RE/PRESENTING WOMEN:
THE DILEMMA OF SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM CHANGE IN BC

by

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ABSTRACT

Formal curricula, official curriculum documents and recommended resources, are revised periodically and have the opportunity to reflect feminist scholarship available at the time of writing. This feminist project analyzes the treatment of women's history in British Columbia's *Social Studies 8-10 Integrated Resource Package 1997*, the *Social Studies 11 Integrated Resouces Package 1997*, and the *History 12 Integrated Resource Package 1997,* all of which are due to be implemented in September, 1999. Informed by feminist historiography and pedagogy, the above curricula are analyzed using the following thematic organizers: degree of representation; segregation versus integration; experience, diversity and voice; and the construction and deconstruction of gender knowledge. A sampling of recommended learning resources found in the above *Integrated Resource Packages* are also examined for their treatment of women's history. The outcome of the research suggests that while limited gains have been made in the degree to which women are addressed in the new curricula, the manner of representation largely reflects *her-story* approaches that have been considered problematic by most feminist historians since the mid-1970s. Recommendations for future revisions are also included.

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Chapter 1: The Literature Review

> Curriculum frameworks...are revised periodically and thus might reflect the watershed of scholarship published in the last 20 years that has focused on women's experiences and perspectives. But there is considerable evidence to indicate that curriculum documents have not been receptive to this "new" scholarship. (Bernard-Powers 195)

Introduction

British Columbia's current secondary Social Studies Curriculum, implemented in 1988, adds to the "considerable evidence" of which Jane Bernard-Powers speaks. When I began teaching I was struck by the virtual absence of women's history in the 1988 *Social Studies Curriculum Guide Grades 8-11* and the 1989 *History 12 Curriculum Guide* (1989), in spite of the wealth of women's history that had been written in the two preceding decades. Internationally acclaimed scholarship, relevant to the curriculum, had been ignored. Where was recognition of First Nations' women in the fur trade, as researched by Sylvia Van Kirk in 1980? Why weren't students given the opportunity to query, as Joan Kelly did in 1976, whether there was a "French Revolution" or a "Renaissance" for women?

In the fall of 1995 the process of rewriting the Social Studies Curriculum began. Although there was a mandate for limited change, gender equity was to be addressed. The new curriculum was distributed to teachers in 1997 and is to be implemented in the

fall of 1999. As a feminist teacher I find myself wondering to what extent these new documents reflect the "watershed of scholarship" to which Bernard Powers refers. Gail Cuthbert Brandt wrote in 1991: "During the last decade, the writing of women's history in Canada has flourished and reached a new level of methodological and analytic complexity" (441). This thesis focuses on the history components of the 1997 *Social Studies 8-11 Integrated Resource Packages* and the 1997 *History 12 Integrated Resource Package* and measures to what degree they have been receptive to the wealth of scholarship in women's history available at the time of writing.

There are two parts to this literature review. The first part focuses on feminist history and historiography, as they establish the in-depth analysis of women's history required for this project. The wealth of the scholarship, as well as the methodological conflicts found in feminist history, provide insight into the problems faced by educators attempting to include women's history and the construction of gender as a central concern in the curriculum. There are many parallels to be drawn between the processes of establishing an equitable location in the academy of history and writing gender-fair history curriculum. The second section of the literature review deals with feminist pedagogy and curriculum analysis. These areas of theory and research illuminate the ways to approach a gender analysis of the new curriculum.

Part 1: Feminist History

In analyzing a curriculum for British Columbia it seems logical to look to the works of Canadian historians of women, but there are several reasons for looking beyond Canada. Most historians of women in Canada write about the experience of women in Canada's past, and the curriculum is not limited to Canada. Moreover, as Karen Offen

and colleagues suggest, in locating Canadian models of feminist historiography one must not overlook the influence of Great Britain and the "unwitting cultural imperialism of our neighbours to the south" (xxiii). In short, Canadian feminist historiography operates within a larger framework of western, and to a lesser degree international, feminist historiography. We should also listen to accounts which tell us that existing theories and methodologies from western experience have been found to be limited in accounting for the historical and cultural particularities of many groups and cultures (Awe quoted by Offen et al. xxiii).

Finding a structure for a historiographical analysis of writing women's history is problematic. There are two predominant approaches. One organizational model focuses on predominant themes and conflicts or dichotomies in the writing of women's history (Silverman; Cuthbert Brant). Another approach implies a progressive chronology of methodology (Scott; Rose). Both approaches have limitations. A thematic approach can downplay recognizable trends, and a progressive model can minimize the significant contributions of historians using models considered to be defunct. As Phyllis Stock Morton argues, it is important to remember that any attempt to sum up the stages in women's history will be artificial and reflect the vantage point of a single historian: "Different historians, or groups of historians, move on to another stage at different points; no one can say that women's history has reached a certain stage at a certain time" (60). We are also reminded that in "international and intra-national contexts such a process of recovery may take place alongside further theoretical developments and co-exist with them. Indeed, the very process of recovery can yield important theoretical insights" (Offen et al. xxx).

It is my intention to look critically at the progressive model of feminist

historiography set forth by Scott in her influential 1986 publication *Gender and the Politics of History*. I have selected Scott's model because one can reasonably argue Scott's has had an "enormous impact" (Rose 90) on many feminist historians and that her post-structural approach has influenced a vast array of projects (Pierson; Rose). That her work is regularly, and often vehemently, critiqued (Hall; Canning; Bosch; Clark; Valverde) is another indication of her influence. I examine Scott's model by applying it to examples of Canadian women's history and by juxtaposing Scott's claims with critiques of her work written by other feminist historians.

I begin by introducing Scott's first stage, *her-story*. For Scott *her-story* is used to describe works that tend to "isolate women as a special and separate topic of history" (*Gender* 20). This specialness or separateness comes about as the result of asking different questions about women, using different categories of analysis for women, or even examining different documents in reference to women only (*Gender* 21). Although I adopt Scott's use of the term *her-story* for consistency I do not intend it as a diminutive (as I understand Scott to), but rather as a category to be problematized. It is my intention to demonstrate that Scott's chronological approach situates woman-centred history in the early seventies, and as such, allows her to skirt around addressing more recent (and methodologically sophisticated) accounts to which her criticisms are far less applicable.

Secondly, I introduce Scott's next chronological approach, gender-relational history. These works, according to Scott, introduce the important concept of gender and move away from biological explanations for the different experiences of women and men in the past. Once again, I will argue that by situating this approach in the mid-seventies Scott is able to criticize it because it inevitably ends up focusing on law and politics, and thereby, neglects female agency by ignoring personal and social life. It is my intention

to demonstrate that Scott fails to include the contribution of more recent gender-relational models which do not overlook female agency or the areas where women have been visible participants.

Next, I look to post-structuralism, Scott's third (and most advanced) approach to writing women's history. Scott argues that French post-structuralism and the method of deconstruction allow historians to examine the meanings generated through language and maintains that this approach is necessary for feminist historical analysis to advance and realize the "radical potential" of women's history. I will look at the possibilities of this approach as argued by Scott and others, as well as critiques that suggest that post-structuralism, while having much to offer, is not without its own methodological and political dangers.

Feminist theorists of difference, in particular women of colour and post-structuralist feminists, have both worked at fragmenting the unitary nature of 'woman.' This recognition of diversity has led to controversy concerning the issue of voice. The final section of part one of the literature review addresses what Ruth Roach Pierson refers to as the interconnections of "experience, difference, dominance and voice."

Her-Story

Virginia Woolf's oft-quoted plea for a woman's "supplement to history" was enthusiastically undertaken during the upsurge of what has been described as largely a white, western, feminist movement in the early 1970s (hooks, *Margin to Centre*). Eliane Leslau Silverman's historiographical analysis of Canadian women's history from 1970-1982 demonstrates that Canadian historians began to write seriously about women around 1970. Joan Scott refers to this early period of writing women's history (and

those who continue to write using this model) as *her-story* (*Gender* 18-22).

Scott states that *her-story* has had several different uses. For example, some historians have gathered information about women to demonstrate their essential likeness or equality to men as historical actors in the public sphere. Some works follow the "great man" model and focus on the efforts of exceptional women. A Canadian example is found in Penny Kome's populist book *Women of Influence*, which celebrates a number of prominent female politicians in Canada and examines their influence on the political system as a whole. According to Scott, another approach which demonstrates the essential likeness of women to men takes it lead from labour history's rank and file approach to women's historical agency in political movements. Joan Sangster concurs that in Canada earlier research emphasized women's political contributions in women's suffrage and reform organizations (234).

A second approach of *her-story* according to Scott focuses on:

> ...the qualities of women's experience that sharply distinguish it from men's experience...explanation and interpretation are framed within the terms of the female sphere; by examinations of personal experience, familial and domestic structures, collective (female) reinterpretations of social definitions of women's role, and networks of female friendship that provided emotional as well as physical sustenance. (*Gender* 20)

Scott suggests that the insights to be gained by exploration of a separate women's culture is exemplified in the United States by Carol Smith-Rosenberg's 1975 classic "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth Century America" (*Gender* 20). In this work Smith-Rosenberg analyzes the correspondence and diaries of men and women in thirty-five families written between the 1760s and 1880s which encompass a broad range of white, middle class families from a variety of rural and urban settings. She sets out to illuminate the historical phenomena of the American

female friendship of the nineteenth century as an essential aspect of American society of the time "in which men made but a shadowy appearance" (2).

In her historiography of Canadian women's history (1970-1982) Eliane Leslau Silverman argues that "the issue of a women's culture is central to the writing of women's history" (521). Gail Cuthbert Brandt's 1991 historiography of Canadian Women's history, demonstrates that many Canadian historians of women have grappled with the concept of women's culture. For example, in her synthesis of the interwar period in Canada, *The New Day Recalled*, Veronica Strong-Boag sets out to "capture the essence of what it meant to be female in Canada in the 1920s and 1930s by focussing on crucial periods and activities in women's lives." Strong-Boag stresses that *The New Day Recalled* is not an examination of how both sexes experienced different periods and activities in their lives; rather, "It is first and foremost a study of girls and women...women get to tell their side of the Canadian story" (4-5). She finds that women in these post-suffrage decades continued to develop and sustain women's culture in an inequitable environment:

> A predisposition to intimacy, rooted in patterns of socialization, helped sustain a female culture without which lives would have been poorer and harder. Associations like the Canadian Girls in Training and the Girl Guides, led by spirited activists, provided youngsters with important lessons in female co-operation, leadership and community involvement....Intense friendships with other women were essential resources for a talented generation of innovators like Agnes Macphail, Dorothy Livesay, and Charlotte Whitton. Bolstered by same-sex relationships, they challenged convention and affirmed women's claim to a voice in the public affairs of society. (218)

In her analysis of Canadian suburbia during the years 1945 to 1960, *Home Dreams*, Strong-Boag writes that "suburban houses were the stage on which women explored the meaning of separate spheres." While Strong-Boag acknowledges that the experiences of suburban women varied greatly due to economic and individual

differences, she asserts that many women developed significant bonds with other women which helped them "cope with limited resources and new environments" (495).

Another use of *her-story* according to Scott involves using evidence about women in order to challenge received interpretations of progress and regress or to depart from the framework of conventional history and offer new periodizations. In Canada, new periodization can be found in key survey publications about both English- and French-speaking Canadian women. For example, in *Canadian Women: A History,* the collective "have tried to construct a chronology that takes into account the interaction of the technological, economic, and social, as well as the political dimensions of women's experience" (Prentice et al. 13). The result of this is the identification of three major turning points for Canadian women: the transition from pre-industrial to an industrial society, World War I, and World War II. Similarly, the Clio Collective (Dumont et al.) reject the traditional dividing points of Quebec's political and constitutional history based on the argument that they do not constitute meaningful turning points in the lives of Quebec women.

Scott credits *her-story* with important accomplishments: By amassing evidence about women in the past it helps refute the claim that women have no history. Moreover, as Joan Kelly argues: "It has disabused us of the notion that the history of women is the same as the history of men and that significant turning points in history have the same impact on one sex as for the other" (17). Taking its lead from the consciousness-raising groups of the 1970s, *her-story* asserts that the personal is political, and as Scott states, alters some of the standards of historical significance and establishes the need to conceptualize gender differences historically if we are to make sense of women's actions in the past (*Gender* 20).

However, Scott warns that *her-story* runs several risks. One of the criticisms frequently leveled at *her-story* accounts is a concern among feminist historians that at times *her-story* "conflates two separate operations: the valuation of women's experience (considering it worthy of study) and the positive assessment of everything women said or did" (*Gender* 20). In her critique of Penny Kome's populist book of biographies, *Women of Influence* (1985), Joan Sangster argues that Kome's biographies "tend uniformly to celebrate all women in politics; they skirt over differences between women in politics...and they downplay the community and grassroots role that many women played in politics" (239). However, unlike Scott's blanket disapproval of her-story, Sangster deems fault in Kome's methodology. Sangster finds Kome's biographies lacking as they overlook new primary historical research and ignore several secondary sources which would have helped draw a more accurate picture. Moreover, while Sangster makes it clear that she is not offering a "blanket condemnation of biography," she wonders if we really want to adopt the "great man" model without revisions. After all, the "great man" approach is one of the reasons women have been left out of traditional history.

In spite of Scott's stated admiration for Smith-Rosenberg's "Relations Between Women", like others, she has reservations about works dealing with a separate women's culture. Michelle Perrot argues: "We must also beware of describing a feminine culture that would be no more than the rigid designation of a complementary space and, in the end, another formulation of immutable nature...the risk is that we shall go on forever reproducing a tautological argument..." (7). Scott is particularly concerned with the influence of psychologist and feminist theorist Carol Gilligan on the work of feminist historians. "By insisting on fixed differences (in Gilligan's case by simplifying data with

mixed results about sex and moral reasoning to underscore sexual difference), feminists contribute to the kind of thinking they want to oppose" (*Gender* 40). However, Scott's footnote admits: "My comments on the tendency of historians to cite Gilligan come from reading unpublished manuscripts and grant proposals" (*Gender* 208). In effect, Scott issues a warning against intentionally or accidentally creating an image of female essence. As such, historians who write accounts that deal with women separately, rather than in relation to men, are criticized for assuming that gender explains the different histories of women and men, and for failing to theorize how gender operates historically.

Clearly, not all works that explore the concepts of separate spheres and women's cultures can be dismissed with the same arguments Scott uses when she refers to works (often implying methodological weakness) written in the early seventies. For example, Strong-Boag's work on suburban women can hardly be dismissed as "insisting on fixed differences" or of failing to historicize gender. Her use of a wide variety of sources, ranging from prescriptive literature of the time, popular women's publications, the introduction of revisions to the Housing Act in 1954, to women's own accounts of their experiences, tends to historicize the notion of a separate sphere and explore women's culture in a particular context. Jane Roland Martin adds that "to determine whether feminist scholars have been ahistorical, one must do more than note the categories they employ. One must see how they are used" ("Methodological Essentialism" 641).

Moreover, many contend that the notion of a separate sphere of woman's culture isolates women's history as a separate topic of study and thereby contributes to the ghettoization of women's history (Scott; Farge; Kelly). Scott suggests that *her-story*:

> ...tends to isolate women as a special and separate topic of history, whether different questions are asked, different categories of analysis offered, or only different documents examined. For those interested there

> is now a growing and important history of women to supplement and enrich conventional histories, but it can too easily be confined to the "separate sphere" that has long been associated exclusively with the female sex. (21)

Works that emphasize the commonality of female experience have also been criticized for minimizing or overlooking the differences among women. (Roach Pierson; Scott; Riley). White, western, middle-class feminist tracts using the language of universal womanhood such as Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* have been critiqued as being racist and classist (hooks, *Margin to Centre*). Similarly, historical accounts which suggest that a particular group of women represent all women's experience have been rightly criticized. However, as I examine this important issue in more depth further on in the literature review, it will become apparent that a postmodern methodology of difference is not without its own "dangerous traps" (Roland Martin, "Methodological Essentialism").

The conflicts surrounding Scott's critique of *her-story* pose many relevant issues for curriculum analysis. Do works which take a liberal tack and try to demonstrate the essential likeness of women to men as political actors belong in the curriculum? Or would it be more appropriate to value the diversity of human agency in history? Does the curriculum take the "great man" approach, and if so, is there a preferable approach to recognizing the roles that famous people have played in history? As Joan Sangster argues the "great man" approach has been one of the reasons women have been excluded from traditional history. A "great woman" approach also leads to the exclusion of the vast majority of women's contributions. Sangster suggests that biography models of women who have played significant political roles need to be revised, and if I understand her correctly, she implies that the stories of individual famous women need

to be written critically and in a way that relates to the significance of the role of grassroots work, and to the diversity of women's experience. For example, in examining the role Emily Murphy played in the "person's case," shouldn't the curriculum also look to grassroots feminist movements and examine to what extent the "person's case" impacted the experiences of women diversified?

Another area of conflict relevant to the curriculum is found in the contentious issue of women's culture. As noted, Scott finds the notion of separate women's culture to be politically dangerous as it leads to the ghettoization of women's history and reinforces essentialism. The contrary argument suggests that women have had cultures (albeit these cultures are not ahistorical and are specific and related to other variable such as race, class, and sexual identity) which are different from male cultures, and that rather than being problematic it is politically advantageous to demonstrate the ways women can support one another and work together in particular contexts.

Gender-Relations in History

Like others Scott considers the work of feminist historians such as Joan Kelly and Natalie Zemon Davis in the mid-seventies as marking a second phase in writing women's history. According to Scott, in this approach women's situations are either compared implicitly or explicitly to men's by looking at the changes in laws, policies and symbolic representations. The late Joan Kelly-Gadol addressed the Second Berkshire Conference on the History of Women in October 1975 by quoting Zemon Davis:

> It seems to me we should be interested in the history of both women and men, that we should not be working only on the subjected sex any more than a historian of class can focus exclusively on peasants. (Quoted in Kelly-Gadol 21)

Scott credits this turn in approach to setting the goal of making sex as fundamental to the analysis of social order as other classifications such as class or race. As a result, this work attempts to end the marginalization of women's history as a special or segregated field. For example, while Kelly argues that traditional periodizations have not taken women's experience into account she is against the development of new periodizations for women because of their potential to isolate women's history. Kelly asserts that it is preferable for periodization to relate the history of women to that of men:

> Handled this way, traditional periodizing concepts may well be retained--and ought to be insofar as they refer to major structural changes in society. But in the evaluation of such changes we need to consider their effects upon women as distinct from men....When women are excluded from the benefits for the economic, political, and cultural advances made in certain periods, a situation which gives women a different historical experience from men, it is to those "advances" we must look to find the reasons for the separation of the sexes. (18)

Scott writes that such works are also significant in developing ways of thinking about gender historically by drawing "attention to the ways changes happen in laws, policies, and symbolic representations" (24). As a result, works such as Kelly's "The Social Relation of the Sexes" look to social rather than biological explanations for different behaviours and unequal conditions of men and women in the past.

Scott further argues that while gender-relational historiography such as Kelly's demonstrates the importance of connecting the study of gender with the study of politics, and more specifically with governments, as the realms in which power relationships are negotiated, they undercut the feminist project by neglecting female agency and by implicitly diminishing the historical importance of the areas that women have been visible participants, namely personal and social life (24). Is it reasonable to suggest that works which look to social rather than biological differences and compare women either

implicitly or explicitly to men must inevitably be consigned solely to the study of politics and the neglect of female agency?

