explore issues such as the cultural appropriateness of sex education (see, e.g., Ward & Taylor, 1994) and the merits of gender-separate versus coeducational class settings (see, e.g., Noon, 1997). For instance, Ward and Taylor (1994) reported that Asian American students thought sex education classes excluded issues such as the feelings and passions that “affect sexual decision making and that occur within a context framed by cultural values and beliefs” (p. 58). These students also reported that they did not trust White instructors to teach them about sexuality because they felt these teachers lacked sensitivity to cultural issues. Black, Haitian and Latino students, for example, were aware that many assumptions made about them were based on myths held about their cultural group (e.g., African-American boys are sexually aggressive and irresponsible) (Ward & Taylor, 1994). The findings from this study suggest that American sexuality education

classes privileges a White, middle-class view of sexuality and thus fails to include discussions that do not stigmatize non-White cultural constructions of sexuality. Given that AVP served as the backdrop for my study, I will discuss in chapter 4 the extent that this program addressed non-White ethnic cultural understandings of gender relations and whether their ideas of gender resonated with boys from non-White ethnic backgrounds.

In another study, Noon (1997) found, among other things, that “students expressed mixed views regarding whether sexuality education should be taught in a coeducational setting” (p. 100). Though students reported wanting to learn more about the views of the other gender, both females and males were also concerned that “the ‘know it all’ attitudes of male students and their inappropriate laughing, joking and asking ‘not too serious’ questions would disrupt the class environment” (p. 100). Noon presented findings from other studies that suggested coeducational class settings may serve in part to advantage males while disadvantaging females. Yet, the findings of her study indicate that perhaps a combination of both same sex and coeducational sex education classes would be most helpful for students. Noon’s discussion about the importance of coeducational versus same sex class settings led me to discuss, in the final chapter of this thesis, the pros and cons of teaching boys violence prevention in gender-separate versus co-ed workshops.

Masculinity, Male Violence, and Secondary Anti-Violence Programs

As stated earlier, some feminist and other scholars have examined dominant notions of masculinity and their connection to adult men’s physical and sexual violence against women (see, e.g., Brownmiller, 1976; Dworkin, 1974; Hills, 1995). This research found that the construction of a dominant masculinity that valued and reinforced male heterosexual prowess and male physical dominance was linked to certain males’ acts of violence toward females.

In recent years, American and Canadian researchers have started to look at the problem of violence in teenage relationships, focusing primarily on young men's violence against young women (see, e.g., Bagley, Bolitho, & Bertrand, 1997; Larkin, 1994).⁶ This research is significant mainly because it makes public many girls' experiences with a continuum of male violence, ranging from verbal insults to rape. This work also reveals the need to provide girls access to anti-violence education. However, the lack of attention to boys places the burden of responsibility and change disproportionately on the shoulders of girls. This research also does not address the relationship between sources of male power, which not all boys subscribe to, and male violence. Nevertheless, these findings do have implications for anti-violence education, such as recognizing the need to include boys in discussions about gender, power, and violence.

Since the early 1990s, many violence prevention programs aimed at girls and boys have been developed and some even integrated into the school curriculum, such as merging sections on anger management and conflict resolution with classes in family life skills or drama (Wolfe, Wekerle, & Scott, 1997). Other programs focus on intervention and are employed to teach students communication and/or conflict management skills after a problem has already taken place (see, e.g., MacDougall, 1993; Wolfe et al., 1997). In addition, certain types of anti-violence programs provide on-going services, "such as a youth hotline that can help youth prevent crimes," whereas others are one-time events, such as educational video presentations, workshops or conferences (MacDougall, 1993, p. 23). These varieties of violence prevention programs remain popular, but the effectiveness of some programs vary, and that of others has been largely untested (see, e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 1996). For instance, intervention programs involve treatment of certain individuals targeted as "the carrier of the problem," which are "more likely to lead to feelings of blame

or rejection of the [persons] with the problem” (Wolfe et al., 1997, p. 27). These programs fail to address violence within the context of interpersonal relationships. In addition, most “skills-based” violence prevention programs focus on training teachers and students “to help people develop impulse control, communication skills, problem solving and anger management” (p. 131). In these programs, students are “given the responsibility of mediating conflicts that occur among their peers while at school” after they complete their training (p. 131). Teaching students concrete skills that might help them safely deal with potentially violent situations is crucial. Yet, failure to challenge the hegemonic discourses of masculinity that underpin many boys’ abusive talk and practices serves in part to understand male violence as an individual, rather than a systemic, problem. As I will illustrate in chapter 4, AVP is a violence prevention program that attempts to challenge dominant notions of masculinity (and femininity) within the context of a patriarchal society that encourages various forms of male power, such as physical dominance.

There is also evidence that some secondary anti-violence programs have begun to address concepts such as power relations, hegemonic masculinity and sex-role socialization (see, e.g., Macdougall, 1993). Discussions about power relations address the patriarchal nature of our society, wherein economic dominance and social power are seen as the privilege of White, middle-class men. These programs also acknowledge the problematic nature of the construction of a dominant masculinity that encourages sexism and sexual aggressiveness (see, e.g., Novogrodsky, Kaufman, Holland, & Wells, 1992). For instance, some sexual health educators in Toronto have started to incorporate discussions about alternative, non-hegemonic models of masculinity that recognize the “nurturing side of men” in their workshops with teens (Sex Talk, April 1996, p. 3). Yet, their use of sex-role language in talk about gender differences produces the view that young women and men are

the passive recipients of gender socialization. The nature of these discussions give little understanding of the detail of secondary school life, such as young men drawing on multiple discourses of masculinity (Connell, 1996, pp. 211-212). To counter this trend, I will draw on a feminist poststructuralist analysis in my examination of the talk of teachers, boys and girls on masculinity because this framework recognizes that boys are active agents of socialization who draw on multiple discourses. This theory, which I discuss further in chapter 3, also understands that “race,” culture, gender, and class work together to inform considerations of masculinity.

Research Questions

My primary research question and its sub-questions have been drawn from the various themes that emerge from my review of the relevant literature. These questions also stem in part from feminist poststructuralist theory, which explores secondary schooling as one key site for the (re)production of a dominant oppressive notion of masculinity. My primary research question asks, “What does teachers’, boys’ and girls’ talk on masculinity and male violence in the context of a high-school sponsored anti-violence program reveal about boys’ negotiations with hegemonic masculinity?” Sub-research questions are listed as follows: (1) How do AVP instructors conceive of masculinity? Do their conceptions challenge or reinforce hegemonic masculinity? (2) What does boys’ talk on masculinity reveal about the ways that “race” and culture mediate understandings of masculinity? Moreover, what, if any, are these young men’s notions of non-oppressive masculinity? (3) In what ways does teenage girls’ talk on masculinity shed light on boys’ negotiations with hegemonic masculinity? (4) What, if anything, does the teachers’, boys’ and girls’ talk on masculinity reveal about the link between masculinity and male violence?

Overview of Thesis Chapters

Chapters 1 through 4 set the tone and foundation for this study. The introduction identifies the goals and significance of my thesis, presents a review of the relevant literature, and lays out the research questions that emerged from this critique. Chapter 2 looks at the methods I used and why I used them, the research setting, the sample, my observations of interview dynamics, and my positionalities.⁷ Chapter 3 provides a review of feminist notions of gender and power in part to situate the feminist beliefs of AVP. In this chapter, I also compare and contrast sex-role socialization theory and feminist poststructuralism and illustrate the relevance of the latter theory to my analysis. Also included in chapter 3 is a discussion of several important concepts that are employed throughout this thesis, as well as a discussion about the challenges I faced in trying to both incorporate “race” and culture in my analysis and create a non-oppressive masculinity. In chapter 4, I examine the AVP teachers’ talk on boys, masculinity and male violence, which reveals the intentions, beliefs and teaching methods of this program. I distinguish between this program’s conception of a non-oppressive masculinity and that of my own to illustrate how I would like to build on this program’s work. Chapter 5 explores the boys’ talk on masculinity, sexuality, and male violence. The goal of this chapter is twofold. First, it demonstrates how these boys’ discussions about masculinity unveil their own struggles with hegemonic masculinity. Second, it shows how the talk of these boys reveals not only the link between masculinity and male violence, but also the part “race” and culture play in considerations of masculinity. Chapter 6 gives the girls’ perspectives on boys, masculinity, sexuality, and male violence, which provide an important part of the context in which many of the boys in my study talk about masculinity. These girls’ discussions show that not only do boys struggle with hegemonic masculinity, but that many girls will often reinforce certain boys’ hegemonic

masculine plays. In Chapter 7, I present a summary and discussion of the findings—in particular their implications for teaching diverse groups of teenage boys violence prevention. This thesis concludes with an analysis of the ways that a framework that draws on feminist poststructuralist and non-White notions of masculinity can be used in schools to interrogate hegemonic discourses on masculinity and to create and sustain non-oppressive discourses on masculinity. It is my hope that this thesis will offer those studying or working with boys deeper insight into the complexity of boys' relationships with hegemonic masculinity, as shared in both their own voice and those of girls and anti-violence teachers.

Notes

¹ Anti-Violence Program, or AVP, is a pseudonym for an existing Canadian anti-violence program. High schools (and some elementary schools) sponsor this program across Canada and abroad.

² For the sake of simplicity, I use male violence, boys' violence, and men's violence interchangeably to indicate the perpetrator of violence as any male aged 13 and above. This male-to-male or male-to-female violence occurs on a continuum that ranges from verbal insults to sexual violence.

³ Nayak and Kehily (1996) and Gilbert and Gilbert (1998) also use the metaphor "play" in their discussions about masculinities and boys' schooling. For instance, Nayak and Kehily (1996) draw on this metaphor to refer to boys who feel pressured to "play straight" (play heterosexual), whereas Gilbert and Gilbert (1998) refer to it mainly in terms of how boys play sports and video games and "play at masculinities" (pp. 55-81).

⁴ The term "race" is generally used to refer to differences between White and non-White ethnic individuals and suggests that a biological difference exist between different groups of humans. Fine and Weis (1996, pp. 256-7) argue that "race is a social construction that is so deeply confounded with racism that it has enormous power in people's lives...and the ways in which most groups 'other'." For the purpose of my study, I will use the term "race" in quotes to indicate the problems with using the term "race" to refer to individuals from different White and non-White ethnic backgrounds when they are all from the human race. In chapter 3, I detail my struggle with how to bring "race" into my analysis.

⁵ The boys who participated in Mac an Ghaill's study were of South Asian descent (e.g., from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, etc.). Other researchers use the term Asian to refer to a broad range of Asian cultural backgrounds—grouping people from Pakistan and East India with those from Mainland China and Taiwan. For the sake of simplicity, I use the term Asian to refer to only Chinese (Hong Kong, Mainland China and Taiwan), Filipino and Japanese people. I use White to refer to a range of White ethnic groups (including White South African and French Canadian).

⁶ I use the words boys and young men (girls and young women) interchangeably to refer to teenagers aged 13 to 19. However, the students in my study were between 15 and 16 years old at the time of their interviews.

⁷ According to Rhoads (1997), "positionality refers to the social position of the knower...[and that] questions of positionality are epistemological in nature in that they relate to how the knowledge is produced and how the knower comes to an understanding of knowledge" (p. 10). The growing concern with positioning oneself in one's research stems in part from recent feminist epistemological explorations that have unveiled the position of the "knower" as connected to both the acquisition and construction of knowledge (p. 10). In the research relationship, the researcher's social positionalities affect to some degree who chooses to talk to her, the nature of their interviews, and how she interprets this information.

Chapter 2

Qualitative Research Methods

My use of qualitative research methods for exploring the talk of teachers and students was based on the premise that individuals' discussions about masculinity and male violence would reveal the ways that they actively drew on multiple discourses to formulate their conceptions of masculinity. The purpose of my study was also exploratory in nature and my sample size intended to be modest. Specifically, I conducted focus group and individual interviews with students who took AVP, an existing school-sponsored anti-violence program, and individual interviews with this program's instructors to obtain their views about boys, masculinity, and male violence. I observed this program's gender-separate workshops in order to glean its teaching methods and content. In this chapter, I describe the research setting and the sample before addressing my rationale for employing interviewing and observation research methods in my study. I also summarize my observation of students' focus group and individual interview dynamics, how I made use of my observations of the AVP gender-separate workshops, and my follow-up contacts with students and instructors. Given the growing concern over the power imbalances between researchers and research participants and how this affects the research process, I conclude with a brief discussion about my positionalities.

The Research Setting

The school research setting was composed of the Blue Shores school district, Ocean View Secondary, and Beach Secondary.¹ The demographic information on this school district and these two schools that I provide here is based on verbal accounts given by the school contacts, as well as records provided by the district secretary treasurer.²

Blue Shores was a suburban school district situated within a western Canadian province. At the time of this study, it had a total population of approximately 24,567 students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12. Of these, about 11,223 (46%) were enrolled in secondary schools (grades 8 through 12).

Ocean View Secondary and Beach Secondary were located in close proximity to each other and in a predominantly middle-class and culturally diverse area of Blue Shores. The average income of parents of the students who resided in the neighborhoods served by both schools was \$65,000, with about 86% of students coming from dual parent families and 14% from single parent households. These neighborhoods were made up of approximately 50% White people and 50% visible minorities. Of the 50% of visible minorities, 43% were of Asian ancestry and 5% were classified as other, which included individuals of Black (African or Caribbean), Latin American, West Indian, East Indian, or First Nations heritage.³

The student body at Ocean View was predominantly Asian, with 78% of students from Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, Korean, or Filipino cultures. Twenty percent of students were White, while 2% were classified as other. The student body at Beach was predominantly Asian, with 70% of students from Chinese, Taiwanese, Japanese, Korean, or Filipino cultures. Twenty-five percent of students were White, while 5% were classified as other.

Sampling

AVP was selected for my study because I received an opportunity to interview the director, Anastasia, for an ethnography course assignment. I chose this particular course assignment because AVP related to my broad research interest at that time. A year later, I approached Anastasia about my study and asked if she would allow me to interview her again, as well as her instructors and the students who took her program. Anastasia granted

me access to her program and recommended Beach Secondary and Ocean View Secondary, because these two schools were not only supportive of her program, but of graduate student research. These schools were also selected for my study because they would offer diversity in terms of culture in their student sample. After making contact with the school district principal, whose authority covered both schools, I submitted a brief description of my study—including its purpose, methods and significance—and received consent. Next, I met with the school contacts and received permission to meet with the students who had either taken or would be taking AVP. Beach Secondary allowed me to meet with the physical education students both before and after they took the AVP gender-separate sessions. Before they took the program, I introduced my study and distributed student and parental letters of permission. After students took the program, I asked whether anyone was interested in volunteering to be in my study. In total, eight male and eight female students volunteered and, within a week, returned the signed consents to me (see appendix G for sample). They kept copies for their records.

By contrast, the four male and six female students from Ocean View Secondary were selected for me by the school contact (the head of the Physical Education department). These students had taken AVP three months earlier, but I chose to interview them because I was interested in how much, if anything, they remembered about the AVP's teachings. After I met with the contact person at Ocean View about my research, he selected six boys and six girls based on my criteria. Specifically, I told him that, if possible, I would like to interview students who fit four criteria. First, students had to come from different cultures, particularly Asian (such as Chinese and Taiwanese) and Caucasian students from different countries who were either Canadian-born or landed immigrants. Second, they did not know each other too well (e.g., students who were not close friends). Third, they did not dominate

conversations. Four, these students were not in conflict with each other (e.g., who have dated or are currently dating the same person). He also gave these students (and the principal) descriptions of my study and student and parental letters of permission, which he returned to me signed. Students kept copies for their records. Signed consents were received for all six boys, but two of them did not show up for the boys' focus group interview and were not contacted again.

I interviewed AVP instructors after completing my interviews with all students. However, I met with two male and two female instructors about my study right before I observed the female instructors teach the girls' session at Beach Secondary. They read and signed the letters of permission I gave them and kept a copy for their records. I told them that I would arrange individual interviews with them after I had completed my interviews with students. Nick, who was not teaching these sessions, was already familiar with my work because I had interviewed him for my ethnography course a year earlier. I called him to talk about my study and to set up an interview. I gave him his consent form during our interview.

To sum up, my study draws on interviews with 12 male and 14 female grade 10 students who participated in AVP and three male and three female program instructors. My study mainly focused on the 12 boys' interviews, but the interviews with the anti-violence instructors and female students were analyzed because they shed additional light on the context in which the boys discussed masculinity and male violence.

Male Students' Profiles

Of the 12 male students, one was American Caribbean, one was Indo Canadian, four were Asian, and six were White. All students were proficient in English, although two of the Asian boys were recent immigrants to Canada, with English being their second language.

Thus, the two recent immigrants may not have articulated their thoughts as clearly as did the others. Of the Asian boys, two lived with their mothers who were housewives, while their fathers worked abroad; one lived with both parents with his mother working at home as a housewife and his father earning the family income. The fourth Asian boy lived with his parents, who both worked outside the home. Of the White boys, four came from dual income families, one came from a two-parent family where the father earned the money and the mother stayed at home, and one was being raised by a single working mother. The American Caribbean and Indo Canadian boys lived with their single working mothers. The demographic information on these boys is summarized in Table 1 and is meant to provide the reader with a further glimpse of these boys.

Table 1: Demographics for Male Students

| Pseudonym ⁴ | Age | Culture and Nationality | Language(s) spoken | Parents' work status | Lives with |
|------------------------|-----|---------------------------|--------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Antonio | 15 | White Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and sister |
| Arlo | 16 | White South African | English | Father is employed full-time; mother is housewife | Parents and brothers |
| Dante | 15 | White Canadian American | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and brother |
| Floyd | 16 | Indo Canadian | English | Employed full-time | Mother, 2 brothers |
| JKM | 15 | White Canadian | English | Employed full-time | Mother, sister and brother |
| Julio | 15 | Chinese Filipino Canadian | English | Father employed full-time; mother is housewife | Parents and sister |
| Kolo | 16 | Taiwanese | Mandarin, English | Father works abroad; mother is housewife | Mother and brother |
| Montel | 15 | American Caribbean | English | Employed full-time | Mother |
| Pazooki | 15 | White Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and sister |
| Polo | 15 | Japanese Canadian | Japanese, English | Both parents work full-time | Parents, sister and grandmother |
| Tom | 16 | Chinese Canadian | Cantonese, English | Father works abroad; mother is housewife | Mother and grandmother |
| Willy | 15 | White Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and brother |

Female Students' Profiles

The girls' interviews were analyzed because they shed light on the 12 boys' negotiations with hegemonic masculinity. Table 2 provides their demographic information.

Table 2: Demographics for Female Students

| Pseudonym | Age | Culture and Nationality | Language(s) spoken | Parents' work status | Lives with |
|-----------|-----|-------------------------|------------------------------|--|---|
| Alicia | 15 | White Canadian | English | Mother works full-time | Mother and sister |
| Carrie | 15 | Chinese Canadian | Cantonese, English | Mother works full-time | Parents and brother |
| Colleen | 15 | Filipino Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents |
| Hope | 15 | Greek Canadian | Greek, English | Father works full-time | Parents, sister and brother |
| Jodie | 15 | White Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and sister |
| Joy | 15 | Chinese Filipino | Filipino, Chinese, English | Both parents and aunt work full-time | Parents, 2 sisters, 1 brother and aunt |
| Julie | 16 | Chinese Greek Canadian | English, Cantonese | Mother works full-time | Mother |
| Leigha | 15 | White Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and sister |
| Monica | 15 | Canadian Hispanic | English | Both parents and step-mother work full-time | Parents and step-mother |
| Nicole | 15 | White Canadian | English | Mother works full-time | Mother, sister and brother |
| PJ | 15 | Taiwanese Canadian | English, Mandarin, Taiwanese | Father works full-time; Mother helps with his work | Parents, 2 brothers and sister |
| Sandy | 16 | Chinese | Mandarin, English | Father works full-time | Parents and brother |
| Summer | 15 | White Canadian | English | Both parents work full-time | Parents and sister |
| Winnie | 15 | Chinese | Cantonese, English | Both guardians work full-time | Guardians, friend and her oldest sister |

AVP Instructors' Profiles

The director of this program and four of her instructors were White, with one male instructor being of Arab Canadian ancestry. Anastasia and Amber devoted their time fully to AVP, whereas one female and the three male instructors were involved in other projects and educational pursuits. Anastasia's early training and teaching experience in martial arts influenced her to create AVP. Amber's involvement in this program stemmed from her university coursework in women's studies, focusing on issues related to sexual harassment and violence against women. Julia held a BA in women's studies and worked as a research and resource coordinator at an anti-family violence agency. She planned to pursue her MA after working for several more years. Anastasia wrote the boys' program, but Nick, who was pursuing a doctorate in Education, co-developed the order and style of delivery of the boys' workshop. He had been involved for many years in the men's movement and men's groups, counseling and educating primarily adult males about the problems with, and consequences of, engaging in sexism and men's violence against women. Ben held a Masters' degree in cultural studies with a special focus on the portrayal of men in the media and was working as an education director at a film institute. Pat was a freelance writer, and he taught for both AVP and several other arts and theatre organizations. All the instructors appeared to draw on feminist ideas about gender and power and were either married or in long-term heterosexual relationships at the time of the interviews. Table 3 summarizes the demographic information for the AVP director and her instructors.

Table 3: Demographics for AVP Director and Instructors

| Pseudonym | Age | Culture and Nationality | Language(s) spoken |
|-----------|-----|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Anastasia | 48 | French Canadian | English, French |
| Amber | 35 | White Canadian | English |
| Ben | 32 | White Canadian | English |
| Julia | 25 | White Canadian | English, French |
| Nick | 47 | White American Canadian | English and a little Spanish |
| Pat | 31 | Arab Canadian | English |

Interviewing

Qualitative interviewing allows the researcher to obtain detailed information about specific topics from interviewees and serves as a valuable research tool given its versatility (see, e.g., Rubin & Rubin, 1995). There are three major types of interviews. Unstructured interviewing involves having an informal conversation with the research participant, whereas structured interviewing requires the use of standardized open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviewing, on the other hand, draws on both unstructured interviewing methods—such as minimum control over interviewees—and structured interviews—such as the use of an interview guide that contains the questions and issues the interviewer wants to cover in a specific order (see, e.g., Reinhartz, 1992).

For both my focus group and individual interviews, I decided to use a semi-structured interview technique because of its versatility. The interview guides I developed listed a series of questions to be explored with students during the focus group and one-on-one interview

and with teachers during their individual interviews. These questions were based primarily on themes that emerged from my literature review and reflected my research questions (see appendices A - D for all interview schedules). By using this method of interviewing, I was able to guide interviewees' discussions so that our interaction stayed focused and to offer them a chance to share their thoughts and experiences.

My focus group and individual interviews with all students were conducted during the last month of their 10th grade school year (May 12 - June 10, 1998) mainly because AVP's gender-separate programs was carried out at Beach Secondary at the beginning of May. Interviewing the students who volunteered to talk to me soon afterwards meant that they would have the program's teachings fresh in their minds. The focus group and individual interviews with students were conducted at designated classrooms located at both schools after receiving signed student and parental consents. After finishing all student interviews, I interviewed the instructors either at their place of work or in their homes. My decision to conduct the teachers' interviews after I interviewed all the students was based in part on my desire to avoid having my interviews with students influenced by the teachers' views toward or experiences with working with these students. All interviews lasted between 45 minute and 1 hour and were completed by the end of June 1998. Students' questions centered on their own definitions of and views toward masculinity, femininity and sexuality, and their attitudes about relationships among women and men. The interview questions for instructors were also semi-structured and asked about their observations about boys' experiences with masculinity and the instructors' conceptions of what it means to be a man.

Some researchers stated that the ideal researcher-participant scenario included informal interaction between the researcher and, in this case, students outside of the interview so that a degree of rapport with each interviewee could be established (see, e.g.,

Rubin & Rubin, 1995). However, given the time restraints (toward the end of the school year), this was not possible. Nevertheless, I did try to establish some level of comfort with participants by doing two main things. First, I started each interview with a brief informal chat with the students about how their day was going before leading into a short review about the interview process. I also explained that anything they said in the interview was confidential and that they had the choice to ask me to pause or stop the tape recorder at anytime.⁵ After starting the interview, I began with the general questions about their experiences with AVP and gradually moved onto more specific questions about their views on gender, sexuality and male violence. The order of the more detailed questions varied depending on the information given by interviewees. For instance, on several occasions in my individual interviews with boys, their talk revealed their desire to discuss the negative stereotypes of teenage boys. In these cases, I let them share their views and experiences while I listened and probed for further information.

Through the course of my interviewing experience, I discovered that unexpected comments made by the male (and female) students served to enhance and challenge my initial research questions. For example, during the individual interview with Julio, one of the Asian boys, he volunteered his distinction between Chinese masculinity scripts versus Western expectations of manhood. This disclosure prompted me to explore more deeply Asian notions of masculinity in my analysis.

By employing probes and follow-up questions, I was able to encourage all students to expand on their responses. For example, some students gave brief responses to the question, "What image comes to your mind when you hear the word masculine or masculinity?" In these instances, I would use a probe such as, "Is this the image you see in society or is this your ideal picture of maleness"? Once a student had completed his or her

thought, I moved on to a related question. When students got off topic and started sharing things unrelated to the interview questions and objectives, which were rare occurrences, I allowed the student to talk a bit, then redirected them to the interview question. Other times, it was clear that a student either did not have a response to a question or simply did not want to talk about it. In the latter case, I would ask if they would like some time to think about their answer now or if they wanted me to come back to this question. However, if a student seemed reluctant to talk about an issue, then I would proceed to the next question. It was important to me that students had comfortable interview experiences and did not feel pressured to talk about things they found uncomfortable.

After each interview, I asked students if they wanted to talk about anything that I did not ask them or if they had any questions for me about my study. I also invited them to offer any suggestions about my interview process or questions. Some remarkable suggestions made by students include, but are not limited to the following suggestions: One student recommended alternate locations for interviewing students, such as at a coffee shop, whereas another student suggested building rapport with students by interacting with students a few times before doing an interview.

Focus Group Interview

A focus group is made up of, ideally, 6 to 12 individuals who share similar characteristics and is meant to produce qualitative data in the form of a transcript of the participants' comments (see, e.g., Duffy, 1993; Krueger, 1988; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Focus groups facilitate an open exchange of interviewees' views, opinions, feelings, or reactions and are generally meant to be exploratory in nature (Krueger, 1988). The participants may be purposefully or randomly selected from the group they represent (e.g., teenagers). Krueger (1988) recommends that focus group participants should not know each other, but

this is not always possible or desirable. For instance, the boys and the girls in my study were either classmates or friends who belonged to the same classes that took AVP. Since this program was the overall context for my study, it was necessary that I interviewed only those students who had taken the program.

The methods I used for my focus group interviews were drawn primarily from the works of Krueger (1988) and Stewart and Shamdasani (1990). For example, Stewart and Shamdasani (1990) assert that providing participants with a table gives them a sense of personal space, a place to rest their arms and hands and a protective barrier between each other. Therefore, I set up either a table or desks that formed a table for my participants. There are also two general approaches to doing focus groups. With the "directive approach," the interviewer exercises tight control over the discussion, whereas with the "nondirective approach," the interviewer interjects only when necessary to keep the discussion on topic (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990, p. 89). The directive method allows for a more detailed coverage of the interview questions but "at the cost of the group synergy and spontaneity" (p. 89). The nondirective method gives participants more freedom to talk and interact, but it risks allowing them to ignore specific interview questions. I chose to use a combination of both styles because I wanted some control over the discussion while giving everyone a chance to share their views.

Focus groups serve as a particularly useful tool for researchers who want to explore a specific issue from the point of view of a specific social group (see, e.g., Krueger, 1988; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990) such as teenage boys (see Appendix A for focus group interview schedule). I anticipated that my interviews with the 12 teenage boys would help identify: (1) what they perceived as hegemonic masculinity, (2) their negotiations with hegemonic masculinity, and (3) how they conceptualized masculinity. This type of interview

takes little time to set up and the actual interview generally lasts only one to two hours. The only material equipment needed to carry out this form of research are a tape recorder, tape cassettes and a quiet place in which to conduct the interview.

However, Rubin and Rubin (1995) argue that the interviewer cannot establish a deep relationship with her participants in focus groups. Since there is not enough time to build trust with the participants, the researcher must settle for creating a comfortable and productive environment in which participants can talk. I wanted all students to have an opportunity to share their stories, but some might not have felt comfortable sharing certain experiences or views in front of their peers. Others might have spoken in certain ways to “fit in” with their peers. For these reasons, I decided that it was necessary to conduct one individual interview with each student after the completion of the focus group interviews.

Individual Interview

Individual interviewing allows one-on-one, face-to-face interaction between the researcher and her participants. Conducting individual interviews, particularly in combination with focus group interviews, provides the researcher the opportunity to get an accurate account of the thoughts and experiences from the interviewee’s own point of view. The combination of the focus group and individual interviews with students also gave me a chance to understand their disclosures within the context of both a private, one-on-one interview and a group setting with their same-sexed friends and peers. For example, the discussions of the boys in my study occurred within the context of (a) the AVP teachings, (b) the girls in my study who were either their classmates or friends, and (c) these boys’ one-on-one interviews. In their focus groups, the boys’ disclosures were also influenced by their relationship to the other focus group members and each individual’s talk and behavior.

Boys' Focus Group and Individual Interview Dynamics

There were some differences among the focus group and individual interview dynamics. The eight boys at Beach Secondary volunteered to talk to me and were all classmates in the PE class that took the boys' workshop, whereas the four boys from Ocean View Secondary were selected for my study. In the Beach Secondary focus group, five boys played on their school's competitive sports teams and three boys each had his own separate groups of friends. In the Ocean View Secondary focus group, two boys were classmates and the other two were friends. The Beach focus group size was also twice the size of the Ocean View focus group, which translated into more work for me in terms of mediating discussion so that everyone would get a chance to talk. Everyone in the Ocean View boys' focus group was talkative, but each person allowed whoever had the floor to finish his thoughts before interjecting their opinions. Montel and Pazooki appeared relaxed and offered responses that were detailed. JKM talked very fast, whereas Polo shared more as the interview progressed. The primary difference in their individual interviews was that each boy elaborated more on different issues related to masculinity and dating. Pazooki also expressed interest in my research both during the focus group and individual interviews.

On the other hand, in the Beach focus group, Floyd seemed to be performing for the other boys and me. He often laughed or joked around or would interrupt others when they were talking. Arlo, Julio, and Dante, in particular, appeared to ignore Floyd's performance. Whenever Floyd started to dominate the conversation or was interrupting others, I would either say it's time to get to some of the other boys (then give someone else the floor) or remind him that no interrupting was allowed. His performance diminished part way through the interview. Dante, Julio, Arlo, and Kolo remained comfortable sharing their opinions, but Antonio, Willy, and Tom seemed to speak mainly when I offered them the floor. At the

end of this interview, I reminded everyone that if they did not feel comfortable sharing something or did not get a chance to say something in the group, they would have another opportunity in their individual interviews.

In addition, on occasion, a couple of boys whispered their views to each other while a boy was sharing his opinion to the group. In these instances, I allowed the boy who was talking to finish, then asked the other boys to share their private conversation with the group. These interruptions by peers generally reflected these boys' desire to also share their opinion, albeit while talking over another participant's disclosure.

The individual interviews with these eight boys differed from the focus group interview in two main ways. First, Floyd's demeanor and how he answered questions in his individual interview suggested that he was being more honest, particularly in his discussions about heterosexuality and homophobia. Yet, it was also possible that he noticed my seriousness during our focus group interview and decided to play the interview game accordingly. Whether Floyd was doing it through group performance or a serious, one-on-one session, his talk in both contexts did reveal his beliefs about hegemonic masculinity.

Second, all boys seemed to elaborate their observations of boys' experiences with hegemonic masculinity and there did not appear to be the showing off that occurred during the focus group interview. Tom, Kolo, and Willy were also more talkative during our individual interviews. In addition, at the end of our interview, Arlo disclosed that he was glad I was doing both group and individual interviews. He believed that people said things to "show off or because of peer pressure" in a group setting, whereas they were more likely to give "honest answers in an individual interview." He also added that he believed the girls' group would be "slower to start." It appeared that Arlo was right, on both counts.

Girls' Focus Group and Individual Interview Dynamics

The two girls' focus groups resembled that of the Ocean View boys' focus group interview because the girls also took turns sharing their thoughts and opinions. Although the girls were, as Arlo predicted, "slower to start" discussions, they were very respectful of each other's disclosures. The eight girls at Beach Secondary who volunteered to talk to me were all classmates in the PE class that took the girls' workshop, whereas the six girls from Ocean View Secondary were selected for my study. In the Beach focus group, two girls were friends, whereas four other girls seemed to hang out together. Two other girls each had her separate group of friends. Everyone participated in discussions, but three girls seemed to be shy, though sharing a few things on occasion. In their individual interviews, two of these three girls were noticeably more talkative, whereas one girl remained reticent.

In the Ocean View focus group, five girls appeared to hang out together, whereas one girl had her own separate group of friends. Three girls were the most verbal, but other girls also shared their thoughts. One girl became restless toward the end of the focus group interview and started looking at the clock and around the room. I invited her to talk a couple of times after this but realized that, for her, the interview was running on the long side. In their individual interviews, everyone offered more elaborate responses, including the girl who "tuned out" during our focus group interview.

Observation and Fieldwork

Following each interview with students and instructors, my observations of the gender-separate programs, and my follow-up meetings with students, I recorded my field notes either by tape recording or handwriting, or doing both. Both the taped and written notes were transcribed and were meant to facilitate my analysis and interpretation of the data. The transcribed journal contained my perceptions of the students, instructors and the

interview experience and the process of collecting this data, as well as things that I may have missed and would have liked to address in future interviews. For instance, in drawing on my fieldnotes and memory of my fieldwork experience in my analysis of each person's talk, I found that the students who volunteered (versus students who were selected for my study) expressed more interest in my research. This record captured my observation of focus group and individual interview dynamics and the content and teaching methods of AVP. In this section, I discuss how and why I used observation in my analysis and my follow-up contacts with students and instructors.

Observation

Marshall and Rossman (1995) assert that even in interview studies, "observation plays an important role as the researcher notes body language and affect in addition to the person's words" (p. 80). Through observation, the researcher learns more about the meanings attached to research participants' discussions and behaviors. In addition to the observations I made during focus group and individual interviews, I observed the girls' workshops carried out at Beach Secondary because AVP provided the context in which the girls talked about boys, masculinity, and male violence. I also observed one of the male instructors teach the boys' workshop, albeit to a different group of boys than the ones who participated in my study.⁶ For the girls' program, I was able to take notes on all three female instructors' teaching styles. That is, one female instructor taught a full three-hour workshop to one group of girls, whereas another female instructor taught the first two hours of her class, then had the program director come in to teach the last hour of physical self-defence. The content of the girls' and boys' workshops is discussed in chapter 4.

For my observations of the girls' workshop carried out at Beach Secondary and the boys' session taught to young adult males (17-24 years old), I focused my note taking on the

teaching methods and content of the programs and, whenever possible, student-student and student-instructor dynamics. I chose to record the teaching methods because each instructor's style was unique and varied depending on the group they were teaching. Jotting down a summary description of the sessions' content also gave me a chance to compare what was taught on that particular day to the general format intended for the gender-separate workshops. For instance, Anastasia pointed out that the program's content sometimes varied depending on the amount of time they had and the group they were teaching. These observations, when used with the teachers' interviews, shed light on how the teachers conceived of masculinity and how they used this in their teachings. When I observed Ben instruct the boys' session to a group of young men who had experienced living on the streets, I noticed that Ben tailored the boys' workshop for schools to fit the needs of these youths, such as addressing street or gang violence. But he also drew on certain principles of the boys' session, such as demonstrating AVP's non-violent form of assertiveness. This group of young men challenged Ben on the usefulness of AVP's concepts to their lives, but they also appeared open to what Ben had to say and to trying out these techniques.