Catherine Hall, in her review of Scott's *Gender and Politics*, points out that in *Family Fortunes* she and Leonore Davidoff used *gender* conceptually to mean the social organization of the relations between the sexes and argued that, thought in this way, "gender is a constitutive element in all social relations" (209). In the *Gender of Breadwinners* Joy Parr uses a feminist neo-Marxist approach to compare and contrast two central Canadian manufacturing communities, Paris, a knit-goods manufacturing centre with a largely female labour base, and Hanover, a furniture manufacturing town in which most of the wage earners were male. Parr finds that:

> Men, like women, were gendered subjects. Both women and men were formed and constrained in class relations. Never did class and gender, either singly or in conjunction, map the whole of social existence; both personally and collectively, understandings and obligations were also framed in religious faith, ethnicity, and nationality. (245)

Furthermore, Parr finds evidence of women's agency and women's culture among the knitting operative immigrants to Paris:

> Their workplace friendships were emotionally supportive and often the economic foundation for joint households comprised entirely of women. Many were joined in town by women kin with whom they were able to share housing and household work and upon whom they could rely for support in hard times. (85)

Studying the ways in which gender relations are constructed will look to politics, but as Hall and Parr have demonstrated, it need not neglect female agency or ignore daily life. Nor need it result in presenting a universal female experience. As the 'radical' difference in a post-structuralist account cannot be found in Scott's critiques of gender relational accounts, we need to look to the claims she makes regarding the potential of a post-structuralist approach to writing women's history.

Post- Structuralism and Writing Women's History

From Scott's vantage point the third (and most advanced) period in women's history has come about in the last ten years as a result of the influence of postmodern theory. Scott argues that French post-structuralism, in particular deconstruction (the approaches associated with Foucault and Derrida), offers methods of examining meaning as generated through language. She maintains that this focus is necessary in order for feminist historical analysis to advance because of the difficulty of analysing gender within the framework of social history and "the relatively limited impact women's history was having on historical studies generally" (*Gender* 3-4).

Scott and Riley are committed to an attack on essentialism and insist that the category *women* is a discursive construction and that *gender* means knowledge about sexual difference. Scott defines gender knowledge as "the understandings produced by cultures and societies of human relationships, in this case of those between men and women." She further stresses that such knowledge "is not absolute or true, but always relative" (*Gender* 2). According to Scott gender needs to be rethought, and new knowledge about sexual difference needs to be produced, "knowledge that calls into question even the primacy of the male/female opposition" (*Gender* 11).

In denying the possibility that any knowledge is true or absolute, Scott puts forth the following definition of knowledge:

> It is produced in complex ways within large epistemic frames that themselves have an (at least quasi-) autonomous history. Its uses and meanings become contested politically and are the means by which relationships of power--of domination and subordination--are constructed. Knowledge refers not only to ideas but to institutions and structures, everyday practices as well as specialized rituals, all of which constitute social relationships. Knowledge is a way of ordering the world; as such it is not prior to social organization, it is inseparable from social organization. (2)

Thus for Scott the appropriate objects of study are epistemological categories: "The story is no longer about the things that have happened to women and men and how they have reacted to them; instead it is about how the subjective and collective meanings of women and men as categories of identity have been constructed" (*Gender* 6). For Scott and other post-structuralists identity, or subjectivity itself, is to be radically de-essentialized. Subjectivity does not stem from one's experience or being; instead subjectivity is conceptualized as a position in a discursive field. In "Experience," Scott questions historians' focus on experience and argues that experience is not an authentic source of human agency but is discursively produced:

> The study of experience, therefore, must call into question its originary status in historical explanation. This will happen when the historians take as their project *not* the reproduction and transmission of knowledge to be arrived at through experience, but the analysis of the production of that knowledge itself. Such an analysis would constitute a genuinely non-foundational history, one which retains its explanatory power and its interest in change but does not stand on or reproduce naturalized categories. (37)

In *Am I That Name?* Denise Riley uses a like-minded approach and argues that the oppression of women occurs in the ways in which women are positioned as 'women.' She states, "This positioning occurs both in language, forms of description, and what gets carried out..." (3). Riley's insistence on the discursive construction of the category 'women' is argued through the rethinking of particular moments in history. She supports this inquiry of the constancy of the category 'women' with a quote from Foucault: "The purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity but to commit itself to its dissipation." She clarifies this remark by adding, "It's not that our identity is to be dissipated into airy indeterminacy, extinction; instead it is to be refined to the more substantial realms of discursive historical formation" (5).

Scott argues that with this approach feminist history is not exclusively the record of changes in the social organization of the sexes, but also a significant participant in the production of knowledge about sexual difference. History's representations of the past help to construct gender in the present. For historians it is necessary to pay attention to the "assumptions, practices, and rhetoric of the discipline," including the notions that history can faithfully document lived reality, that archives are repositories of facts, and that categories such as man and woman are transparent (*Gender* 2). Scott states that in her work history is as much the object of analysis as it is the method of analysis.

The publication of Scott's influential *Gender and the Politics of History* and Denise Riley's *Am I That Name: Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* brought post-structuralist theory into the "heartlands of feminist history" (Hall 205). In her 1991 historiography of Canadian women's history Cuthbert Brandt writes that:

> ...[postmodernism's] emphasis on difference, recognition of intervening social and cultural factors in the creation of historical 'fact,' rejection of a linear, all-encompassing historical vision, recourse to deconstruction and attention to culture and discourse have struck a responsive chord among some feminist historians. (467)

Canadian historian Ruth Roach Pierson writes that deconstructive literary theory and discourse analysis have had the positive effect of bringing about a flurry of theorizing (79). Indeed, Karen Offen, Ruth Roach Pierson and Jane Rendall write in the introduction to *Writing Women's History: International Perspectives* that most of the essays in that volume respond "to the challenge to the discipline, experienced worldwide over the last ten years, from forms of deconstructionist and postmodern analysis" and share a tension "between the drive towards the empirical recovery of the lives of women, and the changing and fragmenting possibilities of new explanatory models" (xxx).

While Scott stresses that a post-structuralist theoretical approach is not

antithetical to feminist history or feminist politics, many feminist historians are leery of the challenge put forth by Scott and Riley to make use of post-structuralist discourse theory in the writing of feminist history.

Some feminist historians are concerned that focusing on discourse analysis downplays or masks the role of human agency in historical accounts by suggesting that human agency is not an attribute of autonomous subjects, but instead a discursive effect (Hall; Canning; Clark; Rose). Anna Clark wonders if a post-structuralist turn to gender and language has distracted feminist historians from the central question of feminism: "Why and how has the subordination of women endured for so long?" (Judith Bennet quoted in Clark 115). Clark maintains that there is a problem in linking "the elegant postmodernist play with language to the grubby historical questions of power" (115). She is not satisfied with the solutions set forth:

> Post-modernists influenced by Foucault have an answer here... they reject notions of overarching systems of power, such as class or patriarchy, and instead assert that power is exercised through dispersed networks and nodes, in which subjects are constructed through discourse. The passive voice is deliberate; they rarely answer the question of who exercises this power. (115)

She argues that post-structuralists take the dangerous course of overlooking the role in which real political actors negotiate power. German historian Kathleen Canning argues that the particularities and horrors of modern German history serve as a limit case for testing difficult questions about historical practice. Indeed, while a discursive analysis of the Holocaust might be helpful, to minimize the role of human agency creates a frightful historical problem.

Another concern regarding agency is the postmodern take on experience and its ramifications for women's agency in history. Canning argues that post-structuralists

create their own binary oppositions; for example, "...discourse--always seems to determine or construct the other [experience]..." (106). Similarly, Linda Hutcheon argues that postmodernist theory is problematic for feminists because it denies 'women' as a meaningful category of analysis and further renders individual agency and collective political action as problematic. Catherine Hall reiterates that, while she is fully aware of the discursive fields which construct meaning in our lives, she still wants "an emphasis on 'we' acting, on us being present and active in our own making" (210).

The post-structuralist take on experience and subjectivity is especially problematic for women who are only beginning to undertake the process of historical recovery. It is not only seen as a threat to the process of recovery but also to political action. Nancy Hewitt quotes an African American scholar as arguing that "there is still too little black women's history out there to worry about saying something new" (3). Sonya Rose quotes Iris Marion Young:

> Describing the processes of social life from the point of view of the subject brings to language the hurts and harms of oppressive structures, and only such experiential description can do so....Experience names a moment of creative agency in social processes, which cannot be finally totalized or categorized by the dominant oppressive structures. Describing kinds of oppression, and the creative agency of the oppressed can help form resistance and envision alternatives. (95)

Examining the role of experience and action of Women of Colour in both 'first' and'third' worlds plays an important role in such rethinking (hooks, *Yearning*; Mohanty; Higginbotham). While hooks and Mohanty both draw on post-structuralism, unlike Scott they have different understandings of identity and agency.

Another concern is that post-structuralism presents itself as a new master narrative. Mineke Bosch charges Scott with putting forth 'truths' in the guise of post-structuralism:

> Scott uses the compelling vocabulary of scientific progress, presenting the development in her theoretical work in terms reminiscent of paradigmatic change and scientific revolution. She speaks about the 'most dramatic shift in my own thinking,' 'a more powerful analytic perspective' and 'open up new intellectual directions.' With this shift towards post-structuralism goes a deprecation of what went before: women's historians initially endorsed 'an almost naive empiricism' and accepted a 'historical positivism' which implied a belief in pluralism, note the words 'naive' and 'belief.' (142)

Many argue that some of the insights attributed to post-structuralist theorists had already been addressed by black and feminist scholars (hooks; Rose; Novick). Linda Alcoff suggests that post-structuralism concurs with critical feminist and anticolonialist theories which contend that who is speaking to whom turns out to be equally important for meaning and truth as what is said, and what is said changes according to who is speaking and who is listening. Alcoff further argues that:

> The discursive style in which some European post-structuralists have made the claim that all writing is political marks it as important and likely to be true for a certain powerful milieu; whereas the style in which African-American writers made the same claim marked their speech as dismissable in the eyes of the same milieu. (13)

Moreover, many women of colour are leery of post-structuralism's claim to be a vehicle for inclusion. Bell hooks writes:

> The upshot of all this has been the unprecedented support among scholars and intellectuals for the inclusion of the Other--in theory. Yes, everyone is clamouring for "difference", only a few seem to want any difference that is about changing policy or that supports active engagement and struggle...Too often is seems, the point is to promote the appearance of difference within intellectual discourse, a "celebration" that fails to ask who is sponsoring the party and who is extending the invitations. For who is controlling this new discourse? Who is getting hired to teach it, and where? Who is getting paid to write about it? (*Yearning* 54)

She also argues that:

> ...it is sadly ironic that the contemporary discourse which talks the most about heterogeneity, the decentered subject, declaring breakthroughs that allow recognition of Otherness, still directs its critical voice primarily to a

> specialized audience that shares a common language rooted in the very master narrative it claims to challenge (*Yearning* 25).

Hooks, however, does suggest that there is potential in post-structuralism, but in order to be a vehicle for inclusion it needs to be transformed and altered.

Mariana Valverde, a Canadian feminist historian who sometimes engages in discourse analysis and post-structuralist social theory, suggests that Scott "vastly overrates" what philosophers such as Derrida can offer history (121). She contends that post-structuralism is useful to social history because of its theorization of sign systems as "ongoing struggles over and through meaning"(121). Moreover, she stresses that, taking from structuralism the fundamental insight that subjectivity is constituted rather than originary, more recent theorists have argued that neither discourses nor subjectivities are monolithic. It is her view that:

> Women's history is not self-sufficient, because it can fall into the trap of presupposing the object of its inquiry; but the critique of the constitution of gender at the level of discourse is not sufficient either...if 'there is nothing outside of the text,' there is also nothing outside of history. A post-ontological philosophy and a critical history can thus, in my opinion, work together fruitfully for feminist purposes in the study of how particular categories of social regulation are formed, stretched, and reformed. (124-125)

"Experience, Difference, Dominance, and Voice"

Women of Colour and post-structuralist feminists have both worked at fragmenting the universal historical subject of feminism. The following discussion demonstrates the manner in which some aspects of post-structuralism have helped to address the important issues of dominance and voice in the writing of history, although other understandings of experience and the possibilities of integrated models, have also made important contributions to this topic.

The recognition of the diversity in women's experience has led to controversy

surrounding the issue of voice: Who is entitled to speak on behalf of whom? It has been argued that white feminists have overlooked their own positionality and need to interrogate their whiteness (hooks; Mohanty; Alcoff). British postmodern feminist theorists Claire Pajaczkowska and Lola Young argue that if we analyze three aspects of culture--white, middle class and male--we find processes which identify and maintain this identity "as a cultural norm, an absence, a negativity, with the power to define itself only in terms of what it designates as opposites" (202). Similarly, Mohanty argues that universal images of third world women are predicated upon and bring into sharper focus assumptions about Western women being secular, liberated and in control of their own lives. She suggests that if this discursive self-presentation were a reality, there would be no need for feminist political movement in the west. She argues that only from the vantage point of the West is it possible to define the "third world" as underdeveloped and economically dependent: "Without the overdetermined discourse that creates the third world, there would be no (singular and privileged) first world" (74).

Bell hooks points out that, when discussing whiteness in a university setting, often "white students respond with naive amazement that black people critically assess white people from a standpoint where 'whiteness' is the privileged signifier...their amazement that black people watch white people with a critical 'ethnographic' gaze, is itself an expression of racism." She argues that this rage often erupts because they have a deep emotional investment in the myth of sameness even as their actions reflect the "primacy of whiteness as a sign informing who they are and how they think" (*Black Looks* 167).

Another important issue germane to voice and positionality is that the problem of 'speaking for others' has become an important issue in the writing of history. Cuthbert Brandt suggests that the postmodern/feminist controversy surrounding representation

and voice (Who is entitled to speak on behalf of different races?) is partly responsible for the lack of major historical representations of native and other ethnic women in Canada (468). Cuthbert Brandt notes that one positive outcome has been the increased use of oral history and points to recent publications documenting aboriginal women's experiences, such as *Enough is Enough* and *Gossip,* which highlight the efficacy of this research methodology. Jane Roland Martin warns that post-structuralist feminist scholarship is threatened with falling into the old "Separate but Equal segregationist policy" by "proclaiming in advance the impossibility of constructing adequate 'integrated' theories and narratives" (648). If one attests that all generalizations are false, there is no impetus to improve one's sample. Linda Alcoff suggests that group identities are problematic: "I am a Panamanian-American, and a person of mixed ethnicity and race: half white/Angla and half Panamanian mestiza. The criterion of group identities leaves many unanswered questions for a person such as myself..." (8). She acknowledges the importance of discussions going on today about how to develop strategies for a more equitable distribution of the ability to speak and be heard. However, she cautions that this development "should not be taken as an absolute disauthorization of all practice of speaking for" (29).

Pierson problematizes experience and voice in the writing of Canadian women's history. She argues that experience, an important concept in feminism and women's history, is inextricably linked to the concepts of difference, dominance, and voice. She suggests that while feminist historians have been attentive to class differences and differences in the experience of French and English speaking Canadian women they have been less attentive to other differences. Pierson argues that the historian must recognize the position from which she speaks. If the historian finds herself in a position

of dominance, she needs to employ what Uma Narayan calls "methodological caution" and "epistemic humility." In examining the interconnections of experience, difference, dominance and voice in *Many Tender Ties*, Sylvia Van Kirk's historical account of First Nations' women in the Canadian fur trade, Pierson asserts:

> It is only in the attempt to resurrect the interior experience of women whose specific experience of oppression Van Kirk does not share and for which no written records in their own voices exist that Van Kirk may have overstepped the bounds. The reconstruction of the society and economy of the fur trade and the recovery of Native women's indispensable place within it Van Kirk accomplished with both skill and respect. (94)

Part 2: Feminist Discourses on Pedagogy and Curriculum

Many feminist education theorists write about overlapping but distinct phases or approaches to feminist pedagogy (Luke and Gore; Gaskell and McLaren; Kenway and Modra; Weiner). Considering the interconnected nature of feminist theory, it is not surprising to find parallels between feminist historiography and feminist pedagogy.

Starting about 1970 feminist educators and scholars influenced by liberal feminism sought to achieve equality by demonstrating that females were like males and deserved the same treatment; this approach parallels the documentation of "great women" and women's rank and file contributions in political movements with the purpose of demonstrating their essential likeness to men. In the area of education feminists looked to remedy unequal treatment in texts, classrooms, and schools. In Canada *The Royal Commission on the Status of Women* (1970) concluded that the texts provided "few challenging models for young girls, and fail to create a sense of community between men and women as fellow human beings." Early readers, in particular, were scrutinized for their impact on sex-role stereotyping on children (Berg-Cross and Berg-Cross; Flerx,

Fidler and Rogers; Scott and Feldman-Summers). There was also evidence that teacher expectations of female and male students were stereotyped and that boys received more attention than girls from teachers. (For summaries see Gaskell and McLaren; Luke and Gore; Weiner) Research and activism had effect. In British Columbia in 1974 the Ministry of Education issued a directive entitled "On the equal treatment of the Sexes: Guidelines for Educational Materials."

Gaskell and McLaren suggest that there was a near consensus among feminists in the early 1970s regarding the problems and solutions to gender inequality in schools; after all, few could disagree with the aim of equal treatment in order to provide equal opportunity in schools. Yet, by the late 1970s many felt that much had been gained, and it was less urgent to continue the attack on gender inequality. Other feminist educators and educational scholars were not satisfied with this limited success (5-6).

The second pedagogical approach, like the separate spheres of women's culture in *her-story*, stressed the necessity of looking at gender from a female-centred perspective. New constructions of feminist pedagogy engaged with emergent pedagogical discourses of cultural and radical feminisms in the area of Women's Studies (Luke and Gore). Responding to and encouraging the development of separate Women Studies courses in British Columbia's schools the Ministry of Education issued *A Resource Guide for Teachers in Women's Studies*. Kenway and Modra compare these first two approaches to feminist pedagogy:

> The titles "Non-Sexist," "Equal Opportunity," and "Girl-Friendly," have been applied to the former..."Anti-Sexist," "Feminist" and "Girl-Centred" to the latter. The former is concerned, primarily, with such "quantifiable aspects of access" (Suggest 1987 70) as participation rates in nontraditional subjects and careers and resource distribution. The latter set is more concerned about the qualitative questions "Access to what?" "What is worthwhile and useful knowledge for girls?" (142)

The third pedological approach calls for a synthesis and rethinking of the whole and corresponds to gender-relational history. Jane Roland Martin (*Reclaiming*) demonstrates revaluing the feminine condoned characteristics that women developed in a male dominated society and led to the a priori negation of characteristics considered male. Gaskell and McLaren write that "a synthesis needed to be created for everyone, a synthesis that allows both male and female experiences to be seen, to be valued, and most importantly to be rethought" (8). In order to create such a synthesis, research models themselves had to be rethought. For example, feminists responded to male bias research by rethinking research models is a variety of areas such as moral development (Gilligan), ways of knowing (Belenky et al.), and status attainment (Gaskell).

Like feminist theory in general and feminist historiography, feminist educational scholarship has been critiqued for its white, middle-class bias. Efforts to respond to the diversity of women's experience, as in feminist historiography, have taken two courses in meeting the challenge of diversity. One course involves focusing on difference within the model of critical feminist pedagogy; the other, following a post-structuralist model, uses discourse analysis to critique the limitations of critical, liberatory pedagogy. Gaskell and McLaren, for example, tend towards the former view and suggest:

> An understanding of the diversity of the female experience means deconstructing the unified category of female. It means listening to the voices of Native women, girls, older women ...disabled women, immigrant women, poor women, lesbians. It does not mean a simple celebration of difference (Nicholson 10). It means valuing difference based on structured divisions in society, placing difference rather than commonality at the centre of feminism and rethinking the whole based on these differences. It means building alliances between feminism and other democratic struggles. In education it means transforming the curriculum and pedagogy to ensure that all people give voice to their experience, to analyze and understand it, and to connect it to the experience of others. (10)

The notion of giving "voice" to experience shifts in a postmodern analytical framework. Voices speaking in the name of their own liberation and empowerment is more problematic (Ellsworth; Lather "Post-Critical"; Orner). Many working within a post-modern theoretical framework attest to the necessity of recognizing the "largely unconscious" nature of our subjectivities. Orner argues that the term "subject" unlike "individual" encourages us to think of ourselves and our realities as constructions, "the products of signifying or meaning making activities which are both culturally specific and generally unconscious" (79).