When I observed the girls' workshop at Beach Secondary, I was also able to write down some general comments about the student-instructor and student-peer dynamics. I decided to do this in order to get a sense of the extent to which AVP's teachings resonated with some students. My observations revealed that each instructor had her own unique teaching style, which helped to draw girls into the workshop exercises and discussions. For instance, Amber had very animated facial and body movements that she combined with her articulate delivery of the AVP concepts. Her energetic and theatrical style of teaching and acting out role-plays made the role-plays look fun and inviting to the students, many of whom eagerly participated. Julie presented herself in a more casual manner and sat on the

gym floor with her female students when she talked and presented the role-plays. She seemed to be able to create a low-key, comfortable setting for the girls in her class. Anastasia was charismatic in how she taught girls physical self-defence skills. She was highly energetic, articulate and theatrical, which many of the students clearly found empowering. These observations were particularly useful in my analysis because when used with the teachers' and students' interviews, I was able to achieve a deeper understanding about AVP's teachings and the ways that some students might have taken up their language or concepts. For instance, in each class, there were always a few students, particularly non-White students, who seemed to have a hard time following discussions. A couple of the instructors pointed out in their interviews that given the pace at which the programs were taught, recent immigrant or ESL students were likely to find it challenging in terms of language barriers. I return to this discussion in chapter 4.

Follow-up contacts with students and teachers

I met with all students twice after these interviews, once in March 1999 and once in June 2000, in order to give them updates on my research and materials from my study. During my first follow-up meetings with students, I met with all students from both schools in two separate groups. At this time, I updated them on my research project and gave them an opportunity to ask any questions that they might have for me. I also gave the school contacts a copy of the interim research report that I drafted for (and had given to) the school district principal and the AVP staff. At my second and final follow-up meetings, I met with the students at Ocean View as a group for 10 minutes during their lunch period because the new school contact was concerned about taking these students out of their classes.⁷ These students were each given a memo thanking them for their participation in my study, updating my research status, and listing quotes from their interviews. The memo indicated

that they could edit their quotes and either email or mail these changes to me, but I also told them they had this option when meeting with them. None of these students made any changes to their quotes. Students also received their own copy of my interim report.

On the other hand, I was able to meet with all the students at Beach Secondary in a group for 20 minutes first, then each individually for 15-20 minutes. During our one-on-one follow-up meetings, I gave them their personalized memos with their quotes listed, as well as their own copy of my interim report. Students were given a chance to read over the information and make any changes. Only two girls and three boys made minor edits, but two of these boys added clarifications to a couple of their quotes. These two boys also seemed very curious about my thesis, which I told them would be available in the university library after I graduated.

Follow-up contacts with instructors were conducted via email and mail due to their busy teaching and work schedules. Everyone received a personalized memo that listed his or her quotes. A copy of my interim summary report and a draft of the AVP chapter were sent to the Program director for her review. No one made any requests for changes to their quotes, but Anastasia clarified and elaborated on my analysis of AVP. It is important to note here that although Anastasia thought I “encapsulated the work [of AVP] well,” she also expressed some disagreement with aspects of my discussion of AVP. I incorporated all of Anastasia’s suggestions in order to provide a clearer and fuller description of AVP’s content and intentions and the often challenging, conservative school climate in which the AVP instructors carried out their teachings. However, I retained my analysis of the similarities between AVP’s language and Robert Bly’s “warrior” concept, albeit noting Anastasia’s assertion that she neither agreed with, nor drew on, “Bly’s teachings” (see chapter 4). Deciding to keep this piece was particularly difficult for me given my immense respect for

Anastasia and her instructors and appreciation for her giving me access to her program; and I did not wish to do anything that might jeopardize our research-participant relationship. For instance, Anastasia might have perceived my presentation of this section as an attempt to critically evaluate her program, when in actuality, I included it as part of an illustration of AVP (in its entirety) as the context for (rather than the focus of) my study. Nonetheless, I believe that doing this ensures that I am being fair, both in acknowledging that Bly's idea of the "warrior" exists and its resemblance to aspects of AVP's teaching and in validating Anastasia's desire to be disassociated from Bly's work.

I gave a copy of my thesis to AVP at the completion of my study. Doing the follow-up contacts in this manner gave all participants an opportunity to be part of my research process; it also helped secure my data accuracy and to make any modifications where appropriate.

Data Analysis

Initially, my plan was to code and analyze my data manually before selecting the most appropriate computer program to manage my data. However, as my manual coding and analysis progressed, I found that using a computer analysis program would not be necessary. Computer packages used to analyze interview data are particularly helpful in pinpointing the frequencies of words or phrases used by interviewees, as well as themes and sub-themes. Some researchers, however, are concerned that these programs take the comments out of their context and leave out the richness of the data (see, e.g., Duffy, 1993). In my study, for instance, many of the students did not always respond in complete thoughts or clearly articulated phrases. Their comments often included "mall speak" terms that, tallied without the context, would have very little meaning.⁸ By manually coding and recoding the students'

responses, I was able to interpret selected quotes in their entirety and within the context of the discussions that proceeded and followed the responses.

Some researchers have addressed the appropriate processes for analyzing interview data. For example, it has been recommended that demographic data or fieldnotes be summarized, and focus group and individual interviews be transcribed, as soon as possible after the interview sessions (see, e.g., Duffy, 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Yet, given the number of interviews I did over a short period of time (two months), I opted to spend my time between interviews typing up my fieldnotes for each interviewee and preparing for the next interview. The boys' interviews were transcribed verbatim by a private and reputable agency within three months of their interviews due to time constraints. I then reviewed them carefully against the taped interviews to ensure accuracy. The girls' and instructors' interviews were transcribed verbatim by me within a year of their interviews. After the transcription was completed, I reviewed the transcripts, then made notes drawn from my memory and fieldnotes in the margins.

These transcripts were then coded and segments were assigned to five major categories reflecting the interview questions: (1a) AVP Experience (students) OR (1b) Experience teaching AVP (teachers), (2) Gender, (3) Sexuality, (4) Male Violence and (5) Relationships. Next, the interviewees' quotes were recoded and reassigned more specific sub-categories listed under the five major headings. These sub-categories reflected recurring themes in everyone's transcripts. For instance, the sub-categories for all students: (1a) AVP Experience: Liked about AVP, Disliked about AVP. Co-ed versus Gender Separate anti-violence classes, Suggestions for AVP. (2) Gender: Dominant images masculinity, Dominant images femininity, Personal view of masculinity, Personal view of femininity.

(3) Sexuality: Heterosexuality, Homophobia, Stereotypes of teenage boys, Stereotypes of teenage girls. (4) Violence: Male-to-female violence, Male-to-male violence. (5) Relationships: friendships, dating relationships. When some students' responses fell into more than one category, I would place the responses in both categories. For instance, a few of the boys discussed the importance for young men to establish their heterosexuality to protect them from gay bashing. These responses were grouped under "heterosexuality" and "homophobia." Marshall and Rossman (1995) caution researchers about not letting classifications lead their analysis and to instead use these categories to trigger themes that will assist them with their exploratory efforts (p. 115). I coded and recoded the interviewees' transcripts following the suggestions made by Marshall and Rossman.

Positionality

Although I do not seek to make a methodological contribution in this thesis, I do acknowledge the growing concern, particularly amongst feminists, with positioning oneself in one's research. As an Asian woman interviewing White and non-White teenage boys and girls, I recognize that my occupying different social positions from my interviewees created unique nuances in the research relationship because I was unable to conduct in several cases "same sex" or "same culture" or "same age" interviews. Sharing a gender identity with one's interviewee might lessen the power differentials in the research relationship (see, e.g., Olson & Shope, 1991). However, there are power inequalities inherent in the interviewer-interviewee relationship, such as the interviewer's position of authority during and after the research process (see, e.g., Rhoads, 1997; Wolf, 1996). For instance, the female instructors, students, and I shared the same gender identity, which seemed to help create trust in our research relationship. Yet, I ultimately had the authority to analyze their discussions

according to my views, albeit taking into account any comments they might have offered during my follow-up contacts with them.

My positionalities of “race,” gender, and age were the most relevant to my study because they were the most visible and might have influenced which students chose to talk to me, how they perceived me and what they chose to share. For example, boys who volunteered to be in my study might have disclosed more about issues related to their masculinity had they spoken with a male interviewer. A couple of White boys, in their individual interviews, appeared to make an effort to discuss sexuality-related issues in a more formal, respectful manner than perhaps they would have had they been talking with a male interviewer. Yet, I speculate that some boys might have either felt more at ease talking with a woman than with a man about these things or simply had no preference. For instance, some boys might communicate more openly about sensitive issues with females because they find it difficult to do so with male (e.g., due to a closer relationship with mother or a concern about being seen as “acting like a girl” if talking about their feelings with other guys). One of the boys in my study had a close relationship with his (single-parent) mother and appeared to be quite at ease talking with girls and women about a range of topics.

All students seemed comfortable with my disclosure at the beginning of the focus group and individual interviews that I was neither working for AVP nor evaluating their workshops, but rather doing my own research. Some students might have felt less threatened sharing certain things with me because I was not associated with AVP or with their school. Yet, it was unclear how most of the boys and girls saw me, other than my being an outsider, given that most of them did not speak to this directly. The eight girls who volunteered said that they wanted to speak out about their thoughts and opinions because they enjoyed taking the girls’ workshop and were thus willing to be part of my study. Also,

the 6 girls and 4 boys who were selected by the Ocean View school contact agreed to talk to me because they liked their experience with AVP and because they wanted to get community service credits for participating in my study.⁹ Although all 12 boys were able to entertain non-hegemonic notions of manhood, the boys who volunteered appeared to do so mainly because they enjoyed taking the boys' workshop and wanted to voice their opinions. For example, a few White and non-White ethnic boys stated that they wanted an opportunity to challenge the negative stereotypes of teenage boys. Therefore, it is probable that boys who chose to talk to me and their subsequent disclosures had less to do with my positionalities and more to do with their desire to speak out and with their openness to alternative understandings of masculinity.

Nonetheless, a few students' discussions did shed light on how some of them might have perceived me based on my positionalities. For instance, one of the Asian boys shared openly with me in our individual interview that he preferred talking to Asian adults because he felt many White teachers and adults could not relate to, or understand, Asian kids' experiences with racism. Another Asian boy, who was fairly reticent during our individual interview, responded to my after-interview question, "How can adults talk with teenagers in a way that's comfortable for the teenagers?" with the suggestion that the interviewer should meet with the students a few times before conducting their interviews. Although none of the girls indicated how they saw me based on my positionalities, several White and Asian girls shared that they believed it was important to get boys' and girls' perspectives on things, and were thus happy I was interviewing both sexes. These students' disclosures suggested that for some students, a shared positionality in the research relationship meant sharing commonalities and bonding and was therefore important. Their discussions also indicated that other students valued getting a chance to establish a rapport and relationship with the

interviewees before their interviews over having a shared gender or “racial” identity. In chapter 3, I address the difficulties I experienced in trying to incorporate “race” into my analysis.

Notes

¹ The names of the school district and the two schools where I conducted my research are pseudonyms.

² The Blue Shores School District secretary and treasurer provided me with two volumes that contained the historical and projected enrollment for all the schools in its district, as well as the demographics for each school catchment (geographic area that represents the formal attendance boundary of a school). This information was gleaned from the Family Allowance data. He also gave me Census data (1996) for each of the elementary schools under the jurisdiction of the two secondary schools involved in my study. Through this information, I was able to compile the demographics for the student body and neighborhoods served at both secondary schools.

³ Please see endnote #4 in chapter 1 regarding how I have used the term Asian.

⁴ All the students and the program instructors chose their own pseudonyms.

⁵ All students were also informed that the exception to the latter rule is if they disclosed to me any physical or sexual abuse, which I would be required by law to report to a parent, teacher or social worker.

⁶ AVP had a mandate to not permit males to view the girls’ workshop and vice versa. So, instead of observing a boys’ workshop for the schools, I was permitted to sit in on what was originally intended to be a coed session tailored for young men and women (aged 17 to 24) from an alternative program. But when none of the female participants showed up for the coed session, the male instructor decided to allow the alternative program’s female group leader and myself to stay and observe. Rather than doing a coed program, he chose to teach a version of the boy’s workshop aimed at alternative male youths. Although an exception was made in my case, the gender-separate observer rule remains intact.

Also, when using the term “alternative” within the context of the male youths in the “alternative program” who participated in AVP’s boys’ workshop, I was referring to youths considered at risk and youths who have had street life experience. AVP instructors tailored their workshops for these “alternative” youths by addressing issues related to street life—including brawling and gang type violence.

⁷ The initial contact person for Ocean View selected my Ocean View sample and arranged my focus group and individual interviews with these students. However, when he took a position at another school, my follow-up meetings with students were arranged with the second school contact for Ocean View.

⁸ The term "mall speak" refers to the current speech patterns exhibited by many youths in North America. Such dialogue includes frequent use of words such as "like" or "you know" in young people's discussions with each other. (H. Wang, personal communication, April 30, 1999).

⁹ At Ocean View Secondary, all students were required to obtain a certain number of community credits, generally earned through community service work. The four boys and six girls from Ocean View each received a community credit, granted by their school, for participating in my study.

Chapter 3

Theorizing Masculinities

Feminist and other scholars assert that masculinity is a socially constructed phenomenon (see, e.g., Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Segal, 1990). How it is defined specifically is determined in part by the moment in history in which it lives. “Hegemonic” signifies a position of cultural authority and power, not total dominance. Most accounts of masculinity revolve around the concept of “hegemony,” which, used in this context, refers to a group’s assertion of one form of masculinity over others (Connell, 1995; Kimmel, 1994; Segal, 1990). The type of masculinity that is practiced by the dominant group within a given culture is thus called “hegemonic masculinity” (see, e.g., Cheng, 1999; Connell, 1996). Hegemonic masculinity is the most visible, but other discourses on masculinity exist concurrently so that there are multiple masculinities that any given boy can draw on in his efforts to develop his identity both as an individual and as a male. Connell (1996) claims that although hegemonic notions of masculinity may be what many boys aspire to achieve, they are not necessarily practiced by a majority of boys.

The current construction of hegemonic or dominant masculinity in Western society includes, but is not limited to, a rejection of homosexuality, a need to demonstrate heterosexuality—often through displays of misogyny or homophobia—and marginalization of non-White masculinities. Many (pro)feminist and other scholars have pointed out the consequences for many women and men of subscribing to these and other negative aspects of hegemonic masculinity (see, e.g., Frank, 1996; Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Nayak & Kehily, 1996). Yet, other scholars have also noted some positive aspects of dominant masculinity, such as initiative, leadership, and strength (see, e.g., Levant, 1995). As I

illustrate in chapter 5, the boys in my study, in their (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity, still primarily adhered to dominant notions of gender, albeit with reservations and with some awareness of the limitations.

There are various feminist approaches to understanding the construction of masculinity and how this phenomenon is understood and practiced by boys and men. These include, but are not limited to, liberal, radical and socialist feminist notions of what it means to be a man. In this chapter, I examine the current construction of dominant masculinity from a feminist poststructuralist perspective. I begin by outlining the way the three main strands of feminist theory—namely, liberal, radical, and socialist—make sense of masculinity. This serves in part to locate and identify AVP's feminism. I also discuss feminist poststructuralism and contrast it with socialization theory to define terms such as socialization, talk, and discourse, and to illustrate the ways that feminist poststructuralism enhances my analysis of participants' discussions of masculinity and male violence. In addition, I distinguish between hegemonic and non-oppressive masculinities and address the relationship between heterosexism, homophobia, and sexism within the context of feminist poststructuralism so that the use of these concepts in this thesis is clear. Finally, I discuss the challenges I experienced in trying to both develop a non-oppressive model of masculinity and to incorporate "race" and culture into my analysis.

(Pro)Feminist Education Programs

Feminist and other scholars have recently begun to look at, and distinguish between, (pro)feminist versus "masculinist" education programs (Lingard & Douglas, 1999). (Pro)feminist education programs that address topics such as sexuality, for instance, challenge hegemonic masculinity, whereas "masculinist" programs discuss sexuality within the context of reinforcing traditional gender scripts. In their discussion on various

educational programs for boys in schools, Lingard and Douglas argue that (pro)feminists tend to “reject traditional and conservative masculine norms, seeking to redefine masculinity in a manner responsive to feminist critiques of men and masculinity” (p. 134). For instance, (pro)feminist programs see boys’ struggles with masculinity as consequences of the dominant societal belief that masculinity has to be earned, whereas masculinist programs focus primarily on the needs of boys without taking into consideration the context of boys’ relationships with girls. The authors believe that many boys’ experiences with emotional distance are due to the expectation that they, as males, must prove their manhood in terms of “the harmful standards of hegemonic masculine expressions” (p. 134). (Pro)feminist programs are more likely than masculinist programs to address boys’ relationship with hegemonic masculinity and to understand their struggles within the context of their relationships with girls and other boys. However, (pro)feminist programs that address issues such as homophobia and violence against women “have been more ad hoc, usually sponsored by individual schools and often as ‘one-off’ sessions within the broader framework of personal development and sex education” (Lingard & Douglas, 1999, p. 131).

Given that there are different strands of feminism, each with its own particular take on masculinity, it is important to distinguish between these various feminist approaches. In this section, I discuss the three major branches of Western feminist theory—liberal, radical, and socialist—and the recent feminist poststructuralist approach, in terms of the ways they conceptualize masculinity and power. This discussion helps to situate, understand, and distinguish AVP’s feminism, which serves as the backdrop for the talk of the boys (and girls) in my study. It also suggests that a feminist poststructuralist approach to exploring boys’ hegemonic masculinity plays is the most desirable of the feminist strategies, for my purposes,

because it takes into account the complexities of boys' relationships with hegemonic masculinity.

Liberal Feminism, Masculinity, and "Power In"

Connell (1996) asserts that "the feminist movement was the first to place gender issues on educational agendas" (p. 228). For the past two decades, second-wave feminism has been trying to unsettle dominant notions about masculinity and femininity and traditional gender relations within both educational institutions and the larger society. Sex-role socialization theory, for example, was crucial to liberal feminism's efforts to launch affirmative action programs for girls in the 1970s (Connell, 1996).

According to liberal feminism, girls and boys are socialized into traditional attitudes and orientations that limit their futures unnecessarily into sex-stereotyped work and family roles. At the same time, socialization encourages patterns of interpersonal relationships between females and males that disadvantage females, who are placed in a position of dependency, and also males, who are forced to suppress their emotional and caring potential (Acker, 1987, p. 424). These gender stereotypes are promoted through agents of socialization such as families, schools, and mass media. For liberal feminists, "power is seen to be located in institutional roles, rules and structures and those who occupy the appropriate locations are seen to exercise power over their subordinates through the capacity to make and effect the rules" (Kenway, Willis, Blackmore, & Rennie, 1998, p. 99). Given that they understand power as being in these locations, they believe that breaking down traditional gender stereotypes can eliminate the inequalities between the sexes. An example would be to give girls better training and role models that are more varied in order to ensure them equal access to jobs traditionally accessible mainly to boys.

Yet this theory does not locate sex roles within actual power dynamics that exist among men and women, or any other concrete social relations such as class (see, e.g., Connell, 1987). For example, advocates of liberal feminism would try to increase the number of women in positions of leadership in politics or business, but they neglect to question the social hierarchies that created these positions. Therefore, liberal feminism does not confront the economic and political structures of contemporary capitalist societies, which help to sustain hegemonic notions of gender. This approach also does not explain the actual demands made on men and the emotional and political dynamics of masculinity. That is, it fails to examine why the majority of men not only endure their expected place in life, but display resistance to change (see, e.g., Connell, 1987). Liberal feminism's reliance on the concepts of socialization and sex roles assumes that a consistent and uniform set of social expectations about men and women universally is shared within any society. Although sex-role language remains the most popular way to talk about gender in schools, it is inadequate as a conceptual framework for addressing the complex relations between females and males (see, e.g., Connell, 1996; Davies, 1993).

Radical Feminism, Masculinity, and "Power Over"

Radical feminism emerged initially in the United States from feminists who were resistant to the sexism they experienced in their daily lives and who wanted to respond to the Marxist theory by which many feminists were inspired (Jagger & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 120). The new radical feminists argue that the sexism of traditional Marxist theory minimizes women's oppression and struggles.

Central to radical feminist theory is the insistence that gender oppression is the oldest and most serious form of exploitation and predates and underlies all other forms of oppression, including those of "race" and class (Acker, 1987; Jagger & Rothenberg, 1993).

Radical feminists argue that women are oppressed because men have power over them and that changing women's marginalized situations requires contesting and breaking this male power over females (Connell, 1987, p. 34). For these feminists, power is perceived to be a negative thing that symbolizes "dominance, mastery, oppression, hierarchy and exclusion by individual men and/or by 'masculine' institutions" (Kenway et al., 1998, p. 99). For example, many radical feminists view the societal practices through which men control women's bodies, especially women's procreative and sexual capacities, as the source of women's oppression. Others emphasize male control of women's sexuality through institutions such as prostitution, pornography, and heterosexuality itself (Jagger & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 121). For instance, many of these feminists claim that the male heterosexuality rampant in Western society often celebrates a form of masculinity in which "aggression, violence and [misogyny were] central" (Mahony, 1989, p. 158). All men are seen as wanting to prove their manhood by objectifying women—whom men consider as their inferiors. This contempt for women is understood as being rooted in the history of how to be male (Mahony, 1989), and boys and men who fail to live up to this heterosexual masculinity are often made outcasts by other males.

Many radical feminists believe that all women are vulnerable to the possibility of being victims of sexual violence and that all men are potential rapists. They argue that male violence occurs along a continuum of sexual violence, ranging from the everyday abuse of women in pornographic images, sexist jokes and sexual harassment through to the non-routine occurrences of rape and sex murder (Mahony, 1989). Anti-porn radical feminists, for instance, believe in censoring all porn in order to combat male power over women. Yet, pro-porn radical feminists assert that equating masculinity with domination is what encourages and condones male violence against females. That is, male violence is caused by

societies that constructed masculinity in terms of the dominance of male heterosexual power and continued to see sex as sinful—"locating the object of sexuality in women and the subject of sexual desires in men" (Segal, 1990, p. 252). Therefore, the "solution" to abolishing male dominance is to deconstruct notions of masculinity. Although the various subgroups of radical feminists may differ in their strategies for change, the central goal for these feminists is to remove the "reproduction" of men's power over women.

However, radical feminism has been accused of biological reductionism, which claims that the universality of male dominance was not only rooted in biology, but was the cause of women's subordination (Acker, 1987, p. 430). Although this perspective offers a description of women's subordination, it neglects to explain why men want to have power over women. Further, by viewing all women as potential victims of all men, these feminists fail both to address women's oppression in the context of the larger socio-economic system and to acknowledge power differences amongst different groups of males.

Kenway and her colleagues (1998) argue that the conception of power as power in, or power over, someone was problematic for educational reformers for four major reasons (p. 99). First, this conception offers a negative view of power and fails to understand the positive and proactive aspects of power. Second, equating power with the masculine suggests that one must adopt the masculine in order to achieve power. Third, this conception of power equates power as residing in all men and powerlessness as experienced by all women. Although it provides a "way out" of this by offering "an alternative version of power associated with the so-called feminine sensibilities of equality . . . nurturance and other female values, it does not alleviate the conceptual problem" (p. 100). Finally, this view of power fails to address the "power differences that [existed] amongst males and females or other axes of power" (p. 100). Kenway and her colleagues' analysis and critique of these

liberal and radical feminist perspectives suggest that a broader understanding of power is needed.

Socialist Feminism, Masculinity, and "Power With"

Kenway and her colleagues (1998) assert that different feminist theories have "different implications for educational policies and practices" and those that have informed school gender reforms "have evolved over time" (p. xii). Socialist feminism preceded and fed into feminist poststructuralism and emerged in the second half of the 1970s in response to the discomfort that many feminists felt with both the "gender-blindness of traditional Marxism and the class-blindness of early radical feminism" (Jagger & Rothenberg, 1993, p. 122). Briefly, these feminists believe that though traditional understandings of Marxism often serve to obscure the seriousness of male dominance, some aspects of Marxist theory remain useful for developing an adequate feminist theory and practice. They pursued the "theoretical project" of amending traditional Marxist theory by incorporating radical feminist insights and the "practical project of devising strategies for political action that would challenge male dominance simultaneously with capitalism" (p. 123). Although the history of feminist and socialist movements in the United States (and Canada) has shown both that feminism may be elitist and that socialism may be sexist, socialist feminists argue that the political goals of both movements could not be met in isolation from each other. They assert that socialists must attend to the needs of the female half of the working class while feminists must acknowledge that genuine sex equality is possible only under socialism.

Socialist feminists assert that class oppression stems from capitalism and that capitalism must be eliminated for women to be liberated (Acker, 1987, p. 421). Along with many radical feminists, socialist feminists also discuss power in terms of male power over females. Yet unlike radical feminists, they emphasize the concept of power with, taking into

account factors such material inequalities amongst groups of men. According to Segal (1990, p. 288):

Masculinity . . . is best understood as . . . a heterogeneous set of ideas, constructed around assumptions of social power, which are lived out . . . reinforced . . . perhaps challenged . . . in diverse ways within a whole social system in which relations of authority, work, and domestic life are organised.

That is, masculinity exists in the various forms of power men have, such as their power to assert control over women, over other men and over their own bodies. However, not all men have found it possible, or desirable, to participate in the social relations that generate dominance. Segal (1990) views the differences between men as central to the struggle toward replacing the notion of power over with the idea of power with. She offers a socialist feminist analysis of masculinity that takes into account the larger societal structures of class and gender and indicates the need for feminists and pro-feminists to work in coalition.

A socialist feminist approach focuses on women's position within the family and the economy and is particularly concerned with the "reproduction" of gender divisions within capitalism. This theory looks at the marginalization of women in the context of class divisions and privilege. The aim of socialist feminism is to remove oppression by abolishing capitalism and encouraging men to share their power—their privilege in both the public and domestic spheres of life—with women.

Although socialist feminists emphasize the notions of power over, and power with, their conception of power still suggests that men possess power over women and other men. This theory also sees change in men—most notably for men to share their masculine economic power with women—as the solution to eradicating gender inequalities. It does little, however, to address the need for many women to change, such as questioning some women's participation in encouraging male forms of dominance. In addition, socialist

feminists have been criticized by liberal and radical feminists for their eagerness to make alliances with men—"in which women's interests are bound to be subordinate"—and for the "linguistic and logical contortions" needed to bring together Marxist and feminist theories (Acker, 1987, p. 422). Much of socialist feminist writings on gender and education consists of theoretical arguments, historical research or policy analysis, whereas relatively few empirical studies have been done. Furthermore, some radical feminists claim that the socialist feminists' focus on capitalism fails to do justice to the many ways in which men hold power over women through control of women's sexuality and the threat of violence. Finally, socialist feminism, along with liberal and radical feminist theories, has been criticized for emphasizing privileged Western White women's concerns and failing to address the needs of ethnic and minority women (Acker, 1987, p. 422).

Feminist Poststructuralism, Masculinity, and "Power Through"

Educational gender reform policy continues to draw on mainly liberal and radical feminist notions of masculinity, femininity, and power. Yet, recently, some feminist researchers have begun to employ a feminist poststructuralist approach to studying masculinity and power within the context of boys' (and girls') schooling (see, e.g., Davies, 1993; Kenway et al., 1998). These feminists offer a positive perspective on power, seeing it as "power through the capacity to do things, to achieve goals, especially but not only in collaboration [or power] with others" (Kenway et al., 1998, p. 100). For instance, the access to gaining "personal knowledge" is viewed as "a means of empowerment rather than a source of power over others" (p. 100). Thus, efforts would be made to give females access to acquiring this "knowledge," such as "the power to do or act rather than the exercise of power over another." Feminist poststructuralists also perceive power as "decentralized, not dispersed from the center . . . exercised, not possessed" (p. 98). They believe that power is

“best understood through . . . the interplay of discourses and the ways in which individuals and groups [took] up the positions which such discourses offer them” (Kenway et al., 1998, p. 98). Finally, they reject binary thinking and the idea that groups are monolithic, thereby understanding the unitary categorization of, for example, boys as problematic given the cultural and social differences among boys (Davies, 1993). They not only recognize that boys draw on different discourses of masculinity, but that inequalities exist among boys on an individual and group level.

A feminist poststructuralist conception of power differs from those of liberal, radical, and socialist feminists in that it transcends the view that power is based solely on dominance, hierarchy, or social class. I believe this approach offers a more inclusive model for exploring everyone’s discussions about masculinity. However, after examining these various feminist theories, it became clear that the AVP instructors’ talk (which I examine in chapter 4) reflected primarily a combination of liberal and radical feminist ideas about gender and power.

The Merits of Feminist Poststructuralism

Drawing on primarily the works of Weedon (1997) and Davies (1993), I address concepts central to poststructuralism such as discourse, language and subjectivity, and the way that a feminist take on these notions understands and reshapes them. In addition, I contrast feminist poststructuralism with sex-role socialization to illustrate how the former enhances my analysis. Feminist poststructuralism remains a marginalized approach, but I believe, with Kenway and her colleagues (1998), that it would serve as a more inclusive framework for understanding and addressing hegemonic masculinity in school gender reforms, including anti-violence education.

Feminism Meets Poststructuralism

Davies (1993) argues that poststructuralist theory is a “radical discourse” that feminists can “take up” because it allows feminists to “think beyond the male-female dualism as inevitable” (p. xi). Briefly, Davies (1993) states that poststructuralism stemmed from Freud, Marx and Foucault, and offers “a radical framework for understanding the relation between persons and their social world and for conceptualizing change” (p. xi). This theory views individuals as actively and continually constructing their own identities “through learning the discursive practices of [any given] society” (p. xi). Poststructuralists also view individuals as both “complex” and “changing” (p. xi). Therefore, embracing poststructuralism would allow feminists to examine how individuals locate themselves within dominant discourses in multiple ways and to challenge and deconstruct certain discourses so that alternative ones are created and sustained.

In my study, I explore how the talk of the teachers, boys and girls revealed boys’ negotiations with dominant discourses on masculinity. Luke states (as cited in Kelly, 1998, p. 226):

[Discourse] consists of recurrent statements and wordings across texts (Foucault, 1972). These together mark out identifiable systems of meaning and fields of knowledge and belief (Kress, 1989b) that, in turn, are tied to ways of knowing, believing, and categorizing the world and modes of action (Gee, 1990).

Thus, discourse is a conversation that individuals draw on and participate in, whereas talk represents one manner in which discourses manifest themselves (Davies, 1993; Weedon, 1997). Drawing on Foucault and poststructuralism, Weedon (1997, p. 108) defines discourse as

[existing] both in written and oral forms and in the social practices of everyday life. [Discourses] are inherent in the very physical layout of our institutions such as schools, churches, law courts and houses. . . . To be effective, they require activation through the agency of the individuals whom they constitute and govern in particular ways as embodied subjects.

She also describes discursive practices as the way in which certain issues such as gender or sexuality “get put into discourse” (Weedon, 1997, p. 114). These definitions suggest that talk and texts are expressed through a range of discursive practices and that individuals make sense of these everyday discourses in a variety of ways. For instance, many scholars, politicians and educators draw on hegemonic discourses on gender, which are distributed in their talk and writings. These discourses and discursive practices serve to frame the realities of men and women in ways that maintain and challenge the patriarchal structure of North American society.

Other individuals, including many feminist scholars, engage in feminist discourses on gender that are marginal to, and in direct conflict with, dominant definitions of, for instance, femininity and its social constitution and regulation. Although feminist discourses are seen as subordinate to dominant discourses, they do hold social power in that they can “offer the discursive space from which the individual can resist dominant subject positions” (Weedon, 1997, p. 107).

Several feminist scholars have addressed the power of “everyday” or “commonsense” discourses (see, e.g., Miller, 1993; Weedon, 1997). For instance, Miller (1993) asserts that “commonsense discourses [are] descriptions of reality that ‘go without saying’ . . . and give people ways to understand the world” (p. 361). She believes that the hegemonic power of these everyday discourses, such as those about masculinity, stems from the fact that they are normalized and unchallenged. As I will illustrate in the following chapters, the talk of the teachers, boys, and girls in my study indicated that although boys actively struggled with dominant notions of manhood, they were open to entertaining non-hegemonic discourses of masculinity.

Feminist Poststructuralism: Transcending Socialization Theory

Weedon (1997) argues that feminist poststructuralism views language as the channel through which individuals could “think, speak and give meaning to the world around [them]: meaning and consciousness do not exist outside language” (p. 31). She also asserts that “it is language in the form of conflicting discourses which constitute us as conscious thinking subjects and enable us to give meaning to the world and to transform it” (p. 31). For Weedon, concepts that are central to poststructuralist analysis—such as language, subjectivity, discourse and power—can serve as an effective tool that feminists could use to “understand experience and [relate] it to social power” using fluid “notions of identity” (p. vi). For instance, rather than viewing gender socialization, the process of how boys and girls become gendered beings, as a fixed process, feminist poststructuralism understands this experience as shaped by historical and social contexts. Masculinity, for instance, in this respect, is seen not as a monolithic thing, but as a complex phenomenon that influences both men and women and is mediated by various social factors, including gender, “race,” culture, and class.

A feminist poststructuralist approach to gender socialization understands boys and girls as actively taking up their gender, rather than passively learning how to be male or female as a set of received values and traits. This empowering viewpoint also acknowledges that social and cultural differences exist amongst boys and girls and that they should therefore be understood as non-monolithic groups. These feminists recognize that gender is socially constructed in various ways and that boys and girls actively and continually (re)negotiate their gender (see, e.g., Davies, 1993; Jones, 1997; Weedon, 1997).

Weedon (1997) asserts that “language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested . . . it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is

constructed" (p. 21). The underlying assumption in her statement is that individuals' identities are multifaceted and changeable because both individuals and the world around them shape them. This suggests that language helps individuals actively create and (re)negotiate their subjectivities—their conscious and subconscious beliefs and emotions—in ways specific to their own social and cultural contexts (see, e.g., Davis, 1993; Weedon, 1997). Therefore, language provides individuals with different "discursive positions, including modes of femininity and masculinity, through which [they] can consciously live [their] lives" (Weedon, 1997, p. 25).

By contrast, sex-role socialization theory draws on the male/female dualism in its understanding of gender, which translates into viewing boys and girls as monolithic groups. In Connell's critique of role theory, he describes the five core points of sex-role theory, of which the first two ingredients reflect the "metaphor [of] an actor and a script" (1987, p. 47). According to Connell (1987), there is first "an analytic distinction between the person and the social position she occupies" and second "a set of actions or role behaviours which [were] assigned to the position" (p. 47). The remaining three aspects of role theory declares "the means by which the social drama is set in motion and held to its script" (p. 47). The third aspect states that "role expectations or norms [determine] which actions are appropriate to a given position" (p. 47). The fourth stipulates that these "role expectations" are "held by people occupying counter-positions (role senders, reference groups)," but the fifth refers to those "who enforce them by means of sanctions—rewards, punishments, positive and negative reinforcements" (p. 47). Sex-role socialization theory is broadly defined as "the approach to social structure which locates its basic constraints in stereotyped interpersonal expectations" (Connell, 1987, p. 48). Given this, boys and girls are seen as

passive recipients of socialization who are being shaped into their respective masculine and feminine sex roles by outside structures such as by schools (see, e.g., Davies, 1993).

Sex-role language permits “a shift away from biological assumptions about sex differences, emphasizing that women’s and men’s behaviours are different because they respond to different social expectations” (Connell, 1987, p. 48). According to this theory, changing the gender expectations (e.g., allowing women to do men’s work) would eliminate gender inequalities. By adhering to a “rigid distinction between women and men,” this approach neglects to address material inequalities (such as “race” and class) among different groups of women and men. Also, this theory influenced liberal feminists, for instance, in their efforts to achieve gender equality, to discuss girls as not only passive recipients of gender socialization, but as a unitary group. Connell (1996) argues that sex-role theory gives little understanding of the detail of school life—such as girls using conventions of femininity to resist control or boys producing multiple masculinities (p. 212). Although this perspective fails to acknowledge boys’ and girls’ active participation in constructing their notions of masculinity and femininity, the language of sex roles remains a popular framework used in school gender reforms.

Davies (1993) states that socialization theory believes the solution for change lies in replacing traditional gender scripts with non-traditional stories, whereas feminist poststructuralism views people as producers of themselves, using “the discourses they have available to them” (p. 14). Sex-role theory sees change as coming either from sources outside of the individual such as economic change or from “inside the person, from the ‘real self’ demanding a relaxation of the constricting [gender] role” (Connell, 1987, p. 53). However, feminist poststructuralist theory recognizes that boys and girls could be taught to “deconstruct” existing storylines (Davies, 1993, p. 14). Given this distinction, feminist

poststructuralism serves to offer an alternative, more liberating, means of understanding the ways that individuals actively became gendered beings. For example, many feminists have examined the male/female dualism through which masculinity and femininity are constructed. This male/female dualism represents a traditional binary understanding about being male and female and was “embedded in the ways of seeing, knowing and being” that were made available to boys and girls through discursive practices such as school texts and talk (Davies, 1993, p. 10). Feminist poststructuralists in particular have begun the task of deconstructing male/female dualism by exploring ways in which this dualism is maintained through discourse, and the ways it might be deconstructed (Davies, 1993, p. 8). According to Davies (1993, p. 12):

In seeing how it is that power and maleness are constituted in relation to each other, in understanding how it is that apparently intractable and debilitating patterns of desire are put in place and maintained in place, in discovering the possibility for disrupting old discourses, paths open up for speaking into existence other ways of being which are not organized in terms of binary opposition between male and female.

By deconstructing traditional binary understandings of gender maintained in discourse, poststructuralist feminists hope to provide males and females with different ways of reading, seeing and understanding gender so that they may access the many different ways of being male and female.

Feminist Poststructuralism's Contribution to My Analysis

Feminist poststructuralist theory serves to frame my analysis of the talk of the teachers, boys, and girls about masculinity in four main ways. First, this theory perceives boys as active in their own construction of masculinity, as well as in their resistance or conformity to hegemonic masculinity (see, e.g., Davies, 1993). For instance, although all the boys in my study identified heterosexist masculinity as predominant in Canada and the

United States, some of them also shared their belief that this image was both unrealistic and damaging to teenage boys.

Second, this approach views masculinity as having multiple meanings (see, e.g., Davies, 1993) and thus recognizes that boys can draw on different and often competing discourses on masculinity. For example, a “macho” boy who draws on a hegemonic masculinity discourse may decide to play an alternative masculinity (e.g., talk about his feelings and play “sensitive” guy) to get a date with a certain girl whom he believes prefers sensitive guys over “macho” guys. A feminist poststructuralist analysis can thus provide insight into boys’ complex struggles with hegemonic masculinity.

Third, this theory understands masculinity as a socially constructed phenomenon mediated by gender, “race,” culture, and class. For instance, in many Asian cultures, public expressions of one’s sexuality are perceived as causing shame or dishonor to the family (see, e.g., Chan, 1994). Several American studies have also found that many Asian American teenagers were aware of the expectations of their parents and the importance of tradition and self-discipline (see, e.g., Chan, 1994; Schuster, M., Bell, R., Nakajima, G., & Kanouse, D., 1998). A feminist poststructuralist analysis recognizes that young men formulate their ideas and expressions of masculinity based in part on the cultural options available to them. It is therefore necessary to examine their culture within the context of the dominant culture in order to achieve a fuller understanding of the meanings they attach to masculinity.

Finally, feminist poststructuralism acknowledges that not all individuals have access to non-hegemonic discourses (see, e.g., Weedon, 1997). Traditional discourses on masculinity pervade North American culture—including school texts and talk about gender—and serve to limit boys’ and girls’ understandings about what it means to be male and female. These practices are played out in school sports and in the sexual politics of teachers and students,

thereby constructing and reinforcing dominant notions of masculinity and femininity while marginalizing other forms of gender. For instance, Nayak and Kehily (1996) found that boys who were either sexually identified as gay or boys who looked (e.g., under-developed bodies), talked (e.g., high pitched voice) or acted (e.g., non-athletic) “feminine” were generally targets of homophobic insults by their (mainly) male peers (p. 219). Also, other researchers reported that many teachers reinforced students’ homophobic practices by telling boys who displayed feminine traits to stop “acting like a girl,” which was equated with being “feminine” and therefore weak, or with being “gay,” and therefore abnormal (see, e.g., Connell, 1996; Mac an Ghaill, 1994a, 1996). Feminist poststructuralism understands that although schools actively produce heterosexual divisions, they can also serve as potentially significant public sites that enable young men (and women) to read, see, understand and access the many ways of being male (and female). In the final chapter of this thesis, I discuss some ways that feminist poststructuralism can replace the sex-role model in school gender reforms and therefore help to deconstruct the dominant discourses produced in school text, talk, and practices and provide non-oppressive gender discourses.

Key Concepts

Hegemonic Masculinity

As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, the current construction of hegemonic masculinity in North America focuses on male dominance, characterized by male heterosexuality and physical, social, and economic power (see, e.g., Connell, 1995; Segal, 1990). Connell (1989) distinguishes between two main, dominant forms of masculinity, one revolving around aggression and pride, and the other around themes of “rationality and responsibility” (p. 297). Institutional practices, especially the “hidden school curriculum,” contribute to the development of both forms of masculinity (p. 297). Academically inclined

White working- and middle-class boys tend to display a notion of manhood that Connell associates with rational thought and the “dry sciences” (p. 298). This masculinity emerges from these young men’s efforts to stay in school and do well academically, as well as their families’ encouragement of their academic efforts toward the goal of achieving higher education and a professional career (p. 297). Yet, curriculum “streaming and ‘failure’ push groups of working-class boys toward alienation, and state authority provides them a perfect foil for the construction of a combative, dominance-focused masculinity” (p. 298). Boys who do not have access to the “dry sciences” form of masculinity are likely to engage in aggressive displays of manhood such as (hetero)sexist talk and actions. Consequently, both hegemonic versions of male power legitimize White, heterosexual men’s dominance over women, gay men, and ethnic minorities and are constructed by positioning the feminine and marginalized masculinities as being inferior (Connell, 1995, p. 77).

Weedon (1997) asserts that “the meanings of femininity and masculinity vary from culture to culture and language to language . . . they even vary between discourses within a particular language, between different feminist discourses, for instance, and are subject to historical change” (p. 22). North American culture’s dominant discourse on gender is conservative, and “links masculinity with sexual conquest and femininity with sexual attractiveness” (Rhode, 1996, p. 210). According to this discourse, being a “real man” means being able to “display oneself as knowledgeable and experienced in relation to women and to sexuality” (Morgan, 1996, p. 109). Being a woman requires that one is sexually attractive and desirable to men, but not too intelligent, or too emotionally or financially independent. The continued prevalence of men’s violence against women and other men is shaped, in part, from these culturally constructed discourses of dominant (hetero)sexist masculinity and sexualized femininity. Thus, hegemonic conservative discourses on

masculinity and femininity serve to “deny the possibility of changing social relations by appealing to the essential fixity of human nature” (Weedon, 1997, p. 80).

The Relationship between Hegemonic Masculinity, Heterosexism, Homophobia, and Sexism

Within the Western cultural context, male heterosexual prowess is perceived as a sign of “real” manhood, whereas female heterosexual conquest is seen as both undesirable and promiscuous. Heterosexuality is viewed in terms of sexual contact between people of the opposite sex, whereas homosexuality is seen as a sexual union between same-sexed individuals. Homosexuality, unlike heterosexuality, is depicted as both deviant and promiscuous, particularly when applied to judging gay, male relationships.

A feminist poststructuralist analysis questions how the categories of heterosexuality and homosexuality came into existence, the meanings that are attached to them, how these meanings are influenced by gender, “race,” culture, and class, as well as how the discourses surrounding these categories can change. This approach would move beyond binary understandings about gender and sexuality, toward a more multicultural feminist framework for comprehending and discussing these identities. For instance, the dominant Western notion of masculinity dictates that male heterosexual success is an important indication of a boy’s manliness. I found that boys have a complex relationship with this “male sex machine” image, which is informed by their gender, class, and cultural notions of masculinity and sexuality. In addition, the talk of the teachers, boys and girls reveal that boys’ (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity are active, constant, and changing.

It is not surprising to find that given the pressures to prove their male heterosexual status, issues such as homophobia and heterosexism arose in these boys’ discussions about gender and power. That is, the link between hegemonic masculinity and homophobia is indisputable given that most of the characteristics attributed to gay males are assigned to

women (see, e.g., Nayak & Kehily, 1997, p. 141). Generally, homophobia refers to the fear of a gay or lesbian identity or sexual practice. This could be a fear that is projected onto others given one's hidden yet uncertain (homo) sexuality, or the prejudice aimed toward others who are perceived to be, or are, gay or lesbian. For instance, a young man who is unsure of his sexual orientation, while being aware of the pressures for young men to be heterosexual, may engage in verbal forms of gay bashing in order to gain peer acceptance.

Several feminist and pro-feminist scholars argue that homophobic talk and acts are rampant in schools and that the meanings behind such notions and practices are multifaceted (see, e.g., Epstein, 1997; Frank, 1996). Nayak and Kehily (1997) assert that heterosexism is distinct from homophobia in that the former refers to the "daily cultural practices [that] are themselves based around a norm of heterosexuality" (Nayak & Kehily, 1997, p. 139). Heterosexism then signifies a "gender obedience to heterosexual masculine hegemony" (Frank, 1996, p. 120), whereas homophobia illustrates one method in which this norm is accepted, assumed and maintained. Epstein & Johnson (as cited in Nayak & Kehily, 1997, p. 139) found that homophobic talk or acts did not need to be displayed in order for heterosexism to be active in a particular moment; rather, it "operate[d] through silence and absences as well as through overt discrimination."

Another way of sustaining heterosexism is through sexism, or the exploitation and subordination of women, which can be expressed in a range of discursive practices. For instance, sexist language can be used to express a hatred of women (misogyny). In other instances, sexist talk serves as a way for certain boys to establish their status in the dominant masculinity culture and mask any vulnerabilities (see, e.g., Nayak & Kehily, 1997). Several boys in my study, for example, articulated that although commenting on girls' breast size was

understood as inappropriate, some boys engaged in this sexist bravado in order to establish their heterosexual status.

The Idea of Non-oppressive Masculinities

As illustrated earlier, a dominant discourse on masculinity helps maintain the patriarchal order of Western society, thereby privileging certain groups of men over women and other men. Hegemonic masculinity is also held together by the relative lack of discussion about non-oppressive notions of masculinity (and femininity). It is therefore necessary for feminist and other scholars not only to interrogate hegemonic masculinity both within and beyond a gender construct, but also to offer alternative masculine identities that contest the material inequalities that keep dominant discourses in powerful positions.

A non-hegemonic discourse on masculinity would make problematic the heterosexism perpetuated by hegemonic masculinity and dispute the social and economic power held by the dominant groups. However, in formulating a non-oppressive conception of masculinity, I encountered three main challenges. First, I considered the reality that some boys might perceive a model as empowering, whereas other boys would view this same ideal as oppressive. For instance, working-class boys who develop a macho aggressive masculinity in opposition to school authority would see this as a form of social power accessible to them. Yet, young men who do not subscribe to “macho” male behavior would understand this as an oppressive model of masculinity. Therefore, any given type of masculinity will be understood and used differently depending on the boys involved in this relationship.

Second, the multiple masculinities that most males play stem from a mix of hegemonic notions of manhood and marginalized masculine identities. Many young men practice an alternative, gay masculinity, but this does not mean that all of them also take up a view that is less heterosexist or sexist than young men who engage in hegemonic masculinity. A boy

can be “oppressed” in terms of his homosexuality, for example, but at the same time be oppressive if he takes up misogynist practices. Consequently, boys draw on multiple masculinities that will situate them “simultaneously [as] members of multiple groups, including dominant and marginalized groups” (Cheng, 1999).

Third, I found it difficult to develop an example of a non-hegemonic model of masculinity that was inclusive of non-White ethnic notions of gender. For example, I agree with Davies (1993) that “the vast majority of non-sexist programs” have limited boys’ and girls’ thinking within a male-female dualism (p. x). Rather than questioning this gender construct, these programs “are simply rejecting the negative side of femininity for girls (fragility, timidity, obsession with appearance and with domesticity), and the negative side of masculinity for boys (aggression, insensitivity, rudeness and a refusal to be helpful)” (p. x). As I show in chapter 4, AVP offers a non-hegemonic masculinity model that is, in some ways, less oppressive than the current hegemonic version of manhood, but nevertheless still mirrors the efforts of the “non-sexist programs” of which Davies spoke.

My efforts to conceive a non-oppressive masculinity inspired me to develop a framework for interrogating and rethinking hegemonic masculinity, one that can be tailored to anti-violence education (see chapter 7). This framework is most distinct from current anti-violence teachings in that it provides non-White notions of non-violent assertiveness and explicitly tackles racist notions of masculinity, which is one of the primary sources of violent talk or practices in, ironically, predominantly multiculturally populated schools. I believe that anti-violence programs should recognize that non-White defined forms of power that do not involve the use of coercion or violence not only exist, but are attainable by young men. Incorporating such a framework into anti-violence education would also teach girls that they do not need to take up dominant male defined sources of power in

order to be powerful beings.¹ Since this framework draws on a feminist poststructuralist approach, it also acknowledges that there are differences within any group of boys in terms of how they understand and practice their masculinities. These differences, whether they are individual or cultural, mediate to some degree, for example, what talk and behavior different boys consider “assertive.” The twelve boys in my study might have notions of assertiveness different than those of my own. In chapter 5, I will present what some of these boys articulated to be non-oppressive masculine qualities and show how their “race” and culture played a role in their understandings of masculinity.

“Race,” Culture, and Boys’ Masculinities in Play

Some researchers have acknowledged the racist roots of the notion of “race,” namely that it is falsely defined as referring to individuals who have more physical traits in common with each other than with those outside of their group (see, e.g., Harrison, 1999; Shanklin, 1999). In addition, Harrison (1999) points out the problem with researchers trying to replace the “biological notion of race” with “culture”; this simply relabels the issue rather than solves it (p. 610). Rather, culture means something distinct from “race.” For example, assertions about how Asian males have smaller bodies than White males tap into “race,” whereas discussions about Asian males being less likely to engage in early sexual activity than their White peers represent culture.

Frank (1996) argues that researchers continue “to conduct anti-racist analysis without acknowledging how particular practices of masculinity are interwoven with race” (p. 127).² In my thesis, I attempt to incorporate “race” and culture into my analysis of the talk of the teachers, boys, and girls to better understand the role that “race” and culture play in conceptions of masculinity. However, there were two major challenges that I encountered in my effort to do this. First, I found it difficult to address how the boys in my study dealt

with racist ideas of their masculinities while simultaneously avoiding basing my analysis of how they made sense of their masculinity only in terms of their “race.” For example, Montel, the American Caribbean boy in my study, aspired to play pro-basketball and was a star player in his high school basketball team. Although he enjoyed his status as a top athlete, he was also troubled by the racist perceptions that limited his capabilities to sports. In his individual interview, Montel asserted that “slavery” continues to pervade North America society in the form of pressuring young Black men into sports rather than academics. He was aware that athletic competence is constructed as one positive part of a marginalized Black masculinity because it is acceptable for society to validate Black males for this type of achievement. Montel argued that although some Black males hold white-collar professional positions (such as lawyers), they are still judged and treated based on the negative racial stereotypes placed on them.

Many boys are marginalized based on the racial stereotypes assigned them. However, had I chosen to understand Montel’s experience by concluding that he had bought into the stereotypical Black masculinity (due to his aspirations to play pro-basketball), I would have attributed his making of his manhood solely to his “race” and treated Black masculinity as a monolithic construction. Engaging in this type of analysis would have also neglected other important factors in Montel’s active (re)making of his masculinity such as his family upbringing, personal value system, and personality traits. Davis (1999) cautions that understanding, for instance, Black boys based only on their “race” serves to “obscure the diversity of their multiple subject positions; and also limits our understanding of a multifaceted black male adolescent sexuality that is nurtured, performed, and often perfected at schools” (p. 51). Davis further reported that Black males in his study were “on the vanguard of hip-hop culture and set the standards of athleticism” and were in this sense

celebrated males in their schools (Davis, 1999, p. 49). Yet, they also faced “disproportionate levels of punishment and academic marginality” (p. 49). Smedley (1998) adds that the United States, in particular, has “made ‘race’ (and the physical features connected to it) equivalent to, and the dominant source of, human identity, superseding all other aspects of identity” (p. 695). She also asserts that “the dilemma for the low-status races [such as Black] was, and still is, how to construct a positive identity for themselves in the light of the ‘racial’ identity imposed on them by the dominant society” (p. 695).

I did not systematically examine how the boys in my study dealt with racist ideas of their masculinities, and thus I cannot speak to these boys’ experiences with racism and masculinity. Rather, I offer a framework for understanding how “race” and culture inform considerations of masculinity. For instance, my framework acknowledges the diversity in boys and girls without resorting to viewing them only via a “racial” lens. It also understands that young men (and women) make sense of who they are in a range of ways that overlap and interplay the identities such as “race,” culture, gender, and sexuality. I return to this discussion in chapter 7.

Second, just as there are multiple masculinities that are constantly in flux, the concept of culture is also changing, and it was challenging to avoid falling into an analysis that assumed distinct White, Black or Asian masculinities. I explored the discussion of a diverse group of boys, but there were contested masculinities within and between each cultural site. For example, the breadwinning model of masculinity that defines the sole financial providers for their families as “real men” is a notion shared by both Western and Asian cultures. Given this, the boundaries between what is considered White hegemonic masculinity and Asian hegemonic masculinity are blurred. In my study, one Asian boy, Julio, was aware of the stereotypical Chinese masculinity, but he chose not to draw on it. This implied that in

Chinese cultures, masculinity was stable, whereas in Canada, it was in flux. Yet, this actually mirrored Julio's Canadian perspective, rather than an existing Asian hegemonic masculinity. In analyzing boys' discussions about masculinity within the context of their "race" and culture, it became evident that there were distinctions within and between White and non-White cultural notions of masculinities.

Western hegemonic masculinity is a racist, misogynist, and heterosexist discourse that constructs "race," gender, and sexuality in dichotomous terms (such as White/Black, Male/Female, Heterosexual/Homosexual). Being a White, heterosexual male is seen as positive and desirable, whereas being a non-White (particularly Black) male or homosexual male is viewed as negative and inferior based on the racist and heterosexist assumptions linked to these types of men. That is, the latter males are perceived as failed men due to their membership in marginalized masculinities (e.g., Black males are "mentally inferior" and homosexuals are "sexually deviant"). Dichotomizing "race," gender, and sexuality constructs consequently feeds racism and heterosexism by positioning a White, heterosexual male as a positive male model and a female or a Black or gay male as negative, and contributes to various forms of male violence (see, e.g., Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Mac an Ghaill, 1994b). It is therefore necessary to problematize hegemonic masculinity within the context of the racist, sexist, and heterosexist ideas of manhood that this type of discourse perpetuates. In chapter 7, I offer some ways in which educators can do this without dichotomizing or reinforcing this discourse.

Before moving to a discussion of the boys' talk on masculinity and male violence and the themes that emerged from this analysis, I first present the context in which these boys were explicitly taught about hegemonic and alternative notions of what it means to be a man. By exploring the AVP instructors' discussions on gender and power, it became evident that

this program provided some of these boys with a comfortable setting in which to discuss masculinity. Doing so also revealed the ways that the AVP's alternative model of masculinity might also have served to reinforce (albeit unintentionally), rather than simply contest, hegemonic notions of masculinity.

Notes

¹ In the past few years, there has been a steady rise in the research on girl-against-girl and girl-against-boy violence (see, e.g., Artz, 1997; Kaufman, 1997; Sex Talk, 1996). Kaufman (1997), for instance, asserts that societal definitions of power are “defined by your capacity to control others and control the world around you” (p. 18). He argues that given this, it is “no surprise that as young women come into a sense of their own power (a positive thing), a significant number of them will express it within the dominant discourse of our society (a negative thing)” (p. 18). In addition, several researchers have cautioned against the media created and disseminated image of violent girls and their supposed increasing population (see, e.g., Males, 1996; Thorbes, 2000). I do not address either this media hype or the link between female forms of violence and hegemonic masculinity in my dissertation. However, I believe that it would be valuable to examine this topic.

² It is important to note here that in their 1998 book, Masculinity Goes to School, Gilbert and Gilbert do take “race” into consideration when discussing boys’ masculinities and schooling, albeit not within the context of an empirical study.

Chapter 4

AVP Instructors Talk about Boys, Masculinity, and Male Violence

As discussed in the literature review, many school-based and school-sponsored violence prevention programs have been developed in recent years. Although the majority of these programs focus on teaching students conflict resolution skills (see, e.g., Wolfe et al., 1997), some have begun to address hegemonic masculinity, albeit using sex-role language (see, e.g., Novogrodsky et al., 1992). Yet, Canadian and American research that looks at the ways that teachers' discussions reflect these programs' beliefs remains limited.

Anastasia, the creator of AVP, is a feminist and considers her program pro-feminist. In this chapter, I look at and analyze AVP through this set of lenses, particularly feminist poststructuralism. Specifically, I explore how she and her five (pro)feminist anti-violence instructors' talk about boys, masculinity, and male violence revealed their conceptions of masculinity, as well as how they taught this to teenagers. The examination of the instructors' discussions is important because it provides the overall context in which the 12 boys talked about masculinity. These teachers' talk also offered insight into boys' negotiations with hegemonic masculinity and the connection between dominant notions of manhood and male violence. Furthermore, the description and analysis of AVP contributes to our understanding of developing curriculum in the high school setting.

North American society has grown more therapeutic and the discourse of therapy permeates [its] popular culture (see, e.g., Kaminer, 1993; Sandell, 1996). AVP is one of a number of such programs, whose teachings are reminiscent of transactional analysis. Transactional analysis was first formulated by Eric Berne and Thomas Harris and has similarities to Freud's notions around personality (see, e.g., Coburn, 1986; Crider, Goethals,

Kavanaugh, & Solomon, 1989). Crider and his colleagues (1989) state that this concept is rooted in the belief that people's "social interactions are governed by one of three aspects of [their] personality: the Child, the Parent, or the Adult" (p. 595). The "Child" is "spontaneous" but "dependent," whereas the "Parent" represents rules adopted from their parents such as "what not to do, what do to, and how to do it" (p. 595). The "Adult" reflects the "mature, flexible and rational aspect of the personality" that collects information, "[reviews] options and [makes] decisions" (p. 595). Berne refers to these "three personality aspects [as] ego states" (which resemble Freud's id, ego, and superego) and asserts that a healthy person would have a balance among the "Child, Parent and Adult" (p. 595). AVP's idea of each person having three identities with three different functions, which I discuss later in this chapter, appears to mirror transactional analysis.

AVP's Feminism

The Conception and Birth of AVP

AVP is an example of a pro-feminist initiative to educate boys and girls about the negative outcomes of subscribing to traditional gender ideologies. It attempts to offer alternative, non-oppressive models of masculinity and femininity, and continues to rework aspects of its content to accommodate different groups of students. It is a privately owned and operated program carried out in schools across Canada, the United States, and abroad.¹ Schools sponsored this program for a fee, which was either paid for entirely by the school or cost-shared with student participants. In Canada, this program was generally classified under the physical or health education component of the school's curriculum and most often taught to grade 10 physical education students.² This program comprised three main components: the boys' workshop, the girls' workshop, and the coed workshop.³ The boys' and girls' sessions taught the AVP language, whereas the coed workshop provided an

opportunity for students to use this language in a mixed-gender setting. All three workshops include a focus on assertiveness training, which Anastasia, the program director, asserts will enable boys and girls to learn to exert their “inner power” peacefully. AVP was born out of Anastasia’s studies and practices in martial arts and her experiences with teaching adult women self-defence. She developed and taught a ten-week physical self-defence class to adult women over a period of several years, eventually condensing it into a three-hour program. Her new program focused on both prevention skills (assertiveness training) and physical self-defence techniques and became the foundation for the current AVP workshop for girls and adult women. After years of working with the girls, she decided to develop a boys’ workshop, given her belief that “it’s the men out there who are actually perpetrating the majority of violent crimes and how can we reach the boys” (Anastasia).

When she began writing the boys’ workshop, she started by teaching a couple of coed sessions. However, she found the experience to be difficult for both herself and the girls who participated because a few boys made rude, sexually suggestive gestures at her while other boys got “very competitive . . . putting the girls down” (Anastasia). She described her search for and success in finding the “right” man to teach her newly devised boys’ program:

So I clicked one day, I need a man to teach [the boys’ workshop]. . . . So finding a man that can work with teens that had this feminist understanding and this awareness that was I guess masculine enough in presentation that the boys would see him as an okay role model, that had enough yang but that he wasn’t strutting around [acting macho]. In the meantime, I kept developing what I felt would work, the exercises, I pretty much had a lot of the curriculum figured out and then I met [Nick] . . . who had been doing workshops for men who batter in the States . . . and he did end up out [where I’m based] and it was within a year [he began working for me].

Overview of AVP’s Three Workshops

In this section, I draw on my observations of AVP’s gender-separate sessions and the teachers’ descriptions of their teachings, goals, and observations. This reveals not only how the teachers conceived of masculinity, but also their struggles with challenging hegemonic

masculinity within the current school climate. For instance, Anastasia said that given that they only had three hours in which to teach their program and that many schools harbored “a conservative environment,” they are usually unable to address issues such as homophobia directly. The focus of their workshops also varies depending on “the direction the group took,” so that “sometimes [they] aren’t able to do more than just mention diversity issues, [whereas other times], the whole group would be about racism or homophobia as opposed to dating violence.” Nevertheless, they have to be “very careful” and keep their discussions “simple” and “non-threatening to the school staff, administration and parents” (Anastasia). I return to this discussion later in the chapter.

The Boys’ Workshop: “Child,” “Stud” or “Warrior,” and “Wise Man”

The boys’ workshop was developed in the early nineties with the purpose of achieving three main objectives with boys. The following description of these objectives emerged from the instructors’ discussions. Specifically, the primary goal of this session is to “make the guys think about being guys and how that affects their treatment of women in particular . . . to be concerned about issues like physical violence, control and letting people speak their mind” (Ben). For the first hour of the program, the instructors open the floor by asking boys what they like about being male. This conversation gives boys an opportunity to talk about and defend against the negative stereotypes of males, as well as to “brainstorm a list of good things about being a guy” (Nick). Anastasia and her instructors argue that by doing this first, the boys can begin to feel good about themselves as males and thus be more likely to be open to exploring issues around masculinity and male violence.

In the second hour of this workshop, the instructors teach the young men about AVP’s alternative model for masculinity, which is based on the program’s understanding of assertiveness. The instructors assert that this model of manhood is different from

hegemonic notions of masculinity in that young men are taught how to “stand up” for themselves and “have a sense of self-respect without turning to violence or aggression as the way to do it” (Ben). Specifically, the boys learn the AVP language—the three male identities that form AVP’s assertiveness model.⁴ The boys are also given a chance to participate in role-plays that teach them the distinctions between hegemonic forms of masculinity and AVP’s model of manhood.

The third objective of this session is to educate boys about sexual harassment, date rape, and the law. The last hour of the program deals with the issue of “consent” (Pat) and informs boys about their “moral” and “legal” (Anastasia) responsibilities in terms of their involvement with heterosexual “intimate relationships” (Pat). Ben described this goal:

And [the third thing is] when you’re involved in an intimate relationship, there are confusing situations that are going to come up. That saying no means no is one that they’ve heard and they know about. . . . So [we] go through a series of scenarios that are much more gray [and] that are much more about how you deal with these immediate circumstances. If there’s mixed signals, what do you do . . . so . . . really specific concrete situations . . . not only do they need to be conscious of what are the implications of being a guy, but why does that set up differences between men and women. Which means this, what we talk about right at the end is that there is a double standard in the law about who has responsibility for sexual harassment, and men have more responsibility. And they kind of go, “oh man, that seems so unfair.” And then we talk about exactly why that’s the case.

Ben also gave an example of a scenario addressing the issue of date rape that was discussed with young men. I have summarized Ben’s example as follows:

Scenario: A boy goes to a party and starts to drink. He’s pretty intoxicated when a girl, who has also been drinking, approaches him and says she wants to go upstairs with him. He follows her upstairs into a room where they start making out and eventually end up having sexual intercourse. The next day, the girl remembers what she did and tells the story and her feelings of regret to one of her friends. Her friend says she should see her doctor and talk to the police. Consequence: If the girl decides to file charges against the boy, he could be convicted of date rape because of the “double standard in the law about . . . men [having] more responsibility.”

In addition, Anastasia stated that many boys sexually harassed girls and women, in and out of school, and would end up, as she elaborated:

. . . going to the work place, and [guys] are going to get sued, they are breaking the law, and schools need to teach them that . . . this behavior is not only not acceptable morally or spiritually devastating to the people that [they're] harassing, it's illegal, sexual harassment in Canada is illegal and they need to know that.

Both Ben and Anastasia argue that boys have the "responsibility" to not have sex while intoxicated or with girls who had been drinking for two main reasons. First, the instructors believe that legally, the scenario could be understood as a date rape wherein the boy could be charged and convicted of rape; though the girl initiated and consented to the sexual encounter. The instructors discuss sexual harassment and date rape within a legal context based on their belief that only males are seen as sexual aggressors, not vice versa. Second, they assert that sexual intimacy is more enjoyable for men when valued and treated with respect, and that having sex while intoxicated diminished this reality. Thus, the boys' session attempts to teach young men to both take "responsibility" for, and understand the possible consequences of, their talk and behavior, in particular with the issue of sexual "consent."

The boys' workshop addressed sexual consent and date rape within the context of heterosexual dating situations, but it did not openly discuss homosexuality or homophobia. For instance, when I asked Nick if they addressed the issue of homophobia and, if so, how they went about doing it, Nick responded:

I'm not happy with the way we address it. (pause) I'm generally so scared of their homophobia that I'll just try to use neutral language so that I'm not excluding anybody. But that's not bringing the issue out into focus. So for example, I would never talk about my wife. I would talk about my partner. So I'm not using my heterosexual privilege and they might be wondering a little bit about oh, he said partner, so what does that mean about him. And . . . when I say what do you want from an intimate relationship, I say some of you guys have had relationships, you've had girlfriends or whatever already. I throw in the whatever so that if there are gay men in the group, and chances are there are, they won't feel they're totally excluded. Some of the most macho guys in the world are gay men. And that could challenge their assumptions too. . . . Homophobia is linked to sexism because [it's assumed that gay men are] failed men. They're sort of like women and so it's linked to sexism. That stuff is so tricky [and] awful. . . . [All] I can do is to try not to exclude gay and lesbian realities from the workshop and try not to reinforce heterosexist privilege.

[But] I think [our program] needs to more directly address homophobia and more directly address hatred of women.

Nick asserts that homophobia represents the hatred of feminine qualities, particularly when expressed by men, and thus is directly connected to sexism and "heterosexist privilege." In addition, his discomfort with not feeling safe to problematize homophobia in the classroom revealed his belief that doing this openly would alienate him from his male students, not to mention parents, teachers, and school administrators. Thus, his talk illustrated his struggles with finding an effective way to address homophobia in the classroom.

According to Anastasia, her program is "a survival skills [training] for young women and really important life skills [training] for young men." Both the gender-separate workshops draw on AVP's "assertiveness model," which is "built on the model of three people inside all of us" (Nick). For the boys' workshop, these "three people" are the "child," the "stud" or "warrior," and the "wise man" (Anastasia). Anastasia's creation of the "child" identity is rooted in her views on the socialization of women:

A woman is socialized to defend her children. So you ask any woman, what would you do to defend your child and women say this to me in the workshops "I would kill." They say two things: "Anything I would kill to save [my] child, even somebody else's child." How do you know? That's socialization. We have been socialized as women to devalue ourselves . . . our needs . . . always giving of [ourselves]. . . . So what would she be willing to do to defend [herself]. So I teach a woman an eye gouge and she says "Yeah, but I wouldn't want to hurt the guy."

Anastasia not only sees women as being socialized to be subordinate, but also alluded to women's instinctual tendency to "defend" or "save" a "child." The "child" represents the identity within each person that experiences feelings of "fear" and needs to be protected and "kept safe" (Anastasia). Nick further described the "child" as the part of all males "who doesn't know how to be assertive . . . doesn't have good eye contact . . . looks vulnerable and invites aggression."

By contrast, the “stud” or “warrior” depicts the part of all men that expresses their anger, typically by engaging in verbal or physical aggression. Anastasia and Nick described this “angry” side of males:

To be a man is completely connected to being powerful. And in the mainstream definition of powerful, meaning you’re in control at all times, you never show your feelings except anger . . . power and control for men is very connected to sex. . . . So that to be in control and to feel powerful while you’re being sexual becomes very important to men. Therefore, rape and sexual assault are connected to that manhood, power and control. (pause) And when little boys are brought up to not show that they’re afraid ever, and not show their sadness ever, then the only emotional expression they have is anger. And all other feelings get channeled into that. So particularly if a man is feeling powerless, he will express anger. (Anastasia)

The second person inside of us, the “stud” or “warrior” would respond and he gets pissed off and says hey fuck you asshole . . . and the stud . . . will get you into fights . . . lots of young men get into that . . . because there’s that masculine bravado that’s driving the stud that is the whole stereotypical masculinity that says no one pushes me around. (Nick)

Anastasia argues that dominant masculinity imposes on young men the belief that they need to have control over everything: themselves, the world, other males, and especially females. Her talk implies that boys are socialized to show only their anger and to repress all other emotions, which are considered weak. Her take on men’s and women’s socialization suggests that boys are passive recipients of, rather than active participants in, the socialization process, and in this regard, she demonstrates a liberal feminist understanding of gender.

Nick added that the “warrior personality” reflects the macho aspect of “stereotypical masculinity” because it desires power over females and other males. Pat also described the role of the “stud” or “tough guy” when he stated, “people who play tough guy all the time, they’re playing I have no fear.” Both Nick and Pat’s talk assumes that each male not only has a piece of hegemonic masculine identity within himself, but also has the potential to exhibit this “masculine bravado.”

Finally, the third “personality” that resides within every male is the “wise man.” He is the masculine identity who is capable of being “assertive” without ever resorting to verbal or physical violence to achieve his “inner power” (Anastasia). Nick and Pat talked about the introduction of the “wise man” identity:

And the third person inside of us is what I call the “wise man,” and the “wise man” is the side of us that speaks from our heart and thinks, “Is this worth fighting about?” It’s the really smart side of [guys] that thinks really good thoughts like “Wow, what happens in this room if I get into a fight?” . . . So, I try to give them some assertiveness skills to work with in those situations with other men. We do a number of things where someone wants us to fight them, we do racism. I try to get someone from a cultural or ethnic minority group to, I’m a White racist and they get to challenge me on that. I’m a teacher verbally abusive and they get to challenge me on that [using our assertiveness model]. (Nick)

And I give them the basic [assertiveness] skills, planting your feet, breathing, saying what you want, saying it a few times. Making eye contact being the most important thing. And we do role-plays. (Pat)

Nick’s talk indicates that the “wise man” was defined in terms of his ability to use rational thought to exert the “assertiveness violence prevention skills.” Pat elaborated by describing the ingredients that made up the “wise man personality.” Specifically, for a boy to access his “wise man” identity, he would have to maintain a firm physical stance and neutral facial expression that involved “making eye contact” while stating his assertion in a neutral tone of voice. For instance, should a boy be approached by another who wanted to brawl with him, then the boy could demonstrate his “wise man” by stating in a neutral tone of voice a statement like, “I am not going to fight you” while standing still and maintaining “neutral eye contact.” The boy’s “wise man” would sustain this physical composure and repeat, if necessary, up to a maximum of two times his assertion “I am not going to fight you” slowly and clearly, pausing between each repetition, until the other boy ceased to provoke him to fight. If the latter boy did not back off, then the boy’s “wise man” could calmly walk away.