Notions of liberatory pedagogies are also scrutinized through the framework of postmodern theory (Walkerdine; Gore; Weiler). As Lather writes:

> Rather that positioning liberatory pedagogies as logical unfoldings toward a desired goal, such work explores their contradictions and contingencies, their tensions, and internal resistances to their own 'forward' movement. ("Post-Critical" 129)

However, the divide between post-structural feminists in education and the critical feminist pedagogy they critique is becoming less clear. Luke and Gore point out in the introduction to *Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy* that many of the post-modernist readings in their text take up as their object of analysis critical pedagogy discourse which is situated "comfortably within modern enlightenment epistemologies" at a time when "some critical pedagogy theorists are themselves beginning to explore the implications of post-modern and post-structuralist theories" (9).

Indeed, as those writing within the discourse of feminist critical pedagogy are speaking of the need for students to analyze and relate their experiences, some working within the realm of postmodern pedagogy clearly state their unwillingness to give up the notion of female identity. As Luke and Gore stress:

> The historical contingency of feminine subjectivity is central to feminist theories, and therefore the refusal of identity is not part of the feminist theoretical or political project. Moreover, we are not at all convinced that men are giving up their identity and authority, even as they speak a good post-modernist game of "multiple narratives" and "border crossings." As bell hooks points out "it's easy to give up an identity, when you got one." In this context, feminist theories are far from ready to give up feminist struggles for identities of our own making. (6)

Feminist Discourses on History Curriculum

One such struggle identified by Seixas and Bernard-Powers is the attack by proponents of "cultural literacy," which has in part resulted in the limited gains of those interested in inclusive curricula. Michael Bliss argues against the "sundering" of Canadian history as a unified discipline by those insisting on introducing more "private history" at the expense of "political history." In his 1998 bestseller, Granatstein points the finger of blame for the "killing" of Canadian history in schools at academic historians who "profess trivia" when they do not include "history written from a central Canadian perspective," favouring instead "history from the points of view of women, the working class, minorities, and regions" (57). The backlash in British Columbia became particularly clear to me when I attended the 1995 British Columbia Social Studies Teachers Association Conference. The keynote speaker was the *New York Times* writer, Richard Bernstein. His speech, for which he was paid $3000, warned the audience about the dangers of multicultural education to democratic process. Bernard-Powers writes that the climate is "chilly" for those advocating for gender fair and culturally inclusive social studies curriculum change (192).

While one may argue that prescribed curriculum is not a key determinant in what plays out in the classroom, it is certainly a crucial factor in many circumstances.

Curriculum influences the writing and purchasing of textbooks. Textbooks often become a fundamental source of content knowledge (Apple; Mehlinger and Marker); recent feminist critiques of social studies textbooks suggest that the more things change the more they stay the same.

Many textbook analyses begin with a look at statistical representation, and the findings indicate that women are seriously under-represented (Light, Staton, and Bourne; Baldwin and Baldwin; Bernard-Powers). Light and colleagues found that publishers used photographs to mask the absence of substantive integrated discussion of women. How women are represented is also a key concern. They suggest that when women do appear more substantially, their treatment is "incidental, marginal, and frequently the depiction of their roles is inaccurate." Often textbooks underline the assumption that women are marginal to the shaping of history and include a focus or biography which is boxed off from the main text. Other texts address women in a separate last chapter in the book, in effect, an afterthought. They also noted a tendency in several texts to blame female family members for faults of the central men under discussion (19). For example: "Macdonald's first wife, Isabella, was a bedridden invalid. Because he could not entertain at home, he used to go to taverns. He began to drink too much" (Garrod et al. 249, quoted in Light et al.).

The diversity of women's representation also proves problematic. Gaskell, McLaren and Novogrodsky argue:

> To include women's experience means diversifying the curriculum so that native women, children from single parent homes, business women and Chinese-Canadian women see what they are taught as having some relevance for their lives, so that the enormous variety of women's experience in Canada is represented...It means adding the study of women's work in First Nations families in Labrador as well as adding the study of pioneer women in Nova Scotia...To add women's experience to

> the curriculum means fundamental change. It means re-examining the rules that are used for inclusion in the first place and changing the way the entire subject is conceptualized.

If people mentioned in history texts, they continue, are primarily those who have played an important role in governing the country, women cannot be equally represented. Rather, the process of adding women involves changing ideas about what students should learn in history classes and the reasons why they should study history (42-3).

Light and colleagues also note that gender-neutral language often serves to mask the exclusion of women's experience. The need has been recognized to use gender-neutral language and gender-specific language, as appropriate. In addition they found that in many texts the tone of language changed and became trivializing when women were discussed. Although tone is frequently difficult to judge, they "believe women were generally described less seriously than men" (Light et al.19). For example, they cite from Hux and Jarman's 1981 textbook:

> Women also made many personal sacrifices during the war. Silk stockings were very rare in Canada because the silk was needed to make parachutes. Many women showed their spirit of fun when they painted their legs the colour of stockings. They even painted seams on the back of their legs!

Katherine McKenna's article "An Examination of Sex Equity in the 1986 Ontario Curriculum Guideline for History and Contemporary Studies" provides useful guidelines for reviewing curriculum and texts. She begins by pointing to the discrepancy of the forthright statement on sex equity with the reality of the curriculum. She also finds the use of inappropriate gender-neutral language a device for masking exclusion of those other than white males. Like the textbooks reviewed above she found that the curriculum of the Senior Division American History course implies that women were excluded unfairly from public life and only mentions them in a brief reference to feminism and

suffrage, that is, only when they entered the public, male domain. She found throughout most of the courses that wars and political conflict were set forth as the driving forces of history and suggests that "a stress on women's culture as well as men's would make aggression only one human characteristic rather than the primary one" (22). McKenna expressed concerns with an evaluation of cognitive development modelled on Kohlberg's work on morality with boys. In effect, the curriculum judged cognitive development according to the notion that the more abstract the principle, the more sophisticated the student's thinking is deemed to be. Citing Carol Gilligan, McKenna argues that this cognitive evaluation model disadvantages girls. McKenna did, however, find the grade 7 course "Early Canadian Communities" a model for curriculum development because rather than stressing wars and conflict it looks at how people related cooperatively. Moreover, the course starts from the student's own personal experience and reaches outward, allowing for an integrated view of public and private, and hence male and female, historical perspectives.

Another problem with curriculum is identified by ten Dam and Rijkschroess in "Teaching Women's History in Secondary Education: Constructing Gender Identity." They present results of a research project regarding the impact of teaching women's history in the Netherlands in 1990 and 1991 when women's history constitutes an area of curriculum emphasis and is included as one of the two compulsory final exam essay questions in the grade prior to graduation year. The curriculum was analyzed as containing three distinct levels pertaining to women. At the first level, women's roles in areas traditionally ascribed to men are made apparent. The second level affirms the value of the domains more traditionally associated with women. The third level is an examination of the changing meanings for gender differences and femininity as a social

construction. They stress that the subject of women's history was presented and taught as a separate theme and that the course was continually related to the needs of girls with very little discussion of the value of the course to boys. They suggest that this resulted in a loss of status for the theme of women's history and may have resulted in stereotyping because it implied that girls were different and needed special attention (86).

The British Columbia Ministry of Education's *Learning Resources Guide* has responded to many of these critiques and suggests the following guidelines for analyzing gender portrayal in learning resources:

> Consider portrayal of the personal traits and circumstances, attitudes and actions of males and females in regard to the following:...frequency and portrayal of each sex; gender sensitive language which is specific when appropriate and inclusive whenever possible; diversity of roles and relations for each sex; and the historical invisibility of the contributions, experiences and perspectives of girls and women. (15-16)

As such, the Ministry supports the selection of texts on the basis of their treatment of gender and portrayal of women's history.

The feminist works reviewed in this chapter share the common goal of challenging gender oppression. There are many parallels between feminist historiography and feminist pedagogy, particularly in the conflicted nature of each discipline, often resulting from the tensions between critical and postmodern feminisms. Chapter 2 sets out to negotiate these conflicts and provide a framework for the analysis of the curricula.

Chapter 2: A Framework for Analysis

> It is written from the perspective of one who believes that, just as there is no neutral education, there is no neutral research. (Lather, *Getting Smart* 50)

Research as Praxis

This study is a feminist undertaking. In the words of Patti Lather "to do feminist research is to put the construction of gender at the centre of one's inquiry" (294). As Evelyn Fox Keller writes, feminism is among other things a form of attention, a lens that brings into focus particular questions (6). I define feminism here as theory and practice which consciously challenges the oppression of women on the basis of gender. The choice of gender as a focus is not intended to suggest that gender is primary over other systemic oppressions based on constructs such as race, class, or sexual identity. Indeed, any gender analysis must take into account the interconnections of gender with other constructs. As Avtar Brah writes: "Structures of class, racism, gender and sexuality cannot be treated as 'independent variables' because the oppression of each is inscribed within the other--is constituted by and is constitutive of the other" (137).

Feminist research projects are concerned with research as praxis (Lather; Weiler). This means that feminist researchers must ask themselves if their research has the potential to help women's lives. This project uses a gender lens to analyze the history

components of the British Columbia Social Studies 8-11 and the History 12 *Integrated Resource Packages* which are both scheduled to be implemented in September, 1999. There are two steps in this process; the first involves locating the curricular changes relevant to the representation of women, and the second involves analyzing the curriculum for the gender knowledge it produces. Scott maintains that "history's representation of the past helps construct gender knowledge for the present" (*Gender* 2). In effect, the problem is set up with the curriculum as sample, and feminist theory, in particular feminist historiography and educational scholarship, as the measure of the analysis.

Reading draft proposals for the 8-11 curriculum and acting as a gender reviewer for the Ministry of Education for History 12 made me aware of the need for an in-depth analysis of the incoming curriculum. I think that the curriculum has the responsibility of providing gender equitable education. As Joan Kelly wrote in 1976, there are two goals to women's history: "To restore women to history and to restore our history to women" (15). While historians focus on restoring women to history, it is the role of educators to restore women's history to girls and women. (I believe, however, that women's history is also important for male students.) As the literature review demonstrates, the ways in which we go about representing women's history in the curriculum is of crucial concern. History education plays an important role in creating gender identity. Maria Grever calls historiography a political necessity in the process of constructing an identity:

> Individuals and groups do not find their identity in the historical facts, but form their identity in a reconstruction of the past into the present with views about the future...Which identifying features are emphasized, which players are chosen for the historical stage and how they are presented, depends on the interests of the historian. (quoted in ten Dam and Rijkschroeff 76)

I am certainly aware that the curriculum is not the sole determinant in what plays

out in the classroom. Lusted states that pedagogy is "the transformation of consciousness that takes place in the intersection of three agencies--the teacher, the learner and the knowledge they produce together" (quoted in Lather, *Getting Smart* 15). It has been my experience that to varying degrees the curriculum plays an important role in determining what knowledge the teacher brings into the classroom. While I agree with Thornton that teachers act as "gatekeepers" of knowledge in the classroom, there are a number of reasons teachers follow curriculum guides. The most obvious reason is that teachers are employed to teach the curriculum. Moreover, many schools administer school-wide midterms and final exams that necessitate following the curriculum. The best example of systemic control of the history curriculum is History 12; forty percent of the student mark is based on her or his performance on a provincial exam that the teacher does not see ahead of time and does not mark. The dense knowledge component of the course necessitates a strict adherence to the mandated curriculum.

As pointed out in the literature review, curriculum often impacts the writing and selection of texts and other learning resources. Mehlinger and Marker demonstrate that textbooks are a fundamental source of content knowledge: "About half of all social studies teachers depend upon a single textbook; about 90% use no more than three" (849). It has been my experience that teachers who do try to broaden the knowledge base face several obstacles: limited resources, limited resource money, copyright laws, photocopying limitations, and limited time. Teachers developing gender-inclusive resource packages or requesting funds to purchase gender-inclusive materials would benefit from being validated by the curriculum. What is considered worth knowing in the curriculum sends out a message to administrators, teachers, students, and parents.

While feminist pedagogy, in particular that which addresses social studies

curriculum, is important, I have selected feminist historiography as the primary measure of the curriculum. Feminist historiography provides the in-depth engagement with representations of women in history that is required for this project. Peter Seixas identifies parallel crises in the academy and in curriculum writing which he believes provide an opportunity for curriculum development. The crises over the representation of women in the academy are instructional in our attempts to develop gender fair history curriculum:

> As feminists have documented the lives of women in the past, provided interpretations of particular periods and events, and analyzed the specific conditions of women's subordination, they have encountered the powerful resistance of history--as a disciplined body of knowledge and as a professional institution. Meeting this resistance has been an occasion of variously for anger, retreat, and the formulation of new strategies. It has also provoked analyses of the deeply gendered nature of history itself. The entire process has generated a search for terms of criticism, conceptual reorientations, and theory that are the preconditions for feminist rewritings of history. Much of the search has revolved around the issue of woman as a subject, that is an active agent in history. (Scott, *Gender* 2)

Just as feminist historians struggle to validate women's history in the academy, feminist social studies teachers struggle to validate women's history in the curriculum.

What can be generalized from this research? The research deals with a specific curriculum, and is intended as an assessment of that specific curriculum. Ideally, I would like to see this critique of the curriculum and other feminist assessments have an impact on future mandated curriculum in this province. I also hope this project will be useful to social studies teachers interested in gender equity in that it analyzes problems in representation and suggests strategies for more meaningful inclusion. Moreover, it should be helpful in the development of lessons, units, and teacher resource packages. I know that working through these issues has impacted the knowledge and strategies that I bring to the classroom. British Columbia's curriculum is not unique in the way it sets out

to represent women in history and, as there is very limited research analyzing government-mandated social studies curriculum with a gender lens, this project contributes to that body of academic knowledge.

A dramatic shift in the understanding of scientific inquiry has come about as a result of theories of difference and poststructuralist thought. Postpositivism requires inquiry approaches that recognize that knowledge is "socially constituted, historically embedded, and valuationally based. Theory serves as agentic function, and research illustrates (vivifies) rather than provides a truth test" (Hendrick 506). "What this means," contends Lather, "is that openly ideological, advocacy-based research has arisen as a new contender for legitimacy" (*Getting Smart* 52). How does one address the issue of validity in an openly ideological project such as this? Zeller argues that we actively select, transform and interpret 'reality' in our inquiry, but most often our structuring and shaping mechanisms are hidden behind masks of objectivity and fact. (Zeller quoted in Lather, *Getting Smart* 91).

Self-reflexivity is recommended as a strategy to help us to recognize and acknowledge our own will to power in our work as opposed to masking that will with claims to truth. Lather writes:

> While we cannot but be engulfed by the categories of our times, self-reflexivity teaches that our discourse is the meaning of our longing. Derrida's "the always already" means that how we speak and write tells us more about our own inscribed selves, about the way that language writes us, than about the "object" of our gaze. (Lather, *Getting Smart* 119)

Negotiating the Conflicts Prior to Analysis

As feminist theory and feminist historiography do not provide a unitary discourse with which to evaluate the curriculum, selection and negotiation were required on my part.

In effect, this section is an act of self-reflexivity, an attempt to make clear my own position regarding some of the key conflicts I encountered in writing the literature review, and in coming to terms with how to use feminist historical discourse as a measurement of the curriculum, when feminist history is itself a field of political contest. Since there are several contentious issues within the field of feminist history, I needed to make decisions about which approaches seemed most relevant and appropriate to the concerns of secondary school history curriculum. The different approaches to women's history in many cases suggest varied approaches to curriculum writing and analysis. It seems to me that all three approaches, outlined by Scott, have valuable contributions to make to curriculum analysis. Similarly, I have concerns about certain aspects of each approach. In the following pages I set out to come to terms with the key conflicts and to formulate a framework for analyzing the curriculum.

The most obvious measurement of the impact of feminist history and pedagogy on the curriculum, the amount of **representation of women**, is the least contentious for feminists. This involves asking if women are represented more so in the new curriculum. It seems reasonable to expect that as women have made up roughly half of the population throughout history that their experiences are suitably addressed in the curriculum. While mere representation considered on its own can be quite meaningless, it does provide an important foundation for more sophisticated analyses.

The representation of women is further illuminated when one considers the issue of **segregation and integration**. In the literature review, *her-story*, gender history, and post-structuralist accounts of women's history are conflicted on the subject of integration. Many feminist historians share Scott's concern that the segregation of women's history

runs the risk of isolating women as a special topic of history and reinforces the notion of the gender as essence. Research done on teaching women's history in the Netherlands (ten Dam and Rijkschroeff) suggests that one of the problems with the model used there was that women's history taught as a "separate theme" and seemed to suggest that girls required "special attention"; moreover, they found girls reluctant to identify with a group perceived as "deficient" (86). They suggest that it would be better to teach women's history in an integrated fashion.

The literature review suggests that some integrated models can be misleading; the exclusion of women is often masked with gender-neutral language. For example, the 1986 curriculum implicitly concerns itself with male culture, although that culture is veiled with universal language such as "the individual in society." I would argue that the learning outcome of identifying the roles of major personalities in the outbreak of WWII is the study of a specific, powerful, privileged, male culture (*History 12* 1989 33). I am not suggesting that we do away with the study of male culture in the curriculum. It seems to me that a history of the 20th Century should include the role of politicians. Perhaps, the best solution is that we make both examples of male and female experiences explicit in the curriculum. Srole writes, "Gender labelling will promote clarity for students and force textbook authors and teachers to define for themselves the distinctions in male and female experience" (265).

Srole also maintains that "the recognition of differences is the first step toward locating intersections" (269). She outlines a model which could prove useful for secondary history education. First, she suggests that the curriculum avoid inappropriate neutral language and delineate male roles and activities from those of women. Next, she suggests that the way change impacts men and women (diversified) be explored. In

order to demonstrate that women are also agents of change, while avoiding "contribution history," is to look beyond political history to the larger picture. She sets out the American Revolution (currently in British Columbia a topic of study in the Grade 9 curriculum) as an example and demonstrates that the integration of gender, political, economic and social history can lead to a more complete historical analysis in which women, as well as men, are agents of change. Srole highlights the potential for acknowledging the different roles of women and men in a historical situation as a means to deconstruct the separateness of public and private spheres.

But it is not enough to delineate female and male experience and represent women's role in an integrated manner where appropriate. The literature review establishes the consensus that the experiences of women and men are impacted by constructs other than gender. Race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual identity, among others, are constructs which have interacted with gender experiences. Another important issue that I needed to come to terms with was that of **experience, diversity, and voice**. The validation of women's experience has for many years been a foundational aspect of feminism, and an important part of my own understanding of feminist consciousness. Stanley and Wise wrote in 1983 that:

> Feminism insists that women should define and interpret our experiences, and that women need to re-define and re-name what other people--experts, men--have previously defined and named for us...'the personal', experience, is intensely political and immensely important politically...an examination of experience clearly demonstrates the inadequacies of a positivist approach. (114)

By the 1980s feminist theorists of difference, such as women of color and lesbians, had problematized the notion of monolithic female experience. Works such as bell hooks' *Margin to Centre* and Hazel Carby's *White Women Listen* played important roles in my

understanding of the diversity of women's experience. For me, like others, this recognition of the diversity of women's experiences necessitates listening to and valuing the diverse experiences of women; it means rethinking feminist theory. Gaskell and McLaren argue, and I too believe that:

> It does not mean starting from the experiences of the white middle class female as the norm and finding out how the experiences of "others" differ ....An understanding of the diversity of the female experience means deconstructing the unified category of the female. (10)

Many poststructuralist feminists writing in the area of history have come to define experience quite differently from definitions put forth by other feminists. For example, In "Experience" Joan Scott refers to a passage of Samuel Delany's (a black, homosexual writer) concerning his experience of visiting a Bathhouse in 1963; he writes that the "apprehension of massed bodies" gave him a "sense of political power." Scott finds fault with this because "when experience is taken as the origin of knowledge, the vision of the individual subject...becomes the bedrock of evidence upon which explanation is built." Moving her argument into the realm of historical discourse, Scott suggests that historians should take as their project "*not* the reproduction and transmission of knowledge said to be arrived at through experience, but the analysis of the production of knowledge itself" (25). In effect, experience loses its status as a source of knowledge and is relegated to the position of being the "handmaiden" to discourse analysis. The image of a poststructuralist claiming that women's experiences are not valuable as sources of knowledge and applying specialized terminology to demonstrate how women came to that sense of experience makes me, like several of the historians cited in the literature review, uncomfortable.

For me, this discomfort is, in part, an issue of the interconnections between

"experience, difference, dominance and voice" as set out by Pierson. The majority of poststructuralist feminist historian are white, middle-class women, and while they may be well-intentioned, valuing discourse theory to the extent that experience is no longer a source of knowledge, especially when in a position of dominance, is problematic. This is not to say that I think historians should accept oral histories or written accounts of women's experience at face value, or uncritically. I am most comfortable with the approach set forth by Pierson:

> As collectors and recorders of the stories of other...we cannot accept a woman's recollection uncritically, that is, as unmediated by cultural/historical context...we need to contextualize women's narratives, for to be understood they have 'to be thoughtfully situated in time and place.' (Pierson 91; interior quotation, Personal Narratives Group, 'Origins', in *Interpreting Women's Lives* 12)

Another related conflict relevant to experience and post-structuralism, and germane to curriculum analysis, is the ways in which the curriculum plays a role in **constructing and deconstructing gender knowledge** for students. As indicated above many feminists historians are concerned with the impact of poststructuralism on human agency in history. I share Anna Clark's concern that often poststructuralist accounts of history "assert that power is exercised through dispersed networks and nodes, in which subjects are constructed through discourse" and "rarely answer the question of who exercises this power" (115). There are two concerns related to agency and both are relevant to the political potential of women's history for students. One is that post-structuralist theory masks the actuality that real people acted and exercised power in history (115). Canning's suggestion that modern German history serves as a limit case for historical methods makes a powerful point. To me teaching a unit on the Holocaust that analyses the discursive construction of the concept of 'Jewish,' without

acknowledging that real people committed horrendous acts of oppression and mass murder is extremely problematic. It seems important for students to recognize that sites of oppression can be located and contested, and while meaning may be constituted discursively, human agency plays an important role in what occurs in history. Students should be able to recognize not only their own oppressions, but also the ways in which they might oppress others, such as in incidents of racism, classism, sexism or homophobia. If we are to teach women's history that goes beyond the valorization of women, we need also to acknowledge women's complicity in acts of oppression.

Just as it is politically problematic to mask the ways in which real political actors have exercised power, and enacted oppression, it is also problematic to downplay the actions of those who have struggled against oppression. I think it important that we also provide students with the awareness that particular acts of oppression can be challenged, and sometimes are challenged successfully. While I think the feminist work in discourse theory is useful, and that curriculum should include the study of the discursive fields that shape meaning in our lives, I find myself, like Hall, wanting a different balance: "an emphasis on 'we' acting, on us being present and active in our own making" (Hall 210). I am not recommending that we valorize women's role in history. As Sangster suggests in her critique of Kome's *Women of Influence*, we need critical women's history, not a female version of the "great man" in history. Curriculum writers and teachers have access to a wealth of critical feminist history on which to draw.

Another important conflict found between critical feminist historians and post-structuralist feminist historians is the conflict regarding essentialism and deconstruction, in particular, as it pertains to women's culture. In writing the literature review I came across no recent examples of historical accounts that insist on fixed historical differences

between women and men. This is not particularly surprising as Scott herself admits that the works which concern her are unpublished. However, her concern, which is shared by others, is that histories focussing on women's culture, albeit unintentionally, reinforce the notion of ahistorical difference. Both the advocates for representing women's cultures in the past and those against it lay claims to the political efficacy of their own approach. Works such as Strong-Boag's *The New Day Recalled* demonstrate that same-sex relationships have "bolstered" women's challenges of convention (218). In line with Scott, Perrot poses the countervailing argument:

> We must also be aware of describing a feminine culture that would be no more than the rigid designation of a complementary space and, in the end, another formulation of immutable nature...the risk is that we shall go on forever reproducing a tautological argument.... (7)

These are both compelling arguments, and I suggest that while it is politically important for historical accounts of women's culture to be included in the curriculum, the "immutable nature" of these cultures should be deconstructed as well. It seems that discourse theory, in particular the method of deconstruction, can play a valuable role in making this evident, and in teaching critical thinking. Lather writes that deconstruction: " ...as the postmodern equivalent of the dialectic provides a corrective moment, a safeguard against dogmatism, a continual displacement" (*Getting Smart* 13).

Indeed the history curriculum should reflect developments and controversies within the academy. Milt McLaren, of Simon Fraser University's Faculty of Education, advised the curriculum writing team in 1995:

> Where a field of knowledge is in a state of flux, where debates rage, where new discoveries are being made, where theories or paradigms are changing, students too should be let in on the excitement and controversy and come to see the pursuit of knowledge as an active passionate, human endeavour rather than the memorization of a mountain of decontextualized facts. (2)

As such, the curriculum is an appropriate place to study not only conflicts within feminist history but also within the academy of history at large. This should not only result in a more interesting curriculum, it should also open the gateways to more meaningful inclusion of groups previously marginalized in a curriculum largely dependent on traditional historical understandings.

The following chapters make use of feminist historiography and pedagogical theory and research, as set out in the four themes discussed above, to analyze how the new British Columbia social studies and history curricula address women's history and gender issues. Chapter 3 deals specifically with the history components of the Social Studies 8-11 curricula, while Chapter 4 focuses on History 12 and includes a discussion of the constraints associated with the Provincial Examination.

Although the analysis of the curricula is organized under four themes, this is in no way intended to suggest that these themes are distinct and separate. The themes are constructed for the sake of clarity in analysis but are found in interrelationship within the curricula themselves and such interconnections are also discussed. The use of gender-neutral and gender-specific language is not addressed separately; rather it plays an important role throughout the thematic analyses.

The list of learning resources recommended to support each curriculum is added to in an ongoing process and there is still another year until the new curriculum is mandated. Therefore, the reviews of the learning resources found in Chapters 3 and 4 represent only a sampling of what is currently available.

Chapter 5 provides a summary, discusses the process of curriculum writing, and considers the implications of the curricula for student understandings about gender.

Chapter 3: The Social Studies 8 to 11 Curricula

> ....the explicit curriculum of social studies is a powerful source of change in schools that has barely been tapped, and gender equity is the wellspring of that change. (Bernard-Powers 205)

Introduction

Bernard-Powers suggests that the *formal curriculum*, defined here as the official curriculum documents and the recommended resources, has a profound impact on the *taught curriculum* and plays an important role in shaping students' ideas about gender. Students are required to take social studies from grades 8-11, covering topics from the fall of the Roman Empire to modern-day Canada. Within these contexts their political and social understandings are shaped by the history they learn. I teach in a school where I am not constrained by cross-grade midterm or final examinations which affords me many opportunities to interrogate "traditional" historical accounts. However, many feminist teachers face the challenge of negotiating these constraints. In addition, due to the virtual absence of women in the 1988 social studies curriculum, we are generally hard-pressed to acquire resources suitable for teaching women's history. *Formal curriculum* which validates such teaching is essential to support the inclusion of women's history.

This chapter begins with a brief analysis of the history components of the outgoing 1988 grade 8-11 *Curriculum Guide* as it seems that one important measure of the new

curriculum is the manner in which it differs from the old curriculum in relation to women's history. I begin by assessing the degree to which women are represented in the history components of the outgoing Social Studies 8-11 Curriculum, and then analyze the use of gender-neutral and gender-specific language. The history components of the new *Grades 8-10* and *Grade 11 Social Studies 1997 IRPs* are analyzed using the issues arising from the literature review. They are addressed under the following themes:

- Representation of women
- Segregation and Integration
- Experience, Diversity and Voice
- Constructing and Deconstructing Gender Knowledge

These themes, although interconnected, are discussed separately for the sake of clarity. In addition, the use of language plays an important role in their analyses. The various learning resources recommended to support the revised curriculum provide denser material for analysis, and thus these are discussed in a manner which allows for consideration of thematic interconnections.

An assessment of the ground gained with the new curriculum suggests there is more support for feminist teaching, both in terms of learning outcomes and resources; however, there is still considerable distance and difficult terrain to be negotiated.

The 1988 Curriculum

The goals of the outgoing curriculum refer to the concept of *social diversity,* suggesting a document that is mindful of gender, but the specifics of the curriculum show otherwise. The 1988 *Social Studies Curriculum Guide: Grade Eight-Grade Eleven* is a 95-page document. It is prefaced by four program goals (4-5), a philosophy and rationale (6), a grade focus or program flow (7), and a model for evaluation (8-10). The curriculum

itself is organized under four headings per page: *Focus, Topic, Understandings and Skills,* and *Sample Key Questions* (14-87). "Appendix A: Skills through the Grades" is a scope and sequence for grades 1-11 for teaching social studies-related skills (91-95).

While the goals provide some opportunity for the inclusion of women's history and gender issues, they do not specifically refer to gender as an aspect of diversity where diversity and society are mentioned. At first glance, one might anticipate that the broad nature of curricular goals has left terms such as "social and cultural diversity" to be followed through in a manner which is gender-inclusive in the specifics of the curriculum. However, further analysis demonstrates that either the goals were not carried out in the curriculum or that gender was not considered to be relevant to social and cultural diversity.

The first goal states that students should know and understand "...the factors which have shaped and continue to shape Canada and Canadians" and further specifies that students should be expected to know and understand "how Canada's social and cultural diversity has developed and continues to develop." Based on this goal one might expect that gender would be examined, along with other structures such as race and class, as a factor shaping Canadians and as an aspect of social diversity in Canadian society. The second goal looks beyond Canada to the world and asserts that students should know and understand "the diverse patterns of human activity in the world." This goal further states that students should be expected to know and understand "the social and cultural diversity of the peoples of the world and the factors which contribute to their diversity," but gender is not specified as a factor of diversity (4).

The next two goals look to citizenship. Goal 3 states that students should know and understand "the roles, rights and responsibilities of an individual as a member of

society" and specifies that students should know and understand the "informal and formal interactions within the society and their influence upon individuals and groups," as well as, "the influence of media upon individuals and society." Yet, once again gender is not specifically referred to in this goal. Similarly, the fourth goal states that students "should develop a willingness and ability to use knowledge and understanding as a member of society" but does not refer to gender or gender issues, in spite of the subset goals requiring students to "appreciate differing points of view" and to examine "a variety of points of view with respect to issues and problems" (5).

Any expectation that these broad goals are intended to lead to curriculum which is inclusive of gender issues or women's history can be easily dismissed when one looks more carefully at the specifics of the stated curriculum. There are no references to gender or women under the categories of *Focus, Topic,* or *Understandings and Skills*. There are 165 mandated *Understandings and Skills*, none of which refer to women or gender. Of the 501 *Sample Key Questions* found in the 8-11 curricula only two refer specifically to women. The first reference to women is found in grade nine under the topic of the "Social and Political Effects of the Industrial Revolution" (46). Here the understanding is that students are able to "identify the ways in which the Industrial Revolution affected people" and a sample key question asks "How were the lives of men, women, and children changed?" (47). The next reference to women is not found until grade eleven, where under the topic of "Canada and the World," a sample key question asks, "What changes occurred after World War I in the following areas: industrialization, trade unionism, political movements, social attitudes, and the role of women in society?" (76). At best, these two sample questions provide a token attempt to represent women. Moreover, women are presented as objects of historical change rather than subjects with

historical agency. Their lives are affected by paramount political change driven by male agency.

Feminism has argued both through research and theory that attention to language is important in attempts to achieve gender equity. Indeed, even the use of gender-inclusive language is highly inconsistent in the curriculum. In some cases the use of language is gender-neutral, and in other cases it is exclusive. While this approach would be preferable in a gender-sensitive curriculum that uses both gender-specific and gender-neutral language as appropriate, it is not used appropriately in this curriculum document. For example, the grade 8 focus on the Reformation asks if "human beings" are controlled by logic and reason, but also refers to "man's curiosity" and "mankind" on the same page (28). Gender-neutral and male-centred language are used randomly with no apparent consideration or gender-sensitivity. It seems that the use of gender-appropriate language was considered such a non-issue that no policy regarding this was adopted in the writing of the curriculum.

In spite of the important impact made by feminist theory on the discipline of history several years prior to the writing of the curriculum, there is no indication of any attempt in the curriculum to reflect such development. In 1976 Joan Kelly challenged the significance of traditional periodization for women, while the 1986 curriculum asks "Were the long-term effects of the Reformation beneficial to mankind?" (29).

The 1997 Curricula

The new curriculum is packaged in two different publications, the *Social Studies 8-10 Integrated Resources Package 1997* and the *Social Studies 11 Integrated Resource Package 1997* (IRPs), both to be implemented in the fall of 1999. These are

substantially different from the previous curriculum guide; they transform the column of *understanding and skills* into fewer, more observable *prescribed learning outcomes* and suggest strategies for instruction and assessment. Appendices also provide additional information and teacher support. The documents are set up using a common framework. The *Social Studies 8-10 IRP* is 166 pages in total and broken down as follows:

- Preface: Using this Integrated Resource Package (I-V)
- Introduction to Social Studies 8-10 (1-9)
- The Social Studies 8-10 Curriculum (10-43)
- Appendix A: Prescribed Learning Outcomes [chart] (A2-A7)
- Appendix B: Learning Resources (B3-B67)
- Appendix C: Cross Curricular Interests (C3-C14)
- Appendix D: Assessment and Evaluation (D3-D27)
- Appendix E: Acknowledgements (E3-E4)

The *Social Studies 11 IRP* is 164 pages long:

- Preface: Using This Integrated Resource Package (I-V)
- Introduction to Social Studies 11 (1-7)
- The Social Studies 11 Curriculum (10-29)
- Appendix A: Prescribed Learning Outcomes [chart] (A2-A7)
- Appendix B: Learning Resources (B3-B91)
- Appendix C: Cross-Curricular Interests (C3-C14)
- Appendix D: Assessment and Evaluation (D3-D14)
- Appendix E: Acknowledgements (E3-E4)

The Preface and Appendix C are identical features in the two curricula.

Unlike the earlier curriculum guide both documents clearly state in their introductions that the development teams have done their "best to ensure that relevance, equity, and accessibility issues are addressed" and further list issues relevant to feminist theory such as gender equity, multiculturalism and anti-racism, aboriginal studies, and special needs (*8-10 IRP* 8-9; *11 IRP* 6).

Gender Equity is also addressed in Appendix C in both documents under the headings of "Principles of Gender Equity in Education" and "General Strategies for Gender-Equitable Teaching" (C8-C9). This useful summary for teachers is found in all

the new IRPs and is credited as being "derived from the preliminary *Report of the Gender Equity Advisory Committee*, received by the Ministry of Education in February 1994, and from a review of related materials" (C8). Gender equity is defined as follows:

> Gender-equitable education involves the inclusion of the experiences, perceptions, and perspectives of girls and women, as well as boys and men, in all aspects of education. It will initially focus on girls in order to redress historical inequities. (C8)

The issue of diversity is also addressed under "Principles": "Gender equity incorporates a consideration of social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and age" (C8). Under "Strategies" it is suggested that teachers be committed to "learning about and practising equitable teaching" and a variety of strategies concerning issues such as gender-sensitive language, relating the abstract to the personal, and avoiding heterosexism are set forth (C9). Teachers are encouraged to ask colleagues familiar with gender-biases, to observe their teaching, and to discuss potential concerns. The information found in this section reflects the current literature on critical feminist pedagogy, and should prove useful to teachers interested in gender-equitable teaching.

The curriculum sections of both IRPs are organized in facing two-page spreads under four headings:

- Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
- Suggested Instructional Strategies (SISs)
- Suggested Assessment Strategies (SASs)
- Recommended Learning Resources (RLRs).

It should also be noted that the PLOs comprise the only mandated components found in the two documents. The prefaces of the two documents state that the Instructional and Assessment Strategies have been developed by "specialist and generalist teachers to assist their colleagues," but also stress that they are "suggestions only" (iii).

Both IRPs divide the PLOs under themes. The thematic layouts are titled differently, but are similar in substance. The grade 8-10 Social Studies Curriculum is divided into five "interrelated curriculum organizers" or themes:

- Applications of Social Studies
- Society and Culture
- Politics and Law
- Economy and Technology
- Environment

The grade 11 curriculum is organized under the following themes:

- Skills and Processes
- Social Issues
- Cultural Issues
- Political Issues
- Legal Issues
- Economic Issues
- Environmental Issues

Representation of Women

The discussion regarding gender-equity in the "Introductions" and the "C" Appendices lead one to expect an improvement in the representation of women's history in the curriculum sections of the new IRPs. Although mere representation is inconclusive on its own because it doesn't address the ways in which women are included, it is important to understand the overall representation of women before moving on to more sophisticated analyses.

The new IRPs do mandate the inclusion of women and gender, an improvement over the 1988 curriculum. Still, only 4 of the 129 PLOs for grades 8 to 11 refer specifically to women or gender:

- Grade 8: Compare daily life, family structures, and gender roles in early and contemporary civilizations. (14)

- Grade 9: Describe how identity is shaped by a variety of factors, including:

    - family
    - gender
    - belief systems
    - ethnicity
    - nationality (24)

- Grade 10: Identify the changing nature of families and women's roles in Canadian society. (34)

- Grade 11: Describe the role of women in the development of Canadian society. (14)

In essence one PLO specifically referring to women or gender has been included in each grade under a social theme.

Certainly, an increased emphasis on social history seems a significant gain for the teaching of women's history. By introducing gender and family life into the curriculum, it is clear that the curriculum writers to some extent responded to Gaskell et al's suggestion that there is a need to re-examine "the rules that are used for inclusion." The recognition that family life and social life constitute knowledge worthy of study is an important gain. Joan Kelly writes that the historical study of the family also provides political possibilities:

> Surely a dominant reason for studying the social relation of the sexes is political...[women's history] opens up the other half of history, viewing women as agents and the family as a productive and social force...if the historical conception of civilization can be shown to include the psychosocial functions of the family, then with that understanding we can insist that any reconstruction of society along just lines incorporate reconstruction of the family--all kinds of collective and private families, and all of them functioning, not as property relations, but as personal relations among freely associating people. (25)

However, whether the curriculum has succeeded in meaningfully reconceptualizing

the "entire subject," as suggested by Gaskell et al (43), is another question. References to women are not located in PLOs under other themes and are only on occasion found in the Instructional and Assessment Strategies.

Segregation and Integration

There are many compelling reasons to opt for an integrated gender approach to teaching history, whenever appropriate. While the themes of the IRPs are intended to be "interrelated" and do offer the opportunity to integrate the histories of both genders, the IRPs may lead many teachers to a gender-segregated teaching style.

There are several complications in analyzing the degree to which gender issues and women's contributions are integrated in the curriculum. First of all, the thematic locations of these PLOs are significant and clearly not random. Each of the PLOs for grades 8-10 listed above is located under the theme of "Society and Culture." Similarly, the one Grade 11 PLO specifically referring to women is located under the thematic heading of "Social Issues." While a separate theme for gender and family intended to be integrated where possible might be appropriate, the rationale for separating other gender roles and women's contributions rather than integrating them into appropriate PLOs under themes such as "Politics and Law" or "Economy and Technology" is unclear. Moreover, even if the intention is to teach these themes in an integrated fashion, there are still some problems to consider.