These instructors' discussions suggest that by giving boys access to an alternative, non-hegemonic version of masculinity, namely the "wise man" model of assertiveness, young men would be able to protect their "child" self while controlling their "warrior" identity. Similarly, the parallel feminine constructions, namely the "child" (fear), the "bitch" or "warrior woman" (anger) and the "wise woman" (assertiveness) were offered to girls in the girls' workshop, which I discuss in the following section.

The Girls' Workshop: "Child," "Bitch" or "Warrior Woman," and "Wise Woman"

Anastasia described the content and breakdown of her three-hour girls' program as having "two hours . . . prevention—contacting inner power . . . dealing with [women's] socialization . . . and [one-hour] of the physical self-defence skills."⁵ The first two hours of the girls' workshop addresses four goals. First, the female instructors inform girls about the prevalence of violence against women and offer some statistics related to this phenomenon. Anastasia noted that they also discuss how "sexual harassment was against the law for girls too [but] how it's different," explaining that "the thing boys are most afraid of from girls is being laughed at and the thing girls are most afraid of from boys is being killed" (Anastasia). This part of the session ends with a discussion about how girls need to learn how to take responsibility for their own actions, while being aware that they also should not be "blamed for making an unwise choice during their process of becoming wise" (Anastasia).

Second, the instructors introduce the AVP concepts of the "hard house" and the "easy house" to demonstrate the difference between a challenging target versus an "easy" target of violence. Briefly, a "hard house" is described as a home that has a full security system intact inside (e.g., alarm system) and outside of the house (e.g., guard dogs) in addition to its doors and windows being locked and sealed at all times. By contrast, the "easy house" is a residence where the doors are often kept unlocked, windows are left wide open, no guard

dogs are present, and no security measures of any kind are installed. This illustration is then applied to the difference between a girl who is perceived by a perpetrator as a challenging target (“hard house” and not victim material) versus one who is seen as an “easy” target (“easy house” and likely victim) of violence.

The third goal is to teach young women the female categories: the “child,” the “bitch” or “warrior woman,” and the “wise woman,” and focused primarily on how girls could display their “hard house” or “wise woman.” Although Anastasia offers girls the option of using “warrior woman” over “bitch” if the word was “culturally or personally or religiously offensive to [them],” she tries to use the term “bitch” as a “reclaiming” of girls’ and women’s anger. In describing her efforts to “reclaim the negative label ‘bitch,’” Anastasia gave her rationale for teaching girls the “assertiveness model” of “wise woman”:

When I’m developing the program . . . there’s sort of a connection that happens there where the part of [women] that fights back is called a “bitch.” And over the years, I’m noticing as a woman that every time I stand up for myself at all [or] I make a strong point [or] I’m adamant [or] I raise my voice. And every time I sound like I even know what I’m talking about, some man in the room, every time I’m not a complete man pleaser doormat, I’m a “bitch.” And what I believe to be really powerless men, over the years have found me really threatening and that’s the word they use to describe the part of me that they find threatening. Now even the “wise woman,” like the assertive part of me is called “bitch.” Because even when you’re more neutral or more assertive, it’s too strong from what they’re used to. They’re used to women being so pleasing that any show of strength, it doesn’t have to be aggression, is labeled “bitch.” But “bitch” started to represent the part of [women] that will physically fight back.

It sounds like you’re reclaiming the negative use of “bitch.” And I’m not sure if you’re ever worried that when you use the term with young girls, they would buy into the negative stereotype of this term. (Athena)

Yeah, definitely I'm trying to reclaim a woman's right to be angry. Women who get angry before they get afraid get away more often. To physically resist, especially at the beginning of an attack, is what gets women safe. So it's really important for a woman to access her anger. . . . So anger, the survival emotion, [is] incredibly important. And that's what "bitch" represents. For women to reclaim that as positive. The part of you that will fight for you [and] values you . . . [because women] have been so socialized to not value ourselves. So the "bitch," she values you. She says "I am angry. You have no right to treat me that way and fuck you, you don't talk to me like that." The part of you that when that boyfriend grabs your arm too hard that first time, then says "I said get in the car," breaks that wrist grip, that looks at him and says "don't you ever fuckin' touch me again." The same as a man would say to another man who grabbed his arm and tried to make him get in the car. He'd break the grip and he'd say, "you don't touch me." That's him standing up for himself. He's being a man. He's saying, "you don't have the right to treat me like that because I am valuable, I have value." But a woman takes it. (Anastasia)

Anastasia stated that assertive women are often perceived as "bitches" by certain men, rather than being respected for their taking a "strong" stance. She also added that when men assert themselves, they are perceived by society as being "real men." That is, the dominant image of masculinity is a man who is physically and mentally strong, whereas the hegemonic view of women is that they are the "weaker sex"; and are therefore passive and obedient. Thus, assertive men are honored with the noble title of "stud," "warrior," "tough guy" or "fighter," whereas assertive women are marked with the derogatory and misogynistic label "bitch."

In addition, Anastasia argues that the "bitch" symbolizes the part of a woman that is in touch with her anger, which she believes is a "right" that has been denied women both historically and in modern society. For her, girls and women need to "reclaim our right to be angry," thereby "reclaiming our 'bitch'." Although Anastasia advocates the importance for girls and women to learn to access and use their "bitch" appropriately, she also pointed out the problems with being a "too 'bitch' identified" woman:

If you're too "bitch" identified, then you're going to move into that realm that men occupy, which is wanting to be violent. It's power over. It's about hiding the insecurity and wanting the power over. So you get women . . . [who] become almost too "bitch" identified and then they're beating up on other women. And then they're hiding their vulnerabilities. So then you need to . . . admit that "child" is there . . . [and represents your] fear. . . . The "bitch" job in life is to defend that "child" . . . then you have the "wise woman" who's there and [who] . . . can handle almost every situation. . . . [But], "wise woman" isn't a robotic exterior personality that you put on even though we ask women to pretend at first . . . just mask your feelings, mask your fear, mask your anger, get "bitch" back, get "child" safe. Just be neutral, be in control of the body language. After a while, it isn't something you're doing. It actually becomes who you are. And it integrates so deeply that you start to not consciously but . . . it actually changes an emotional posture and then all the body language changes from inside. The way you walk [and] gesture, how much eye contact you make, the tone of your voice. For women to reclaim their true voice, "wise woman," she starts to speak from that place instead of from that approval-seeking place. It's fascinating to watch that happen. But it is an integration [of the three personalities].

Anastasia stresses the significance of a girl being able to access her "bitch" in the extreme situations, reflecting the stereotype of the woman as she-bear, displaying legitimate anger only when saving her cub. Yet, she also strives to teach girls how to call upon their "wise woman" in order to keep their "bitch" from provoking an attacker and keep her "child" safe. Her statement, "it is an integration [of the three personalities]," reflects her belief that a complete woman would be able to access and balance all three female identities, and thus draw on her "child," "bitch" and "wise woman" appropriately.

The fourth objective in the prevention section of this workshop is to get girls to do exercises and role-plays meant to help them understand how girls are socialized to be passive and to use the AVP model of "assertiveness" to help them break this cycle. The third hour of the program is spent teaching the girls a series of physical self-defence skills that draw on both mental strategies and physical, martial arts-based techniques. Thus, the girls' workshop offers an alternative ("wise woman") femininity and physical skills, both of which could serve as effective self-defence tools for many girls.

The Coed Workshop

The coed workshop is the third and most rarely sponsored component of AVP. Anastasia rarely does coed sessions because schools often do not have the extra funding to pay for this program, in addition to sponsoring the gender-separate programs. The few coed programs that were conducted were mainly done in northern parts of British Columbia.

Anastasia tries her best to offer the coed session only if the boys and girls have participated in the gender-separate programs. She believes that giving teenagers a safe, gender-separate environment in which to learn about male violence enables them to maximize their learning, as well as better communicate their ideas with the "opposite sex" in a follow-up coed session. She and Amber captured the objectives and content of the coed workshops.

Mostly what we're doing is we never do a coed unless we've done gender-separate workshops and given them the language [of] the "wise woman," the "child," the "bitch." And for the guys, it's the "tough guy" or the "fighter," the "wise man," and the "child." And given them that experience of exploring their identities and their gender identities. And then giving them the assertiveness skills. Then in a coed session [which have] really changed a lot since when we first started them . . . the only thing we do now is role-plays with them. We're always trying to find creative ways to teach them listening skills or communication skills that help them to understand the opposite sex. (Amber)

We open up the coed program with exercises in communication and listening and we have the guys say everything that really bugs them about girls. The girls give feedback to the guys, "well, we hear that this really bugs you," without defending, just an active listening exercise. Then the girls say here's what really [bugs us]. Now the guys get to go first . . . and then the girls go. The guys are not as good at listening, they defend way more but they are able to do it. And we facilitate the communication in the coed workshops. Then we get them up doing the role-plays and have the guys up there with a young woman sitting beside him, have him hitting on her, and her stand up to him. And to have him say, "yeah, that would work," it's so affirming for the girls. In an all woman environment they're going "yeah." But what if this is really a guy. (Anastasia)

The pros and cons of teaching gender-separate versus coed anti-violence workshops will be addressed in the final chapter of this thesis.

AVP: A "Hard Sell" for the Boys

Anastasia and a few of her instructors asserted that AVP remains a "hard sell" for certain schools and for the boys mainly because this program is teaching "feminism and women's studies." The reality is that many schools, teachers, and students continue to be resistant to feminist school reforms. Although their program received ample encouragement from some schools, this was due largely to these schools' support for teaching girls physical self-defence skills. By contrast, this reality and the lack of funding for educational programs contributed to the lessened support for sponsoring the boys' program. In addition, several male schoolteachers questioned the content of the boys' program, arguing that the instructors were either "sexist" or focused too much of their teachings on the "sex act" and not enough on "relationships" (Ben). I did not probe Ben about what he meant by "sexist." But my observations of one of the boys' workshops and analysis of everyone's talk suggested that the male school teachers might have misinterpreted AVP teachers' efforts to address gender stereotypes as a reinforcement of, rather than objection to, them. The instructors' discussions about the challenges they faced in their teachings alluded to how the language of AVP may have been understood by the boys who took their program. Two instructors shared their belief that AVP's feminist agenda may have been a "hard sell" to the male students in particular.

For the young men, we're taking away stuff they've relied on to make themselves feel masculine and strong. And so we have to really make the other way of acting, being assertive, look really attractive to them—that that also looks strong and powerful. I have to convince them "yeah, women will like you even more if you can talk about your feelings." You have to tell them things like that because . . . there has to be something in it for them. (Nick)

Nick offered his view that the male instructors have the challenging task of trying to get all boys to understand that "talking about [their] feelings" is not only a display of masculine strength, but is popular with the girls. His talk assumes that all boys are resistant to sharing

their emotions because doing this would be unmanly. It also indicates that all boys have a desire to please girls, particularly when he stated, "women will like you even more if you can talk about your feelings . . . you have to tell them things like that because . . . there has to be something in it for them."

Julia added that the male instructors have a "harder sell" than the female instructors did.

Partly because for girls, we're selling strength, which is a really positive thing, whereas on the guys' side, they're selling a different kind of strength. It's like when I deal with the fighter girls or the tough girls and I try and sell them on inner strength. . . . They're looking at me like are you kidding me. Inner strength isn't going to get me out of that argument with that girl down the street when she tries to break my face. [The male instructors] are going in and they're like okay boys, we all know how to fight, let's use our inner strength and the guys are like, "my guy friends are going to think I'm a bigger loser. I'm not going to look tough in front of the girls. I'm going to go home and my dad is going to think I'm a wimp." And the guys' program has struggled with that. And now they've got an excellent formula. But it took a long time. The same way it took [Anastasia] a long time. Because [she] started the girls' program 20 years ago and that was back when trying to sell women on being strong was also [hard]. 'Cause a lot of women were like why would I want to do that and then there's a lot of backlash and a lot of sentiment against that. Now there's a lot of movement towards making girls and women stronger. And a lot of people support it. But not a lot of people support guys becoming more . . . like the '90s sensitive guy. It becomes this big cliché, like wimpy.

Her discussion implies that both girls ("fighter girls") who took on "masculine" traits and boys were equally resistant to learning about non-hegemonic notions of masculinity and femininity. Furthermore, both Nick and Julia assume that all boys buy into the hegemonic model of masculinity, wherein "real" men are in control of their emotions and acted "tough" (fight). This is significant because it suggests that when the male instructors teach young men AVP's language, they are approaching this task with the assumption that they are addressing a monolithic group of boys who come from the same hegemonic masculine standpoint.

Nevertheless, Anastasia did acknowledge that there were "cultural differences" and "individual differences . . . which is just about specific individual family values" in boys' practices of hegemonic masculinity.

Sometimes you have a White middle-class father who's telling his son that if they [harass] you, you just punch him . . . it's a real old school . . . generation kind of advice. So some of that is just coming from individual family. You've got some macho father who thinks that's the way that things should be regardless of culture. And then there is a cultural difference . . . [in] schools where there's a high East Indian representation, the boys will sit through the class and sometimes they'll actually express their values. And their idea of who women are, who women should be in their lives frankly ranges from obscene to really terrifying. It's like White culture, the boys will say the same thing because it's a dominant [cultural] belief about women. But they don't believe it as strongly. Let's say a White kid in class might say "yeah the thing I most want from relationships is sex and games and blow jobs." A young man from a culture [where] they are actually being taught that the woman's role is to serve him sexually and to serve him in terms of domestic chores and that her only role option in life is actually to raise the children and to stay at home will say something like that less from a humorous place. They'll say, "well what I want from a woman is someone who will clean my house, take care of my kids and be good in bed." . . . It's the same belief that we have in the mainstream White culture, but it's more intense and more deeply imbedded. And it's harder to shake it because it's been so supported in his ethnic community and family.

She also addressed how hegemonic masculinity tends to be overt in working-class communities, but covert in the middle- and upper-classes.

Well, I think it's very deceptive because I think [masculinity is] masked in the middle-upper class. And it's just more honest in the more working class . . . in a very wealthy family, maybe the man isn't backhanding his wife across the face . . . he's viciously verbally tearing her soul out on a regular basis. And it's just a more educated way of battering her. And maybe he is backhanding her across, not the face because that would show, across the upper arms and the back because battering does happen in those very wealthy families. But it's not done as openly because publicly, socially, neither of those people would ever want anybody to know. Whereas in the working-class family, the working class guy is going to slug his wife in the face because who is he going to hide it from. His buddies do it too. They all talk about it.

There has been some evidence in the literature on men's violence that supports Anastasia's claim that the misogynist aspect of hegemonic masculinity exists in both the working- and upper-classes (see, e.g., Gordon, 1988). Her discussion about "individual" differences in

boys' practices of masculinity is also significant because she recognizes that "generation[al]" differences in views on gender could dictate the version of hegemonic masculinity that boys were taught at home. In addition, she pointed out that all boys are vulnerable to hegemonic notions of masculinity regardless of "race" and culture, but that the distinction resides in the fact that the same "White" hegemonic views on gender are "more deeply embedded" in certain Asian cultures. Her talk suggests that class, "race," and culture mediate understandings of hegemonic masculinity.

Although Nick agreed that class differences in boys' notions of masculinity existed, he, unlike Anastasia, believes that there are virtually no cultural differences in terms of boys' understandings about manhood.

We have a stereotype in our society . . . that Asian kids are more polite and nicer. All stereotypes are based on a little bit of truth, that's why they stick around. . . . Anglo teachers would probably say, "oh yes, a nice class of Asian students, that's a great class, I'll take them." (laughs) But I've been around enough Asian boys . . . and watch them as they walk around the street [and] there's a lot of posturing going on. . . . Asian guys are crazy for basketball just like White guys and Black guys are. You go to any elementary or high school around [here], you'll see . . . Asian guys playing basketball. That's one way of proving masculinity for guys everywhere. It's also a way of having a lot of fun. . . . All guys can relate to what we're talking about is my experience. Guys who come from overseas or other cultures, they're all given the same messages that to be a man means to be all these certain ways.

Furthermore, Julia's talk suggests that girls often reinforced, albeit subconsciously, boys' displays of hegemonic masculinity.

They [say] he must be a loser. They kind of have that reaction as well. That's the big thing is that if a guy doesn't want sex, and if he's not that aggressor in that relationship, then he's a loser. Or there's something wrong with him or he's a "fag."

Later in the interview, Julia elaborated that these girls' experiences were due in part to their low standards as to the type of guy they were looking for in a date.

And girls also expect that from guys, [for] guys to be jerks. They don't expect sensitivity [or] understanding. And if they do have a boyfriend that's like that or friends like that, they think it's really unusual. They really, really have really low standards as to who they're looking for in a partner. Really low from my [standpoint]. Like if he doesn't hit you, he must be a pretty good guy.

Julia's discussion indicates that many girls' attitudes facilitated certain boys' hegemonic masculine plays, which might have, in turn, contributed to AVP's "hard sell" for the boys. Many girls said they wanted a nice boy who treated them with respect, but they also admitted to being turned off when one actually asked them out. This suggests that many girls bought into the dominant image of masculinity, a phenomenon that might shed some light on boys' struggles with hegemonic masculinity. I offer a detailed discussion of this topic in chapter 6.

Although these instructors believe that their program is tough to market, particularly for the boys, they also acknowledge that some boys have begun to challenge the dominant, (hetero)sexist version of manhood. For instance, Anastasia shared:

In one of the grade ten classes, one of the boys said, "okay, I just want to know is anybody else in this class a virgin because the way everybody talks, I would think nobody else here is a virgin, and I'm a virgin." Other boys did put up their hands and admit it. It was very moving for me to hear this [from one of the male instructors] because how wonderful that must have been for these young men . . . 'cause they have this pretend world where they're all sexually active [and] successful. They all know everything [and are] completely powerful at all times. Then there's this real world where they go home and they feel like a complete loser because they think everybody else really is. They're buying what the other guys are saying and thinking that they're the only one that isn't that successful sexually or that powerful. . . . It would be incredibly difficult to be a young man to feel good about yourself because the standard is so high, of what they're supposed to be like.

Ben also recognized young men's awareness of today's gender stereotypes:

[Boys] know the stereotypes that are told about them . . . that there's this series of expectations about how they are in the world. . . . That doesn't mean that they have a sustained analysis about how guys are reflected [or that] they know what to do to change it [or that] they're acting on it. But the great lie is that [we] go into a classroom and say, "I'm going to tell you some new information that you guys are stereotyped." [We] don't have to push very hard, they will know [the stereotypes] immediately. Which is different than my generation because when I was a teenager, I don't remember any of us having a real sense of a consciousness of being a guy relative to women as a gender group . . . which I think has changed. They don't talk about it that way, but the way we would talk about it and come up with what is a gendered representation of a guy. [Guys today] know the stereotypes of them, they know how to use them [and] can play that game. . . . And if you scratch just beneath the surface, [boys] in fact are more complex, evolving sort of moral social agents in the world. They don't have it all together certainly. But they know that [for example] sex on its own is not really going to sustain much.

Ben's talk reveals his view that many of the boys who practice hegemonic ways of masculinity do not necessarily believe in this way of being a man. Rather, these boys have learned how to "play the game"—learned to act as though they fitted the (hetero)sexist image of manhood—though in private, some of them desired an alternative model of masculinity.

In addition, the male instructors shared that the boys with whom they have worked, for the most part, were able to articulate their own perceptions of hegemonic masculinity, which resembled those of the instructors.

So one of the brainstormers that we do if we have time is what are the stereotypes of guys. . . . And the things that they say are body type is buff, six pack, muscular, which is not a surprise. Should be able to fix everything, especially cars. Stereotypically watch sports and drink beer on the couch. Don't take directions from people very well. Take up extra space. Violent. Pigs. Treat women disrespectfully, so sexist. Sometimes racist. Depends on the make up of the classroom and the school and what sorts of tensions have been talked about in the school. There's a whole slew of them like that they've put up on the board . . . the stereotype that they know is that men are supposed to be good at [contact] sports . . . aggressive sports like hockey and football and rugby and basketball.⁶ (Ben)

The stereotype [boys] tell me is this that a man is physically big and hugely muscled. He likes to fight . . . he is always confident, and never insecure or never unsure of himself. Always knows what he's doing, where he's going. . . . The kind of sports that he's especially good at and knows a lot about are the rough, tough contact sports like hockey, football. He treats women badly according to the stereotype, treats women [like] they're just sex objects. In fact, sex is the only thing he wants from a relationship. It's all they ever think about . . . They're like just these walking hard ons. (Nick)

According to Ben and Nick, many young men identified the stereotypical image of masculinity as a male who was muscular in build, very athletic and successful with girls. Their talk suggests that boys not only view hegemonic masculinity in terms of a power over phenomenon, but that they are aware of the negative stereotypes of males. For instance, Nick added that many teenage boys feel pressured to establish their heterosexual status:

I mean you see these teenage guys standing in the hallway of a high school and one guy shouts out at a couple of [girls] walking by, "hey nice tits." And you think, does this guy actually think he's going to get a date with her, that he's going to impress her with that. No, I don't think he does. I think he knows he's not. So he's not dumb like that. But what he doesn't know is how she actually feels about it 'cause she doesn't tell him. . . . But it's not about [the girls]. It's about the guys. What he's doing there I believe is that and some feminist theorists are talking about this now, is that he's publicly demonstrating his masculinity for the other guys. And to be a man in our society is to be sexually callous, to say, "I don't care about women's feelings" [or] "oh yeah, I just like to fuck them and forget them." . . . He's also demonstrating his heterosexuality publicly . . . it's about reaffirming his masculinity with these guys here.

He also offered his theories behind many boys' tendency to display hegemonic masculinity:

Young men especially [are] trying to consolidate their understanding of themselves as male. They're walking around with a pretty serious mask on where they try not to reveal any of their true feelings, certainly reveal no insecurities or what they perceive to be inadequacies, and to try to fit in with other guys, and adolescents . . . really grate under that powerlessness [and] they really want to feel powerful. . . . I think that's one of the reasons why young men will do this strutting around posturing stuff, and fighting . . . [they] are told that men especially are supposed to be powerful in society. So they think they're supposed to feel powerful . . . they see this model in the movies of this fighter who kicks everybody's ass. And if he sees women he likes, he just takes them, and overpowers them. . . . They see that model [of manhood] and it looks like something they can aspire to, that they can have some success with. . . . [guys] just don't have any other models [of masculinity], that's all they've seen, so that's very appealing to them, that looks very powerful and positive to them. So I'm trying to get them to reveal the truth about themselves, to realize the complexities of men, that . . . there are many different ways of being a man as there are men in that particular room. And they're all equally valid ways of being a man. There's lots of ways of being strong, fighting and beating on someone is one way of being strong but there's lots of other strengths that I'm sure I can get them to brainstorm those.

Nick reveals his belief that most young men are passive recipients of traditional gender socialization. His talk implies that when boys do not have access to alternative models, they would tend to subscribe to the dominant image offered. Yet his subsequent discussion about his teachings suggests that he also views young men as capable of complexity and change. Thus, Nick's statement illustrates his underlying belief that boys need the exposure to non-traditional models of masculinity, something that he thinks is not available to the vast majority of young men.

AVP's "Wise Man" and "Wise Woman": A Way to Support Gender Reform?

Anastasia developed the "wise man" model of assertiveness to teach boys how to control their anger ("warrior") in an effective, yet manly way. The implication here is that boys know how to express their anger and that some need to learn to express this emotion in a healthy rather than violent manner. The idea to use these three masculine identities to demonstrate various aspects of each boy's personality is innovative and might serve as an effective tool for some boys. For instance, in articulating the "child" personality, certain boys might become more aware that other boys also experience feelings of "fear" or "vulnerability," which may lead them to experience a sense of belonging. In addition, the description of the "wise man personality" can offer many boys an alternative method for dealing with verbal or physical threats of violence that they had not previously considered. The role play scenarios also allow boys a chance to practice the "child," "stud," and "wise man" identities with each other and the instructor, thereby giving them a taste for how AVP's "assertiveness wise man model" can be effective in different situations.

The "wise man" model teaches boys to control their anger, whereas the "wise woman" model of assertiveness teaches girls to "reclaim" their anger ("bitch") in an effective and safe manner. The rationale for developing the "wise woman" then is rooted in the belief that girls do not have access to their "bitch" and therefore need to learn how to "reclaim" it and "use" it appropriately. Anastasia offers "warrior woman" for girls who find this term more comfortable, but the female category of "bitch" is both negative and an example of a derogatory masculine construction of the feminine. It is therefore important to recognize that Anastasia's use of the "bitch" as a means to "reclaim women's right to their anger," though a virtuous effort, might not produce the positive outcomes that she aims to achieve. For instance, the use of "bitch" to describe females who are "assertive" or in touch with

their anger, particularly within a climate that can be very anti-female, might serve to sustain the negative connotations that are associated with women who were called “bitches.” The fact that many people might not be enlightened by this effort is a potential consequence given that many men and women do not have a deeper understanding about gender labels and scripts, nor do they have the language to reflect on, or talk about, these concepts. I also agree with Kelly when she states, “I am not under the illusion that if a particular stereotype can simply be revealed as partial or erroneous, it can be replaced or erased” (2000, p. 26). Kelly further cites Barrett’s assertion that “stereotypes are tied to historical social relations, and . . . the chances of success in challenging a stereotype will depend upon the social location of the group in question (2000, pp. 26-27). For instance, it remains difficult for women in North America to challenge successfully the dominant patriarchal discourse because they are marginalized based on their gender. Many women are also subjected to various form of discrimination given their sexuality, “race,” class, or age. Like Anastasia, my search for other positive labels besides “warrior woman” to replace “bitch” has so far been unsuccessful. Using the term “bitch” serves as an important means to talk about how assertive women are labeled, but the lack of more positive terms to signify assertive women suggests persistent power inequalities.

Anastasia’s concept of the three male and three female identities resembles Robert Bly’s ideas around the “warrior” identity, although Anastasia developed AVP’s teachings independently of Bly. Briefly, Bly discusses the notion of the “child” and the “warrior” inside each person in his book Iron John. Bly (1990) argues that “a third of each person’s brain is a warrior brain; a third of the instincts carried by our DNA relates to warrior behavior; a third of our thoughts—whether we like it or not—are warrior thoughts” (p. 150). He also distinguishes between the “inner” (child) and “outer” or “external” (fighter versus

soldier) warrior identities (pp. 146-156). Specifically, he claims that children who were raised in unstable homes or whose “psychic house” had been “invaded” were likely to have lost their “warrior” self and to have become “unprotected” (p. 148).⁷ The “external warrior,” on the other hand, represents the good and evil fighter sides of individuals. For instance, one man’s “external warrior” might engage in combat “for a cause beyond himself,” whereas another man’s “external warrior” side fights in order to gain power—such as via rape or murder (p. 153). Anastasia said that she “became familiar with Robert Bly’s teachings years after [she] developed the girls program model,” which she subsequently transferred into the assertiveness model for the boys’ workshop. Although Anastasia asserts that she “disliked Bly’s teachings,” her construction of the “warrior” as the protector and the “child” as the vulnerable in need of protection by another appears to be reminiscent of Bly’s writing.

Connell (1995) found Bly’s “warrior” notion to be “gripping,” but he was careful to identify some caveats with respect to Bly’s “warrior” analysis (p. 6). For instance, Connell (1995) warns that “Bly’s eclectic symbolism and search for archetypes, and media attention to the oddities of his movement (beating on drums, pretending to be warriors), should not conceal” the fact that his analysis is simply “a therapy for masculinity” (p. 209). Connell is skeptical of the techniques used by “therapeutic entrepreneurs” to develop men’s workshops wherein participants share their “emotions and gain group validation in exchange” (p. 209). He views these workshops as a form of “therapeutic cult” that combines therapeutic techniques with the “persona of a leader and a trademark ritual and jargon,” which in this case draws on Bly’s “warrior” idea (p. 209). Thus, Connell (1995) claims that this “masculinity therapy” ends up replacing “a politics of [gender] reform rather than support[ing] it” (p. 210).

Likewise, although AVP's use of the concept "warrior" was not drawn from Bly's idea of "warrior," its use of "warrior" and "wise man" might be, in some ways, replacing rather than supporting gender reform. The AVP conception of "wise man" and "wise woman" is particularly problematic, in four main ways, for boys (and girls) who take up non-White understandings of these concepts. First, the instructors assume that all men possess both the capacity to feel anger ("warrior") in a hegemonic manner (aggressively) and the ability to exercise this power over others. This perspective verges on biological determinism and assumes that all males are equal and does little to recognize the social, class, racial, and cultural differences that exist amongst young men. Anastasia later clarified that she believes there are exceptions to the generalization that all boys are potential sexual aggressors and all girls their potential victims. She acknowledged that there are "males who reject the traditional teachings about manhood and do not have a violent/power over bone in their bodies." She also added that some females are "inherently assertive" and know they have the "right to their space in the world both personally and materially," and that some males either feel or are "powerless due to class and race—falling short of the unattainable masculine ideal." This program's discussion of boys (and girls) as though they are monolithic groups nevertheless reinforces hegemonic constructions of masculinity and excludes non-White ethnic cultural notions of strong men (and of women).

Second, this program's "child," "warrior," and "wise man" identities recognize that boys draw on multiple masculinities in their daily lives, as represented by boys' sense of fear, anger and wisdom, but these identities do not adequately reflect the boys' complex relationship with hegemonic masculinity. Focusing on three male identities (fear, anger and assertiveness) is a way to understand the emotions most linked to male violence. However,

doing this neglects to take into account different cultural understandings and expressions of these feelings.

Pat's description of his goals in the classroom spoke to this program's simplification of boys' practices of multiple masculinities:

What I see my job as with this kind of assertiveness model . . . is to let these guys know, the guys that are playing tough guy all the time, that maybe they don't have to do that all the time and maybe it's actually working against them. And there's ways of getting what they want without having to resort to that. With the other guys who are at the other end, it's letting them know that it's possible for them to stand up for themselves. They don't have to be so scared. And for the ones in the middle, it's just kind of . . . just making them laugh and reinforcing them.

According to Pat, there are three types of boys. The first is aggressive and represents AVP's "tough guy." The second kind of guy is "vulnerable and invites aggression," and depicts the program's "child personality." The third and "alternative" group of boys is made up of young men who are in touch with their "wise man" identity, which represents the part of themselves that is powerful by being rational in thought and peaceful in body. As discussed in chapter 3, Connell (1989) believes rational thought and the "dry sciences" are connected and represent a form of hegemonic masculinity that is "culturally- and class-specific (although even within a class, it is not the only type of masculinity)" (p. 298). He claims that "[t]he dry sciences are linked to administration and professionalism, both of which are connected to power, organized collective power embodied in large institutions like companies, the State and property markets" (p. 298). Given Connell's analysis, one might wonder if boys take up AVP's "wise man" identity as a form of non-oppressive manhood or a version of hegemonic masculinity.

Third, Anastasia asserts that "wise woman" represents women's "true voice," thereby seemingly referring to all women's ability to assert their anger and implying that "wise man" represented men's "true voice." The underlying assumption here is that all

women and men have a “true voice” and understand this “voice” in the same way. Yet, the assertiveness model described appears to be defined primarily within a White middle-class view of assertiveness. Consequently, girls and boys from certain “races” and cultures who understand “assertiveness” differently might not have been able to relate to this model. In some Asian cultures, for instance, it is considered disrespectful rather than assertive for a student to make direct contact with, or verbally assert himself to, a verbally harassing teacher. Within the Asian cultural framework, a student who does this is seen as bringing shame to his teacher, whereas a student who refrains from challenging his teacher openly is perceived as acting with dignity and self-respect, and regard for his teacher’s position of authority. Yet, within a Western cultural context, this same Asian student’s reticence would generally be viewed as an indication of his fear, ignorance, or inability to be assertive.

When I followed up with the AVP teachers, Anastasia wrote the following to clarify her program’s objectives with teaching a Western model of assertiveness.

I feel that what we are doing in classrooms is acknowledging that other cultures have different modes and standards and codes and roles, and that we can’t possibly understand or know about all of the differences. But what we do know is that regardless of what their individual cultural understandings are of being assertive, we are teaching them what works here, in predominantly white middle-class North American culture. I don’t believe it serves an Asian youth to look down and away, even if in his culture that would be “manly” and respectful. [Not] if it is going to get him picked on and even possibly beaten up in his life here and now in this predominantly white—and even when it’s not predominantly white, the culture is—North American cultured school environment. Admittedly, not every class delves as deeply into these issues as perhaps they should given the limitations of time and the specific needs of each group. But the intent is to respect diversity of culture while building skills for surviving *this* mainstream culture (Anastasia, personal communication, September 14, 2000).

Anastasia asserts that her program attempts to teach boys (and girls) a non-violent form of assertiveness based on White cultural understandings of assertiveness because it would help White and non-White boys “surviv[e] this mainstream culture.” I agree that this approach may be helpful to some boys, particularly those boys who adopt White notions of manhood.

Yet, I also believe doing this will negate many non-White boys' cultural perspectives because it sends the message that they must assimilate to "this mainstream culture;" rather than communicate the need for educators to problematize the hegemonic masculinity encouraged within "this mainstream culture."

Finally, although Anastasia intended to use the idea of "wise man" and "wise woman" to represent men and women's "true voice," the notion of wisdom (insight) and truth (reality) are not synonymous. In addition, although she relates "wise man" and "wise woman" to one's logical side, these concepts connote a different meaning, particularly to boys and girls from certain Asian and Indigenous cultures. For instance, in certain Chinese cultures, only elders are believed to have wisdom—mastered from a lifetime of learning and experience—and therefore seen as having earned the position of "wise men" or "wise women." Given this, a boy or girl who takes up this non-Western idea of "wise man" or "wise woman" would understand AVP's use of the concepts differently than AVP intended (i.e., "wise man" as the rational, logical side of men). In chapter 7, I address the implications for non-White students when teaching an assertiveness model that is based on North American, predominantly White middle-class notions of assertiveness.

Discussion

My analysis of these teachers' discussions suggests three main things. First, AVP draws primarily on a combination of liberal and radical feminist perspectives on masculinity, femininity, and power, as illustrated in the teachers' discussions of masculinity and their teachings. It draws on liberal feminism in its assertion that boys are socialized to be aggressive and girls are socialized to be passive and thus need resocialization. Yet, it also seems to adopt radical feminist views on masculinity given its belief that, generally, all boys are potential sexual aggressors and all girls are their potential victims. Although both liberal

and radical feminist approaches to understanding masculinity and power have their limitations, AVP remains an important feminist initiative to educate boys and girls about masculinity and the various forms of male violence.

Second, socialist feminism was not present in the teachers' discussions or the content of the workshops. Socialist feminism recognizes the need to address material inequalities based on "race," class, gender, and sexuality, which parallels feminist poststructuralism. The lack of connection to socialist feminism suggests that AVP might be addressing hegemonic masculinity outside of the contexts of various forms of inequality. Thus, it might be useful for them to consider reworking their teachings around diversity issues.

Third, the talk of these instructors' talk informed many boys' complex relationships with hegemonic masculinity. For instance, Anastasia shared her belief that each teenage boy's level of participation with hegemonic masculinity is influenced to some extent by his "race," culture, and socioeconomic status. A few instructors also stated that older students (e.g., 15 years and up) were more likely to understand the AVP concepts, though they believed some of the terms were taken up by younger students (e.g., 11 and 12 years old).

As I reflect on the instructors' talk, I consider the extent to which the boys in my study understood or incorporated the AVP masculine identities. In chapters 5 and 6, I illustrate how the AVP teachings affirmed some of these students' existing beliefs about gender and power. In chapter 5, I show, for example, that boys were able to articulate male sources of power that were based on physical, economic and intellectual strength. Despite some cultural differences, all boys thought that an aggressive, (hetero)sexist masculinity served as both a societal and school-based norm. These boys' talk revealed their struggles with accepting or rejecting hegemonic notions of masculinity and suggested that AVP's

masculine identities might have influenced, to some degree, their views on what constituted an ideal model of manhood.