Secondly, although the PLOs are the only mandated aspect of the curriculum, one can reasonably assume that many teachers will look to the Instructional and Assessment Strategies for guidance, particularly when they are unclear as to the intention of the PLO. As such, it is important to include them in the analysis.

Another complication arises from the confused (or at least confusing) manner in which the terms *gender* and *women* are used. Analyzing the degree to which women's history is synthesized with that of men's requires considering the usage of gender-neutral and gender-specific language, particularly whether the use of gender-neutral language masks the absence of female agency. Analyzing the PLOs along with the associated Instructional and Assessment Strategies only leads to further confusion. Two of the PLOs refer to gender, while two refer to women. But, if we look to the Suggested Instructional and Assessment strategies, *gender* is sometimes realized as *women* and vice versa. Unlike the outgoing curriculum, the new curriculum suggests strategies for using gender-sensitive language in "Appendix C: Cross Curricular Interests" under the heading of "Gender Equity." It states the need to use "inclusive, parallel, or gender sensitive language" and also stresses the following:

> Use gender specific terms to market opportunities--for example, if a technology fair has clearly been designed to appeal to girls, mention girls clearly and specifically. Many girls assume that gender neutral language in non-traditional fields means boys. (C9)

Thus, any discussion of the degree to which women's history is appropriately segregated and integrated requires attention to the use of language.

The Grade 8 *gender* PLO prescribes that students compare daily life, family structures, and gender roles in a variety of cultures from 500 A.D.-1600 A.D (14). If teachers follow the advice that the thematic organizers are "interrelated" this PLO holds much potential. As the goal is written, one could argue that it should be applied to all aspects of the curriculum. However, if we consider that gender is in effect a new addition to the curriculum, that textbooks tend to marginalize the role of women in history, and that most social studies teachers are not well informed about women's history, there is reason

for concern.

If teachers look to the corresponding Instructional Strategy they will find the focus on daily life only. It suggests having students examine a series of pictures and "related data" and focus on comparisons between daily life then and now (14). The assessment strategy is far more hopeful; it recommends that in examining gender roles the following categories be considered: social and legal status, work inside and outside the home, local and national political power (15). While understanding the important work done by women within families in a variety of cultures is a step in the right direction, if it is also the intention is to explore the work and the legal and political status of both genders, why not locate these other issues under the headings of "Politics and Law" and "Economy and Technology"? If the curriculum writers recognize that politics, law, economy, and technology are gendered issues, why have they segregated gender solely under a social theme. This could well lead to the isolation of women's experience as a separate unit of study and contribute to the ghettoisation that many feminist historians have warned against.

Furthermore, if we look to thematic headings of "Politics and Law" and "Economy and Technology," the language is gender-neutral, but does this simply mask a content that will be understood in the "traditional" fashion by many teachers as being primarily about men? There are examples in the Instructional Strategies under other PLOs in the Grade 8 curriculum that do touch on gender and history. However, invariably they are written in a manner in which women are listed as an example, and while the opportunity for gender analysis is implicit, it is not referred to directly. This suggests an 'add women and stir' approach rather than a integrated analysis of gender. For example:

> Ask students to role-play period characters (e.g., a serf on a medieval manor, a trans-Saharan trader, an Abbess in a convent, a government official in the Incan Empire). The role plays should address questions such as:
>
> - How would your daily life be affected by laws?
> - Who holds power, and how is it wielded?
> - What influence would you have and how would you use if? (16)

While we can hope that teachers recognize the need for a gender analysis, it would seem preferable to prescribe it in the corresponding PLO. In spite of the many problems discussed above, the Grade 8 PLO has more potential for gender-balanced teaching than that found in Grade 9.

The Grade 9 *gender* PLO lists gender along with family, belief systems, ethnicity and nationality as factors shaping "identity" in Europe and North America from 1500 to 1815 (24). While the identity is an interesting (and problematic) topic, it lacks the clarity of the Grade 8 term *gender roles* and does not lend itself as well to integration throughout the curriculum. For example, while gender identity was significant in the roles women and men played in the French revolution, examining gender identity does not seem to be prescribing the necessity of teaching gender roles or the discrepancies in the way men and women were affected by the revolution. When teachers look to the corresponding Instructional Strategy they will find gender is interpreted as a construct which applies only to women:

> Ask students to research women's roles in various cultures between 1500 and 1815 (e.g., during the French Revolution, in Aboriginal communities, in British North America). Have them prepare accounts of women's roles using pictures, portraits, and written reports. (24)

In addition, this strategy recommends teaching women's roles in a segregated fashion.

If the intention is to study the way gender shapes identity and roles in the family, why is the identity and role of the male in the family overlooked here? The suggestion

seems to be that women's roles are synonymous with their identity, and that gender is not a factor in shaping male identity. In spite of the lack of clarity as to how this strategy addresses the task of identifying gender as a factor in "shaping identity," it is encouraging that it does suggest looking at women's roles throughout the curriculum. However, the assessment strategy is more limiting in recommending the checking of "accounts of women's roles" for "detailed and accurate information about both family and community roles" (25).

As in the grade 8 curriculum, it is unclear why, if the other aspect of the learning outcome is to look at women's role in the community, these contributions are segregated from the appropriate locations for such inquiry. For example, when we look to revolution under the theme of "Politics and Law," considering gender is not mandated in the PLO which requires teaching "the contributions of the English, French, and American revolutions in the development of democratic concepts" (26). However, the SIS focusses on "significant factors involved in each revolution, factors common to all, democratic concepts that emerged, and key players in the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces (considering class, gender, and age)" (26). It is interesting to note that gender is not specified as an aspect of assessment. I find these inconsistencies perplexing. Connections between the family, the community, and the nation should be clearly articulated. Srole demonstrates that women along with men were indeed agents of change in the American Revolution:

> One of the most difficult topics for the integration of women is the origin of the American Revolution because the economic and political conflicts seem to preclude women. That is, urban political conflicts between artisans and merchants and between liberal Whigs and British governors existed outside of the female sphere. But the underlying economic and social changes that contributed to the tensions among urban colonialists and between the colonists and the British government originated from the burgeoning

> consumer society. Colonial and British merchants would not have fought over tea nor manufacturers over hats if each had not expected to sell to a growing and profitable American market. The developing consumer economy strained the empire. This same rise of consumerism meant more items for the wealthier and middling female colonialist to purchase, increased time devoted to shopping and caring for those goods, as well as substituting skills, like plain stitching for embroidery. It is no surprise that the conflicts over economic control of consumer goods generated the chief political tactic, boycotting British goods. Since women were the major consumers, they became the troops in the tea boycott; and because they engaged in social reproduction, women furnished the patriotic solution, "homespun" goods. (268)

The Grade 10 PLO relating to women appears to combine both an integrated "identify the changing nature of families...", and a segregated approach, "...and women's role in society" (34). As such, it validates the teaching of family, and the broad term *women's role in society* opens the door to integrating women's experience throughout the curriculum, but once again this PLO risks encouraging a segregated approach to women's role in society, and perhaps could be understood to suggest that women's role in society is synonymous with women's role in the family. The Instructional Strategy suggests a gender analysis of pioneer life:

> ...compare the roles of women, men and children then [1815-1914] and now; identifying similarities and differences related to specific themes (e.g., roles and responsibilities within the family, status within the home and community, significance of marriage.)" (34).

The Assessment Strategy provides a means for analyzing the students' comparison of social roles then and now using criteria such as accuracy, relevance, comprehensiveness, organization and logic (35).

The Grade 10 curriculum, like the Grades 8 and 9 curricula, also fails to address gender or women in PLOs under other themes. Many opportunities are overlooked; for example, there is no reference to the sexism of trade unions which provides an ideal

opportunity for integration of family, and the significance of marriage and work. As noted in *Canadian Women: A History*:

> Underlying much of the uneasiness towards women workers was the growing belief in the latter half of the nineteenth century in the idea of a "family wage." Workers believed that if a family wage was paid to men, women would not seek paid employment. They could remain in their proper sphere--the home. The belief, of course, assumed that most women had a male protector, and overlooked the fact that many women did not, that many women wanted to work, and indeed had dependents of their own for whom they were responsible. Women continued to flow into the paid work force, especially in the service sector and into the new and growing women's "professions." (Prentice et al 138)

The Grade 11 curriculum states that students will be expected to "describe the role of women in the development of Canadian society" (14). This goal is fairly broad in its potential for integrating women into the history component of the curriculum, depending on how one interprets society. However, if teachers look to the Instructional and Assessment Strategies corresponding to this goal, the focus is solely on the present. The SIS recommends asking students to "research the legal and economic status of women in Canada today" (14). Clearly, this is an important addition to the curriculum, and also provides the opportunity for a link between the historical past and the present. Yet, it concerns me that the focus on the present will not lead to synthesizing women's experience into the history component of the course.

The Instructional and Assessment Strategies under other themes refer to women's or gender issues are all situated in the present, except for one. This SIS listed under possible research topics related to WWI refers to "changes to the Canadian social structure (e.g., giving the vote to women)" (22). The language suggests the notion that men, and not women, are the agents of historical change: men "give" the vote to women. Women's suffrage is but one example of a missed opportunity for prescribing the

integration of women's history in Social Studies 11.

The exciting aspect of the new curriculum is that it does provide validation for teachers interested integrated women's history into the curriculum. However, it does not do a sufficient job of indicating to other teachers the rationale or approaches for integrating gender across the history curriculum. There are several common concerns related to the issues of segregation and integration found in the grades 8-11 curriculums: the location of PLOs relevant to women's history under the social themes, the suggestion that women and gender are one and the same, and the use of gender-neutral language to mask a history which is largely about men. That the PLOs locate gender and women separately from other historical themes runs the risk of encouraging teaching approaches which ghettoize women's history.

Experience, Diversity, and Voice

As the literature review suggests, feminist theorists of difference have demonstrated that there are problems and inequities associated with the notion of monolithic female experience. Indeed, the curriculum document itself stresses the importance of this understanding: "Gender equity incorporates a consideration of social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and age" (C8), but how clearly is this need expressed in the actual curriculum?

Thus far, I have analyzed the degree to which women are represented in the curriculum, and the extent to which their history is synthesized in, or marginalized by, the historical narrative. Bearing in mind the limited representation, and the threat of ghettoization and marginalization of women's history, it is essential that we consider which women are being represented. As Peggy McIntosh and Emily Styles write there

is a need to provide students with windows through which to view the experiences of others, and mirrors in which to view their own. I begin by looking for opportunities to teach the diverse histories of women in the curriculum. Secondly, I analyze the extent to which some of these women's histories are likely to be marginalized, or excluded. Finally, I look to the issues of voice and dominance.

If a teacher is motivated to deliver a curriculum that represents the diversity of women's experience, the curriculum validates doing so. The grade 8 PLO asks that daily life, family structures, and gender roles from a variety of civilizations (500-1600) are compared (14). This provides the opportunity to deliver the curriculum in a manner that is mindful of the intersectionality of gender, race, and class. On the other hand, the grade 9 PLO focuses on *identity* and how it is shaped by a variety of factors including: "family, gender, belief systems, ethnicity, nationality" (24). This learning outcome is important in that it introduces the concept of intersectionality. Although shaping *identity*, as mentioned above, is problematic, the SIS referring to "women's roles" opens up broad opportunities to include the diverse histories of women. Similarly, the focus of the Grade 10 PLO offers the opportunity to identify the changing nature of families and women's role in Canadian society. Moreover, there is also reinforcement in goals that do not specifically refer to women. First, "describe the contributions made by Aboriginal people, the French, and the British to the development of Canada" (34). Secondly, "identify the influence of immigration on, and the contributions of immigrants to, the development of Canada" (34). If these two goals are combined with the goal above on women's roles, the teaching of the histories of Aboriginal women, and all immigrant women is validated, and teachers can provide students with mirrors as well as windows.

Although the above PLOs enable the teacher to legitimately address the diverse

experiences of women in an integrated fashion throughout the curriculum, it is questionable to what extent most teachers looking to the documents for guidance will be inclusive in their delivery of the curriculum. The segregated aspect of the PLOs throughout the curriculum may lead teachers to present an isolated, superficial look at the diversity of women's experience. Moreover, if teachers seeking clarification of the PLOs look to the corresponding SISs and SASs, the diversity of women's experience is not well represented. The two SISs corresponding to the Grade 9 gender-PLO suggest a gender analysis of daily life and the researching of women's roles in various cultures. However, the examples given support limiting this analysis to three cultural groups: "e.g., during the French revolution, in Aboriginal communities, in British North America" (24). The Grade 10 PLO on families and women's roles is accompanied by a SIS that refers to "pioneer life," but overlooks women's contributions in urban areas--an area of study that would lend itself well to considering the intersectionality of gender, 'race' and class. The Grade 11 PLO states that students should be able to describe the role of women in the development of Canadian society, but both the Instructional and Assessment Strategies corresponding to the PLO refer only to the present and are not historical. Thus the diversity of women's history in the 20th Century is undermined: additionally, the Instructional and Assessment Strategies do not explicitly address the issue of diversity. It is suggested that teachers ask students to research the "economic and legal status of women today" (14): it would be helpful if it were stated that the economic status of women needs to be considered in conjunction with class and race. The Assessment Strategy suggests having students identify the roles women play in the community: "e.g., health care worker, engineer, police officer, school board member, politician" (15). Thus, the focus seems to be on women who are middle class and in most cases working in jobs

traditionally associated with men.

The Instructional Strategies under other themes not only underscore the experience and contribution of women in general, as limited as they are, they focus on white, European women. For example, in the Grade 8 curriculum beyond the organizer of "Society and Culture," the Instructional Strategies of other PLOs only offer list occasional examples of white European women: "an abbess in a convent" (16) and an "individual (male or female) on a manor" (18). The word *gender* is only used outside of the social themes on one occasion in the Grade 9 curriculum under "Politics and Law" in reference to revolution. It further concerns me that while the PLO referring to the democratic concepts emerging from the English, French, and American revolutions is accompanied by an Instructional Strategy that suggests the consideration of class, gender, and age, but not race or ethnicity.

For the most part gender-neutral language masks the lack of focus on all women. While the term *women* does show up periodically in the curriculum, most often the language is gender-neutral. On the one occasion where women are referred to as an example under political issues, "giving the vote to women" (22), the document overlooks the fact that not all women were given the vote. Even in areas that focus on diversity, women's experiences and contributions are likely to be overlooked as a result of gender-neutral language. For example, in Grade 9 it is mandated that the student will "explain the role of Aboriginal people in the fur trade and in the exploration of North America" (28). The omission of gender-specific language masks the opportunity to look at the role of First Nations women in the fur trade.

The only instances where sexual identity is referred to in the documents is in the appendix under the heading of "Principles of Gender Equity in Education" (C8), and

under the "General Strategies for Gender-Equitable Teaching": "Do not assume that all students are heterosexual" (C9). There is no mention of sexual identity in the curriculum, not even in reference to the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It is also problematic that women's experiences are contextualized largely within the framework of marriage and the traditional family which undoubtedly reinforces heterosexist assumptions. The lack of explicit support in the curriculum makes teaching about heterosexism and the experiences of gays, lesbians and bi-sexuals, more difficult for those teachers who recognize its importance.

Any discussion of dominance and voice is limited to the marginal manner in which the diverse experiences of women are addressed. The most pertinent insights are to be found in looking at the representation of Aboriginal women. As noted above, gender is not specified as a category for analysis in teaching about the role of Aboriginals in the fur trade, but it is encouraged that teachers are asked to invite an Aboriginal elder to present *his* or *her* views on the fur trade (28); also it is suggested that students consult band offices for information (Grade 9). As well, resources written from the perspectives of First Nations and Metis women such as *Women in the Shadows* and *The Days of Augusta* are included as Recommended Learning Resources.

However, assumptions that students can take on the perspectives of Aboriginals is evident, particularly under the grade 9 theme of "Society and Culture." The PLO states that teachers should "describe daily life in Aboriginal communities...", and then the SIS suggests challenging "students in groups to create one-minute vignettes that address the themes of settlement, land ownership, and daily life from the perspectives of women and men from Aboriginal communities...." (24). This relates to the words of Pierson regarding Van Kirk's only overstepping the bounds in her attempt to "resurrect the interior

experience of women whose specific experience of oppression Van Kirk does not share and for which no written records in their own voices exist" (94). It would have been helpful if the curriculum writers considered "epistemic humility" and conveyed this understanding to teachers, as well: "Appendix D: Assessment and Evaluation" provides the ideal location for a detailed discussion.

Constructing and Deconstructing Gender Knowledge

The knowledge that is valued in the curriculum plays a role in the way teachers construct gender for students. A curriculum that is mindful of feminist historiography and pedagogy should also provide opportunities to rethink or deconstruct gender knowledge. In spite of the gender-neutral language used in the documents, it is quite evident that white, middle-class men are at the centre of the curriculum: their experiences are the most valued, and we risk either implicity or explicitly teaching this to students. This problem is compounded by the lack of explicit instructions in the documents to challenge students to think about gender in new ways.

Even when women enter the political domain their roles are overlooked. The treatment of "responsible government" in the curriculum demonstrates this point well. The factors leading to revolution, the development of democratic concepts through revolution, and the contributions to the evolution of "responsible government" are mandated as PLOs. However, there are no PLOs addressing women's suffrage movements or women's attainment of the vote. That the only mention of women's suffrage is found as an example in an SIS which corresponds to a PLO focussing on the World Wars is telling: Men's historical agency is what is valued.

> Challenge students to research WWI and WWII from a Canadian perspective...research could include:
>
> - the battles of Vimy Ridge and Dieppe, the war in the Atlantic, D-Day, contributions to resource and arms
> - changes to Canada's social structure (e.g., giving the vote to women)
> - changes to Canada's relationship with other countries.... (22)

Indeed, the words "giving the vote to women" clearly indicate from whose perspective this is written. As a result, women's historical agency is ignored. While the achievement of responsible government for men plays a major role in the curriculum, women's suffrage is buried as a example in an SIS. Similarly, the curriculum does not require the study of the achievement of citizenship rights (required to vote) by the Chinese community after WWII, an unfortunate omission in a province with a substantial ethnic Chinese population.

Moreover, only "great men" are named in the curriculum. Men associated with the politics of responsible government are named in the curriculum, but there is no mention of women such as Emily Murphy or Nellie McClung. Indeed, no women are mentioned by name throughout the 8-11 curriculum. In spite of the problems associated with the "great man" approach, if male dominant personalities are named in the curriculum as historical agents, the absence of "great women" is problematic.

The curriculum puts forth war and political conflicts as the driving forces of political change. As noted in the literature review, Katherine McKenna points out that stressing women's culture as well as men's would make aggression only one human characteristic as opposed to the primary one. The curriculum seems to have attempted to redress this problem by adding social history as a theme to each grade. While this addition affirms the value of domains traditionally associated with women, the segregation of women's "roles" largely to the family and the community, with very little guidance as to how to

connect this to historical change, undermines the agency of women in the curriculum. There is a grade 8 SIS that challenges the notion of conflict as the driving force in the creation of civilizations: "Conduct a debate on a resolution such as 'Civilizations are created through conflict, war, and conquest'" (16). (It seems ironic that a strategy of conflict is used to address the issue.) Nonetheless, the notion of conflict as the primary agent of historical change persists throughout the curriculum and is not explicitly challenged again.

The curriculum does not require teaching the deconstruction or rethinking of *gender,* nor does it suggest teaching why the construct of gender shifts and changes historically (with the exception of women being "given" the vote as a result of WWI). The Grade 9 PLO that lists gender as a factor shaping "identity" is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of many feminists theorists. If gender is presented as a factor shaping identity, without any inquiry into how gender knowledge itself is constructed, gender is presented as an essence, an ahistorical entity.

As noted above, the Grade 11 PLO addressing gender is followed through with an Assessment Strategy that has students interviewing a woman in the community: "e.g., health care worker, engineer, police officer, school board member, politician" (15). Suddenly, with no explanation as to how they got there, women are located in jobs which have been traditionally thought of as the male domain. Women who work in the home are not included in the list, and the Assessment Strategy suggests teachers ask students to "consider the complexities that individuals face in balancing work and home" (15). In effect, middle-class women working in traditionally male jobs with family obligations are to be presented as the valued female role-models. The Assessment Strategy asks teachers to evaluate student descriptions of "women's contributions to the community"

(15). Yet, there is never any explicit reference to men's contributions to the community.

It is unfortunate that the curriculum does not address the ways in which masculinity and femininity are constructed through learning outcomes informed by critical feminist theories of patriarchy or poststructuralist discourse analysis. The curriculum allows, but does not prescribe, teaching women's agency in their struggle for equality. If teachers do not take advantage of the opportunity to do so, students may be left with the notion that time and progress march hand in hand, without human agency, and their political efficacy may well be nipped in the bud.

Recommended Learning Resources

This discussion of the Recommended Learning Resources is intended to be a sampling rather than a thorough examination of the resources. Considering the lengthy list of recommended resources even at this time, such a project would be a thesis in itself. Moreover, a definitive discussion of resources at this time would be misleading: the compilation of resources is an ongoing process, and there is more than a year left before the Social Studies 8-11 IRPs will be implemented. Resources continue to be added to the Recommended list, and some additional texts will be written for this curriculum. Here I look to some of the comprehensive course texts that are recommended at this time. In addition, I refer to some of the resources which focus on women's history. As resources are selected on the basis of curriculum fit, there is reason to expect improved representation and treatment of women's history, but the degree of improvement needs to be considered.

At this point, the only Recommended text available that has been written specifically for the new curriculum is Michael Cranny's grade 8 text *Pathways:*

Civilizations through Time. Based on informal discussions with teachers from around the province at the History 12 Provincial Examination marking session, and the representatives of the publishers of both this text and the competing grade 8 Text *Across the Centuries* it appears to be generally expected that this will become the most used grade 8 text in the province. As this is the only text that appears to currently hold this enviable position, I give it more detailed discussion than the others.

Pathways demonstrates the power of curriculum to shape the writing of textbooks; and, as many have argued, texts are a key factor in what is taught in the social studies classroom. Without question, women are less marginalized in this text than in the *Patterns of Civilization: Volume 1* (Beers), the Grade 8 text approved for the 1988 curriculum. The index for *Pathways* lists the following entries under the heading of women:

- advice in Han China 424
- among Vikings 33
- in the Arab Empire 125-127
- in Arab Spain 316
- Eleanor of Acquitaine 66
- Elizabeth I of England 201, 265, 266, 271-73, 293-96
- in Europe's Late Middle Ages 156-57
- in Guilds 152
- in Japan 170-73, 175, 188, 190
- Joan of Arc 148
- Marguerite of Navarre 285
- in Medieval Europe 50-51
- in Ming China 425
- in Renaissance Europe 203, 213, 228
- right to own property 53
- in Song China 406
- Sultana Raziyya 358
- in Tang China 94, 96, 99
- Theodora of the Byzantine Empire 19, 20

Several of the above entries represent "great women": Eleanor; Elizabeth I; Joan of Arc; Marguerite; Isabelle D'este and Artemisia Gentileschi, under Renaissance Europe;

Sultana Raziyya; and Theodora. The entries under "the Vikings," "India," and "Medieval Europe" focus on "Everyday Life," "Social Life," and "Ordinary People" respectively, and provide brief gendered analyses of family life and community labour. The entries on Han China, the Arab Empire, Ming and Tang China look at women's status in a segregated fashion. The topics of Japan and Renaissance Europe also incorporate historical fiction as a means to include women's experience. Some entries that include female examples are not listed in the index such as the sidebar narrative on "Two Early Religious Martyrs" (17). There are also two instances where the notion of femininity is challenged through critically analyzing primary sources (126, 424). Furthermore, illustrations of women and photographs of artifacts relating to women are included.

Pathways does appear to fulfill the requirements of the new stated curriculum. As noted above the segregation of women's history to one PLO in the curriculum leaves the extent to which inclusion is required fairly open to interpretation. The author and publisher have clearly intended to improve the representation of women. It is also encouraging to note that the text follows the advice of feminist pedagogues. The use of gender-neutral and gender-specific language is thoughtful and appropriate. Women are represented at times in both the areas of political and social history, and at times connections are drawn between the two. There are a few occasions in which the text explicitly challenges students to think about the constructs of gender in historical settings.

However, considering the text is 440 pages long, the inclusion of women is improved, but as the index entry above indicates representation continues to be minimal. For example, the "Social Life" heading under Gupta India reads as follows:

> While earlier Aryan society provided some degree of freedom for women, female equality declined during the Gupta Empire. Women were still permitted to own property, but they had fewer rights and opportunities than

> before. Higher Caste Hindu women were increasingly **confined** to home. When they went outdoors, they were expected to be completely covered. Widows were **shunned** and many threw themselves on their husbands funeral fires rather than face a life of isolation. Sons were valued more than daughters because, by tradition, they looked after their parents when they were old. Only sons were permitted to perform sacred rituals. (349)

There is no discussion of why or how women's rights declined or increased, nor is there any attempt to relate this information to the present. If teaching is based on such a textual treatment the intended or unintended learning outcomes for the female student may well be that these women were awfully passive, and that she is lucky to live in such an enlightened society. Not only do references to women's history tend to be brief, gender issues are not addressed in several areas where they might be. For example, there is no discussion of what the Protestant Reformation meant for women.

Across the Centuries is also a comprehensive text recommended for Grade 8, and although it coincidentally provides a sound curriculum fit, in B.C. it has the disadvantage of being an American text, written for the California curriculum. These two texts have similar layouts and multidisciplinary approaches (*Across the Centuries* was published in 1994 while *Pathways* was published in 1997). My colleague Moira Ekdahl did a review on *Across the Centuries* for Canadian distributors Nelson Publishing in which she wrote that regarding gender the text was "more balanced and less marginalizing than we have had available to date," but commented that it failed to analyze "the constructedness of gender, race, class, or childhood, for example, in particular social contexts" (4-5). I think these comments are appropriate for both texts. As a teacher, I appreciate the increased gender content, but feel there is much room for improvement.

Two comprehensive texts are currently recommended for the Social Studies 9 IRP, *Community Canada* (Cruxton and Walker) and *Canada Revisted* (Clark and McKay).

Neither text addresses the European components of the IRP. While social history is addressed throughout the *Community Canada* there is little effort to relate it to political and economic history. For example, there is no mention of the role of First Nations' women in the fur trade. Tone is hard to measure in a text, but at times I find the Cruxton and Walker text trivializes the roles of women. For example:

> Let's look inside a typical habitant home. As you step through the door, you come into the large main room of the house. The family spends most of its time in this room. It serves as a kitchen, living room and dining room. There is a red glow in the fireplace and a stew is simmering in a black kettle over the coals. Pots, pans, kettles, and other cooking utensils hang around the fireplace. On one side a deep bake oven is built into the bricks. The habitant woman is making apple pies. She lights a roaring fire in the oven. Later she removes the ashes and then places the pies inside while the bricks are still hot. An iron door on the oven keeps in the heat. The fresh-baked pies smell wonderful. (224)

Furthermore, this text makes little use of primary or secondary documents for student analysis and shows a heavy reliance on "imaginary letters." The "imaginary letter" from a *fille du roi* (a girl sent from the King's Orphanages to provide a French settler with a bride) clearly doesn't meet the guidelines for "epistemic humility." The text reads "Can you imagine how the *filles du roi* felt when they arrived? The following imaginary letter will give you an idea." Here is the excerpt from the corresponding imaginary letter:

> I must admit dear aunt, that at first I was quite disappointed with Robert. But during the last few days he has been visiting me at the convent. We have had a chance to talk and get to know one another and I believe him to be a good person. I think we will get on well. Robert's farm sounds very nice and it is right on the river, not too far to Quebec. So I have decided to accept his proposal.
>
> Tomorrow, I am off to the Ile d'Orleans. Soon I shall be settled in a home of my own! Wish me luck. (207)

It concerns me that such an offensive example of 'speaking for' isn't noted in the RLR

Appendix in which the Resources Review Team often takes the opportunity to note for colleagues any potential limitations or concerns about the materials reviewed but recommended.

There is no attempt to integrate the stories of "great women" into the master narrative of *Community Canada*; instead, they are marginalized in sidebar narratives. Indeed, the only positive thing I can find in this text from a gender perspective is that it attempts to relate the past to the present and the personal. While this text may technically fulfill the gender requirements of the Grade 9 curriculum, there are compelling reasons to deem it inappropriate.

Canada Revisited: A Social and Political History of Canada to 1911 was the recipient of the Best Gagne/BPPA Award for "1993 Educational Book of the Year." In addition, I have spoken to several teachers who have really enjoyed teaching from this text. While the book is clearly written, attractively formatted, and contains some excellent teaching ideas, its treatment of gender is disappointing. Women are only referred to on 16 pages in a text of 269 pages. Moreover, most of the references to women are very brief. On two pages the references to women are literally footnotes: "**note: Women with property in Lower Canada could vote until the 1830's at which time they lost their vote. Women in Upper Canada could not vote" (141). The footnote on page 140 reads:

> *note: Women did not enter the professions (become doctors, lawyers, judges) at this time [1815-1838] or become involved in the government. While Native people also lived in the area they were not involved in the government at this time and are thus not included on this page.

There is no explanation as to why women lost the vote in Lower Canada or why women in Upper Canada did not have the vote. Neither is there any discussion as to why women did not enter the professions, nor why women and Natives were not involved in

the government. The impact of the work of Sylvia Van Kirk and others is minimal; the inclusion of First Nations' women in the analysis of the fur trade in early Canada consists of:

> Native trading between bands was customarily done through family contacts. To become part of this family trading system, the French left young men to live with a band during the winter. These young men adapted easily to the Native way of living, often marrying Native women and becoming part of their bands. Friendships and trust were thus established between Native bands and the French traders. These family ties were useful in further trading sessions. (31)

There is only one substantive reference to women found in the text, an interesting and historically accurate account on the "Women of the Red River Settlement" (212). There are also representations of women found in the historical fiction inserts.

Michael Cranny, the author of *Pathways,* is currently working on a text to fill the curricular requirements for the grade 9 curriculum. Not only should it provide a better curricular fit, but if he approaches gender in the same way as he did in his Grade 8 text it should provide a more appropriate resource than the two texts reviewed above.

To date, there is only one recommended text which fits the history PLOs for the Grade 10 IRP. *Challenge of the West* is another contribution by Cruxton, this time in partnership with Wilson. Written at a higher reading level and more political in focus, the text lists, in the index, under "Women":

- and fur trade 79
- and Governor-General's office 56
- and voting rights for 55, 153b

The entries are all brief sidebar narratives. Other unlisted references to women can also be found in sidebar locations. Graphic images of women are infrequent; more often than not they are doing "double duty" as, for example, the photograph of the black homesteading family which offers no caption or textual reference to race or gender but

conveniently depicts both (147). First Nations' women are given a dismissive treatment similar to Clark and McKay's. The Fathers of Confederation have become Founders. Susannah Moodie makes her predictable sidebar appearance in a lilac box; lilac boxes are used for profiles of influential Characters in Canadian History and include one other woman, Margret Benedictsson, a little-known Icelandic Canadian who campaigned for women's voting rights in the early 1900s. We learn little about Margret from the text which begins, "Many Icelandic women made special contributions to the history of Canada" (153b). The attempt to draw connections between "great women" and the collective grass-roots movements of women is so marginal that it is meaningless.

Grade 11 currently recommends two comprehensive history texts which provide a close curricular fit. *Canada Today* (3rd edition) by Smith, McDevitt, and Scully could be described as boy-friendly; it is peppered with images and accounts of hockey, including women's participation in hockey (20-1), and the hockey union dispute, used to illustrate the collective bargaining process (170-1). Women are listed in the index:

- in the armed forces 381
- voting rights 312, 313-315
- World War I 366
- World War II 380-381

There are many additional images of women, both historical and contemporary, influential in politics, culture, the economy, and legal precedent, almost always presented in sidebar narratives and photographs. The master narrative continues in the tradition of marginalizing women's experience. For example, there is no reference to the gender dimensions of the economy or of technological change. Social history is overshadowed by the political focus. Nevertheless, women are depicted actively engaged with national life.

Attention to women's grass-roots collective movement is virtually non-existent. While the text separately lists the Women's Movement in the index, only one sentence is devoted to the topic, designed to support the understanding that women of all races have achieved equality:

> ...in 1971, the government developed a powerful multiculturalism policy designed to help Canadians of various ethnic backgrounds preserve their culture and overcome barriers preventing their full participation in Canadian society. Canada worked hand in hand with the aboriginal peoples to produce a new, more equitable relationship between them and the rest of Canada. In addition, from the 1960s, the women of Canada have organized and educated themselves to take on an equal role with men in running the country. (17)

Although the notion that women diversified have achieved equality is implicit in the Grade 11 IRP, this is an erroneous and politically stultifying understanding of the realities of women's lives in Canada today.

The second text, *Canada: A Nation Unfolding* (Eaton and Newman), offers more for the feminist reviewer. Women's lives are integrated in substantive and intelligent ways, beyond the trite and superficial treatments offered in most texts. While the text lacks some of the visual appeal of other texts, a serious attempt has been made to link social and political history and to show women in active roles and collective movements. Sidebars are not used to marginalize anyone but to feature, often in the voices of the participants, aspects of the diverse historical experience of Canadians, forging strong links to understandings developed in the master narrative. For example, after a discussion of the "Just Society" and its implications for Canada's Native Peoples, the text feature incorporates contrasting poems by two First Nations' women on "The Native Experience in Canada" (406-9).

By comparison to *Canada Today*, the Eaton and Newman text deals substantively

with Women in World War II. Chapter 13, "War on the Home Front," looks at "Women's Contributions to the War Effort" under subtitles: "Women in Industry," "Women in Agriculture," "Women in the Services," "Women as Volunteers," "Women after the War," with additional features entitled "Canadian Women at War" --quotations and poetry from a Servicewoman--and "Canada's War Brides"--the personal reflections of three different women on their experiences of coming to Canada. These sections not only credit women with substantial effort in the war, they also deal with the social and political reconstruction of women's roles after the war:

> Once the war ended, however, women were expected to more traditional roles such as homemaking, teaching, nursing, and secretarial work. They had been told that taking a job was their patriotic duty during wartime, but it was made clear that paid work was not their right in peace time. All government-supported day-care support centres were closed despite efforts to keep them open. The three women's service corps were disbanded. Government and private industry let women workers go in order to provide jobs for returning veterans.
>
> After the war, women hung up their uniforms and took off their slacks and bandanas. Fashions for women changed to underline their return to more traditional and 'feminine' roles. Flared skirts, cinched at the waist, replaced casual trousers. Comfortable low-heeled shoes gave way to high platform shoes or high-heeled pumps. Women's magazines ignored the career woman and published glowing articles on the pleasures of the homemaker. The proportion of women in the workforce dropped from 31.4% in 1945 to 22.7% in 1946. The equality barrier between men and women in the workplace had cracked, but it had not broken. Still, women could take pride in the vital contributions they had made at home and overseas. (259-60)

Such passages afford students the opportunities to examine shifting gender constructions throughout history and thereby challenge them to deconstruct their own notions of gender.

Teachers also have the opportunity to supplement the gender components of the curriculum by making use of recommended visual resources which focus on women's

experience. For example, Christine Welsh's moving one-hour video *Women in the Shadows* documents her journey to discover the roles of her female First Nations and Metis ancestors in the fur trade as well as their displacement with its decline. The video demonstrates the processes of historical inquiry through her personal journey and also contains discussions with prominent women writers of Metis history. This video would be a valuable resource for highlighting the significance of women's role in the fur trade.

Another example of a video resource is *Women in the Middle Ages* (22 minutes); it depicts the wide range of economic, political, and social circumstances of medieval women. The video tackles the difficult issues of prostitution and wife-beating, dispelling some of the popular myths about the status of women in the Middle Ages.

Also worthy of note is the inclusion of several literary resources which relate the experiences of young and old women. Some examples include: *Head Cook at Weddings & Funerals and Other Stories of Doukhobor Life*, a collection of short stories about a young girl growing up in southeastern British Columbia and negotiating parallel cultural environments; *Home and Homeland: The Canadian Immigrant Experience*, a collection of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, some historical and some contemporary; *The Days of Augusta*, an oral literature and photo essay in which Mary Augusta Tappage, a member of the Shuswap Nation from the Cariboo region of British Columbia, recounts her life story; and *Call My People Home*, originally a documentary poem by well-known Canadian poet Dorothy Livesay for radio (available in print, 1950) and also recently produced as a video (1991), which focusses on the experiences of Japanese men and women interned during World War II.

A series of British booklets under the series title *Women in History* have also been

recommended for these curricula. Titles include: *Coalmining Women: Victorian Lives and Campaigns; Under Control: Life in a Nineteenth Century Silk Factory; From Workshop to Warfare: The Lives of Medieval Women; Women as Healers: A History of Women in Medicine; Votes for Women;* and *Plains Women: Women in the American West.* These booklets rely heavily on both direct and indirect primary sources as evidence of women's experience. The drawback of these sources is that the teacher would need to supplement them to provide a Canadian context; however, it is interesting to note that some of these have also been recommended for the theme of "Applications of Social Studies." They provide a model for developing Canadian teacher resources which could rely on the works of feminist historians such as Joy Parr.

Of course, there will be more resources added to the list as the process is on-going. One such worthy addition might be *Women: Changing Canada*, one of a series of scrapbook-like or magazine-style glossy booklets entitled *Canadian Challenges*. This resource deals in-depth with the political, economic, social, and legal status of Canadian women throughout the 20th century and would be a useful addition to the Grade 11 curriculum.

The review of the selected resources demonstrates the potential of the *formal curriculum* in influencing the writing and selection of texts to be used by teachers. While some comprehensive texts provide a much better treatment of women's history, for the most part, there is still much room for improvement. Some of the women-focussed resources also have much to offer but run the risk of reinforcing the notion that women's history is a separate and special area of study.

Conclusions

The Social Studies 8-11 IRPs take the important first step of including women's history in the prescribed curriculum. The documents alter the previous rules for inclusion and acknowledge the family as an area worthy of study. The curriculum can also be interpreted in a manner that validates teaching women's history in a segregated or integrated manner as deemed appropriate. However, it is a careful first step; teachers reluctant to address women's history in a meaningful way are also validated. The containment of women's history and gender issues in one PLO per grade, all segregated under "social" themes, only requires teaching women's roles in the family and community in a superficial way. For example, one could arguably cover the required elements of the PLO in a one-page chart. Moreover, teachers who are interested in fairly representing women's history, but uncertain of how to go about it, get very little guidance from these documents, and much of the guidance they do get is problematic. First of all, the thematic segregation of women's history in the curriculum may result in many well-intentioned teachers delivering the curriculum in a segregated approach that implies gender explains the different histories of women and men because it fails to address the ways in which gender has been constructed and reconstructed historically.

Nor does the curriculum sufficiently address the interconnections between gender, race, class, and sexual identity: as such, it runs the risk being interpreted in a fashion that overlooks the diversity of women's experience. It also includes activities which are not sensitive to the issues of dominance and voice, and offers no guidance on this topic. As the documents fail to address women's agency in PLOs under other historical themes, they also run the risk of leading to instruction that implies that men's history is more valuable than women's. The curriculum also uses the terms *women* and *gender*

interchangeably, reinforcing the notion that only women are gendered beings.