Notes

¹ AVP's instructors were also hired to teach variations on the three components to different individuals, groups, and institutions. For instance, they taught an adult component of the gender-separate workshops to various groups such as female college students.

² Within British Columbia, the AVP gender-separate workshops were most commonly taught to grade 10 students. The coed session, however, was more likely to be taught to grade 10, 11, or 12 students. In addition, Anastasia had recently tailored the content of the boys' program to be more relevant to the experiences of grade 7, 8, and 9 boys.

³ In this chapter, I used the term component, workshop and session interchangeably to refer to the different types of workshops that were offered by AVP.

⁴ AVP's language dealt with the program's "assertiveness model," which was made up of three male and three female "personalities." The program instructors coined the term "personalities." However, I use identities, categories, and personalities interchangeably.

⁵ Anastasia did not include a module of physical skills in the school program for boys, as she did for the girls' workshops. She believed that it would make the girls vulnerable if the boys "knew the moves," and that "boys could access martial arts classes within their communities more easily than girls could." However, they did teach, when requested, physical skills to gay men, boys who were victims of physical violence, and any groups regardless of gender or age who were at risk of physical harm due to problems such as racism and homophobia.

⁶ The term "six pack" was slang for describing someone with very well-defined abdominal muscles.

⁷ It is important to note here that earlier in this chapter, I described how AVP uses a similar metaphor for "house" in their girls' program. Specifically, Anastasia and her female instructors teach girls AVP's concept of "hard house" (girl can defend herself) and "easy house" (girl is likely to be a victim of violence) so that girls can learn to display their "hard house" or "wise woman" (see pp. 84-85).

Chapter 5

Boys' Masculinities in Play

The existing research on boys and masculinity focuses primarily on White middle-class boys' experiences and reveals that many boys actively struggle with hegemonic masculinity. In this chapter, I explore 12 White and non-White ethnic teenage boys' discussions on masculinity, sexuality, and male violence within the context of their gender, culture, and "race." The examination of their talk unveils some of the ways that boys either played or felt they needed to play hegemonic masculinity in certain situations, while playing non-oppressive masculinity in other situations. Their discussions also shed light on how "race" and culture inform conceptions of masculinity, as well as on the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and male violence.

Hegemonic Representations of Male Power

Mind and Money Power

The AVP instructors discussed masculinity mainly in terms of men having "power over" women and other men. All the boys in my study identified several different sources of this "power over" type of masculinity, which suggests that AVP may have accurately reflected dominant views on masculinity. Specifically, these boys were able to articulate the essential components of hegemonic masculinity such as intellectual, financial, and physical strength, which were perceived to be important sources of "masculine power" and were addressed in AVP's session for boys. For instance, in their individual interviews, some boys claimed that although the breadwinning model of masculinity was fading in Western society, it continued to be important for many males. These boys reported that men were no longer holding financial power over women because of women's increasing status in education and the workforce.

Women aren't staying at home. They're going out and getting, well of course they have education but they put it to use and go out and get jobs. It's not the tea party at home while the man works. (Antonio, White Canadian, 15)¹

I don't think any more there's really a man's role. I think it's just like to do with your self-esteem. It's basically been portrayed that the man's role is to get a job and bring home the money . . . but since it's changing, like the man won't work and the woman will go out and work. But, among his friends might be this, it might be diminishing. Like degrading to your self-esteem, that a girl is bringing home the money. (Danté, White Canadian American, 15)

Yeah, I think [males] would rather bring in the money 'cause then they have kind of control of, they still feel like they're kind of dominating kind of thing. They got the power and bring in the money, you know. (Arlo, White South African, 16)

I know things are changing now, women are getting jobs and stuff like that. But still I would feel very uncomfortable if [my wife] was the one going out to work, she's the breadwinner and I'm kind of sitting at home watching the kids, whatever. It's also pride. You want to go out and work [and] make something of yourself. Like I don't mind if she's working, but I want to make more than her. I still want to be the man of the house. But, if you're married to a super smart chick and she's making tons of money, sometimes you just can't compete. (pause) It's not the most important thing that you make more money than she does. If you really like her and you're really close then I don't believe in that that much. Although it's a pride thing . . . maybe [some guys] can [stay home with the kids]. But I can't. (Floyd, Indo Canadian, 16)

Antonio's statement "it's not the tea party at home while the man works" appears to harbor a sexist attitude toward traditional, middle-class marital arrangements. However, his discussion also illustrates his belief that many females today do not depend on men financially. According to Danté, the image of the economically powerful man is losing momentum in Western society. However, he also believes that many men still identify their manhood with their ability to earn money. Arlo and Floyd further illustrate Danté's point when they admitted that bringing home the family income offers men a sense of "power" and "pride." Floyd, in particular, emphasized the importance of being "man of the house," claiming that this status was determined by a man's money-making potential. He also stressed that staying at home to raise the children would be demeaning to his manhood, though he was aware that this job might be acceptable to other males.

In addition, in our one-on-one session, when probed about the insights he gave about hegemonic masculinity, one of the Asian boys claimed that in certain Asian cultures, masculinity is characterized primarily by a man's familial responsibility.

Right . . . so what do you think is the image of a Chinese . . . or . . . Filipino man?
(Athena)

The personality of a Chinese guy is to basically keep face, I think. I've heard lots of times. Like if the Chinese man was like to lose his business he loses face, like he loses his status in society. . . . Like of being a rich guy and stuff like that. Yeah, basically they feel like they should be the ones supporting the family, like feeding the children. The wife should be at home, helping them out with school and stuff, being a housewife. But I don't think it's too important. I think it should be shared out equally 'cause I don't want to be the one to push around the family saying I earn the money around here so you should listen to me, 'cause I don't want my kids to hate me for that. I want it to be equal, like me and my wife share like the bills and stuff like that, not only the man paying for it. Really depends where your status is in society, like maybe your wife's like a bank manager and you're just like an employee at the bank. So, it doesn't really matter as long as you guys get off well in life. You both succeed. Doesn't really matter if the wife earns more or the man earns more.
(Julio, Chinese Filipino Canadian, 15)

Significantly, Julio shared that he himself did not care who earned the family income, as long as they were financially secure. Julio self-identified as Chinese Filipino Canadian, but he did not subscribe to the "saving face" phenomenon central to Asian cultures that understands men's worth to be based on their social status and family responsibility. In many Asian cultures, family responsibility is not only achieved by a man's income—an ingredient of manhood that all the boys in my study addressed—or his social status in the community, but is also expressed in terms of a male's quiet demeanor (Chen, 1999; Chua & Fujino, 1999). For instance, Chua & Fujino (1999) found that although White males generally equated their manhood with "anti-feminine" traits such as having a big, muscular body, many American-born men of Chinese and Japanese descent associated their maleness with "caring characteristics such as being polite and obedient" (p. 408). These Asian men viewed both these nurturing qualities and their participation in domestic duties as part of their male

power, whereas their White peers saw both as a threat to their masculinity (p. 401). None of the Asian boys in my study spoke directly to whether or not they viewed “nurturing qualities” as part of their manhood, but Julio and his peers’ discussions did suggest that the breadwinning model of masculinity was valued by various White and non-White cultures.

Levant (1995) reported that many men tried to achieve the male breadwinner ideal because they believed that the sacrifices made to achieve it, such as time spent away from their families, justified the sense of personal “pride” and self-worth they received in return (pp. 177-178). He also found that although not all men desired or had access to this model, many men reported that they did not know any other way to prove their manhood. Some men questioned the merits of this model of masculinity, particularly with the increasing number of dual income families, but others remained heavily invested in the idea that their source of male “power” and “pride” was derived from their position as the sole provider.

The “Masculine/Powerful” Body

Salisbury and Jackson (1996) argue that given that “sources of traditional, masculine authority and respect (like economic power . . .) are only distant invitations” for teenage boys, they are more likely to be preoccupied with their “body image and bodily sense of male power” (p. 190). The majority of the boys in my study asserted that the dominant image of masculinity dictated that “real” men had muscular bodies and possessed physical strength. When asked what images came to their minds when they heard the word “masculine” or “masculinity,” several boys’ individual interview responses pointed to the hegemonic construction of manhood:

The first thing I thought of when you said masculinity was the big beefy guy who has a lot of self-respect . . . and also a lot of what society thinks . . . all the girls like him. He’s big. He has muscles. He’s athletic. (JKM, White Canadian, 15)

Some big ass guy, just harsh ribbed, like huge biceps, six pack. That’s masculinity. (Pazooki, White Canadian, 15)

Probably like a big huge strong guy. . . . I'm not saying that it's good but he probably walks around like all big, all hefty and stuff. He's probably got a huge ego, like "yo baby," that kind of view. And he's probably the one yelling all those phrases like "yo baby, you've got nice legs" or whatever. (Danté)

A guy who's boss, possesses all male qualities . . . no girly things. Like . . . strong upper body . . . he's not a wussy. Not that girls are wussy, but not like soft or anything like that. He's a big strong guy. And . . . he won't even be sensitive. He doesn't like to share his feelings or whatever and he's always like a decent athlete. He's a male stereotype, everything that a male stands for, every guys' positive male stereotype, masculinity. Athletic. Strong. Tall. Smart. If you're thinking a guy and a girl and the guy is older. I guess that's positive as well. Guys like to be older, with more control, more power. Now the negative, you've probably heard them all. Less sensitive. Sex driven, which I don't think is really the case. We found that out when we were doing this thing [in AVP], that 1 in 30 [guys] said sex is what they're looking for in a relationship. (Floyd, individual interview, May 28, 1998)

What I mean I think is that the way guys act around guys is different than the way they act around girls. You can't get too emotional around guys because they'll think you're gay or something. I think it's because guys feel uncomfortable with letting out their emotions and society really pushes the male stereotype of being strong and not showing any emotions, or speaking of your feelings. But when you're with people you feel comfortable with (or in your safe zone), then it feels O.K. to talk about your feelings. I think most guys want to talk about their feelings, but just need to find the right platform on which to do so. (Floyd, follow-up meeting, May 31, 2000)²

These boys pointed out the dominant societal expectation that "real" men had "strong," "big" and "muscular" bodies. Both JKM and Floyd stressed the importance of being athletic, and JKM added that being popular with the girls was crucial to being seen as "masculine." Although Danté elaborated that the physical embodiment of masculinity included having a "macho," sexist attitude toward women, he himself did not find this style appealing. Floyd appeared to support a hegemonic masculinity that was defined in terms of "not girly" qualities such as being "athletic, strong, tall" and "smart." He also viewed males who had "more control, more power" over others as "positive," thus desirable, "stereotypes" of masculinity. Yet, he later added that the pressure imposed upon boys by societal male stereotype is harmful. His clarification is particularly significant because it suggested many boys might play a form of hegemonic masculinity—devoid of emotion—in

order to be accepted as heterosexual males. I return to Floyd's discussion about the link between expressing emotional control and male heterosexual status later in this chapter.

In addition to their talk around societal pressures for boys to achieve a "masculine" body, some of the boys also believe most girls want boyfriends who are good looking and physically fit. In their individual interviews, a few boys' responses to my question, "What do you think girls look for in a date?" illustrated this theme:

I think most girls look for the looks first. . . . They look for the guy's appearance, how he looks at school, how he dresses, and then they go for the personality. (Julio)

I think most girls look for the six pack. I hear that a lot, yeah from girls at school, my sister's friends, "check out the six pack." I think guys and girls both look at a body. . . . I think they want somebody that's fun to spend time with as well. That's, yeah, pretty much the same goes for both. (Pazooki)

[Girls] look for looks, [so] you want to be strong, muscular. You don't want to be fat. (Willy, White Canadian, 15)

Julio and Pazooki argue that girls want boyfriends who have a good "personality" or are "fun." However, they also assert that boys' "looks" and physique are the most important qualities that many girls want in their dates. These boys' talk suggests that certain boys might attempt to achieve "muscular" bodies in order to establish their maleness and succeed in heterosexual dating.

There is evidence in the research literature that indicate many young men work out with weights and in sports in order to achieve the idealized "masculine" body that they perceive will place them in the dominant culture (see, e.g., Morgan, 1996; Frank, 1996; Salisbury & Jackson, 1996). For instance, Salisbury and Jackson (1996) found that by "turning their boyish . . . bodies into manly bodies," boys learned to "associate their physical presence with power and privilege" (p. 189). These boys engaged in physical activities such as bodybuilding or sports in order to establish their manhood and "[counter] the dangerous threat of effeminacy or unmanliness" (p. 189).

Salisbury and Jackson (1996) also reported that there was a “mis-match between what boys think girls will like and what in fact girls do find attractive” (p. 194). They found in a survey of 56 female students that “qualities of being understanding, approachable, sensitive, kind and romantic figure prominently in girls’ expectations” in their dating partners (p. 194). Yet, the researchers discovered that these inner characteristics did not appear to be given importance in the way that boys represented themselves to each other. This finding indicates that exploring how girls defined masculinity and the qualities they desired in their boyfriends might shed some light on the ways that some boys negotiated their masculinities. As I show in chapter 6, some of the girls whom I interviewed supported boys’ notions around the idealized muscular body, whereas others challenged this discourse.

Furthermore, Cheng (1999) argues that Asian males are depicted as being “physically smaller” than their White peers who were the “standard of masculinity” (p. 305). This fact, coupled with the reality that hegemonic masculinity “values physical dominance,” encourages the view that Asian males are “unmasculine” (p. 305). Chen (1999) claims that given this, Asian males, as well as other males who do not conform to hegemonic notions of maleness, are seen as “feminine” and subordinate, and either “asexual” or “homosexual.” The Asian boys in my study did not directly connect body size with boys’ “races.” They did not, for example, explicitly state that Asian boys generally tended to be shorter and thinner (less muscular) than their White or Black peers.

However, in his individual interview, when I asked Tom about his observations of Asian and White teenagers, he shared his perception that Asian boys are more likely to socialize in single-sex groups and are perhaps sometimes viewed by other students as gay:

Usually the [White] boys in here, more like hangs out with girls. Like hangs out a lot in the groups. Guys and girls are in groups. And for Asians they are not. Boys like to play with boys but that doesn’t mean they’re gay. It’s just like play you know. (Chinese Canadian, 16)

When I asked him about whether he thought Asian boys felt pressured to prove their heterosexuality, Tom spoke to the stereotypical images of the “effeminate” male causing certain boys to be “picked on”:

I don't know, but I think the pressure [to be heterosexual] is on everyone. . . . Maybe guys who really like to play with boys, like don't even talk to girls [and] really, really love to play with boys. Or maybe the boys are like tiny. Yeah, they're easy to get picked on, too.

His response here indicates that boys, particularly Asian boys, might be more likely than White boys to “get picked on,” given Asian boys’ tendency to “hang out” with boys. It was unclear if Tom drew on his own personal experiences with either having himself been, or having seen other Asian boys’ being, labeled “gay.” Yet his discussion alludes to the reality that any boy who is small in size (“tiny”) is an easy target for ridicule.

Male Heterosexuality, Homophobia, and Heterosexism

In her work on the social and cultural constructions of adolescent sexualities, Irvine (1994) found that the dominant perspective in many Asian cultures was that homosexual behavior was abnormal. This perspective parallels hegemonic, Western notions of masculinity and reveals that many individuals from Asian and Western cultures disapprove of homosexuality. Kumashiro (1999) asserts that although “the heterosexism of Asian America cites that of mainstream [White] society,” it is “unlike mainstream society [in that] Asian America often assigns racial markers to different sexual orientations” (p. 67). He argues that Asian cultures viewed homosexual behavior as a White phenomenon, but they also “racialized heterosexuality as an Asian value” (p. 67). Furthermore, Wat (as cited in Kumashiro, 1999, p. 67), describes a gay Asian boy as being “not a real Asian [and] more White than Asian, and [having] the ‘White disease’.” Kumashiro (1999) believes that not only are boys who play feminine labeled gay and ostracized by those who subscribe to

dominant heterosexist ways, Asian boys who are either gay or perceived to be gay also face a “racialized heterosexism” in their own cultural communities.

The Asian boys in my study did not openly discuss the ways that certain Asian cultures viewed homosexuality, but two Asian boys’ individual interview responses did offer a glimpse of their thoughts on homosexuality. For instance, when I asked Polo, the Japanese Canadian boy, about what types of talk or behaviors he considered harassing to males, he immediately responded “rape.” He later added “maybe someone just coming up to you and they punch you or something, maybe like a gay guy comes up to you and [tries] to do weird stuff.” Polo’s statement not only reveals his recognition that male to male violence included physical and sexual forms of abuse, but it also implies that he might have linked male-to-male sexual violence with homosexuality. In addition, Kolo, the Taiwanese boy, shared his belief that boys who “talked feminine,” such as with a “high pitched voice,” or who displayed certain feminine “hand gestures,” are probably gay. He also admitted that being around boys who talked or acted in this manner “bother[ed] [him]” because he didn’t know if they were doing it “on purpose” or if they were actually gay. He later clarified that he expected gay boys to exhibit these mannerisms, but that what annoyed him was when straight boys played gay. His talk indicates that he bought into the stereotypical view that gay males were expected to speak and act in “feminine” ways. It was unclear whether or not their views on homosexuality reflect the Asian and White heterosexism that Kumashiro’s work addressed, or a combination of this and an Asian “racialized heterosexuality,” but these Asian boys appear to perceive homosexuality as abnormal and therefore undesirable.

When asked whether they thought boys their age felt pressured to prove their heterosexuality, a few other boys stated in their individual interviews that boys who failed to establish their heterosexual status often got teased or “beat up.”

In my opinion, society doesn't care about you as an individual. They care about you as a group of people or a culture. We obviously live in a straight society. We don't live in a gay society. So whether they say that gay is all right or not, we live in a straight society, and that's the easiest thing. And we don't know how to fix that I think. (Montel, American Caribbean, 15)

Yeah, there's a major pressure. It could be anything from yelling a comment across the hall to make sure everybody can hear. I'm just going to use one of the examples from the last session. "Hey nice legs baby," sort of thing. Like someone might yell that, maybe only once a year but that's sort of like "I'm not gay." It's the same thing as yelling I'm not gay across the whole hall and just makes a point. I find that it needs to be done. Maybe not as often as lots of people do it. Well, like the people that do it six times a day, they are trying to check out a girl. But the person that does it [once a year], they're just trying to make a point like I'm not gay, don't make fun of me. (JKM)

I think it's important for guys like some time in their schooling career to show that they're heterosexual. Yeah, for sure. Otherwise, if you don't really show that and you kind of hold back . . . then you might just do one thing wrong and then you'll be called gay or something like that. And you haven't really done anything to set that straight. Like sometimes guys called gay get beat up and stuff like that. I don't know, just get hassled probably, every day. You could lose your friends, guy friends most of them. I guess life just gets a lot harder. (Arlo)

Other boys added in their individual interviews that emotional control was a key component of masculinity. For instance, when probed about their discussions around male heterosexuality, two boys' talk captured many boys' struggles with expressing their feelings:

If a guy is hugging with a guy . . . if you're comforting a death in the family, I guess that's okay or something traumatic. Well (pause) people see masculinity as strong and more the boss, like protector of the female who's smaller, weaker. . . . So if you see a male comforting another male, say like a death, that would be a sign of you're inferior. Well I'm thinking more [arm] around the shoulder. But if another person, not knowing what happened, sees another guy like hugging another guy, it'd be seen as being weaker and being more feminine. (Antonio)

I mean I like to take certain things, like the athlete, tall . . . masculine, although sensitivity is, like I mean it's not so masculine, it's kind of feminine but . . . you got to show emotions towards some people sometimes. It has to be a part of you and I'm thinking of this model person right [a classmate]. . . . He's a big guy, athletic. He's not very sensitive . . . and he's the man with the chicks and everything. He's like big time in the school and he's got a very big popularity base. (Floyd)

Antonio asserts that it was "safer" for young men to utter displays of "weakness," such as crying or comforting other boys—under extreme or "traumatic" circumstances. Although

Floyd acknowledged that guys must “show emotions toward” other people “sometimes,” he appears to look up to a male classmate who embodies the hegemonic qualities of masculinity. That is, Floyd’s “model person” was “a big guy,” “athletic” and “not very sensitive” who nevertheless still managed to have “the chicks” and “a very big popularity base.” Also significant is the fact that Floyd openly admitted to being very conservative in his views about masculinity and sexuality. During his focus group interview, for example, he confessed that, “I find it hard to show any kind of emotion toward another guy. . . . I find it extremely uncomfortable . . . watching any kind of guy displaying any kinds of emotion to any other guy. . . . I’m a homophobic.” It is unclear where Floyd got the language (i.e., “homophobic”) to express his disdain for a gay sexual identity. Yet, it was evident that Floyd associated expression of one’s feelings with homosexuality and thus went to great lengths to avoid such displays. In his individual interview, Floyd responded to the question, “Do you think boys experience pressures to prove their heterosexuality?” by stating:

Yeah, totally. I know there’s a lot of homophobia going around, I don’t want to be gay, I want to make sure everyone knows I’m straight, I’m going to go out with a girl.

Two other boys’ individual interview responses also spoke to many boys’ struggles with establishing their manhood publicly, particularly when confronted with a potential fight situation.

Yeah, like if a guy got into a situation where in the outcome it seemed like he was a little less manly than he should have been and guys kept on ragging him about that, that might be done. Standing up for yourself, like doing it in a way that guys might not consider manly. Say you go and a situation arises and you decide that you’re going to settle it in the back field and maybe you decide this guy’s going to kick the shit out of me, I would like to go home. And everybody’s out there waiting for you to show or maybe you go out there (pause) and . . . you lose . . . or maybe you got out there and you say, “hey man, look, I don’t really want to fight.” I would consider that a big move, to go out there and say, “I don’t want to fight” in front of all those guys. But then again if some of those guys started getting on you, that might be a situation where you might come out seeming less than a man. Yeah, like maybe not to your friends you wouldn’t seem less of a man, but like when the word spreads, some people might say, “what a pussy” or something like that. (Pazooki)

With guys it's hard because you have to show you're masculine and stuff and other guys are saying "don't be a fag, don't be a pussy, don't back off, he said this about so and so and about your friend." Yeah, you should stand up and be a man. But you know you're scared to fight him but you have to put on this tough guy thing to show that you're not scared because he's the one that started stuff with you. You just have to show yourself off to your friends, that you're not scared of whoever was harassing you. (Julio)

In his work with boys, scholar and clinical psychologist William Pollack found that traditional expectations about manhood encouraged boys to exhibit only their feelings of anger (Pollack, 1998). This implies that for many boys, aggression and violence are the only means by which they communicate their anger, sadness, or loneliness. The talk of the boys in my study indicates that an important measure of a boy's masculinity was his ability to suppress his emotions. Their discussions also suggest that boys who fail to either establish their heterosexuality or keep their emotions inside and fight are likely to be labeled "gay" or to experience verbal or physical violence.

However, when I asked them if they saw girls dealing with the lesbian label, all the boys assert that girls did not have the pressures that boys had to affirm their heterosexuality. For instance, in his one-on-one session with me, Floyd offered his theory on why he thought only boys struggled to prove their gender identity.

I think it's more acceptable to be a lesbian than it is to be gay . . . 'cause I think when you're younger, little girls are always holding hands. And you never see two guys holding hands. And I guess through that it's always been more acceptable for lesbians, to see two girls together than to see two guys . . . also guys are more self conscious of being homos. Nobody likes homos. So if you see two guys, it's [they're gay]. But girls aren't as bad and they see a few girls going together, it's fine. (Floyd)

Floyd's statement implies that boys and girls were passive recipients of gender socialization because he believes that they learned to "accept" girls being physically affectionate with each other, whereas boys learned to be "self conscious of being homos." Although he is likely projecting his own "homophobia," his talk does speak to some boys' concerns with being placed in the ostracized, "gay" culture.

Cheng (1999) argues that because hegemonic masculinity is “a relational construct, it needs gayness as a contrast, as something to be more than, something to be against” (p. 307). Several authors assert that the dominant masculinity script currently constructed in North America encourages males to establish their manhood via heterosexual displays (emotional control and physical strength) and practices (athletic and heterosexual prowess) (see, e.g., Connell, 1996; Epstein, 1997; Nayak & Kehily, 1996). Haywood (1996), in his examination of sex talk in schools, reported that many boys “performed their heterosexuality by displaying sexual knowledge and competence . . . and expressing erotic prowess and athleticism” (p. 241). These boys were attempting to establish their masculine identities by publicly articulating their heterosexuality. Furthermore, Kaufman (1997) found that many boys engaged in sexist practices to prove to other boys and, “presumably to themselves, that they were real men,” that “the harassed girls were tokens of their masculine credentials” (p. 17). The findings from these studies indicate that many boys who are aware that dominant versions of masculinity are firmly connected to male heterosexuality feel pressured to play hegemonic masculinity.

Nayak and Kehily (1997) argue that the “pervasiveness of homophobic language and actions within schools cannot be underestimated” (p. 139). In their work on masculinities and schooling, they reported that students’ homophobic practices served as “classroom humor, to disrupt sessions...for the construction of masculinities and as a form of abuse toward other [students] or teachers” (p. 140). Further, Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997) found that “there [was] overwhelming evidence to show that verbal and physical harassment, teasing and taunting relating to sexuality or gender against girls and women” were rampant in schools (p. 123). Perhaps even more disturbing was the fact that boys who either adopted or complied with these gender and sexuality scripts were seen by many of their classmates and

teachers to be acting appropriately male and thus rewarded for their behavior. By contrast, young men who displayed any talk or actions deemed to be feminine were labeled "gay" or "pussy," pushed to fight, or both. Boys who challenged or resisted these dominant discourses and practices were punished for doing so, which made them "easy" targets of verbal or physical abuse.

Most of the boys in my study were aware of the extent of homophobic and sexist talk in their schools, but a few boys also added that working-class boys are more likely than boys from higher income families to engage in sexism. Arlo responded to the statement, "It's no big deal if a bunch of guys want to check out a girl and whistle or yell stuff like nice legs," with a stereotypical view that boys from lower financial backgrounds are more likely to engage in sexist talk. He stated, "I think it's different with different guys . . . like maybe someone from [a working class neighborhood] might do that," and a couple of other boys in the Beach focus group interview nodded in agreement.

Although they may have been perpetuating a stereotype, there is some evidence in the literature to support the perception that working-class boys are more likely than middle-class boys to practice an aggressive, (hetero)sexist version of masculinity (see, e.g., Connell, 1989; 1996). For example, Connell (1989) found that young men from working-class backgrounds who were streamed into lower-level courses sought out other forms of masculine power such as sporting prowess, physical aggression or sexual conquest (p. 295). In addition, Mac an Ghail's 1994 study showed that boys from higher socio-economic families were likely to excel academically because they are given special privileges by school administrators, such as preferential treatment in terms of course selection and scheduling (p. 60). These boys organized their masculinity around themes of rationality and responsibility. Nonetheless, other scholars have reported that often the emotional, physical and sexual violence suffered

by women whose partners were White, middle- or upper-class males were easily masked given the men's respected cultural and socioeconomic standing in the community (see, e.g., Levant, 1995). It is therefore necessary to recognize that hegemonic masculinity is linked to male violence and crosses class, culture, and "race" boundaries.

Sporting Hegemonic Masculinity

Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997) argue that hegemonic notions of masculinity are linked to male violence, and that this violence is widespread in school and "occurs along a continuum and involves physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse of power at individual, group and social structural levels" (p. 117). They found that many boys in schools competed with each other at both the individual and group levels. These boys did so, for example, in sports, in fighting prowess and, for older boys, in heterosexual conquest. Boys' negotiations around "male dominance/subordination relations" were thus generally played out by their participation in "legitimate (sports) [or] illegitimate (brawling, bashing) physical violence" (p. 122).

Several boys in my study stated that the expectation to achieve a "masculine" physique and establish one's heterosexual status went hand in hand with being competent in sports. Although all of them played sports, only some participated in competitive school sports such as soccer, hockey, basketball, and football. A few of the boys did sports either for fun or physical education requirements, but several of them engaged in athletics in order to establish their masculine status. For the latter group of boys, sports, whether played in gym class or on the schools' athletic teams, were seen not only as a male activity, but also as an important means to express their masculinity. For example, in our individual interview, when asked about his views on gender-separate and coed anti-violence classes, Willy's reply revealed that sports was a stage wherein he could act out his physical aggression legitimately.

It's like PE class, I don't think girls and guys belong together. Like if I'm playing hockey with a girl, I really don't want to be there because I don't want to have to hit her. In hockey, there's bumping and stuff. . . . I don't take my aggression out on fighting, I take it out on sports. If I hit you and you're hurt, well hit me back, but don't punch me, hit me back in the game. I don't want to hurt anyone. But if I hit [you] and you're upset about it, you should hit me back in the game, won't upset me, but don't, let's not fight over it.

Also, in our one-on-one session, Pazooki talked about the level of competitive aggression that was expected from boys when they engaged in sports when I asked him to respond to the stereotype that boys were aggressive. His statement suggested that aggression in sports was the norm and that many boys combine physical force with their athletic ability in order to compete and win as a team.

Like we were just playing baseball the other day and it's pretty competitive for guys. You get out there and you don't want to lose to this other team. Well I would say in a sports respect when we're in a situation where there's something to be won, lost, gained, that kind of thing, I would say we're aggressive. I think if we're in a situation where there might be something to be shared or gained for all of us, we would be aggressive cooperatively to get that thing. Yeah. Like our team would be aggressive as a collective, but I don't think that would filter down to teammate against teammate aggressive.

Several boys in my study described the pressures to "measure up" and gain peer acceptance experienced by many young men. For instance, in his individual interview, JKM discussed his struggles to gain popularity via his participation in school sports.

What about the stereotype that boys are aggressive? (Athena)

[Guys] are more aggressive in sports. . . . I was on the football team because I wanted to be, I've always been considered one of the more quiet, stays out of fights. I was always tall but I was more the weak tall person and I wanted to be viewed differently because I really didn't have a ton of friends then. So I joined the football team and I was always on the ground. And now, like just half way through the new semester . . . we're having football in class. And some of the people who I was going against, who I would have run away from before, like just playing football in class we were allowed to play tackle. They ran away from me. I was more mowing them down because I've learned to use my size to my advantage and my strength more. (JKM)

When I probed in our individual interview, Floyd elaborated that being "a good player" in contact sports was directly related to his having "a lot of friends."

Quite often, like on my soccer team . . . all the good players hang out with each other kind of thing 'cause you're good. Oh . . . give him a pass, he's a good player. Respect the guy athletically, so he always has lots of friends. The guys that suck on the team for some reason or another, he doesn't have a lot of friends, and it's always been that way, I guess. Athleticism is a big one. (Floyd)

These boys' discussions reveal that excelling in school sports is a crucial means to maximize their physical size and display their physical skill and toughness, thereby establishing their membership in hegemonic masculinity.

Pollack (1998) argues that although sports provide boys with a stage for expressing their feelings or exposing "their yearning for connection," they are also "a place where boys showed unbridled aggression, let out inappropriate feelings of anger and frustration, and actually hurt other boys" (p. 273). In addition, Connell (1996) asserts that "[s]ociological research on sport has shown how an aggressive masculinity is created organizationally by the structure of organized sport, by its pattern of competition, its system of training, and its steep hierarchy of levels and rewards" (p. 209). Although the image of the aggressive and athletic masculinity is both popular and predominant in the sports media, most males do not live up to the standards created.

Some researchers have found that not only were certain levels of male violence permitted when played out within the sports arena, but that these displays were often accepted and applauded by many school staff and coaches (see, e.g., Eder, Evans, & Parker, 1995; Mac an Ghaill, 1994b). For instance, in the game of hockey, players informally assigned the role of "enforcer" are expected to start a fight with those players on the opposing team who are trying to injure one of the enforcer's team's smaller, yet faster and valuable players. Not only do referees ignore such a brawl, but the other players on both teams would also stand aside and watch, often with a sense of enjoyment and amusement. Sabo and Panepinto (1990) argue that the sport of football "has sustained a hegemonic

model of masculinity that prioritizes competitiveness, asceticism, success (winning), aggression, violence, superiority to women, and respect for and compliance with male authority" (p. 115). Furthermore, Messner and Sabo (as cited in Frank, 1996, p. 117), assert that for many young men, sports serve to "maintain inequality between and among [boys] along divisions of physical size and strength, class, and sexual orientation." This demand on boys often leads to anxiety, fear and low self-esteem for boys who do not "measure up" to these standards of manhood.

Furthermore, some Australian and British studies show that White working-class and Black English schoolboys were generally streamed into lower-level courses or into competitive school sports (see, e.g., Connell, 1989; Jackson & Salisbury, 1996; Mac an Ghaill, 1994b). These findings indicate that socio-economic class inequalities, combined with negative cultural stereotypes, serve to support the aggressive, oppressive masculinity model that the boys in my study described. For example, Mac an Ghaill's 1994 ethnographic study on masculinity, sexuality and schooling demonstrated how certain male teachers and students measured everyone against the football players—with their fit bodies, physical strength and power (p. 194). In addition, he found that many school administrators actively sought success in competitive sports as a source of prestige. Consequently, the football team's championships attracted as much honor and indulgence from staff as the school's academic accomplishments.

Western images of the Black man as representing the body and the White man as depicting the mind are both destructive and pervasive in society (Segal, 1990, p. 180). Mac an Ghaill (1994b) found that White male teachers justified the over-representation of Afro-Caribbean male students in football based on their assumption that the Black boys were innately physically superior and of low academic capacity and achievement (p. 196).

Although these boys were alienated from school life partly because they were streamed into lower-level courses, many male teachers celebrated their macho sporting display. As the American Caribbean boy in my study shared in our individual interview:

A Black culture. In the States it's you play basketball. . . . Black people . . . get the sense that the only way we're going to be accepted is if we prove ourselves. And no one's going to give anything to us. (Pause) I guess basketball and rap or whatever is the only way, or sports is the only way they can really prove that. And . . . there's like a lot of Black people who are in business but they're not a majority to any extent at all. So it's a lot tougher for a Black person to become a lawyer growing up in the projects of some sort right, 'cause they're not given the opportunity. They're lucky to get through school. And even if they are smart, teachers are going to be telling them to get into sports or to get into areas that [teachers] think [Black boys] are going to excel in. So you could also portray it in the way that slavery is still here, but it's portrayed a lot in a different way. By saying that you can't do that because I don't think you're smart enough or I don't think you have the talent. Yeah, they just changed it. [Slavery] is still there right. (Montel)

Montel disclosed that he was being recruited illegally by a few male high school basketball coaches in the province. Although he was an intelligent person, the dominant assumption and expectation placed on him related to his physicality and sporting prowess rather than to his intellectual capacity. It is evident that Montel believes the male teachers and coaches see him primarily as the most valuable player, as the one who is expected to bring the high school to the provincial basketball championships. Montel's desire to pursue a professional career in basketball indicates that he might be playing one aspect of the racist notion of Black masculinity due to his awareness of the educational limits placed on Black boys. Yet, he also aspires to become a professional basketball player given his love for the game. Nevertheless, his disclosure speaks to the need to examine both class and racial stereotypes of masculinity (re)produced by secondary education and the implications this has for certain boys' schooling.