The learning resources list offers many improved options; some, however, are better than others. Within the range of both traditional and women-centred texts and videos selected to support the new curricula, feminists will have easier access to resources which promote teaching women's history. But text and other resource selection by teachers not informed by feminist understandings could lead to the further marginalization of women's history.

The new social studies IRPs are a step in the right direction, albeit a small, unsteady step that is taken with limited guidance from feminist historiography and pedagogy.

Chapter 4: The History 12 Curriculum

> How could women achieve the status of subjects in a field that subsumed or ignored them? How could women be added to a history presented as a universal human story exemplified by the lives of men? Since the specificity or particularity of women already made them unfit representatives of humankind, how could attention to women undercut, rather than reinforce, that notion? The history of women's history during the last decade and a half illustrates the difficulty of finding easy answers to these questions. (Scott, *Gender* 2)

Introduction

The current *History 12 Curriculum* (implemented in 1989) is presented as a study of Twentieth Century history. As in the history components of the 1988 *Social Studies 8-11 Curriculum,* women are virtually invisible. There are two main reasons as to why the stated curriculum for History 12 is particularly important. It is the only provincially approved course which is devoted entirely to history, and it is the only history course in the province in which 40% of a student's grade is based on her or his performance on the Provincial Final Examination. As a result of the exam, most teachers feel compelled to follow the curriculum closely. Moreover, if their classes do not perform at a level acceptable to the school, it is likely the course will be taken away from them.

My own experience demonstrates the manner in which even a feminist teacher can find herself feeling compelled to teach a course in twentieth century history where the only historical agency represented is that of "great men" and "everyman." When I started

teaching the course five years ago I imagined that I would be able to at least supplement the course with women's history. Yet, in practice I have not done this in a substantive manner for a variety of reasons. The dense knowledge component of the course, along with the Provincial Final, make me feel compelled to adhere to the stated curriculum. Any time spent outside the confines of the curriculum reduces the chances of my students being successful on the exam. I teach in an inner-city school and it is important to me that my students meet their graduation requirements, and that those who hope to get into university have the best possible opportunity to do so. I facilitate a critique of the exclusive nature of the curriculum, but even this is tempered by my recognition of the need to keep students motivated. In addition, Provincial Examination scores are important to the academic reputation of a school and administrators regularly stress this to the staff.

As a result of my discomfort with the content of the course, I was very relieved when I heard the History 12 curriculum was being rewritten. Although the mandate was for limited change, I was hopeful because I knew that two of the intentions of the revisions were to make the course more gender-equitable and more multi-cultural. I hoped that I would see a significant improvement in comparison to the current curriculum.

This chapter begins with a gender analysis of the outgoing *History 12 Curriculum 1989* and the *History 12 Resources Manual* which was published in 1990 by the Ministry of Education to accompany the curriculum guide. As well, I consider the required knowledge for the Provincial Examinations for the course. Next, I analyze the *History 12: Integrated Resource Package 1997*. This analysis is organized under the following themes:

- Representation of Women
- Segregation and Integration
- Experience, Diversity and Voice
- Constructing and Deconstructing Gender Knowledge

As in Chapter 3 the use of language in considered throughout the themes, and a discussion of Recommended Learning Resources is included. In addition, the impact of the Provincial Final Examination is considered.

The 1989 History 12 Curriculum Guide

The *History 12 Curriculum Guide* is a 40 page document organized as follows:

- Preface (4)
- Introduction (5-6)
- Statement of Philosophy (7-8)
- Rationale (9)
- Goals (10-11)
- Scope and Sequence (12)
- Themes (13-14)
- Topics (15-16)
- Topics 1-6 [the curriculum] (17-38)
- Evaluation (39-40)

The rationale and goals for the course lead one to expect a curriculum that represents women's historical agency in the 20th Century. The rationale states that "history is the sum total of all human experiences" and further asserts:

> As a unit of study, 20th Century history, in particular, has a number of advantages. For students, this period has a particular relevance and an immediacy that other areas may lack. In addition, the issues of the century provide an excellent vehicle for the application of critical-thinking and problem-solving strategies. These abilities will better equip students to deal with problems they will encounter as concerned citizens in a democratic society. In studying the 20th century, students will engage in a process of self-realization that ultimately leads them to a global view of the world. (9)

The goals of the course suggest that students should be able to find *self-realization* in the content of the curriculum. The stated goals are:

- To promote growth in the ability to engage in appropriate forms of historiography.
- To promote growth in knowledge and understanding of the diversity of human activity in the 20th century.
- To promote the ability to select and apply appropriate learning strategies.
- To promote growth of personal and shared attitudes based on an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of a member of society and respect for differences within society.
- To promote the growth of a positive self-concept through experience, competence, and achievement in using history skills and knowledge. (10-11)

Such goals lead one to expect a curriculum that addresses women's historical experience, for how could a curriculum which excludes the experiences and contributions of women in the 20th Century expect to promote growth "in knowledge and understanding of the diversity of human activity" or claim to teach the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and "respect for differences within society"? How could teachers facilitate a "positive self-concept" for girls in a subject that suggests that women played no significant role in the 20th Century? Yet when we look to the curriculum itself women are absent.

Six topics are used to set up the chronological framework of the course:

Topic 1: The Study of History
Topic 2: The World to 1919
Topic 3: The USA and USSR as Emerging World Powers
Topic 4: The Inter-War Period
Topic 5: The Second World War
Topic 6: The Post-Second World War Period to 1980

Seven themes are to be integrated throughout the course:

Theme 1: The impact of nationalism and imperialism in the 20th century
Theme 2: The role of the individual in History
Theme 3: The nature of conflict and conflict resolution
Theme 4: The growth of internationalism in the twentieth century
Theme 5: The changing role of the individual in society

Theme 6: The impact of dominant political philosophies in the 20th century.
Theme 7: The impact of technology and economic change in the 20th century (13-14)

The lack of content about women is evident when we look to the second theme which deals with human agency. The "role of the individual in history" is broken into two sub themes, the "role of the dominant personality" and "the role of 'everyman'" (13). If we look to the curriculum itself it is clear that "dominant personalities" refer only to "great men", for there are no "great" women to be found. Moreover, instead of recognizing the diversity of social history, the curriculum subsumes women within the universal category of "everyman." As Peter Novick states, universalism in the discipline of history became entirely problematic by the 1980s (521). Nonetheless, universal experience is represented here without any caution. It's difficult to imagine how the goal of teaching the "diversity of human activity" is expected to be realized in a curriculum where human historical agency is attributed only to "great men" and the ungendered masses.

Each topic is presented in a two-page spread under three headings: "topic emphasis," "theme emphasis," and "specific learning outcomes." Of the 103 learning outcomes women are only referred to once: "Assess the impact of World War I on the role of women" (21). Thus, in the one instance where women are represented the agency is given to the war, not the women. It's interesting to note that this Learning Outcome is the same as one of the two sample questions referring to women in the outgoing Grade 11 curriculum, as well as the only Instructional Strategy relating to women under "politics" in the new Grade 11 IRP, "giving the vote to women" (14). Thus, in Grade 11 we teach that women got the vote in Canada, and in History 12 we teach that women got the vote in the United States and Britain. Long before 1989 there was a wealth of scholarship

dealing with women's history in the 20th Century, and this is all the Ministry felt compelled to include in History 12.

The language of the curriculum masks the token inclusion of women. There is no gender-specific language used with the exception of "great man" and "everyman", and these two terms aptly depict the male-centred content of the curriculum. As mentioned above "women" are referred to only once in the document. For the most part, women's exclusion is masked with the alternate term for everyman, "the individual in society."

The 133 page *History 12: Resources Manual 1990* is divided into three sections: planning a history program, teaching strategies and skills, and appendices. There are no references to women or gender to be found in the document. The section on "Theories of History" lists the following theories: cyclical, linear, great man, everyman, ideas, economic, and other theories (75-77). Under "other theories" it is explained that "other historians suggest that religion, race or climate determine the course of history" (77). There is no mention of feminist history. Appendix C is particularly important in that it provides a "suggested framework" for topic review. Each topic is broken into key concepts, key words, key personalities, important events, and readings. No women are represented as key personalities, and the one learning outcome relating to women, the achievement of suffrage as a result of WWI, is not listed as an important event.

The 1989 *History 12 Curriculum* implies through omission that women did nothing significant enough in the twentieth century to be included in the curriculum, with the exception of getting the vote. The *Resources Guide* and the Provincial Examinations undermine this one learning outcome: the absence of women in the *Resources Guide* is also apparent in the exams. The Ministry of Education's Internet site *Provincial Examinations and Information* reveals that the learning outcome relating to women is not

addressed on any of the nine Provincial Examinations listed (January 1996 and June 1998).

The *History 12 Integrated Resource Package 1997*

The *History 12 IRP 1997* will be implemented in the fall of September, 1999. It is set up in the same fashion as the Social Studies 8-10 and Social Studies 11 *IRPs*:

- Preface: Using this Integrated Resource Package (III-V)
- Introduction to History 12 (1-8)
- The History 12 Curriculum (10-37)
- Appendix A: Prescribed Learning Outcomes (A3-A6)
- Appendix B: Learning Resources (B9-B31)
- Appendix C: Cross Curricular Interests (C3-C14)
- Appendix D: Assessment and Evaluation (D3-D21)
- Appendix E: Acknowledgements (E3-E4)

The Preface and Appendix C are identical to those found in the *8-10 IRP* and the *11 IRP*. As well, the *History 12 IRP* also states that efforts have been made to produce an equitable curriculum: "The development team has done its best to ensure that relevance, equity and accessibility issues are addressed in this IRP." Gender equity, multiculturalism, and anti-racism are also included among the list of cross-curricular interests (7).

The new IRP defines the course as follows:

> While History 12 can be described broadly as a history of world affairs in the 20th century, it concentrates on the years between 1919 and 1991, with an emphasis on the West and its relation to world affairs. In order to expand students historical awareness of global affairs in the 20th century, the curriculum also incorporates a global perspective where appropriate. (2)

The curriculum is set forth in a chronological manner and grouped under the following six organizers:

- The Study of History
- Conflict and Challenge: The World of 1919
- Promise and Collapse: 1919-1933
- Turmoil and Tragedy: 1933-1945
- Transformation and Tension: 1945-1963
- Progress and Uncertainty: 1963-1991

There are also 5 themes that are to be integrated throughout the curriculum:

- Geopolitical Events
- Social Change
- Economic Developments
- Technological Progress
- Ideologies (5)

The explanation of the theme "social change" does not refer specifically to gender as a category for analysis: "By exploring the evolution of society through the 20th century, students increase their understanding of the different and changing views of various groups and classes in society, and of relationships among individuals and groups" (5).

Representation of Women

Like the 8-11 Social Studies IRPs, the framework for the *History 12 IRP* is organized under four headings: Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Suggested Instructional Strategies (SISs), Suggested Assessment Strategies (SASs) and Recommended Learning Resources (RLRs). Of the 45 PLOs only one refers specifically to women: "Assess the influence of women in political and economic affairs in the late 20th century" (34). Thus, in this respect there is little difference between the outgoing and incoming curricula. Both the old and new curriculums have only one required learning outcome regarding women, albeit there are only 45 PLOs in the new curriculum, as opposed to 103 specific learning outcomes in the outgoing curriculum. As noted above, this absence of women has particular relevance for this course due to the

Provincial Final.

There are some opportunities to teach women's history found in Instructional and Assessment Strategies. Women or gender are referred to on three occasions in the Instructional Strategies corresponding to other PLOs (14,18,30). In another instance, Rosa Parks, is referred to by name (30), the only occasion in the document where a specific woman is named. Also, the term *gender* is mentioned in one assessment strategy (29).

It is interesting to note that the PLO referring to women has changed since the draft version of the IRP. Originally, the PLO read "compare the roles of women in industrialized and developing societies" (34). While neither version of the PLO is particularly satisfactory from a feminist point of view, I was curious about the change. I asked a member of the History 12 curriculum writing team about the rationale for the change. He told me that it was felt that the draft PLO was too broad and would be too time consuming considering there was already so much in the curriculum. Overall, if we compare the outgoing and incoming curriculum, the representation of women has improved, but only marginally.

Segregation and Integration

As noted above, the *Social Studies 8-11 IRP*, although offering the opportunity for an integrated approach, may well be realized in many classrooms across the province with women's history being taught in a segregated fashion. The *History 12 IRP* presents a unique set of problems.

First of all, the curriculum is presented as a document which can be followed for instruction: "Although this chronological organization of the History 12 curriculum may

prove useful in planning for instruction, it is not intended to limit or direct teachers" (2). Although the later part of the above statement softens the direction, as long as the course is assessed by a provincial final, it is likely that in the majority of classrooms the course will be taught in a manner rather consistent with that suggested. The 8-11 curriculum allows me the latitude to teach gender-balanced history in an integrated fashion. However, I feel much more constrained to follow the curriculum format of History 12 because it is reasonable to assume that the exam, as it has in the past, will closely mirror the curriculum. Thus, while one may rearrange the organization somewhat, the weighting and substance must remain the same.

The one Learning Outcome that relates to women is presented in a segregated fashion. As noted above, it reads: "Assess the influence of women in political and economic affairs in the late 20th century" (34). This PLO is located under the thematic organizer "Progress and Uncertainty: 1963-1991." This Learning Outcome allows the opportunity to integrate the contributions of influential women throughout the years 1963-1991. Moreover, the term 'assess' allows an integrated analysis of the absence of women where appropriate.

However, the curriculum does not require the inclusion of women in the course outside of this time period. Moreover, the only women one is required to include are influential women. As the course deals largely with political and economic affairs there is no apparent reason for segregating women's roles as such. The Instructional Strategy further encourages a segregated approach:

> Divide the class into small groups. Provide each group with key visual of an influential woman. Ask students to summarize the roles played by the individuals, then post the visuals and summaries around the room. In a Gallery Walk, have students record information about these women, including:

- their roles in historic events
- their ideologies
- how they achieved their positions of influence

> Provide a forum for students to draw conclusions about the characteristics of influential women. (34)

Indeed, the strategy of a gallery walk visually reinforces the notion of the separateness of women's contributions.

Furthermore, the Instructional Strategies referring to women also segregate their experience. The PLO "explain the social, economic, and political effects of World War I on the post-war world" is followed up with a SIS that separates women's experiences:

> Have students work in groups to research and present their findings on how people's lives were changed by World War I (e.g., effects on women's lives, employment, productivity, living conditions).... (14)

It would seem preferable here to incorporate a conscious gender analysis throughout the areas researched rather than assigning women to one group of students. Similarly, the PLO "explain the effects of mass production on the United States in the 1920s" segregates women's experiences from categories in which they ought to be included:

> Ask each student to choose a technological development that was popularized through mass production during the 1920s (e.g., automobile, radio, vacuum cleaner, refrigerator). Then have students create advertisements, in whatever media they choose, showing the benefits of the chosen products. Suggest that students highlight the experiences of specific groups (e.g., women, workers, students, business people)... (18)

Thus, the opportunity to explore the way technological advancements impacted workers along gender lines is underscored by an SIS that appears to locate women solely in the home.

The other PLO which has an Instructional Strategy referring to women states that students will "analyze the influence of public opinion, including direct action by individuals or groups on national policy" (34). The suggested Instructional Strategy recommends the

following movements as possibilities:

- women's movement
- opposition to the Vietnam War
- anti-nuclear campaign
- civil rights movement of the 1960s
- anti-apartheid movement
- pro-democracy movement in China
- specific environment movement
- dissident movement in the USSR
- Palestinian independence movement
- movement for aboriginal self-government (34)

While this validates the teaching of feminist movement, the focus of the Instructional Strategy is limited to the political sphere: "To what extent did the movement you have chosen achieve its goal?" (34). Moreover, the significance of gender in the other movements is overlooked.

Of course, Instructional Strategies are suggestions only and one could opt to use integrated approaches in teaching the above Learning Outcomes. While some teachers will undoubtedly choose to do so, the guidance to teachers seeking advice for incorporating new content will undoubtedly lead many to a segregated approach.

On the other hand, the PLO that directs teachers to ask students to "evaluate the role of the United Nations in advancing international co-operation" has an Instructional Strategy that refers to women specifically, but would be difficult to fulfill without including an analysis of gender roles in the family and the community:

> Have each student create a pamphlet describing the program and activities of one of the United Nations agencies working to improve living conditions. Discuss with students why some United Nations programs focus on women as the key to improving a whole community. (30)

However, for the most part, women's roles have been segregated and marginalized. This curriculum does not provide the same opportunities for a gender-integrated approach as do the 8-11 IRPs. While the PLO referring to women for Grade

8 asks that daily life, family structures, and gender roles from a variety of civilizations are compared (14), in History 12 the PLO is limited to "great women" in the late 20th century (34). As such, many opportunities for integrating women's history throughout the 20th century are overlooked. Unlike the social studies curriculum, there is little validation here for considering the gender roles within families and communities.

Experience, Diversity and Voice

As the last chapter indicates, the 8-11 curriculum largely validates the teaching of a gender-balanced curriculum which is attentive to diversity. The same analysis is applied to the History 12 Curriculum here. That is, I begin by looking for the opportunities to teach the diverse histories of women in the curriculum. Next I analyze the extent to which the diversity of female experience are marginalized or excluded. Finally, I consider the issues of voice and dominance.

Opportunities to teach the diverse histories of women are limited by the minimal representation of women in general. As the PLO focussing on women is restricted to those who have been politically and economically influential in the later half of the 20th century, the opportunities for teaching about the diversity of experience are further impeded. Although the theme of "progress and uncertainty" focuses largely on the actions of the USA and the Soviet Union, there is no indication that the teaching of this PLO must be centred on white women. However, it must by definition focus on powerful women. Moreover, the intention is not to look at the diversity of women's experience, rather it is to focus on the common traits of influential women. The accompanying Instructional Strategy suggests a Gallery Walk in which teachers "provide a forum for students to draw conclusions about the characteristics of influential women" (35). At best,

this PLO offers an opportunity to provide a token look at the roles and common characteristics of a few powerful women. There is no instruction to link grassroots movements with the actions of influential women. The fact that this is the only required Learning Outcome regarding women in the course, and that it does not specify the need to consider women from a variety of cultures, indicates that one could teach the course without any content regarding the diversity of women's experience.

None of the Instructional Strategies referring to gender look at the interconnections of gender, race, and class. For example, the SIS which corresponds to the Learning Outcome addressing the social, economic, and political effects of WWI lists, among other things, having students consider the "effects on women's lives." Certainly, the effects on women's lives varied in relation to factors such as race and class. Thus, on the occasions where "everyman" is abandoned for women we find "everywoman." Similarly, the Learning Outcome regarding the effects of mass production on the USA in the 1920s is accompanied by an Instructional Strategy that suggests teachers have students consider the production of appliances such as the vacuum cleaner and the refrigerator on the lives of women. To consider this without thinking about the ramifications of class and race not only presents an inaccurate historical understanding, but misses an important opportunity to look at the meaning of privilege. Once again, it is important to note that these strategies are suggested and for those who recognize the value of doing so, there is the opportunity to incorporate the impacts of class and race as well as gender.

While the Instructional Strategy suggesting that teachers discuss with students the reasons some United Nations programs focus on women as the key to improving a whole community affords the opportunity to teach the agency of women in developing countries,

the focus of the Learning Outcome is primarily concerned with the agency of the United Nations: "evaluate the role of the United Nations in advancing international cooperation" (30). This does allow the opportunity to teach about the agency of women in less-developed countries and connects the family, the community, and the nation, but it is not a prescribed component of the curriculum.