Another significant theme is that certain Asian boys placed less importance on their athletic ability than did their non-Asian peers. Kolo, one of these Asian boys, stated in his individual interview that his male role model was a professional athlete:

Kobe Bryant. He played on the LA Lakers. He's a basketball player. He got money and he got fame, so that's why I think guys would, at least I would want to admire him. And his education isn't that bad. I don't remember the score on his SAT, but it's pretty high . . . and I think it said in the newspaper that he can enroll in almost any school in the States if he wants to. He plays on the Lakers, but at the same time still goes to school. He worked hard for [everything] and he got it. (Taiwanese, 16)

Like his non-Asian peers, Kolo also looks up to a professional male athlete. But what is different in his talk is the emphasis he also placed on this basketball star's work ethic and intellectual strength. That is, Kolo said that one of the things he most respected about Kobe Bryant was that he worked hard at honing his athletic skill and in his educational pursuits. By contrast, when naming their male role models, non-Asian boys who selected a professional athlete tended to focus on the athlete's fame, fortune, or popularity with women. One White boy said in the Ocean View focus group interview:

Michael Jordan. He's just tall. He has money. He has lots of respect from other people. He's got like, you see people with like these T-shirts on, his name is written on. You can almost find it anywhere. He's just known really well. (JKM)

These boys' talk suggests that certain Asian boys might identify their masculinity with being a hard worker or with their educational pursuits, whereas some non-Asian boys' sense of maleness might focus more on the popularity aspect of dominant Western masculinity. There is some support for the belief that Asian cultures may attach less meaning to Western notions of sporting due to their cultures' strong work and education ethic (see, e.g., Flemming, 1991). Nevertheless, all the boys in my study recognized that athletic prowess was an important means for young men to obtain a "masculine" body, display their physical strength and establish their masculinity within the hegemonically defined White, heterosexual culture.

Accepting and Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity

All the boys in my study were able to articulate what they perceived to be the dominant images of masculinity. For instance, as illustrated earlier, several of them talked about the popularized image of manhood as someone with a muscular build, six pack and all. However, most of them were also disturbed by this image and saw it as either unhealthy for boys or unattainable by the average male. In his individual interview, Julio's discussion about the dominant image of masculinity best illustrates these boys' sentiments:

I read basketball magazines but nothing to do with your image. But you see basketball players and they're all muscular so you kind of want to be like them. 'Cause there's not really any magazines that focus on guys should look like this basically and like in ads too. You never see a fat guy advertising cologne. It's always a real muscular guy advertising Calvin Klein or Polo or whatever. Yeah, it's like the world saying you have to look like this in order to get a girl, 'cause it always shows a muscular guy with a beautiful girl. If you're not muscular, you won't get a beautiful girl. That's what it's trying to impose on people I guess.

His talk is significant because he unveils many young men's struggles with choosing between refusing or playing a hegemonic, heterosexual masculinity. He displayed an awareness of the media-projected image of the ideal man as having both an athletic physique and beautiful women. Yet his negotiations with this ideal are also apparent from his talk when he stated, "I read basketball magazines but nothing to do with your image. But you see basketball players and they're all muscular so you kind of want to be like them." Julio sees basketball magazines as sports oriented reading materials and thus different than girls' fashion magazines, which he views as focusing primarily on body image. However, he also admitted that the basketball magazines portray an ideal of the male muscular physique, although within the context of sports. Thus, Julio understands that the male athletic types illustrated in the sports magazines represent a masculine standard projected by dominant masculinity scripts, which many boys feel pressured to play.

Another example of boys' struggles with hegemonic masculinity is evident from Willy's critique of this image in our individual interview.

There might be some pressure to be big and strong, but I think it's impossible. No one's perfect. If you're perfect you'll be on a magazine cover. . . . If you're big and strong and you look decent, average marks, have a nice car, everything's going for you. That's my vision of a man.

His statement about the impossibility for boys to achieve this masculine ideal reveals his own desire to adopt a dominant, Western notion of masculinity. Willy believes that this is an unrealistic image seen only on magazine covers. Yet, he also aspires to this portrayal of manhood when he said "If you're big and strong...everything's going for you. That's my vision of a man." Willy does not view this image as problematic. Rather, his perception that this masculinity is out of his reach is what keeps him from thinking that he can embody it.

When I asked the boys at Beach Secondary what they thought were some negative stereotypes of guys, a few boys were quick to respond and challenged the negative stereotype that all males were sex-driven "maniacs."

People say that guys want more out of a relationship than girls . . . like in sexual ways, but sometimes it's the girl who wants more . . . they always say that the guys are the ones who are playing the girls, but sometimes the girls are playing the guys . . . moving from guy to guy. (Julio)

Playing the girl means? (Athena)

They get with one guy, say like/ (Julio)

They're not serious. (Arlo)

They flirt with you and stuff . . . but they say guys are the ones who do it more. (Julio)

Okay, interesting point. What do other people think? (Athena)

It's like different, I don't know how to explain this. But like different views of things . . . a guy goes around and he gets tons of play, you know I'm talking about guys that try to get play, like you get some. He gets some and he's considered like the man right, but if a girl does the same thing, she's considered a slut. It's just different views of it. (Danté)

Yeah, the girls never get labeled cool, but guys do. (Julio)

The girls get labeled slut whereas guys are like cool. (Danté)

Yeah, but girls are in there to get some from guys too. The girls get a bad rap, but with the guys, they go "oh, I can go out with that girl because you can get play from her." (Julio)

Yeah, but I think guys and girls want more of a sexual relationship equally . . . it's made up that the guys think about sex 24-7, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I don't think a lot of guys do that. I think we're stereotyped that way. Like after we had the [boys' workshop], I had girls coming up to me and say "oh, you guys think about sex like every 8 seconds," which is totally not true. Like we're not like some sex maniac. (A few guys laugh and nod in agreement). It's like a total stereotype that guys are just out there for sex. Guys want meaningful relationships and they're not just out there to get some. (Danté)

Well, it's a stereotype that guys look for stuff in girls like big breasts and like a nice body. (Julio)

It's not all we want. (Kolo)

Yeah, definitely not all we want. (Arlo)

So what are some other qualities that would be important to you in someone you date? (Athena)

Funny, a good sense of humor and a good personality. (Danté)

Someone you trust and can talk to . . . someone you feel comfortable with. (Arlo)

Same interests. (Willy)

Then a bit later in the focus group interview, when I asked what they thought girls wanted out of relationships, they revealed:

I think girls want more like the physical part . . . they like you to dress nice. They like you tall, they don't want any short guys. (Kolo)

Yeah, I think they like height, like if you're tall or not and if you've got a good smile and you're friendly. (Antonio)

Yeah, I get pissed off at a lot of girls because they put it out like we're the bad guys in it right but/ (Arlo)

But they're the ones that want the play. (Julio)

They kind of sit back and say the guys are bad, but a lot of times it's the girls who are initiating. (Arlo)

[Girls] like do something to you . . . like give you signs that they want something to happen, but when [guys] do something, they say you're moving too fast or whatever. (Julio)

Kolo agreed with Julio's claim that boys are not just looking for "a nice body" in their female dates. Danté's assertion that guys are stereotyped as being obsessed with "sex like 24-7" is particularly significant because he shared that the boys who took AVP appeared to have received criticism about this male stereotype from certain girls who participated in the girls' session. This indicates that the girls were not only taught about issues related to masculinity, but that they seemed to have come to the conclusion that young men were preoccupied with sex. This disclosure seems to confirm my observations of the girls' sessions in that some of the role-play scenarios about potentially harmful situations do reflect stereotypical understandings of hegemonic masculinity. In addition, Arlo and Julio both explicitly argue that not only do many boys resist a notion of masculinity that involves heterosexual conquest, but that it is often the girls who are initiating these relationships. That is, based on their experiences with certain social circles in and out of their school, they found that some girls pursued the boys rather than the reverse. It is unclear whether these girls were assertive in their dating relationships or they were "initiating" these relationships because they thought that was what the boys wanted. Nonetheless, these boys are aware of the double standard that heterosexually active males are seen as being successfully male, whereas heterosexually active girls are viewed as "sluts." Their discussions are particularly significant because they raised the issue of how educators could talk about the dominant behavior and stereotypes without reinforcing it.

AVP's workshop for boys was only three hours in the lives of these boys, but it was possible that the male instructors' teachings may have influenced, somewhat, certain boys'

responses about heterosexual relationships. Drawing on my observations of the content of the boys' program, it is likely that these boys' existing beliefs about gender were further affirmed by the male instructor's discussions around male stereotypes and heterosexual dating. For instance, several boys in my study made reference to one of the exercises used by the male instructors in the boys' session to challenge the stereotype that boys are mainly out to "get some." In our individual interview, JKM described this exercise when asked to give his response to the stereotype that boys think about sex all the time:

I think lots of people are like that. Because also in [AVP] we sort of did something like this and he collected sheets from everybody asking the five things they wanted in a girl and I think there was like anywhere from 9 to 13 sheets that didn't even have sex on there. There was like 35, maybe 40 [guys] in [the class]. And I think there would have been even more but [guys] were still afraid to put it down in case [other guys] looked on the sheet or maybe they recognized the printing. . . . It was mostly respect and trust.

The boys were instructed to not write down their names to ensure confidentiality. Yet, JKM believes that more boys would not have put down "sex" had they not been "afraid" that their handwriting would be recognized by their male peers. This suggests that many boys might have felt pressured to prove their heterosexuality in front of each other while playing masculinities in private that either challenged or did not fit this stereotype.

In addition, when asked about what they liked about the boys' workshop, three boys' individual interview responses shed light on the extent to which certain boys might have taken up AVP's language and concepts:

Well he gave us a lot of different information to deal with, like people hassling you just for money or just giving you a hard time. He dealt with a lot of different stuff that pertained to you as a teenager that could help you in the future. . . . Yeah, teenagers involved in sexual relationships and just given teenage relationships and the pressures. Like have sex and like the girl's influence on relationships and the guy's influence on relationships. (Danté)

There was one scene where [a guy] was at a party, it was talking about [sexual] consent. . . . He was talking about how people get drunk at parties and you just start making out with a girl, all of a sudden they stop, and you don't know what to do. 'Cause it's happened lots of times. You like stop then you don't know if the girl wants to or if she's just too drunk [and] she doesn't know. So I thought that was a good example to use because that happens a lot at parties right now. [The instructor] told us that it's okay to kiss and stuff. But if you were to have sex, it's always better to have it when both of you are sober. 'Cause when, he says when you're drunk or under the influence of drugs, there's no consent because they're not 100%. . . . [And] if you did have sex with her, then she could turn it around and say that you raped her 'cause she was drunk and the law could come into it quite quickly. (Julio)

I can remember most of the lessons but not much of the role plays. Like (pause) there's this one talking about date rape where the girl gets a little drunk. The guy may or may not [be drunk], then they get together and go up in a room. They sort of get along and then one thing leads to another and then they have sex. But, the girl was so drunk she wakes up the next day, she's sore down there and she doesn't really know why 'cause she was drunk. And then her sister comes over and says so how do you feel and she's like well I'm a little sore down there. They take her to the hospital and find out she had sex or was raped or whatever, and then they ask her a few questions . . . then they show up at your door the next day and they arrest you. What are you going to do? Well she wanted to, so it's your word against hers. So it's more or less like a lesson to be careful when you get into that sort of thing. (JKM)

Danté talked about a range of situations that the male instructor presented and discussed with the boys, alluding also to scenarios that revealed AVP's take on "sexual relationships" and the girls' and boys' "influence on relationships." More significantly, Julio and JKM described what the male instructors claimed as a "double standard" in the law around "sexual assault." As illustrated in chapter 4, the male instructors stated that there was a "double standard" in the law about men having more "responsibility" than women for sexual harassment and date rape. These boys' talk showed that their views about sexual dating and "responsibility" are either drawn from or affirmed by the AVP teachings.

Although I believe it is important to instruct boys to be accountable for their actions, particularly since Julio confirmed that these situations "happened lots of times" in his social circle, I am also concerned about the manner in which they were taught this "responsibility."

For example, although the instructors stated earlier that they also taught boys that having sex when sober would be a more rewarding experience, the moral of this scenario appears to be based on ways that boys could avoid the negative consequences for themselves. It is possible that the instructors meant to emphasize to boys that society stereotypes males as sexual perpetrators and females as their victims and is therefore likely to place harsher judgment on boys in these types of situations. However, by not addressing the effects that this scenario could have had on the girl, the instructors might be communicating to boys, albeit unintentionally, only the importance of looking after their own interests. It also seems misleading to teach boys that the overall social disapprobation of rape comes down on [men], or that women who say they have been raped are easily believed. That is, many women who claimed that they have been raped are not only often not believed by those in their communities or in the justice system, but are also often viewed with contempt for speaking out.

Finally, although these boys' talk demonstrates that they understand the positive message that boys must exercise caution and responsibility within the context of heterosexual dating scenarios, one Asian boy admitted to not being able to relate to this scenario. In his individual interview, he shared:

You go to a party and then you drink and a girl asks you to go up to the bedroom. She goes I'm pretty tired, do you want to go up. And then you would have sex with her. That was the scenario [in the program]. I don't think that would happen very often, at least didn't happen to me. Yeah, I don't think that would really happen often to the immigrants. . . . I think, more Caucasian people, those are White people right? Yeah, Caucasians, they're more open to sex, I think. Yeah, that's why. I think Asian people are more private. (Kolo)

Unlike his Asian peer, Julio, who not only related to this role-play, but also claimed this type of situation occurred frequently at teenage parties, Kolo did not see the relevance of this scenario to his life. Instead, Kolo believes that there are cultural differences between Asian

and White teens in terms of their attitudes toward sex. When he said, "Caucasians. Like they're more open...to like sex I think...and then Asian people are more like private," he speaks to the traditional family and cultural gender expectations to which many Asian boys have grown accustomed. This suggests that the AVP efforts to teach boys skills to deal with story lines that reflected Western, middle-class heterosexual situations might have inadvertently served to exclude certain non-White (and White) boys' experiences. Although none of the White boys in my study talked about the relevance of the party scenario to their own lives, it is important to acknowledge that these heterosexual situations might not fit some White boys' experiences.

Non-Oppressive Masculinity or Hegemonic Masculinity's Guise?

As addressed in chapter 4, AVP offers a model of masculinity that appears to be non-oppressive in that it encourages boys to be assertive without resorting to verbal or physical abuse. Yet, this assertiveness was both defined within a White middle-class context and focused on a "rationality" and "responsibility" that seem to represent a form of hegemonic masculinity that is "culturally and class-specific" (Connell, 1989, p. 298). Given that some of the boys in my study seem to draw in part on this program's conception of masculinity, it is possible that their views of what made a non-hegemonic masculine discourse may in actuality reflect hegemonic masculinity masked as a non-oppressive masculinity. Nevertheless, the AVP assertiveness model of manhood is healthier than a traditional notion of manhood that encourages using violence as a means to achieve an end.

Some of the boys talked about their ideal model of masculinity. Their responses were prompted by my interview questions (see Appendix B) that asked about their own ideal images of manhood and what kind of man they wanted to become. Five of the twelve boys' discussions about what they thought constituted a non-oppressive masculinity are

particularly significant because they reveal the tensions boys experience in their negotiations with hegemonic masculinity. For example, in their individual interview, a couple of boys stated their goals for the future when asked what kind of men they wanted to grow into:

Well (pause) when I was little . . . I wanted to become a baseball player. And then once I saw a couple of Arnold Schwarzenegger movies, I wanted to be him. Strong and (pause) yeah, "I'll be back." I like all that stuff. Now I just want to be myself. I don't want to change. I'm leaning towards being a teacher. That or somebody in the computer field because I like computers. (Antonio)

I would like to be self-confident. I probably rather be more mentally strong than more physically. And I want to be like a cook. . . . I want to have some of those kind of skills. (Polo, Japanese Canadian, 15)

Antonio and Polo's talk showed that boys did actively construct their discussions on masculinity and that they often drew on multiple discourses of masculinity. Antonio shared his initial desire to become an athlete and to be physically powerful, thereby subscribing to the dominant masculinity script. Yet when he talked about his career aspirations, he included his consideration of working in the traditionally female-dominated field of teaching. Polo valued the "mentally strong" ("dry sciences") component of hegemonic masculinity, but he also shared his goal to become "a cook," which is considered a "feminine" or "domestic" position.

A couple of other boys offered their own ideal of manhood in their individual interviews, which appeared to oppose the dominant hegemonic masculinity they described:

He's kind of outgoing. He deals with his problems without fighting but just verbally. He talks stuff out. . . . Yeah, I don't like fighting, it's meaningless. (Danté)

Masculine, feeling good about themselves, feeling confident enough to stand up in front of other people and show your masculinity right. But not necessarily having your chest out, having huge muscles. (Montel)

Both physically and mentally strong. Like not really muscular but maybe above average. His mental side. Like even if this guy starts making fun of him and it's like just little stuff, he doesn't get mad or anything. (Polo)

Although Danté alluded to valuing popularity, he did describe a non-aggressive approach to handling conflict in his ideal image of what it means to be a man. He also stated his disapproval of fighting when he stated “it’s meaningless.” Montel seemed to echo Danté’s sentiments when he stressed that “show[ing] your masculinity” did not have to be done in the hegemonically defined way of “having your chest out, having huge muscles.” Polo further emphasized the combination of “mental” and physical strength and an emotional calm. These boys’ talk implies that although being “self-confident” and being able to “stand up” for oneself are important ingredients for being a “real” man, it is also necessary to do this in a peaceful, non-violent manner. Although their focus on non-violence could be considered as non-oppressiveness, the ideal masculine qualities they describe, such as “mental” strength and emotional control, mirror hegemonic notions of manhood. Their discussions also suggest that the AVP “wise man” model of “assertiveness” might have influenced their views on what constitutes an ideal model of manhood.

I believe with Connell that “masculinities come into existence as people act [and talk]” (1996, p. 210). Since masculinity scripts are socially constructed and mutable, they can be reconstructed and rewritten. I discuss how this might be done, taking into account the material constraints on this reconstruction (such as racism), in chapter 7.

Discussion

Three main findings emerged from my analysis of these White and non-White ethnic boys’ talk. First, all boys, regardless of their “race” or culture, were able to articulate hegemonic notions of masculinity that located boys’ manhood in the body, in their athletic ability, and in heterosexual conquest. Other boys also discussed male sources of power that were based on intellectual or financial strength. For instance, the Indo-Canadian boy and a

few of his White peers shared that many males valued the connection between men's sense of "pride" and "self-esteem" and their financial earning ability.

Second, despite some culture differences in their talk on masculinity, all boys believe that boys are pressured to play a heterosexist masculinity in certain situations in order to prove their manhood. For example, a couple of Asian boys argued that White boys are more likely than Asian boys to pursue dating relationships. However, everyone agreed that all boys are expected to live up to the aggressive, heterosexist masculine standard both within and outside the schools, and on and off the athletic field.

Third, all boys admitted to their struggles with either adopting or challenging hegemonic masculinity. For instance, some boys problematized the (hetero)sexist nature of hegemonic masculinity, but they also shared many boys' attempts to play hegemonic masculinity in order to establish their heterosexual status.

These boys spoke to the link between hegemonic masculinity and male violence and distinguished between legitimate (sports) and illegitimate (brawling) forms of male violence. Their discussions also suggest that boys actively drew on multiple masculinity discourses to shape their identities and that "race" and culture mediated considerations of masculinity. In the next chapter, I will look at 14 teenage girls' talk about boys and masculinity, and the ways that their discussions further inform us about these 12 boys' complex relationship with hegemonic masculinity.

Notes

¹ When the boys are first quoted, their "race" and age (at the time of our interview) are indicated in the brackets, e.g., (name of boy, White Canadian, 15).

² Floyd added this clarifying paragraph when I recontacted him in May 2000 for my final follow-up meetings with all students. He was 18 at the time of this reflection.

Chapter 6

Teenage Girls Talk about Boys' Masculinities in Play

Sedgwick argues that “when something is about masculinity, it is not always about men because both males and females are ‘consumers . . . producers . . . and performers of [masculinities]’” (Sedgwick, 1995, p. 12). That is, individuals are actively involved in the formulation and (re)production of masculinities. The feminist literature on masculinity is abundant and has provided extensive critiques of the ways the construction of masculinity impacts both men’s and women’s lives (see, e.g., Dworkin, 1974; Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997; Segal, 1990). Yet, Canadian and American studies that examine teenage girls’ notions of masculinity from their own perspectives remain limited. Given that the boys and girls in my study were either classmates or “hung out” together socially, these boys were likely to have some of these girls in mind when discussing issues such as masculinity and sexuality. Therefore, a discussion of the girls’ talk is necessary because these young women were an important part of the context in which many of the young men in my study talked about gender and power.

This chapter looks at 14 high school girls’ discussions about boys and masculinity within the context of their gender, culture, and “race.” This examination unveils the ways that these girls both reinforced, albeit often inadvertently, and challenged certain boys’ displays of hegemonic masculinity. These girls’ talk suggests that not only do boys have a complex relationship with hegemonic masculinity, but that many girls actively participate in this relationship.

Hegemonic Sources of Male Power

"Masculine" Body Image and Physical Strength

All the girls in my study identified major ingredients of hegemonic masculinity that paralleled those discussed by the boys in chapter 5. Specifically, these girls agreed that physical, athletic, intellectual, and financial dominance remained important ways for boys and men to demonstrate their manhood. Nicole's description of hegemonic masculinity most fully captured the various sources of male power described by these girls.

Really buff and strong. Just like sporty and strong minded. He's persistent . . . he probably has like a big ego. A lot of guys have big egos . . . playing sports, watching sports. Probably want to get a good job so that he can support his family. Feel like he has to support his family. (Nicole, White Canadian, 15)

Several girls also talked at length about many boys' efforts to achieve a masculine physique as a means to establish their manhood. For example, in the Ocean View focus group interview, several girls said that a male's physical build and his macho attitude toward women were important sources of male power.

What images come to your mind when you hear the word masculinity? (Athena)

Big guy, really big muscles. (Jodie, White Canadian, 15)

Big ego. Like "I'm the best" or "I drive a car." (Summer, White Canadian, 15)

Some guy who's like cocky and he thinks he's hot. He thinks all the girls are like "Oh, yeah, they want me" and stuff like that. (Julie, Chinese Greek Canadian, 16)

Big ego. Guy walking around lifting weights with a huge ego. (Alicia, White Canadian, 15)

In her individual interview, Summer added, "[A masculine guy] has to be strong, [with] the six pack. Everyone is going for the six pack. It's just so like macho." Other girls also offered their perception of dominant masculinity in their individual interviews. For instance, Carrie stated that masculine boys were "tall and have lots of muscles" and acted cool by being "not really polite and sometimes [exhibiting] bad manners" (Chinese Canadian, 15),

while Monica said she pictured a masculine guy as being “like buff . . . big ego. It’s the TV image of a macho guy” (Canadian Hispanic, 15). In addition, when probed, Colleen emphasized the extent to which some boys were concerned with their physical build.

Probably like the guys you see making movies. . . . A lot of guys try to workout just to tone their bodies, get the big muscles. They try to look like those people that girls think are hot in magazines. The media puts a lot of pressure on people. I have a friend that I personally think he pushes himself too much. Like when we’re doing weights in the weight room, he bench-pressed 180 and we’re just like “wow.” Some guy who has bigger muscles than him can’t even do that. He wants to work himself so hard just to get that body. He used to be kind of chubby but not really. And I heard that over the summer he tried to lose weight. He didn’t eat and was doing weights at the same time. Well, I went “that’s bad, you shouldn’t do that on an empty stomach.” Well he’s eating now. It’s just that he pushes himself really hard. (Filipino Canadian, 15)

These girls talked about the societal expectation that a “real” man had a “muscular” (masculine) body and a “macho” persona. Colleen elaborated that many boys would go to extreme measures such as over-exercising and under-eating in order to get the body that they believed society and girls demanded of them as males. Her talk is particularly important because it shows that, like many females, many males are in pursuit of a dominant and idealized gendered body.

Hegemonic Masculinity versus Multiple Femininities

These girls’ discussions suggest that boys are limited to hegemonic images of masculinity because no alternative model is encouraged. However, their discussions about gender roles reveal that, by contrast, girls today have access to non-traditional ways of being female, which was another theme evident in the boys’ talk. For example, a few girls shared in their individual interviews:

I think women nowadays don’t usually rely on men. So, it doesn’t matter if I got married or not. I think that’s the main difference. ‘Cause like women many years ago, they tended to rely more on men, they needed to get married. But now I think it’s different. I think [the expectations are] the same [for men]. Like it’s their responsibility to make money for the children and wife. . . . I think men should make money for the family, even if his wife works, he’d still have to work. (Carrie)

I think now women can do a lot more things. . . . Like sometimes it's the father taking care of the kids and the woman's out like she's like a policewoman or whatever. I think that's changed but I think guys do expect that they're going to be the ones who have to support the family like buy the house. That's just been a tradition I guess. (Summer)

A lot of women are starting to work where usually it was a male-dominated area . . . some men are accepting that . . . so I think it is changing. I think women are getting out there and starting to say "hey, I'm qualified, I can do this job, I'm doing it." [And] . . . more celebrities . . . take for instance Sarah McLachlan or an athlete like Gabrielle Reese, they're using their status to tell girls "this is what you can do so go out and do it." I think a lot of girls are listening to that, a lot of women too. Saying, "hey I'm qualified, why I should I let somebody scare me off." A lot of women are going to school, getting their degrees and they're just as equally qualified as men, but they just needed that little push. (Alicia)

Carrie believes that women today do not need to get married because they no longer "rely on men" financially, and thus she does not experience any pressures to get married. She also stated that men, on the other hand, are still expected by many men and women (herself included) to provide for their families financially. Furthermore, Summer and Alicia did not articulate the material inequalities that many working women today face such as unequal pay. But they did acknowledge that an increasing number of women are entering the paid work force and challenging the traditional expectations for women to stay at home and be mothers. The latter image is considered negative by many women and men, though viewed by some as a positive model of femininity. It is particularly harmful because it has been portrayed as the only desirable role for women to take on. Summer's talk indicates that although gender roles are "changing," many men remain attached to the "tradition" that men should earn the family income. Furthermore, Alicia stated that many women today were successful in their careers and served as strong role models for girls. Particularly significant is her assertion that not only are celebrity women like Sarah McLachlan and Gabrielle Reese accomplished, but that they utilize their fame proactively to offer girls non-traditional images of what it means to be female. Alicia also shared that "[girls] just needed that little push,"

which spoke to her belief that females who receive validation might be more likely to try out alternative femininity scripts.

Another girl from this focus group interview elaborated on Summer's claim that many boys are attached to the breadwinner model of masculinity:

I think [women] are beginning to realize that they don't need to be that beautiful in that way to attract people and they know that their life doesn't just depend on being [physically] attractive to the opposite sex. They are focusing more on intelligence and their personality and who they are and what they're going to accomplish and everything. . . . [But] when I talk to my [guy] friends, they say they wouldn't want the wife to work. They don't think it's right. They just seem to think that what was believed years ago should still be around now . . . that somehow they're smarter and they can keep a job longer. The problem is that they don't think [women] can support them . . . that we're strong enough. (Hope, Greek Canadian, 15)

Hope recognized that many females continued to feel pressure to achieve a body type that was appealing to males. Her assertion is significant because she pointed out that although the expectation for women to be sexual objects remained popular and important to many young women, women today could draw on a wider range of non-traditional notions of being female when constructing their own identities. Her talk indicates that some males remain attached to the breadwinning model of masculinity and might be threatened by many females' achievements in the public "masculine" sphere. This implies that certain males who do not hold economic control, but who desire it, might resort to other means of achieving power.

Julie, for example, pointed out in her individual interview that although achieving financial dominance is one way that men displayed their "superior[ity] to women," teenage boys do not have access to this version of dominant masculinity.

I think that mentality is sort of the same in that I think guys are always going to think that they are superior to women like always, no matter what. When you're in my age group, it's more not really on working, it's not careers and stuff. It's more like school and athletic stuff you do outside of school. But for the older age group, it's more like business wise. (Julie)

Julie's statement suggests that given this, teenage boys are likely to engage in other sources of male power, such as athletic dominance, as a means to establish their manhood.

There is also evidence in the research and clinical literature that some men who struggle with their feelings of loss of power and status at work, such as being under- or unemployed, become abusive toward their wives (see, e.g., Gordon, 1988; Kaufman, 1993; Segal, 1990; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). For instance, Gordon (1988) reported that the risks of women being abused by their husbands increased when the wives held a higher socio-economic status than their husbands did (pp. 286-287). In addition, a few of the men that Kaufman (1993) interviewed for his research used emotional or physical violence toward their female partners in part because they felt they had little control at work (pp. 166-7). The girls in my study think images of femininity such as those of educated, working or athletic females are encouraging to girls. However, they also believe that certain boys constrained to (hetero)sexist notions of masculinity would engage in talk and practices that could negatively affect the lives of girls and other boys.

Male Heterosexuality, Homophobia, and Heterosexism

Several (pro)feminist scholars argue that homophobic talk and practices are rampant in schools and that the meanings behind such notions and practices are multifaceted (see, e.g., Epstein, 1997; Frank, 1996). Heterosexism signifies a "gender obedience to heterosexual masculine hegemony" (Frank, 1996, p. 120), whereas homophobia illustrates one method by which this norm was accepted, assumed and maintained. For instance, a few girls who talked about hegemonic masculinity during their focus group interview alluded to the dominant heterosexist discourse that hegemonic masculinity perpetuated.

Now that I've got an image of guys walking around proving their manhood, I'm wondering, do girls go around proving their womanhood? (Athena)
(Several girls shake their heads and say "no" to indicate that girls do not do this).

It's easier in society for girls to be themselves. Guys always have to show that they are more than what they are. 'Cause I think people are the same in that way, but guys try to hide their sensitivity because they feel that's what's expected of them. (Hope)

Later in the focus group interview, these girls emphasized the consequences faced by boys who did not maintain their emotional control.

What society feeds to us. They give off the masculine as some big, tough guy. I mean when have you known the word masculine to be given to a guy who's sitting there crying over breaking up with his girlfriend or something? (Alicia)

So what is this kind of guy? (Athena)

They'd be known as a sissy or a wimp. (Alicia)

Society considers them gay. (Hope)

They kind of put like a guy who cries as like gay, he's like a girl. (Julie)

Society just gives people labels. If you're this way, then you're masculine and if you're not that way, then they would give you the term gay. . . . Society doesn't let you have an in-between. You can't be both according to society. (Alicia)

Like the boys did in chapter 5, these girls also problematized the dominant discourse that boys who maintained emotional control are seen as behaving appropriately male, whereas those who express "feminine" feelings are viewed as acting "like a girl" and cast as "gay." The link between hegemonic masculinity and homophobia is indisputable given that most of the characteristics attributed to gay males are assigned to females (Nayak & Kehily, 1997, p. 141). These girls' talk mirrored that of the boys in my study, indicating that calling other boys "gay" based on their "feminine" behaviors (e.g., crying), physical build (e.g., thin body) or voice (e.g., soft tone) served as one way for certain boys to establish their heterosexual status.

As discussed in chapter 3, another method for sustaining heterosexism is sexist talk and practices. Sexist language, for instance, can be used to sustain boys' "masculine" status.

When asked about their response to the stereotype that guys were “walking hormones,” a few girls’ individual interview discussions pointed to a discrepancy between talk and action:

Most guys are like that [think about sex a lot]. They’re usually all talk though. They might not do [sex]. They might talk about it and they want [sex] all the time. It’s just guys in general. (Colleen)

Yeah, they’ll say stuff like “I wonder who’s going to get laid tonight.” They’re always like talking about it . . . there’s this girl in grade 12 . . . they’d say “if she walked up to me and asked me to do her right here, I’d do it.” They all talk about [sex]. (Jodie)

I think it’s part of this whole tough image that they can’t possibly be tough and strong if people think that they’re gay or something like that. And they’re most scared of that which is weird. Because guys think that the gay guys are weird . . . I think that guys are just scared to be. Not that [being gay] isn’t normal but it’s kind of a minority group and they don’t want to be part of the minority. [Guys] want to be part of the majority. And a lot of things, like gay people get persecuted and stuff like that so [guys] don’t want to be part of that or associated with that at all if they’re not [gay]. So they want to make it very clear that they’re not [gay]. (Leigha, White Canadian, 15)

Colleen asserts that most boys do think about sex, but are more likely to brag about doing it than actually “do[ing] it.” Jodie’s statement is also important because it illustrates how sexist talk, in this case, discussing who was going to “get laid” by the “girl in grade 12,” serves as a means for these boys to reinforce their masculine status. Furthermore, Leigha’s statement reflects her belief that boys who assert their heterosexual status do so in order to establish their space in the dominant (heterosexual) group. According to all the girls in my study, boys’ engagement in homophobic and sex(ist) talk reflects their desire to gain peer acceptance from girls and other boys. The girls discussed topics similar to ones discussed by the boys in my study and appeared to support some of these boys’ experiences.

Nayak and Kehily’s work on homophobia, masculinity and schooling has shown that English schoolboys—significantly more so than girls—frequently yelled out homophobic insults to boys who were either sexually identified as “gay” or boys whose bodies and mannerisms were seen as “feminine.” Some boys also engaged in homophobic “bodily

practices,” such as “walking funny” or “crossing [their] legs,” in order to mimic certain “feminine” looking or acting boys’ mannerisms and to affirm their own heterosexual masculine identity (Nayak & Kehily, 1996, p. 221). These researchers believe that the low occurrence of girls’ visible expressions of homophobia might have been due to the fact that girls, unlike boys, did not feel a need to prove their “womanhood.” Nayak and Kehily were speculating here, and they did not look at certain girls’ experiences, namely those who did not fit traditional definitions of femininity, of being called “butch” by their peers. Yet, the talk of the boys and girls in my study indicates that boys, not girls, are the ones who are more often questioned about their sexuality. That is, many boys appeared to struggle to maintain their masculinity based on their participation in anti-female talk (e.g., sexist remarks) and practices (e.g., excelling in athletics). The fact that young men who are assumed to be gay are imagined to look and act “feminine” suggests that feminized stereotypes of gay men are not only rampant in schools, but remain rarely challenged (see, e.g., Mac an Ghaill, 1996; Nayak & Kehily, 1996, 1997).

Challenging the Legitimatization of “Male” Sports

Most of the girls in my study assert that boys, not girls, are the ones who experience having to prove their heterosexuality, but they also stated that girls who looked (e.g., big or muscular body) or acted “masculine” (e.g., play sports) are branded, particularly by boys, with the label “butch.” For instance, in their focus group interview, when asked about their feelings toward the statement that girls should not be playing men’s sports like football and hockey, a couple of the Beach Secondary students problematized many boys’ claim that contact sports were for boys only.

If [girls] think they can play basketball and they can play football or whatever, they should just go for it and not let anybody stand in their way. [But] a lot of people think that if a girl wants to be a football player or something, then they think she's macho and like "butch." And if guys want to do ballet or gymnastics and stuff that's kind of girly, like a femme. That's what a lot of people would think, guys especially. (Nicole)

I think the same way as [Nicole], but I also agree that guys should be able to do whatever they want to. Sports are a very broad thing . . . and shouldn't be categorized what is a girl thing or what is a guy thing . . . it's for enjoyment and not on the basis of the sex you are. . . . [But] a girl who displays "masculine" characteristics [is seen as] being aggressive or real competitive. (Leigha)

Nicole and Leigha speak to the perception that girls who engage in sports are somehow not being appropriately feminine and are infringing on the "masculine" world of "aggressive" and "competitive" sports. Nicole stated that boys tend to hold this view, indicating that they are the ones calling athletic girls "butch."

When asked the same question in their focus group interview, a couple of Ocean View students' statements resembled the sentiments of those shared by the girls at Beach Secondary.

I play a lot of sports. I have to put up with a lot of that like from guys. I mean they put you down like "oh you can't play this sport, it's a guy sport." And it's like yeah whatever, let's go and I wind up beating them. And then they're just like "oh well that was just like a fluke." They can't handle it if a girl is better than them. I have in my family a lot of professional sports like my grandpa and my uncle and when I say to them, "oh I want to play like softball professionally" or whatever, they're like, "oh whatever, you can't go anywhere with softball, it's a guys' game is like baseball." If I said I wanted to play hardball this year with the guys, I get stuff from [my relatives] like you can't hit those pitches and I'm like "okay, well I go to hardball camps in the summer." And when I was in them I got MVP [Most Valuable Player] over all the guys and they're just like "oh yeah, whatever." (Summer)

I think that it's so stupid that they have to put their label, it's men's sports. Sports are sports. Why can't you just let whoever wants to play them play them . . . they're rough . . . that doesn't label them men's sports. You don't see women out there "oh, pick a women's sport, you can't play." Women don't do that. We have enough confidence that if you want to play, play. If you don't, don't. But men have to like sit there and have their own little leagues 'cause they're scared that women will beat them and half the time we do. (Alicia)

They seem to think they're the stronger sex . . . it all goes back to when men were the dominating sex. Now they fear that we are coming up behind them and we're going to jump over them and beat them because we're getting to be better at a lot of things that we were never allowed to do before. And so they fear being the lower, weaker sex. (Hope)

Summer's talk about the hostile criticism she got from male peers and relatives about her participation in sports revealed many males' attachment to the label "men's sports." Alicia expressed her disdain for men's apparent need to "put their label" on certain sports. She believes that male's desire for ownership over sports stemmed from their lack of self-confidence and fear that "women will beat them."

The girls' discussions from both focus group interviews suggest that hegemonic representations of manhood are constructed as being anti-feminine in body, mind, and mannerisms. By contrast, dominant notions of femininity are constructed as anti-masculine (and lacking in positive qualities such as physical skill and strength). Girls who are seen as built like a man or "too" athletically competent are seen as "not real girls" due to their "masculine" appearance and qualities. On the other hand, boys who do not have a fit physique, or who have failed at sports, are perceived as failed males (read: gay).

As illustrated in chapter 5, the boys associated a "muscular" body with being competent in "male" sports, particularly basketball, football and hockey. When asked to describe the image that came to their mind when they heard the word "masculine" or "masculinity," a couple of girls in their individual interviews addressed the athletic prowess component of hegemonic masculinity:

Just some big macho guy. Big ego . . . better than every body else like "I can do everything, I got big muscles." The big kind of jock you know. (Summer)

I always see guys who are like into athletics and stuff like that who like don't cry. And I guess they're pretty popular. You always think of like the football jock, stuff like that. (Julie)

Summer and Julie both stressed that being “masculine” for many boys was measured according to their athletic ability. Summer linked having a muscular body with sporting prowess, while Julie connected the ability to control emotions with both the “jock” image and peer popularity. When I probed whether they thought that boys experienced pressure to be the “jock” type, they added:

Yeah, I think so. I mean, everybody wants to be good, like athletic. The people who are fortunate to be athletic, they’re proud of that and they use their ability. But there are a lot of people who really want to be like that . . . around this school. Like you’ll see like one of my [guy] friends . . . he’s very athletic. And then you look at another guy and you can see that he kind of looks up to him. He’s like “I want to be like that, I want to be able to play basketball, football, everything,” you know. (Summer)

Yeah, definitely. Like there’s always that pressure there. It’s not really that they have to. It’s just that even if they’re not popular, it’s just what they have to do. They’re just cocky. They’ve always been that way [in] high school. He’s not like sitting tall, he’s sort of like slouched in his chair. He’s wearing like really baggy jeans like that come half way down his butt, that’s like the guys in our school . . . and then I guess baggy shirts . . . eating like chips . . . they talk [about] how guys are always better than girls. I guess that gives them a boost of masculinity when they say like, “oh, girls shouldn’t be playing basketball, it’s a guy sport” stuff like that. (Julie)

Summer asserts that for many boys in her school, achieving the title of “jock” is appealing and important. Julie further described a “jock” culture wherein being viewed as athletically competent meant dressing a certain way and having a “cocky” attitude. She believes that this ideal and the behaviors that come with it, such as doing sexist talk (“girls shouldn’t be playing . . . guy sport[s]”), are directly related to certain “jocks” need to “boost” their masculinity. These girls view sports as a way for many boys to maintain their “masculine” status via displaying their muscular physique and their “cocky,” sexist attitude.

Furthermore, in their individual interviews, when I asked them what they thought boys their age worried about, a couple of girls stated that many boys used their participation in sports as an opportunity to show off their “manhood”:

I guess what girls think about them. All my guy friends play sports. And . . . guys who don't play sports [are] kind of excluded. And even though I don't play Spring league, I'll go watch the guys' game and the girls' game. I think they always want [girls] there so they know that "oh we're playing sports." I think [guys] just want everyone to know that they play sports, like they'll invite us [girls] a lot. If you say anything to them about their sport, they get really mad . . . like "you can't shoot worth anything, you can't play basketball." Stuff like that they'll just like blow up. I guess they want everyone to know that they're good at what they do. (Julie)

Well, just like say you're watching a basketball game or something and they're playing and they see you watching them. So they run faster, they run harder, they're more aggressive in the sport playing, stealing the ball more and like they're really mad if they miss the shot instead of just being "oh, whatever." Yeah, it's almost like they're trying to show off how strong and powerful they are. That's why its kind of intimidating playing sports with them and stuff like that . . . 'cause they're so aggressive so you don't want to get hurt or be too good and show them off, 'cause then they'll get mad. (Leigha)

Julie talked about the negative consequences for boys who were not involved, for one reason or another, in competitive school sports. She said that these boys were generally "excluded" from the accepted male peer groups. For example, in his work on sports and culture, Flemming (1991) found that boys' "low sporting ability" often resulted in "rejection by peers" (p. 35). In addition, both Julie and Leigha pointed out certain boys' tendency to use the sports arena for displaying their physical skill and toughness and for impressing their, particularly female, peers. Julie stated that when girls challenged boys about their performance on the field, boys often "get really mad" and "blow up." Leigha added that playing sports with boys could be "intimidating" because boys are so "aggressive" in the field and terribly attached to excelling and "show[ing] off." In her individual interview, Sandy's response to my probe about boys' participation in sports further supported Julie and Leigha's statements:

It's really hard to play sports with guys because they take it really seriously. Like when we played basketball they won't take it as really fun and a game. They'd just be really aggressive . . . you know how they're more likely to fight and argue with people. 'Cause they don't like to keep their feelings inside in sports and in other things, they would be more aggressive than girls I think. (Sandy, Chinese, from Taiwan, 16)

These girls' individual and focus group discussions echoed the experiences of some of the boys in my study. Their talk suggests that sport not only represents an important source of male power for many young men, but is also an arena wherein girls are only welcomed as spectators, not players. Their discussions also indicate that for girls who are engaged in school sports, the message they received was that physically powerful forms of femininity are neither respected nor desirable.

There is some evidence in the literature on masculinity and boys' schooling that support these girls' discussions about many boys' relationship with sporting hegemonic masculinity. Several researchers, for instance, found that many boys admitted to being shocked that many girls not only played sports with as much skill as boys did, but that some girls often outplayed most of the boys (see, e.g., Humberstone, 1990; Salisbury & Jackson, 1996). These boys viewed sports as an exclusively "masculine" activity in which girls could not participate because girls were assumed the "weaker sex." In addition, Salisbury and Jackson (1996) found that for most boys, "school sport [wasn't] just an innocent pastime" (p. 205). Rather, it was "a heavily gendered, masculinizing process" wherein boys were expected to master "aggressive performance, success, superiority over women . . . [and] physical strength . . . in their sporting activities" in order to achieve this "model of masculinity" (p. 205). This body of work, coupled with the talk of the girls in my study, suggests that school sports often encourage the stereotypical differences between the sexes and serve to reinforce boys' hegemonic masculine plays.

Reinforcing and Challenging Boys' Hegemonic Masculinity Plays

Some of the girls in my study were critical of hegemonic definitions of gender that encouraged certain boys to engage in homophobic displays and deemed other boys "gay." Leigha stated earlier her belief that many boys struggle to define their masculinity according

to dominant notions of what it means to be a man in order to avoid being “persecuted” and “associated with [being] gay.” In her individual interview, Alicia elaborated that being perceived as or labeled “gay” is hurtful to boys because these attacks “question their manhood.” She argued:

Being labeled gay is pretty bad . . . homosexuality . . . is just frowned upon [and] it's not a good thing to call guys. . . . It's a stupid insult, a lot of guys will do it and girls will do it. . . . Commenting on a guy's size, that's a big one, that seems to affect guys. I guess questioning their manhood. That's a big one.

Alicia's talk is especially significant because she reveals that both boys and girls engage in these homophobic displays.

In addition, several other girls shared in their individual interview what they considered as ingredients for a “feminine” or gay male. For instance, when probed about what kind of guy she pictured when someone said “he's acting like a girl,” Winnie said, “Gay . . . very talkative, walk like a girl, thin . . . short” (Chinese, from Hong Kong, 15). However, she described a guy who was “tall, physically strong [with] nice muscles” as epitomizing a “masculine” male. Likewise, a White girl offered her image of a “gay” boy, which reflected the opposite of the hegemonic model of masculinity.

I usually just think of guys being gay instead of girls being gay, like the exact opposite of what I described before. He wouldn't be like this big muscular guy. He'd be like more of a smaller guy. And he wouldn't have a big ego and stuff. (Jodie)

These girls' talk show that like boys, many girls also buy into the dominant expectations for boys to be physically fit and assume that those who do not meet this masculine ideal must be either acting, or are, gay. This is especially significant given the fact that these girls discussed earlier that many boys do talk and act in certain ways in order to try to impress girls. Their talk suggests that both girls and boys reinforce the feminized stereotypes of gay males, thereby encouraging a heterosexist masculinity discourse.

Furthermore, these girls' discussions about dating relationships also speak to girls' support for boys' attempts to achieve hegemonic standards of maleness. A few girls acknowledged in their individual interviews that not all boys fit the sex maniac stereotype. Joy, for instance, claims that this image is false and that boys are actually "more sports thinking" (Chinese Filipino, 15). PJ added, "I don't think that's true of all guys . . . they probably fantasize about it, but it's not really what they look for" (Taiwanese Canadian, 15). In addition, when asked to describe their "ideal guy," most of the girls focused on personality traits such as "honesty," "sensitivity" and "a sense of humor," whereas only a few stated that physical appearance was necessary. Hope asserts that "most girls" like "sensitive" guys and Monica described her "perfect guy" as being "honest and reliable," later stating that "a lot of it is personality, for me" (Canadian Hispanic, 15).

However, these girls admitted that although many girls complain about boys' displays of hegemonic masculinity, they also tend to reject boys who do not fit this image of the guy with a "six pack" who is popular with the girls. Rather, many girls seem to be attracted to the "bad boys." For instance, in their individual interviews, Sandy and Alicia shared their observations when asked about their ideal male:

Masculine, the first thing that came to me is tall and strong and they have really bulky muscles and they just look sexy. That's what I think about a masculine man. I know that's not right, but that's what I think. (Sandy)

I think a lot of girls have a hard time dealing with a boyfriend who disrespects them. It's almost as if a guy disrespects you, you're more likely to stay with him . . . but if a girl is with a guy who gives her respect, it's almost as if she's turned off by it. I don't know if that can be taught because all girls have seem to fallen into it. You can't really teach somebody that like "well, if you have two guys and one of them is a real jerk and one of them is really sweet, go for the sweet guy." Girls would be like "why are you telling me this, I know that." And then they'll go out and do the opposite. It's almost as if that "bad boy" image attracts girls.¹ (Alicia)

Sandy was aware that being "tall and strong . . . [and having] really bulky muscles" was a powerful and dominant image of manhood. She could not help but picture this type of man

as being the epitome of masculinity, but she did allude to the fact that alternative definitions of manhood were desirable. Sandy later shared that her ideal man was “someone who’s nice and really friendly . . . loving and caring . . . have a decent job . . . confident but . . . modest.” Alicia’s discussion addresses the ways that many teenage girls’ actions facilitate certain boys’ hegemonic masculine talk and practices. Her talk suggests that although many girls say they want to be with “sweet” boys who treat them with “respect,” they are also “turned off” by these boys.

One possible reason for this phenomenon was illustrated in Kenway and her colleagues’ 1998 study on feminism in Australian high schools. Specifically, these researchers found that “‘popular’ girls were often the targets of boys’ sexist talk and practices and that some boys argued they were ‘being macho and showing off toughness and maturity’ around those girls because they were ‘trying to get their attention’” (Kenway et al., 1998, p. 108). The authors further reported that many girls not only bought these boys’ explanations, but they also believed that such “bad boy” behaviors were a “sign of interest.” For instance, some of the girls were shocked when viewing an educational video wherein some of the boys in the video were shown to be verbally harassing “ordinary looking girls in the video” (p. 108). These girls assumed that only “popular” or “attractive” girls would receive such attention. This finding suggests that many girls excuse “bad boys” for their behaviors because they believe these boys are trying to praise them for their physical attractiveness and popularity. That is, these girls read these boys’ talk and actions as a validation of their (seemingly traditional) femininity rather than understand these practices as sexist and harmful. In addition, as pointed out by the program instructor Julia, some of her female students’ choice to date boys who verbally disrespected them, for instance, reflects their “low [dating] standards.” This indicates that many girls might not know what a healthy

relationship looks like. That is, some girls interpret a relationship void of physical violence (i.e., “well, he’s okay ‘cause he doesn’t hit me”) as healthy, though other forms of (emotional, verbal) abuse might be going on. Thus, many girls’ proclivity to date boys who “disrespect them” may reflect their own struggles with challenging dominant masculinity (and femininity)—a phenomenon that is further complicated by their negotiations with their own gender and cultural identities.

Culture as a Mediator in Understandings about Masculinity

All girls described similar non-hegemonic types of males as being the ideal. But in their individual interviews, several Asian girls argued that Asian boys are less likely than White boys to pursue dating relationships—a view shared by a couple of the Asian boys in chapter 5. For instance, one Asian girl claimed that Asian boys do not feel pressured to prove their heterosexuality but that “White guys would . . . [because] they hang out with girls . . . [and] tell other guys that they like that girl” (Winnie). That is, Winnie thought that White boys are more likely than Asian boys to openly share their interest in dating a girl with their male friends or peers. Later in our interview, Winnie elaborated that “I think the Asian boys, some of them would like to have a physical relationship and some would not. And I think the White boys would like to be in a physical relationship.” She also stated that “Asian girls would care about the friendships. And the White girls would care about the [dating] relationships between the guys and girls.” Winnie believed that White boys and girls in general might be more likely than Asian teens to be interested in “a physical relationship.” A couple of her Asian peers elaborated in their individual interviews:

‘Cause most of the time guys would ask the girl out. They’d make the first move. And they’ll be the first one to suggest to have sex. [With girls], I think Asian boys are more laid back. They actually respect girls a lot ‘cause they won’t pressure girls into doing anything. (Sandy)

Well a lot of Filipino [boys] are more respectful of the girl, they respect them more. They're usually more polite than White boys in my experiences. If they respect the girl, they wouldn't push the girl into doing anything she didn't want to do. And they're polite around your parents. They're like "oh, good afternoon," or something, like "hi, how are you." They'll like talk right . . . I went out with a White guy once. I know my parents didn't like him because sometimes we just pick him up. He'd get in the car. Didn't say anything, get out of the car, no thank you or anything. But Filipinos are like "Oh, Mr. and Mrs. [X], thanks for the ride." They'll at least attempt to talk to my parents, whereas [White] guys will just who cares, I'm here with you. (Colleen, individual interview, June 2, 1998)

But not all White boys are like that. It really depends on the guy and how they were brought up. (Colleen, follow-up meeting, May 31, 2000)²

These Asian girls believed that Asian boys are "polite" and treat girls with "respect." By contrast, White boys are seen as likely to initiate or "pressure girls" into a sexual relationship, though Colleen later qualified her belief by stating, "not all White boys [were] like that." There is some evidence in the research and clinical literature that Asian American teens are less likely than their White peers to engage in early sexual activity (see, e.g., Irvine, 1994; Ward & Taylor, 1994). The talk of the Asian girls in my study speaks in part to the family and cultural values to which many Asian girls (and boys) have grown accustomed. Their discussions are significant because they indicate that certain Asian girls value sharing the "same" cultural background as their date because this is assumed to translate into having similar cultural understandings about masculinity and dating rituals.

However, their discussions also suggest that they might have, to some extent, categorized Asian and White boys according to the dominant stereotypes of Asian versus White boys. Stereotypes of non-White cultures, such as the view that Asian girls and boys are less likely than their White peers to pursue dating relationships, are firmly embedded within the dominant White culture, and are thus likely to have been internalized by some non-White girls (and boys). For instance, there is some evidence in the research literature that Asian teenagers are viewed as less social, but more studious and hardworking than their

White peers (see, e.g., Mac an Ghaill, 1994b; Razack, 1995; Siu, 1994). Cultural stereotypes are based in part on reality, but buying into them serves to situate different social groups, such as non-White teenage boys, as monolithic units. Thus, these Asian girls' talk mirrored the boys' discussions in chapter 5, and showed that culture plays an important role in considerations of masculinity.

All the girls in my study problematized hegemonic notions of masculinity. However, they also negotiated between accepting and challenging boys who played hegemonic masculinity. Their talk indicates that it might be relevant and useful to address hegemonic masculinity, as well as gender and cultural stereotypes, in secondary anti-violence programs.

Girls' Perceptions of Non-Oppressive Masculinity

In chapter 5, several boys talked about their ideal of manhood as being strong in non-hegemonically defined ways, such as being non-violent or not "having your chest out, having huge muscles" (Montel). All the girls agreed that non-violent strength is an important part of their ideal of masculinity. Six of the twelve girls also articulated other ingredients they believe made up a non-oppressive model of masculinity—some that resembled those listed by the boys. For example, Carrie said in her individual interview that an ideal man would be "Tall, nice, [and] hard working. Smart and should respect and care about girls." Although Carrie valued the physical attribute of height in a man, she also focused on the importance of the man's kind nature and work ethic. In addition, Leigha's description of an ideal man suggests that manliness does not need to be determined hegemonically, such as having a muscular body. Rather, she stated that the inner quality of the individual made a man "beautiful."

What is your image of the ideal man? (Athena)

Someone who has confidence and knows what they want in life and is not necessarily physically beautiful. But the well-rounded personality and everything makes them beautiful. It's basically the same thing I think [for the ideal woman]. (Leigha)

Although several of the boys in my study shared the girls' sentiments about non-violence and self-confidence, most of the boys remained attached to demonstrating emotional control in most situations. By contrast, several girls considered emotional expression in men as manly. For example, in the Ocean View focus group interview, a few girls described their image of an ideal man embodying a balance of "manliness" and sensitivity. Their responses emerged from their discussion about dominant masculinity.

I just think if somebody was to be the exact definition of masculine, they wouldn't be afraid to show . . . not the feminine side, but the more softer side . . . who is so sure of himself that he won't have to be afraid of what other people think. (Hope)

[Guys] can still be masculine and have feelings. I mean not all masculine guys are total macho. There's a lot of decent masculine guys I guess. (Summer)

I know of an example of what Hope is saying . . . [he] is like super masculine . . . tough and everything, but he's not afraid to cry and stuff like that. It's like how I see him as being [masculine]. He's really confident of himself like in the way he's a man. But then he can also be a softy and he can cry and he's not really ashamed of being seen, like it's fine. (Julie)

These girls' dialogue is significant because it mirrored the desire of a few of the boys for a similar masculine ideal—one that situated males who expressed their feelings of fear and sadness as "real" men. Yet, it is important to point out that several girls admitted (as discussed earlier in this chapter) that while girls want boys to be more openly sensitive, some girls also tend to reject these types of "nice" boys.

These girls' discussions reveal that both the boys and girls in my study had complex relationships with hegemonic masculinity. Their talk indicates that anti-violence programs might find it useful to discuss hegemonic masculinity within the context of both boys' and girls' relationship to it, as well to address the possibilities for creating non-oppressive masculinities.

Discussion

My analysis of these girls' discussions about boys and masculinity expanded on the scant literature on girls' notions of masculinity. The themes that emerged from these interviews problematized hegemonic masculinity and shed light on the 12 young men's struggles with hegemonic masculinity. For instance, these girls asserted that many boys "locate" their manhood in the body, in sports, and in their heterosexuality. They further stressed their belief that boys are limited to this dominant yet unrealistic notion of masculinity, whereas girls today have access to a broader understanding of femininity. Although not all girls liked playing sports in gym or for school teams, most of them stated their annoyance with boys' territorial attitude (which a couple of boys in chapter 5 admitted to having) toward these sports. The talk of these girls reflected some of the 12 boys' expressed negotiations with hegemonic masculinity. Their discussions also indicated that gender, culture, and "race" influence to some degree their views on what it means to be male and the ways girls negotiate their own identities and their heterosexual dating relationships. For example, they argued that girls do not tend to be "afraid" of being called "lesbian" or "butch" to the extent that many boys fear being labeled "gay." In addition, some Asian girls made distinctions between the dating rituals of Asian versus White boys, suggesting that the former are less likely than the latter to engage in early sexual activities, which provides support for the assertions of some of the Asian boys in my study. Although these girls (and boys) are likely drawing on dominant cultural male stereotypes when making these distinctions, their talk, like the boys' discussions, indicates the need for educators to find a way to challenge dominant stereotypes without reinforcing these stereotypes. The analysis of these girls' talk suggests ways in which secondary education programs could be reformed to serve the needs of diverse groups of teenage girls and boys. In the next and final chapter,

I discuss the implications that the talk of the teachers, boys, and girls has for teaching anti-violence to boys.

Notes

¹ These girls refer to the “bad boy” image as representing boys who play hegemonic masculinity, such as engaging in sexist bravado.

² Colleen added the following clarifying sentences when I recontacted her in May 2000 for my final follow-up meetings with all students. She was 17 at the time of this reflection.

Chapter 7

Conclusion and Future Directions

As I discussed in the introduction, my study expands on the scant research on boys' own notions of masculinity. Specifically, I look at how the talk of a multiethnic sample of Canadian teenage boys unveiled their (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity. Unlike most research on masculinity and boys' schooling, my study includes Asian boys' own views about what it means to be a man. In addition, all boys' discussions are explored within the context of their participation in an anti-violence program that attempted to challenge hegemonic masculinity and to provide boys with a non-oppressive model of manhood. I include the talk of the anti-violence instructors and some of these boys' female classmates and friends in my analysis because these teachers and girls were part of the context in which these boys discussed masculinity. The themes that emerge from my work are not generalizable to other schools due to the small sample size and the fact that I did not systematically study these boys' actual hegemonic masculinity plays. Nevertheless, my exploration of boys' and girls' focus group and individual interview discussions does show that boys and girls have complex relationships with hegemonic masculinity that are mediated by their gender, culture, and "race."

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. First, I summarize and discuss the major themes that came out of my analysis. I also highlight what I found hopeful about boys' masculinities in play, particularly within the context of anti-violence education, and what about their experiences, I believe, needs to be further explored. Second, I address the implications for teaching anti-violence to White and non-White boys (and girls), as well as the pros and cons of teaching them in gender-separate versus coed settings. Finally, I

develop a framework for interrogating hegemonic masculinity and discuss how it might be adapted to anti-violence education, as well as to the school curriculum. In so doing, I hope to build on the work of AVP and other existing anti-violence programs in a way that helps educators contest, rather than sustain, oppressive hegemonic masculinity discourses.

To Play or Not to Play Hegemonic Masculinity

All the boys in my study were able to identify the dominant notions of masculinity perpetuated in Canada and the United States. For example, they described a muscular body (physical strength), athletic prowess (physical skill and toughness) and heterosexual status (heterosexual conquest and popularity) as being expected of “real” men. They also articulated middle- and upper-class notions of masculinity that emphasized “legitimate” financial sources of male power. Yet, boys cannot exercise this source of male power given their age group. Therefore, certain boys are likely to resort to more attainable means of displaying their masculine strength such as weight training, competing in athletics, or engagement in sexist or homophobic talk or practices.

The boys in my study struggled with their active (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity in several ways. First, although some of the boys were aware of the harmful effects of hegemonic masculinity, they were also conversant with the advantages of playing hegemonic masculinity. For example, a few boys alluded to the problems with encouraging boys to be overly aggressive in school sports because it puts the pressure on boys to win at all costs. Yet, they also indicated that performing well in sports meant popularity among their peers because they had proven their status as “real men.” Several boys pointed out the negative effects of imposing a muscular build as the masculine standard for boys to achieve. However, they also struggled with wanting to acquire this ideal of manhood to establish their masculine standing in both the peer and societal cultures.

Second, some boys stayed attached to traditional masculinity discourses, such as those that situated males as athletic and females as “weak” and non-athletic, despite the growing number of accomplished female athletes around the world. Other boys were aware that the breadwinning model of manhood was fading due to the growing number of dual income families and women in the work place and in education. Yet, many of these boys remain tied to the sense of “power” and “pride” that being the male breadwinner promised them. This implies that although presenting boys with non-oppressive discourses on masculinity could be valuable, some boys may continue to be loyal to hegemonic notions of gender and power.

Third, many boys believe they need to play aspects of hegemonic masculinity in order to survive the school and societal culture of hegemonic masculinity. For instance, these boys admitted to feeling pressure from both society, other boys, and girls to be muscular in build, to wear the “right” clothes or to be “good looking,” things that they think they need to define themselves in terms of the societal masculine standard. That is, they experience tension from other boys who are also competing for hegemonic space, and from girls whom they are trying to impress. They also shared that failing to practice aggressive sporting behavior or heterosexist talk often placed them in the “loser” group, which they equated with the low-level status of gay boys. This finding indicates that these boys believe that not only is it undesirable for them to play non-oppressive masculinities, but that no alternative masculinity exists that would situate them in the “manly” group.

Nonetheless, these boys were able to identify some of the consequences of playing hegemonic masculinity. For instance, a few boys talked about not being able to show emotional support for each other, especially publicly, when playing a form of masculinity that deemed this as “weak” and “feminine.” Some of the boys also appeared to be open to entertaining non-oppressive notions of manhood, although they found the task of creating

an alternative version of masculinity somewhat challenging. For example, in the Beach Secondary boys' group discussion, several boys disputed the negative stereotype that boys were "sex maniacs." One boy's talk, in particular, implies that there needs to be a broader understanding of the relationships between men and women, such as both valuing deeper qualities in their partners. In addition, the instructors' discussions indicate that while they believe boys are passive recipients of their gender socialization, they also think that boys are capable of change and need access to non-hegemonic definitions of manhood. The boys' experiences suggest that other boys resemble them in this respect. This gives me hope because it signifies "the possibility of change in the practice of how these young men, and all men, might live their lives" (Frank, 1996, p. 127). The boys' discussions imply that some young men might play non-hegemonic masculinities only when it serves their own agenda. Yet, their talk also illustrates the possibility that young men who are both aware of and willing to interrogate hegemonic masculinity in their own lives do exist.

Girls' Active Participation in Boys' Hegemonic Masculinity Plays

The girls' and the AVP instructors' talk on masculinity appeared to support boys' discussions about their struggles with hegemonic masculinity. For instance, several girls described certain boys' attempt to bolster their heterosexuality and manhood in front of their peers (particularly the girls) by engaging in sexist talk or bragging about their supposed heterosexual conquests. One girl shared that she knew a boy who over-exerted himself with weight training to achieve a muscular body in order to prove his manhood, whereas other girls stated that they were acquainted with many boys who established their manhood by showing off their athletic prowess via aggressive sports playing.

Furthermore, my analysis reveals that girls also experienced difficulties in trying to contest a hegemonic notion of manhood. Some girls, for instance, disclosed that although many girls claimed they preferred to date boys who were “sensitive” and “respectful” of them, they also tended to reject these boys as potential dating partners. Instead, they were more likely to ‘fall for’ the “bad boys,” boys who engaged in hegemonic masculine talk and practices. The boys’ discussions, as further substantiated by the girls’ and the instructors’ talk, suggest that boys’ (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity are often complicated by girls and other boys.

Hegemonic Masculinity and Male Violence

As discussed in chapters 4 and 5, Kenway and Fitzclarence (1997) argue that masculinity is linked to male sources of violence. The discussions of the boys, girls, and teachers also speak to the direct relationship between hegemonic notions of what it means to be a man and male forms of violence. For instance, a couple of boys talked about playing sports as a means to display their physical toughness and aggression and their masculinity. Verbal and physical forms of male violence are legitimized when exercised within the context of aggressive contact sports such as hockey or football (such as yelling, “you play like a girl” or hitting each other while playing the game). Yet, when verbal or physical aggression (such as engaging in homophobic talk or using unnecessary physical force) are displayed outside of the sports arena, it is seen as violence. Perhaps more disturbing is that even outside the sports context, homophobic talk, along with sexist talk, is rarely challenged in schools by teachers or students (see, e.g., Epp, 1996; Nayak & Kehily, 1997).

The boys in my study stated that they enjoyed their participation in AVP. Their positive experience with this program suggests that secondary education programs, such as anti-violence prevention workshops, might serve as a stage wherein some boys may be able

to discuss boys' negotiations with hegemonic masculinity. Lingard and Douglas (1999) assert that pro-feminist programs are more likely than masculinist programs to both address boys' relationship with hegemonic masculinity and understand their experiences within the context of their relationships with girls and other boys. Providing boys with access to programs that both acknowledge boys' ability to have joint membership in multiple masculinities and validate their struggles with their maleness will help them better understand their experiences. For instance, a Black boy can be marginalized given his "race" and be the target of racist attacks (e.g., being told he is mentally inferior) while simultaneously being encouraged to hone (and be celebrated for) his "natural" athletic prowess. In this instance, both his marginalization from (e.g., streamed into lower level courses) and admission into (e.g., pushed to be a star athlete) the hegemonic masculine world are based on racist assumptions about Black males.

Although boys play an active role in their relationships with hegemonic masculinity, there remains little social support or understanding for their struggles. Many parents and adults working with boys continue to be heavily invested in dominant notions of manhood. Consequently, they are likely to discourage reforms such as the use of feminist poststructuralism in education programs to destabilize conventional gender or cultural story lines. However, despite the often anti-feminist climate, I believe it is crucial to draw on feminist poststructuralism in developing anti-violence programs because doing so would address the material inequalities, such as sexual identity, gender, class, and "race," that keep dominant masculinity discourses intact.

Teaching Anti-Violence to Diverse Groups of Boys

Research into masculinity and boys' schooling shows that schools play a major role in (re)producing dominant notions of masculinities—masculinities that are implicated in male violence (see, e.g., Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998; Kenway & Fitzclarence, 1997). For instance, secondary education encourages (hetero)sexist displays by its failure to discuss or challenge such talk and practices on individual and systemic levels. The findings from this body of work also suggest that masculinity is expressed differently depending on the boys' sexual identity, class, culture, and "race." Yet, virtually no attention has been given to the cultural content of school-based or school-sponsored violence prevention education. It is therefore unclear whether these programs serve to challenge, or to reinforce, existing racial stereotypes that privilege White middle-class understandings of masculinity and men's violence.

Kenway (1995) argues that "masculinities associated with class, ethnic and sexual groupings . . . intersect with the dominant discourse of schooling" (p. 63). In recent years, Canadian and American schools have experienced a rise in population of students from different non-White cultures. Some students are born and raised in North America, while others are recent immigrants. Many possess a mix of their own cultural and Western cultural ideals that have an impact on how they become gendered beings. New ways of understanding boys' masculinities in play that considers the importance of "race" and culture, among other issues, are therefore necessary.

In my study, several non-White boys articulated racist notions of masculinity that affected the lives of many non-White boys. For instance, the talk of a few of the Asian boys highlighted the reality that being both male and Asian was viewed "in mainstream society as unmasculine (wimpy, nerdy)" (Kumashiro, 1999, p. 68). These boys also happened to have chosen to engage in academic or artistic pursuits over sports, which further situated them

outside hegemonic masculinity, and instead, associated them with the marginalized, non-White and gay masculinities. In addition, one of these boys confided in me about the racism he encountered and his experience of not being understood by his White teachers. His disclosure suggests that many non-White teenagers might suffer a similar devaluation of their cultural values, and experience a need for educators to include non-White notions of gender and power in their teachings. It also reveals the need to hire and train teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds who also possess a non-judgmental view of various cultures.

Farrokhzad (2000) found that Canadian anti-violence programs tended to be "reactive" and addressed only the symptoms rather than the underlying issues that are often the trigger for various male forms of violence (p. 17). For example, common interventions such as peer mediation and conflict resolution programs teach children and teenagers skills that are meant to enable them to address "conflict situations" as they arise (see, e.g., Bickmore, 1999; Lipsett & Benson, 1999). Yet, these models tend to "fail miserably, because children have not learned the necessary skills to question, reflect, [and] listen to others [or] draw independent conclusions" (Farrokhzad, 2000, p. 10).

Other anti-violence programs have begun to address hegemonic masculinity, although still primarily drawing on sex-role language. Novogrodsky and her colleagues (1992) were innovative in organizing gender-separate and coed retreats wherein teachers discussed with students the problems of hegemonic masculinity. However, they did not link racism to hegemonic masculinity in their discussions, which served, in my view, to overlook the significant role that "race" plays in considerations of masculinity. If discussions about boys' active adoption of, or resistance to, hegemonic masculinity and their ability to possess multiple masculinities, particularly within the contexts of "race" and culture, are excluded,

diverse groups of boys are denied access to information that might help them understand better their struggles with hegemonic masculinity.

AVP aimed to (re)educate boys about the problems with hegemonic masculinity in their efforts to challenge this version of manhood. They provided boys with their non-oppressive model of hegemonic notions of what it means to be a man. However, because it was constrained to dominant Western understandings of gender, AVP did not address Western, racist notions of masculinity that oppress men and women, nor did it include non-White notions of non-violent assertiveness. Despite these observations, AVP remains a significant gender reform effort.

Gender-Separate and Coed Workshops

All the students in my study reported that discussing sensitive issues, such as sexuality, in same-sexed groups created the safest environment for students to share their thoughts. Both boys and girls believe that boys would likely “show off” or “say stuff that they think girls want to hear” if placed in a coed setting. Other students in my study asserted that both boys and girls would be more likely to talk truthfully in single-sex sessions. For example, several students stated that some girls might not feel comfortable discussing their true opinions about certain topics, such as sexuality issues or dating violence, while in the presence of their male peers. Nevertheless, some male and female students also thought that it would be useful to provide coed workshops for students after they have participated in single-sex sessions so that boys and girls could learn to communicate with, and understand, each other better.

Anastasia also argued that a combination of gender-separate and coed workshops would best encourage students to talk openly about topics such as sexuality and violence. There is some research evidence to support Anastasia’s assertion. For example,

Novogrodsky and her colleagues (1992) discovered that students who attended their retreats appreciated being able to discuss hegemonic masculinity in gender-separate workshops before moving on to further discussion of these issues in coed groups. In addition, Noon (1997) reported that both same-sex and coeducational sex education classes were perceived to be most helpful to students by her research participants. The findings from this research and my study suggest that using both gender-separate and coed workshops would be most effective in teaching boys (and girls) about hegemonic masculinity and male violence.

A Feminist Poststructuralist Framework for Interrogating Hegemonic Masculinity

Kenway and colleagues (1998) argue that “different feminist theories have different implications for educational policies and practices,” with some current programs beginning to focus on “constructing and reconstructing gender within school cultures and across curriculum and on the education of boys” (p. xii). These researchers studied teachers’ and students’ responses to gender reform in many Australian schools and found that these efforts were “on the wane almost everywhere” because many schools “were increasingly disinclined and unable to support gender reform” due to different factors, including decreased funding from government (p. 210). In addition, they reported that although many male teachers refrained from engaging in hegemonic masculine plays, they also helped sustain a dominant discourse on masculinity by not actively participating in gender reform (p. 178). Furthermore, many female teachers also did not feel that the “onus is on them to get involved” in these reform efforts (p. 178). Their findings suggest that although some teachers, boys, and girls were active in challenging such oppressive masculinity discourses, there remained little systematic support for their efforts.

Despite these findings, they concluded that many teachers and students were “hungry for change” and that feminist poststructuralism helped them “identify the dominant narratives which have helped to shape them and to deconstruct the cultural excuses which [were] used to justify the status quo” (Kenway et al., 1998, p. 210). The authors argue that the most effective gender reform programs were conducted using feminist poststructuralism within “environments characterized by respect and support” and had offered teachers and students alternative, positive ways of being male and female, and treated them as active agents versus passive recipients of reform (p. 210).

Taking into account the findings of Kenway and her colleagues’ study as well as what I found in my research, I outline the key ingredients of my framework, as well as some ways that it might be used effectively within the context of secondary education. Before I proceed with this discussion, I will first recount a story that demonstrates how one dominant way of thinking promotes “reactive” sorts of responses to violence in schools.

In the summer of 1999, I met a young White woman while working on a creative project. I will refer to her as Lily, to protect her identity. Several of us were having lunch when the conversation of education and racism came up. Lily asked me what I was studying, and I said that I was looking at a multiethnic sample of boys’ discussions about masculinity. She asked whether or not I was going to look at racism, and I shared that I would, particularly since racism exists in White and non-White cultures and that many boys had to deal with racist notions of their manhood. Lily shared that she was troubled by her first teaching job after college. She had recently received her B.Ed. degree and had started work at an all-White (teachers, staff, and students) high school in a small town in Ontario. Lily was disturbed particularly by comments made by teachers about how proud they were that racism did not exist at their school. For these teachers, racism was not an issue because

everyone in the school was White. Lily's story was one example of how many teachers (and students) at one school lacked a meaningful understanding of the pervasiveness of racism. That is, their thinking was that racism only existed when people of color were around, thereby implying that "removing" these individuals yields a racist-free society.

This belief system is problematic for two main reasons. First, it suggests that racism can only occur if constructed against Whiteness. It does not recognize that racism exists in both White and non-White cultures. Just as Asian and Black, for example, are heterogeneous cultures, so is "White culture." Second, this belief system ignores the reality that many boys and girls encounter various forms of prejudice, which a curriculum apparently centered in the mainstream culture does nothing to challenge. It is necessary to acknowledge, for instance, that some non-White students do engage in racial prejudice against White students on the individual or group level, such as calling them "honkies." However, it is equally important to recognize that non-White people remain marginalized on a systemic level given their minority status because, in North America, White individuals are presently the sole beneficiaries of institutional racism. Within the context of secondary education, institutional racism can manifest in a mandated school curriculum that uses textbooks that present the experiences of White individuals or that streams certain non-White students into lower level classes. It is also evident in the unspoken rules that sanction the hiring of certain (heterosexual) White teachers over non-White teachers. Nonetheless, the fact that Lily showed genuine concern over the racism in her school, and a desire to contest it, reaffirmed my belief that many teachers are, as Kenway and her colleagues stated, "hungry for change."

Interrogating Hegemonic Masculinity from the Margins

In chapter 3, I introduced a more inclusive framework for understanding masculinity that builds on existing feminist poststructuralist gender reform work. Specifically, this proposed way of thinking interrogates hegemonic masculinity from the margins, and combines a feminist poststructuralist approach with non-White, non-violent notions of power. The dominant masculinity discourse is thus questioned within the context of the various forms of social inequalities that it encourages, such as gender, sexual identity, and “race.”

This conceptualization recognizes the Whiteness that is central to hegemonic constructions of masculinity in North America and the reality that non-hegemonic versions of masculinity remain marginalized. Instead of interrogating hegemonic masculinity primarily for its gender oppressive ingredients, this framework explicitly addresses the reality that a range of oppression exists and “originates in the citing of particular discourses that frame how people think, feel, act and interact” (Kumashiro, 2000, p. 40). For instance, racial stereotypes that marginalize non-White ethnic individuals are challenged. Osajima (as cited in Kumashiro, 2000, p. 40) argues that the Western dominant culture claims to be non-racist due to “the ‘success’ of ‘model’ minorities.” Kumashiro (2000) adds that “affirmative action offices and policies, or advisory commissions on race . . . that fail to address the racism experienced by Asian Americans or otherwise ignore Asian Americans, are doing so because they are buying into the model-minority stereotype” (p. 41).

The idea that “Asianness” and “success” work together to permeate these agencies is also played out within the secondary school context. In North America, government officials, educators, and school administrators generally perceive, and thus treat, Asian students as a monolithic group of “model” (successful) minorities (see, e.g., Kumashiro,

2000; Maclear, 1994). The model minority stereotype is seen as positive, but it fails to acknowledge, among other things, the distinct needs and experiences of different Asians (see, e.g., Maclear, 1994). For instance, a third generation Chinese Canadian high school student would be more likely than a recent refugee Chinese youth to be proficient in English and thereby do well in terms of receiving higher marks. Yet, educators who subscribe to the model minority discourse set a higher standard of academic achievement for all Asian students, neglecting to take into account their different backgrounds and experiences, such as their level of English proficiency. In addition, Maclear (1994) argues that “the ‘successful’ Asian student has been advanced as a prototype of what is possible for all marginalized students and used to counter charges from working-class and Black communities that the system is failing” (p. 56). For instance, the model minority discourse justifies various discriminatory educational practices, such as the streaming of working-class and Black high school boys into lower level courses and athletics (which I discussed in chapter 5), and serves “to discredit demands for such radical change as de-streaming” (p. 56). Consequently, depicting Asian students as “unanimously successful” not only sends the message that Asians have “made it” and “can take care of their own needs,” but that “an overhaul of the present educational system” is unnecessary since “it is possible for oppressed groups to achieve success” (p. 57).

My framework for rethinking hegemonic masculinity validates the diversity amongst boys (and girls). It problematizes a dominant discourse that privileges Whiteness, marginalizes non-White notions of masculinity, and is perpetuated in secondary schools. In challenging hegemonic masculinity from the margins, two major objectives are achieved. First, this way of thinking recognizes that many boys, particularly those who do not fit into, or subscribe to, the dominant masculinity discourse, encounter types of male violence that

are directly linked to this discourse. For example, competitive school sports, such as hockey and football, encourage both the practice of “legitimized” forms of violence (such as engaging in excessive physical force or in heterosexist name-calling) and exclusion of many “unmasculine” boys from participation. With Epp (1996), I agree that the lack of attempts to dispute the “rampant student-to-student harassment” in schools leads to “a common-sense violence” that “normalizes” harassing talk and behaviors and needs to be challenged (p. 17). Providing a multicultural masculinity discourse can help contest and diminish the violence that occurs in schools.

Second, this framework acknowledges that there are multiple (and often competing) discourses on masculinity that are being actively and continually negotiated and played out. Individuals are thus treated as actively (re)negotiating their masculinities on an on-going basis. Doing this takes into account the reality that girls, not just boys, have relationships with hegemonic masculinity. It also sets up the possibilities for proactive change. Boys can (re)make their masculinities and girls can challenge hegemonic masculinity. This teaching framework aims to open a dialogue with students that helps them better understand their complex relationships with hegemonic masculinity and is adaptable to diverse groups of boys (and girls).

Incorporating a Cultural, Anti-Racist Perspective into Anti-Violence Education

Most existing anti-violence programs (including AVP) that address hegemonic masculinity advocate that boys (and girls) protect themselves from violence by adopting White, middle-class defined methods to challenge the dominant (White) notions of gender. However, I believe that non-White, non-violent forms of assertiveness can be used effectively to question the construction of Western hegemonic masculinity and its impact on different individuals. For instance, when confronted by someone who verbally assaulted me,

I chose to respond with silence and calm as a means of deflecting the “attacker’s” hostility. Some individuals may have perceived my stillness not as an act of assertiveness, but rather as a passive acceptance of this abuse. Yet within the context of my social reality, I understood that I could not change this individual, and that it was not my job to do so. Rather, I had the ability to choose how I wanted to respond to him, and for me, the silence used in this situation was a manifestation of my ability to empower myself to maintain peace in my life. This scenario has occurred in my life only a few times. However, when I used this version of assertiveness, which was drawn from Eastern philosophies, the individual generally got frustrated or bored and moved on to other things or other targets.

Within a North American context, in particular, a male’s manhood is determined in part by his ability to assert himself using verbal or physical force. That is, individuals who subscribe to the dominant masculinity discourse would perceive a man’s use of this force, regardless of whether he is using physical aggression as a means to defend himself or to hurt another person, as a display of male power. However, the notion of deflecting a verbal or physical attack without resorting to physical force is rooted in the traditional Chinese martial art of Kung Fu. Although there are many different divisions within Kung Fu, these strands share an underlying philosophy that one’s inner power is located within one’s ability to access and use one’s “Chi.” That is, if an “attacker” tries to hit her, someone who practices Kung Fu will simply draw on her own inner energy flow (her “Chi”) and redirect the negative force (her attacker’s attempt to hit or kick her) back to her attacker. The “Chi” principle of Kung Fu could serve as one effective piece of a non-oppressive conception of masculinity, and students could be taught ways to access their “Chi.”

This framework draws on Asian notions about strength such as the one mentioned above, and can be made to fit a range of school-sponsored or school-based anti-violence

programs. An example for how to do this is to address the ways that a dominant, masculine ideal is linked to racist or (hetero)sexist beliefs about masculinity. Such a discussion would fit well as the part of boys' discussions about the negative male stereotypes and their opinions about, or experiences with, these stereotypes. Anti-violence instructors can follow-up on this conceptual dialogue by working together with students in tailoring scripted scenarios that would resonate with the students of a particular class. A classroom of twenty boys who are predominantly Asian and White, for example, can be separated into four multicultural groups consisting of five boys each. One scenario can be selected from issues that the boys problematized earlier in the workshop and distributed to the four groups. For instance, this script might present a situation wherein an Asian boy is the target of racist verbal attacks by his White and non-White classmates. It could include two other characters, such as the person the Asian boy turns to for help and individuals who are "indirectly" implicated in the incident (e.g., classmates who witness the taunting). Each group would then be assigned one of the four players and asked to reflect on and discuss the experience of that particular character. A list of general questions is provided to help students contemplate issues such as the motivations behind their character's actions and the ways that the incident affected their character. The students can also brainstorm probable non-violent and non-vengeful solutions to the problems raised from the small group and class discussions. The script should be designed with enough specificity so that the problem is clearly defined, and with some ambiguity so that the students can come up with their own beliefs about what they would think, feel, or do if they were in their character's place. The reason behind including characters in addition to the oppressor and the oppressed is to help students understand that prejudices carried at the individual or group level affect everyone, including those who are not seemingly directly involved.

Furthermore, if the instructors are highly skilled and prepared, then they could guide students in performing role-play versions of the scripted scenarios. Of course, at a minimum, the instructors must be effective at building trust, setting clear ground rules, and debriefing after the discussions and role-plays. Doing this type of exercise, whether at the conceptual or practice level, can be extremely challenging and require carefully thought out strategies for instruction. It will also acknowledge that not only do boys from any given group have different, individual experiences with hegemonic masculinity, but that they are also likely to share similar experiences of being discriminated against because of their "race." Thus, my proposed framework is based on the underlying concept that one cannot begin to understand individuals' encounters with oppression—whether it be racism, heterosexism or some other form of marginalization—until one has attempted to consider the experiences of those affected by the oppression.

Given the adaptability of this framework, it can also be used in other special secondary school programs, as well as incorporated throughout the school curriculum. For example, in sex education or health and family planning courses, gender or racial stereotypes about sexuality, such as those that depict Black males as sexual aggressors and Asian males as effeminate and thus a non-threatening force, can be challenged. By questioning traditional gender stereotypes such as the "good" girl (virginal or submissive) versus the "bad" girl (slut or bitch), racial stereotypes that position Black women as animalistic and highly sexualized and Asian women as exotic, passive sexual servants of men, could be contested. In addition, positive images linked to female sexual desire and other sexualities would be included. One way that these "sensitive" topics can be breached is by developing exercises that will solicit the opinions and experiences of different students in the classes. In Ward and Taylor's (1994) work, for example, they found that many minority students shared that they felt that

their White instructors not only did not understand their experiences as minorities, but also often held racist beliefs about the sexualities of various minority groups. These students asserted that they wanted to discuss topics related to sexuality, such as birth control negotiation and female sexual desire, that reflected their life experiences.

Furthermore, in terms of the general curriculum, this concept can be applied to physical education classes by refocusing these classes to teach athletic skills and challenging the legitimatizing of school sports as a male arena that allows only certain boys membership. However, I believe that the arts and science classes are where this framework might be most effective, given many students' tendency to enjoy doing role-plays and skits. Davies (1993) found that adults underestimated children's ability to actively make their identities. She also discovered that even children as young as first grade were receptive to learning new ways to "read" masculinity and femininity (such as feminist storylines provided in English classes). This framework can be made part of drama classes so that students can create skits that draw on non-oppressive White and non-White storylines that contest the racist, sexist, and heterosexist nature of hegemonic masculinity. In poetry, music, and art classes, teachers can highlight these storylines in the poems, lyrics, and images created by the students and played out in class. Drama (in the form of role-plays, skits, and plays) can be combined with this proposed way of thinking and carried out in different classes or in the school's educational performances.

This framework promotes the interrogation and reconceptualization of hegemonic masculinity and provides different students ways to draw on independent thinking as a way of being, rather than as a reaction to a crisis. It encourages students to recognize that issues such as racism, sexism, and heterosexism, for instance, are directly connected to dominant notions of masculinity; and have a profound impact on those who choose to oppress, as well

as those who are being oppressed. This way of understanding masculinities can be used as an effective educational tool that helps students (and teachers) acknowledge and exercise their (pro)active role in their (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity by contesting it from the margins.

Boys' Masculinities in Play: Future Directions

As long as we value oppression, competition, and the violence that is a necessary part of fulfilling these, we are trapped in the very processes that support the authorial voice of hegemony. As long as we willingly support and reward these processes, especially in our classrooms and in our schools, then hegemonic masculinity will continue to operate because it gets rewarded. . . . Multiple masculinities are constituted across various sociocultural and historically specific sites. Therefore, problematizing and foregrounding the practices of masculinity and recognizing how the individual and collective needs of boys and men are woven into the structures of the most ordinary of our practices would allow us to make those needs explicit, with a view to changing both the needs and the practices that fulfill them. (Frank, 1996, p. 127).

Although conflict resolution and peer mediation programs remain the most popular forms of anti-violence education in schools, they generally fail to address the relationship between hegemonic masculinity and male violence, such as (hetero)sexist and racist notions of manhood. These programs also neglect to discuss boys' (re)negotiations with hegemonic masculinity, and how the mainstream culture perpetuates many young men's struggles. By not implementing anti-violence programs that address the ways that these underlying issues contribute to violence, schools inadvertently send out the message that hegemonic notions of masculinity are not connected with male violence. Therefore, researchers and educators must look at ways that secondary anti-violence prevention can include non-White cultural notions of masculinity that not only contest dominant, oppressive notions of manhood, but are understood by a range of students from different cultures.

My proposed framework grew out of my efforts to conceptualize a non-oppressive masculinity and my desire to contribute to creating a systemic recognition that North

America is a multicultural society framed within a dominantly White-defined discourse. Its creation is also motivated by my belief that teachers, students, schools and the like are able to acknowledge and question the systemic way of thinking that encourages oppression in many forms and on many levels. Doing this will allow the making of a progressive school environment wherein, at least while at school, students (and teachers and staff) are expected to engage in active perspective-taking as a part of their learning. The focus of this framework is to encourage individuals to critically examine and proactively change, rather than accept or adjust to, the oppressive mainstream culture. The set of principles that I discussed earlier would be ideal for alternative schools or schools willing to try out feminist-related strategies, though it might be more challenging for the "average" school.

More research that explores non-White and White ethnic boys' relationships with hegemonic masculinity is needed. Specifically, I found that two boys in my study explicitly discussed how racial masculinity stereotypes negatively affected non-White boys. Although I did not systematically examine how these boys actively constructed "personal meaning for their lives in and out of school" (Davies, 1999, p. 50), it is necessary to pursue this type of research with diverse groups of boys since the school context impacts boys' educational and social experiences. There must be systematic qualitative examinations of how, for example, Asian, Black, Hispanic, and First Nations boys make sense of their own masculinity.

There also needs to be an exploration of how different White boys make sense of their masculinity given that not all White boys will adopt White-defined versions of manhood. Researchers must contest the Whiteness constructed as part of hegemonic masculinity because there needs to be an understanding of differences and inequalities that occur within various White (and non-White) cultures.

Finally, I did not address class in my thesis, but it would be useful to examine gender, sexuality, culture, "race," and class together, and the ways they interact to inform considerations of boys' masculinities. It is also necessary to conduct analyses of these identities in ways that recognize less prominent, but equally significant, identities (such as education, personality traits, and individual family culture) that contribute to boys' masculinities in play. For example, I speculate that employing a feminist poststructuralist approach to an ethnographic study of the experiences of students at several high schools would be a suitable place to begin. This type of research would combine a healthy mix of focus group and in-depth individual interviews with students, as well as observations of students in individual and group settings. This would involve conducting research over a period of one or more school years, and would draw on students' own journaling of their reflections about, and experiences with, various masculinities. Although Kenway and her colleagues' 1998 study examined the ways that students and teachers responded to various (pro)feminist gender reforms, their research provides an excellent protocol for ways that researchers can draw on both qualitative and quantitative methods effectively in their work.

Pursuing a systematic analysis of different boys' and girls' relationships with hegemonic masculinity is crucial given the multicultural make-up of North American society and its schools. Doing so will allow for teachers and counsellors working with these boys to understand better the multiple meanings that boys from diverse groups associate with their (re)negotiations with hegemonic and marginalized masculinities. It will also highlight the role that girls play in boys' complex relationship with hegemonic masculinity and offer both boys and girls access to a more inclusive and proactive understanding of how they are active agents in remaking boys' masculinities in play.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Interview Questions – Male Students

General thoughts about the program

1. What did you like about the program? What did you dislike?
2. What role-plays did you like? Disliked?
3. What kind of talk or behaviors do you think are hurtful to guys? To girls?
4. What are some skills you think prevention programs should teach teenage boys? Teenage girls?

Masculinity

1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “masculine?” What would a “masculine” boy do or say?
2. Do you think guys are pressured to act in ways that would prove their manhood? If so, what do you think a guy needs to say or do to prove his manhood or masculinity?
3. What are some negative stereotypes of teenage boys?
4. What are your role models (on TV or in real life)?

Femininity

1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “feminine” or “femininity”? What would a “feminine” girl do or say?
2. Do you think girls feel pressured to prove their “womanhood”?
3. What are some negative stereotypes of teenage girls?

Relationships

1. What do teenage boys want in a dating relationship?
2. What do you think teenage girls want in a dating relationship?

Statements

Please give me your reaction/response to the following statements:

- a). Guys are less likely than girls to be treated badly by their dates or peers.
- b). Guys tend to stay in relationships even if they are not getting respect from their dates.
- c). It's no big deal if a bunch of guys want to check out a girl and whistle or yell stuff like “nice legs.”
- d). A guy should not say or do things to show he cares or else other people will think he's acting like a girl or that he's gay?

Appendix A

Focus Group Interview Questions – Female Students

General thoughts about the program

1. What did you like about the program? What did you dislike?
2. What role-plays did you like? Disliked?
3. What kind of talk or behaviors do you think are hurtful to girls? To boys?
4. What are some skills you think prevention programs should teach teenage girls? Teenage boys?

Masculinity

1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “masculine?” What would a “masculine” boy do or say?
2. Do you think guys are pressured to act in ways that would prove their manhood? If so, what do you think a guy needs to say or do to prove his manhood or masculinity?
3. What are some negative stereotypes of teenage boys?

Femininity

1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “feminine” or “femininity”? What would a “feminine” girl do or say?
2. Do you think girls feel pressured to prove their “womanhood”?
3. What are some negative stereotypes of teenage girls?
4. What are your role models (on TV or in real life)?

Relationships

1. What do teenage girls want in a dating relationship?
2. What do you think teenage boys want in a dating relationship?

Statements

Please give me your reaction/response to the following statements:

- a). Guys are less likely than girls to be treated badly by their dates or peers.
- b). Guys tend to stay in relationships even if they are not getting respect from their dates.
- c). It's no big deal if a bunch of guys want to check out a girl and whistle or yell stuff like “nice legs.”
- d). A guy should not say or do things to show he cares or else other people will think he's acting like a girl or that he's gay?

Appendix B

Individual Interview Questions – Male Students

General thoughts about the program

In thinking about the focus group interview, I would like to know whether you would like to add anything to the following items:

1. What did you like about the program? What did you dislike?
2. Could you or your male classmates relate to the role-play situations?
3. Could you give me an example of some types of hurtful talk or actions that you think is common among boys your age? Girls your age?
4. What are some skills you think prevention programs should teach teenage boys? Teenage girls?

Masculinity & femininity

1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “masculine?” What would a “masculine” boy do or say?
2. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “feminine?” What would a “feminine” girl do or say?
3. a). In your opinion, what are Canadian society’s images of a “real” man? A “real” woman?
- b). Is this image different than the one you grew up with at home? In your native country?
4. If they identify the breadwinner model, then ask, how important is this expectation for you, that men must earn the money for their families?
5. Do you think this image of a “real” man as a moneymaker is changing? If so, what do you think are some “new” images of a “real” man?
6. Describe to me the kind of man you want to become and why? Do you feel you are like him now? If not, how are you different from “him” and why do you want to be more like “him”?
7. Please give me your reaction/response to the following statements:
 - a). Guys are less likely than girls to be treated badly by their partners or peers.
 - b). Guys tend to stay in relationships even if they are not getting respect from their partners.
 - c). It’s no big deal if a bunch of guys want to check out a girl and whistle or yell stuff like “nice legs.”

Sexuality & homophobia

1. Do you think guys are pressured to act in ways that would prove their being heterosexual? If so, what do you think a guy needs to say or do to prove his manhood or masculinity?
2. What sort of things do guys say or do what get them labeled “feminine” or “gay”?
3. Do you think girls are also pressured to prove their heterosexuality?

What they want in relationships

1. What are the three most important qualities you want in a friend and why? In a partner and why?
2. How do you like to be treated by your friend(s) and why? By your date(s) and why?

Co-ed program

1. Like gender-separate? Like co-ed? Pros and cons of gender-separate vs. co-ed programs.

After interview questions

1. Why did you volunteer to be interviewed?
2. Why do you think some of your peers did not volunteer?
3. Any suggestions about the interview process?

Appendix B

Individual Interview Questions – Female Students

General thoughts about the program

In thinking about the focus group interview, I would like to know whether you would like to add anything to the following items:

1. What did you like about the program? What did you dislike?
2. Could you or your female classmates relate to the role-play situations?
3. Could you give me an example of some types of hurtful talk or actions that you think is common among girls your age? Boys your age?
4. What are some skills you think prevention programs should teach teenage girls? Teenage boys?

Masculinity & femininity

1. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “masculine?” What would a “masculine” boy do or say?
2. What images come to your mind when you hear the word “feminine?” What would a “feminine” girl do or say?
3. a). In your opinion, what are Canadian society’s images of a “real” man? A “real” woman?
- b). Is this image different than the one you grew up with at home? In your native country?
4. Do you think this image of a “real” man as a moneymaker is changing? If so, what do you think are some “new” images of a “real” man?
5. Describe to me the kind of woman you want to become and why? Do you feel you are like her now? If not, how are you different from “her” and why do you want to be more like “her”?
6. Please give me your reaction/response to the following statements:
 - a). Guys are less likely than girls to be treated badly by their partners or peers.
 - b). Guys tend to stay in relationships even if they are not getting respect from their partners.
 - c). It’s no big deal if a bunch of guys want to check out a girl and whistle or yell stuff like “nice legs.”

Sexuality & homophobia

1. Do you think guys are pressured to act in ways that would prove their being heterosexual? If so, what do you think a guy needs to say or do to prove his manhood or masculinity?
2. What sort of things do guys say or do what get them labeled “feminine” or “gay”?
3. Do you think girls are also pressured to prove their heterosexuality?

What they want in relationships

1. What are the three most important qualities you want in a friend and why? In a partner and why?
2. How do you like to be treated by your friend(s) and why? By your date(s) and why?

Co-ed program

1. Like gender-separate? Like co-ed? Pros and cons of gender-separate vs. co-ed programs.

After interview questions

1. Why you volunteer to be interviewed?
2. Why do you think some of your peers did not volunteer?
3. Any suggestions about the interview process?

Appendix C

Interview Questions – Male Instructors

1. Would you give me a little background about yourself? How did you come to teach the boys' and/or co-ed program? What experience, education, and training did you have that helped prepare you for your current position? How many years have you been working as an instructor in this program?
2. In your opinion, what do you feel are the objectives of the boys' and/or co-ed program? What are your goals in the classroom? How do these goals fit into the broader program of sexuality education?
3. In what school districts have you taught this program? What has been the response by parents, educators, and kids, in each of these schools and/or school districts? How has the response been similar? Different? And why do you suppose this is?
4. In your experience teaching this program, what kinds of information or skills do you feel students lack or need? What types of information or skills have students told you they need or want? What have the students voiced to you as their main concerns re this topic? Do these concerns vary depending on gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status? How has the program tried to address these concerns and needs?
5. How would you define a traditional model of masculinity? In your opinion, what kinds of masculinity are some teenage boys practicing? Are some teenage boys creating or adopting "new" notions of masculinity? Do these constructions of masculinity differ across cultural or socio-economic groups?
6. How would you define a traditional model of femininity? In your opinion, what kinds of femininity are some teenage girls practicing? Are some teenage girls creating or adopting "new" notions of femininity? Do these constructions of femininity differ across cultural or socio-economic groups?
7. How do you reach teens who may not be as vocal or comfortable talking about topics such as assault? What do you have to say or do to engage, for example, teenagers:
 - a). Who are shy?
 - b). From cultures that do not condone discussion about these topics with non-family members?
 - c). With religious backgrounds that consider these topics to be taboo?
 - d). Who are gay or lesbian?
 - e). Who are teen moms or dads?

Appendix C

Interview Questions – Female Instructors

1. Would you give me a little background about yourself? How did you come to teach the girls' and/or co-ed program? What experience, education, and training did you have that helped prepare you for your current position? How many years have you been working as an instructor in this program?
2. In your opinion, what do you feel are the objectives of the girls' and/or co-ed program? What are your goals in the classroom? How do these goals fit into the broader program of sexuality education?
3. In what school districts have you taught this program? What has been the response by parents, educators, and kids, in each of these schools and/or school districts? How has the response been similar? Different? And why do you suppose this is?
4. In your experience teaching this program, what kinds of information or skills do you feel students lack or need? What types of information or skills have students told you they need or want? What have the students voiced to you as their main concerns re this topic? Do these concerns vary depending on gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status? How has the program tried to address these concerns and needs?
5. How would you define a traditional model of masculinity? In your opinion, what kinds of masculinity are some teenage boys practicing? Are some teenage boys creating or adopting "new" notions of masculinity? Do these constructions of masculinity differ across cultural or socio-economic groups?
6. How would you define a traditional model of femininity? In your opinion, what kinds of femininity are some teenage girls practicing? Are some teenage girls creating or adopting "new" notions of femininity? Do these constructions of femininity differ across cultural or socio-economic groups?
7. How do you reach teens who may not be as vocal or comfortable talking about topics such as assault? What do you have to say or do to engage, for example, teenagers:
 - a). Who are shy?
 - b). From cultures that do not condone discussion about these topics with non-family members?
 - c). With religious backgrounds that consider these topics to be taboo?
 - d). Who are gay or lesbian?
 - e). Who are teen moms or dads?

Appendix D

Interview Questions – Program Director

Philosophy behind girls' program & boys' program

In our previous interview you shared with me the process in which you gave birth to Program X, which I thought was fascinating and courageous. So, I was wondering if you could share with me how you arrived at the “three personalities” for the girls' program (“child,” “wise woman,” and “bitch”)? For the boys' program (“child,” “wise man,” and “stud” or “warrior”)?

Masculinity

1. What do you consider a traditional image of masculinity (of what it means to be a man)? How is this different from your ideal image of masculinity?
2. In your opinion, what kinds of masculinity are teenage boys practicing? Are there differences in the kinds of masculinity practiced by boys from different cultural backgrounds? By boys from different socio-economic backgrounds? If so, what are they?
3. In your opinion, are some boys adopting “new” images of masculinity (of what it means to be a man)?
4. One common stereotype of boys around 15 or 16 years old is that they are totally preoccupied with sex--who to get it from, etc.. In your opinion, do you agree or disagree with this stereotype and why?
5. Another common stereotype of boys around this age is that they are very aggressive--in sports, with each other, and with girls. In your opinion, do you agree or disagree with this stereotype and why?
6. In your opinion, are teenage boys pressured to act in a manly or heterosexual way? If so, what kinds of things do they do or say to display their masculinity or heterosexuality?

Femininity

1. What do you consider a traditional image of femininity (of a “feminine” woman)? How is this different from your ideal image of femininity?
2. In your opinion, what kinds of femininity are teenage girls practicing? Are there differences in the kinds of femininity practiced by teenage girls from different cultural backgrounds? By girls from different socio-economic backgrounds? If so, what are they?
3. Are some girls adopting “new” images of femininity (of what it means to be a woman)?
4. Many adults feel that teenage girls in general lack self-esteem. For example, one main stereotype of teenage girls is that they are obsessed with their looks and their weight. From your experiences working with teenage girls, would you agree or disagree with this stereotype and why?
5. Another common stereotype of girls around 15 or 16 years of age is that they have the “disease to please,” which makes them rather passive in most situations. In your opinion, do you agree or disagree with this stereotype and why?

Students (Only ask if time remaining)

1. In your experience teaching this program, what kinds of information or skills do you feel girls and/or boys lack or need? What types of information or skills have girls and/or boys told you they need or want?
2. What have the girls and/or boys voiced to you as their main concerns about assault or violence? Do their needs or concerns vary depending on their gender, culture, and/or socio-economic status?
3. How has the program tried to address their concerns and needs?

Appendix E

Background Information Form for Male and Female Students

1. Your first and last name: _____
2. Fictional first name (do not use your real name - this is the name that I will use in my study if I chose to quote you): _____
3. Your birthday: _____
(day/month/year)
4. What grade are you in right now? _____
5. Were you born in Canada? If not, where are you from and how old were you when you came to Canada?

6. What language(s) do you speak at home? _____
7. List the people you currently live with, according to their relationship to you (e.g., my mother, my brother, my sister, my guardian(s), my grandparent(s), my step-father, my uncle, etc.):

8. What are the occupation(s) of the adults you live with (e.g., my mom is an artist, my step-father is a teacher, etc.)?

9. How would you describe your ethnic background (e.g., I am Chinese and American)?

Appendix E

Background Information Form for Program Director and Instructors

1. Your first and last name: _____
2. Fictional first name (do not use your real name - this is the name that I will use in my study if I chose to quote you): _____
3. Your birthday: _____
(day/month/year)
4. Were you born in Canada? If not, where are you from and how old were you when you came to Canada?

5. What language(s) do you speak? _____
6. How would you describe your ethnic background (e.g., I am Chinese and American)?

7. Are you employed in occupation(s) other than as a Program X instructor? If so, what are your other occupation(s)? _____

Appendix F

Sample Letter of Permission – Male Students

[Department letterhead]

“High school students’ responses to a violence prevention program.”

For my thesis research, I am exploring how adults can create and carry out violence prevention programs that will be useful to teenagers. Not much is known about young women’s and men’s concerns about violence, and [Program X] is the first of its kind in the province. I am interested in talking with students like yourself to learn more about your concerns and needs. I would also like to learn more about what types of information or skills you feel violence prevention education should provide.

After you take the program for boys, I would like to ask you and up to 7 other young men (as a group and individually) questions about your views and concerns about this topic. With your permission, I will tape record the group’s conversation and the individual interview to save me from scribbling too many notes, but nobody will hear it except for myself and perhaps my advisor, [name]. I will not use your real name in the study. Both interviews will last approximately 45 minutes each and will be strictly confidential. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to ask me. You may refuse to participate or choose not to answer any particular question or stop the interview at any time. You also have the option of reviewing and editing your audio-taped responses to questions. Should you have any concerns about your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact [name], [position] of the [university name] Office of Research Services and Administration, at [telephone number].

[Advisor’s name]

[position]

[Area of research]

[Telephone number]

[Athena Wang]

[Ph.D. student]

[Department]

[Telephone number]

I agree to participate in this study and acknowledge that I have received a copy of the consent form for my records.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

I do not agree to participate in this study.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Appendix F

Sample Letter of Permission – Female Students

[Department letterhead]

“High school students’ responses to a violence prevention program.”

For my thesis research, I am exploring how adults can create and carry out violence prevention programs that will be useful to teenagers. Not much is known about young women’s and men’s concerns about violence, and [Program X] is the first of its kind in the province. I am interested in talking with students like yourself to learn more about your concerns and needs. I would also like to learn more about what types of information or skills you feel violence prevention education should provide.

I will participate in the girls’ program that you will take so that I can see what types of information and skills are being taught in this program. After you take the program for girls, I would like to ask you and up to 7 other young women (as a group and individually) questions about your views and concerns about this topic. With your permission, I will tape record the group’s conversation and the individual interview to save me from scribbling too many notes, but nobody will hear it except for myself and perhaps my advisor, [name]. I will not use your real name in the study. Both interviews will last approximately 45 minutes each and will be strictly confidential. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to ask me. You may refuse to participate or choose not to answer any particular question or stop the interview at any time. You also have the option of reviewing and editing you audio-taped responses to questions. Should you have any concerns about your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact [name], [position] of the [university name] Office of Research Services and Administration, at [telephone number].

[Advisor’s name]

[position]

[Area of research]

[Telephone number]

[Athena Wang]

[Ph.D. student]

[Department]

[Telephone number]

I agree to participate in this study and acknowledge that I have received a copy of the consent form for my records.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

I do not agree to participate in this study.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Appendix F

Sample Letter of Permission – Parent(s) or Guardian(s)

[Department letterhead]

“High school students’ responses to a violence prevention program.”

For my thesis research, I am exploring how adults can create and carry out violence prevention programs that will be useful to teenagers. Not much is known about young women’s and men’s concerns about violence, and [Program X] is the first of its kind in the province. I am interested in talking with students to learn more about their concerns and needs. I would also like to learn more about what types of information or skills they feel violence prevention education should provide.

After your son or daughter takes the gender-separate [Program X] workshops, I would like to interview him or her in a group with up to 7 other students (as a group and individually) about this topic. With your permission, I will tape record the group’s conversation and the individual interview to save me from scribbling too many notes, but nobody will hear it except for myself and perhaps my advisor, [name]. I will not use your son’s or daughter’s real name in the study. Both interviews will last approximately 45 minutes each and will be strictly confidential. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to ask me. Your son or daughter may refuse to participate or choose not to answer any particular question or stop the interview at any time. Should you have any concerns about your son’s or daughter’s rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact [name], [position] of the [university name] Office of Research Services and Administration, at [telephone number].

[Advisor’s name]

[position]

[Area of research]

[Telephone number]

[Athena Wang]

[Ph.D. student]

[Department]

[Telephone number]

I consent to my child’s participation in this study and acknowledge that I have received a copy of the consent form for my records.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

I do not consent to my child’s participation in this study.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____

Appendix F

Sample Letter of Permission – Program Director and Instructors

[Department letterhead]

“High school students’ responses to a violence prevention program.”

For my thesis research, I am exploring how some teenagers make sense of the messages and skills taught in an existing violence prevention program. I will be participating in the [Program X] girls’ workshop and co-ed workshop in order to gain a sense of the content of these workshops. I would also like to interview you about your experiences teaching violence prevention to teens, as well as the content of the boys’ workshop. This research will help adults who work with teens to develop ways to provide diverse groups of teens access to sources of information about violence prevention and gender relations.

With your permission, I will tape record the our interview to save me from scribbling too many notes, but nobody will hear it except for myself and perhaps my advisor, [name]. I will not use your real name or the name of your program, unless you and the program director and I decide at a later stage in my research that you and/or the program will be named. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes and will be strictly confidential. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to ask me. You may refuse to participate or choose not to answer any particular question or stop the interview at any time. You also have the option of reviewing and editing your audio-taped responses to questions. Should you have any concerns about your rights or treatment as a research participant, you may contact [name], [position] of the [university name] Office of Research Services and Administration, at [telephone number].

[Advisor’s name]

[position]

[Area of research]

[Telephone number]

[Athena Wang]

[Ph.D. student]

[Department]

[Telephone number]

I agree to be interviewed and acknowledge that I have received a copy of the consent from for my records.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print name _____