There are two Learning Outcomes in the curriculum that deal specifically with the topic of ethnic or racial oppression. The first requires that students "evaluate the historical significance of the Holocaust." The corresponding SIS reads:

> Have students research the history of anti-Semitism to find examples of the anti-semitic policies and practices of Nazi Germany that culminated in the "final solution." Discuss with students the attempts to deal with crimes against humanity at the Nuremberg trials. The activity can be extended by discussing other historical examples of genocide and the responses of the international community. (24)

The focus is not on the historical experience of Jews, Armenians, or Bosnians, but rather on those who devise the strategies of genocide, and the reactions of other nations, such as the Allies and the Nuremberg trials, to acts of genocide.

The other PLO focuses on "the struggle for human rights, including the civil rights movement in the USA and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa" (30). Unlike the Learning Outcome discussed above, the focus here is on the historical agency of African Americans and South Africans. The corresponding Instructional Strategy is the only occasion where a woman (Rosa Parks) is mentioned by name. But there is no reference in either of these PLOs to the interconnections of gender, class, and race.

The Instructional and Assessment Strategies associated with the above PLO are problematic in relation to the issues of voice and dominance. It is recommended that teachers ask students to role-play participants at a conference on human rights and

"discuss human rights struggles from the perspectives of key participants...[considering] the situations, motives, intentions, hopes, and fears of the participants...." (30-31). It is debatable whether the benefits of such a role-play outweigh the risk of teaching appropriation, but if the ministry chooses to include such an activity, it would be wise to include some guidelines regarding "epistemic humility": *Appendix D: Assessment and Evaluation Samples* provides an appropriate location for doing so.

Constructing and Deconstructing Gender Knowledge

The IRP does take some first steps toward valuing women's history in the curriculum. It begins to counterbalance the "great man" curriculum by including "great women." As well, there is some recognition in the Instructional Strategies that the experience of "the masses" has been gendered. The political efficacy of collective feminist action is introduced with the option to teach the women's movement in the later 20th century. While such changes represent a step toward a more equitable curriculum, the size of the step is disappointing.

The knowledge that is valued in this curriculum has important implications for the manner is which teachers construct gender in the classroom. The minimal inclusion of women in the history curriculum constructs gender knowledge that suggests women have played a marginal role in the 20th century. Although inappropriate gender-neutral language attempts to mask the exclusion of women in the skeletal curriculum document, the fleshing out of the PLOs makes it evident that the curriculum deals primarily with the actions of men. The language is gender-neutral with the exception of the few occasions where women are referred to specifically; "men" are never referred to as such. This discrepancy speaks volumes, the implication being that women need to be referred to

specifically because elsewhere the document refers to men.

These problems are only compounded by the minimal and segregated nature of the representation of women, and all work together to reinforce the notion that women's history is a special or deficient history, the very thing feminist historians and pedagogues have warned against. As Scott and others have argued, such segregation also runs the risk of reinforcing the essential notion of sexual difference.

Unlike the 8-11 Social Studies *IRPs*, the history curriculum does not take the important step in valuing the family as an area worthy of study. Earlier, I criticized the 8-11 curriculum for its inclusion of "great men" and not "great women." In the history curriculum it is only required that we teach about some "great women" living between the years 1963-1991. Thus, the knowledge constructed by the curriculum is that women's roles are only worthy of study when they enter the public, male domain. And yet, even within this context their contributions are segregated and ignored until the late 20th century.

Wars and political conflicts continue to be represented as the driving forces in history. While the curriculum no longer includes the battles of WWI, there is still a heavy emphasis on war and conflict. Admittedly, there are also PLOs that are relevant to conflict resolution, such as "the peacemaking process at the end of World War I" (12) and the evaluation of "the role of the United Nations in advancing international co-operation" (30). Yet revenge, self-interest, political confrontation, and conflict are equally relevant in the teaching of these Learning Outcomes. An unfortunate omission in the curriculum is the role of women in the peace movement. Jane Turner, in "Making Space for Women's History," notes that the curriculum and the accompanying texts overlook the contributions of Emily Greene Balch and several other women who suggested a

permanent arbitration body before the League of Nations was established, in spite of the fact that Balch won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1946. Turner further states that there is no reference to Balch in three key History 12 texts (Haberman, Demarco, Howarth), "even though all three texts deal specifically and supposedly in depth with the topic of the search for peace" (9).

The curriculum does not require the discussion of gender roles or the way gender has been constructed historically. Indeed, the term *gender* is only used once in the curricular component of the IRP as an assessment strategy corresponding to the PLO "explain the effects of mass production on the United States in the 1920s" (18). While the option to teach the women's movement does provide one opportunity to deconstruct the notion of gender, the curriculum does not require that teachers address the construction and deconstruction of gender roles (and there is no shortage of opportunities to do so); as such, the teachers need not provide students with the opportunity to relate the past to the present and reconsider their own notions of gender.

Although the curriculum no longer refers to "everyman" and "great men," these concepts continue to be presented as the driving human forces of historical change. "Everyman" is on occasion broken down racially; for example, with the civil rights movement and the anti-apartheid movement. However, there is no discussion within the prescribed learning outcomes regarding the significance of gender in historical experience. Thus, a largely universalistic view of history is presented, in spite of the fact that this in no way reflects the current thinking within the academy.

The knowledge that is presented by teachers as most valued is that which makes its way onto the Provincial Examinations. There has been much speculation in the last couple of years about the possible effects of fiscal restraint on the Provincial

Examinations. If provincial exams were dropped there would be a loosening of the constraints which result from the imperative to adequately prepare students by "teaching to the test." On the assumption that the present system of accountability will continue, the key to increasing the representation of women's history in classrooms is the substantive representation of women in the exam. The PLO regarding great women could not easily be realized as one of the 40 one-mark multiple choice questions because no specific women are referred to. However, it is well-suited to a "written response question": there are three eight-mark written response questions on the exam. In addition, influential women could be realized as a topic for the one eight-mark evidence question. As the twenty-mark essay question requires analysis "throughout the twentieth century," an essay topic on women or gender is not possible. However, students taught about the women's movement in the latter half of the twentieth century could use that information on an essay question such as one which asks students to analyze the influence of public opinion, including direct action by individuals or groups, on national policy, using examples from throughout the 20th century. Past practice would indicate that there is a need for a feminist voice in the exam-writing team in order to ensure that even the marginal representation of women's history found in the curriculum is realized in the exam.

Recommended Learning Resources

At the History 12 Provincial Exam marking session in July, 1998, an interest was expressed by the majority of teachers attending that a single and more comprehensive text than those recommended to date be designated as a primary text upon which the exam would be based. This expression took the form of a petition to the Learning

Resources Branch of the Ministry of Education. While this idea makes sense to me as far as preparing students for the exam, it also demonstrates the significance of the treatment of gender in Recommended Learning Resources. As in Chapter 3, I focus here on the comprehensive texts that have been recommended at this time, and also review two texts that are expected to be approved in September. Unlike the Social Studies IRPs which offer a variety of Recommended Learning Resources focusing solely on women's history, there is only one such resource currently recommended for History 12.

Two of the three comprehensive texts currently in use with the 1989 History 12 curriculum have survived the review process and have been recommended for use with the new *History 12 IRP 1997*. The first, *A Map History of the Modern World (2nd Canadian Edition)* by Catchpole, Hundey, and Magarrey, provides a visual and textual representation of the "key points" of 20th Century history. Each two-page spread in this 192 page book consists of passages of dense text facing a related detailed map page. There is no index entry entitled Women; there are in fact very few female names found in the Index: Rosa Parks, Isabel Peron, and Margaret Thatcher each receive a one-sentence text treatment (110, 106, 132). "Big Bertha," a long-barrel 420mm mortar, gets more coverage than the other three female names put together (12)!

The other text carried over from the 1989 curriculum is *The World This Century* by Neil DeMarco. Once again, there is no Index listing for Women in this 256 page book. The only woman listed is Margaret Thatcher who is briefly referred to on three pages (167, 135, 239). There is an unlisted textual reference to Mao's widow Chiang Ching about her role in the Gang of Four and her resulting trial. Although Chiang Ching is represented in more depth than Thatcher, her depiction is far from positive: "At her trial in 1980 ...Teng described her as a 'very, very evil woman. She is so evil that anything

you can say about her can't be evil enough'" (192).

Two other comprehensive textbooks are up for review in September, 1998 and expected to be recommended. *Twentieth Century Viewpoints* (Zelinski et al.) provides a fairly close curricular fit. Unlike the two texts discussed above, there is an index listing for "women" in this 405 page text:

- Argentina 327
- Canada 9-13, 51
- poverty 378-80
- Saudi Arabia 360
- Second World War 111-112
- Soviet Union 195
- UN Commission on the Status of Women 167

Unfortunately most of the more substantial content relating to women in this text focusses on Canadian women which is not a component of the BC History 12 curriculum. Pages 9-13 discuss the suffrage movement in general but are primarily concerned with the suffrage of Canadian Women. The entry on women in WWII (111-112) highlights the role of Canadian women in the war effort. There is limited attention to race and ethnicity in the content relating to women. One exception is the entry on women in Saudi Arabia. It is encouraging that in discussing the role of women in Saudi Arabia that the narrative attempts to balance the standard western viewpoint:

> While women's public role may be restrictive by Western standards, in the family women wield considerable power. Theirs is the decisive voice in most domestic matters, and their status and power is enhanced by age. Most Saudis view their customs not as repressive but as complimentary to the status of women. Women themselves generally feel satisfied that their traditions provide them with security, respect, and protection. But as global interactions become more commonplace at the end of the twentieth century, some women have begun to view their situation quite differently and are demanding greater social, legal, and personal freedom. (36).

Indeed, the brief entry on the UN Commission on the Status of Women highlights that the

west has not always embraced the concept of universal human rights:

> In 1946, both the United States and Britain opposed the establishment of the UN Commission on the Status of Women as well as Article 8 of the UN charter guaranteeing both women and men the right 'to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality' in all UN organizations. The Western nations, including Canada and the United States, bear the scars of sanctioned injustices against many people throughout their histories. Values change with time and place. They will continue to do so as the world in which we live continues to evolve. (167)

However, there is no discussion here regarding how values change "with time and place" and the concept of "evolving" universal human rights suggests progress is inevitable. When one looks up the index entry on "poverty" the section is actually titled 'Women's Rights" and the *feminization of poverty* is a sub-heading. This section deals with women's rights in the late 20th century and includes a number of interesting concepts. For example, the link between women's "grassroots organizations" and political campaigning is made. Also, the point is made that when women head governments the 'trickle down" effect is not a given: "In Britain, for example, former prime minister Margaret Thatcher's cabinet following the 1987 election did not include a single woman" (378). The text states that women dominate the lowest rungs of the socio-economic ladder around the world, and further posits that as the twentieth century ends "there is a growing trend towards the feminization of poverty" (379).

In addition to the main narrative, three features are found in shaded boxes throughout the text. *Profiles* provide "snapshots of key individuals who have helped to shape historical events." *Voices* present opinions, comments and expressions intended to "enrich" student understanding of events. *Viewpoints* offer "conflicting readings" on key events. There are Profiles on Nellie McClung (11), Eleanor Roosevelt (168), Margaret Thatcher (228-229), Eva Peron (327), Golda Meir (350), and Gro Brundtland

(377). These are depictions of "great women" influencing the political and economic events of the twentieth century. There is only one Voices feature that focuses on women. It contains quotations from the early twentieth century for and against women's suffrage (13), other Voices and Viewpoints features at times include women's comments on political issues.

Although *Twentieth Century Viewpoints* does a better job of addressing women's history than the Catchpole or Demarco texts, the representation is marginal considering the length of the text. Moreover, the tendency is to segregate women's history in sidebar narratives or to locate them under special headings in the main text. Nonetheless, this text is much more inclusive of women's history than the other comprehensive text up for evaluation in September, 1998.

Global Forces of the Twentieth Century (Mitchner and Tuffs) does not include an index entry for "women." Women and women's history are located only in sidebar locations. Purple boxes are used to distinguish Case Studies. One of these, "The British Homefront," briefly refers to women's contributions to WWI as labourers and as enlisted women, and also refers to the improved status of women: "society was becoming more homogeneous as all shared in the dislocation of war and a fairer status for women evolved" (15). There is no elaboration as to what this "fairer status" comprised. Women are also featured in three Biography features which are set off in green boxes. Two of these women are featured along with their husbands, Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu (196-197) and Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner (292). Tsarina Alexandra has a green box of her own, although much of the text within is concerned with her influence on her husband (71). Photographs of women are found throughout the text and help to mask the absence of women in the master narrative. Considering that *Global Forces* is

a large 336 page text published in 1997, the lack of content on women is quite surprising. Nonetheless, this is the text that many teachers at the History 12 marking session felt would be the best choice to base the Provincial Final Examination upon.

There is currently only one recommended resource that refers directly to women. *Half the Sky* is a 27-minute video about the status of women in modern China. The IRP describes the video: "Through documentary narrative and interviews, the film examines the politics of reproduction, the impact of traditional values on the role of modern Chinese women, and the efforts being made to improve their status" (B18). Clearly, the resource does not match the "great woman" PLO of the final version of the History 12 IRP; rather it seems it was selected on the basis of the draft version, "compare the roles of women in industrialized and developing societies" (34).

Conclusions

While it is clear that the *1997 History 12 IRP* represents women more than the *1989 History 12 Curriculum*, it does not equal the gains found in the Grades 8-11 IRPs. The new History 12 does not extend social history to the family, nor does it set out to prescribe gender as an important construct in the study of history. The only PLO relating to women is located within the time-period of 1963-1991 in a course which begins in 1919. Thus, there is no parallel opportunity to integrate the women-focussed PLO throughout the curriculum. Moreover, the corresponding Instructional Strategy lends itself to a segregated approach which reinforces the "special" nature of women's history in the classroom. The focus on "great women" ignores grassroots movement and undermines the representation of the diversity of women's experience. Although there is the opportunity to teach women's movement in the late twentieth century, this is not

required. The new IRP, like the old curriculum, presents a version of the twentieth century where women are almost invisible.

The Provincial Final Examination will likely serve to provide a formidable obstacle to teachers who recognize the need to provide a gender-balanced and gender-integrated course for their students. While the Ministry of Education left the gender and multi-cultural components of the 8-11 IRPs ambiguous enough to satisfy most teachers, the History 12 curriculum is much more specific and limited as it must be clearly interpreted in order for teachers to prepare their students for the final exam. I would further suggest that, in order for the limited gains that have been made to be realized in classrooms, it is important that the Provincial Examination Writing Team makes a much stronger effort to include the content on women's history than that which has been made in the past.

In addition, the Resource Selection Committee could enable teachers to deliver the curricular content on women more successfully by adding appropriate resources to fulfill the needs of the women-focussed PLO, as well as the options relating to women found in other Instructional Strategies. What happens from here on in the teaching of History 12 in British Columbia, as it relates to the study of women's history, may hang tenuously on decisions made concerning the future of the Provincial Final Examination.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

> ... the "puzzling" process [of writing social studies curriculum in BC] makes for interesting considerations of the ways in which social studies is both extremely political and extremely conservative in its construction. (Ekdahl, "Writing" 37)

In 1993 the Ministry of Education funded a Social Studies Needs Assessment Survey and the sample group, representing less than 10% of the teachers in BC, was clear in its mandate. The respondents wanted *limited* change and felt that the existing curriculum could be improved upon by reducing content, increasing teaching options, connecting the past to the present, and providing varied teaching and assessment strategies (Curriculum Development Branch). Scholars, on the other hand, directed the writing team to "envision a discipline of social studies in which learners were provided with the opportunities to see knowledge not as a singular account of the truths of human existence but as accounts which are tentative, constructed, and value-laden." They stressed that the curriculum should not "trivialize diversity" and noted that ethnic tensions, racism, and violence against women and children demonstrated the necessity of such work. It was also suggested that the writing team create a valid curriculum by letting students in on the controversies within academic fields (Ekdahl, "Writing" 37). Taking a document that is driven by an understanding of human agency which only encompasses "great men" and "everyman," adhering to a mandate for limited change,

addressing ethnic and gender diversity in a meaningful way, introducing debates within the academy, and reducing the curricular content is far from a simple task. Given the task, the outcome is not surprising: curriculum which trivializes gender and ethnic diversity and remains quite similar in substance to that it set out to replace.

The first theme of analysis used in this project deals with the degree to which women are represented. The revised Grades 8-11 *Integrated Resource Packages* do include prescribed learning outcomes regarding women, but there is only one such learning outcome found in each grade. While this is an improvement over the outgoing curricula, which had no mandated learning outcomes concerned with women's history, the marginalization of women's history continues.

The degree to which women's history is integrated with men's in the 8-11 revised curricula is also problematic. The curricula reinforce the segregation of women's history by adopting a *her-story* model considered problematic since the mid-seventies. The Grades 8-11 curricula all segregate women's history under social themes, and exclude gender as a component of analysis in areas such as the economy, politics, and law. While the valuation of the family as an area worthy of study is certainly a gain, segregating women's experience gives much cause for concern. As such, the curricula fall into the trap of ghettoizing women's history as a special topic of study, and reinforce the essential nature of gender by suggesting that gender is responsible for the different experiences of women and men because there is no reference to the construction of gender. Research has demonstrated that presenting women's history in such a manner contributes to students perceiving women's history as a *special* and *deficient* topic, and that young women are reluctant to identify with a group they consider deficient.

Neither do the curricula heed the lessons regarding experience, diversity, and voice to be found in feminist historiography. With the exception of the grade 8 curriculum, there are opportunities, but there is no necessity to address the diverse experiences of women. The curricula also ignore warnings from the academy regarding the appropriation of the inner experiences of those who have been oppressed in the past by recommending teaching strategies which include taking on the identities of First Nations people without providing any guidance as to how to do so with sensitivity and "epistemic humility."

Prescribed curriculum impacts the gender knowledge put forth by teachers, and in turn has implications for students' understandings about gender. In spite of the use of gender-neutral language, the experiences of white men are clearly the most valued. Even when women enter the political domain their roles are overlooked. "Great men" continue to be represented in the curriculum, but there are no "great women" to be found. Women are located under social themes in the "private sphere" without direction as to how to connect the family and the community to the nation. In grade 11 women are suddenly presented in jobs traditionally associated with men, but there is no indication as to how they got there. Such a teaching approach runs the risk of leaving students with the impression that time and progress march hand and hand without human agency, an understanding which can have serious political ramifications.

The curricula do not prescribe analyzing the ways in which gender has been constructed for both sexes in a variety of historical settings, or in ways which are mindful of genders intersectionality with other constructs such as race, ethnicity, and class. They overlook the opportunity to let students in on current debates within the field by failing

to prescribe learning outcomes which challenge students to deconstruct binary oppositions such as male/female. Instead, the curriculum documents use the terms *women* and *gender* interchangeably reinforcing the notion that only women are gendered beings.

I have heard it argued by several History 12 teachers that there is nothing wrong with the course having a western, political focus. Indeed, the *History 12 Integrated Resources Package Review Document 1996* openly states this bias in the curriculum profile: "History 12 maintains a traditional emphasis on geopolitical events and ideologies and continues to deal with world history in the 20th century from a primarily western perspective within a chronological framework." While the disclaimer is forthright, it doesn't justify the content of the course. Unlike universities where students have the opportunity to select from a variety of history courses, this is the only option for students. Grade 12 students are taught that this is history; an understanding that undoubtedly turns many girls off the discipline of history. If there is only one provincially approved history course available to students, it ought to better reflect the discipline.

The treatment of women in History 12 is only marginally improved over the outgoing curriculum, and I have seen first hand the ways young women have responded to that curriculum. One of my History 12 students recently complained that the current (1989) curriculum was only concerned with men and conflict: "Why don't we ever study women?", she asked. Why don't we ever study "people who get along"? Ironically, this student seemed to be engaged in a "process of self-realization" just as the goals of that course prescribe. However, her self-realization has come about as a result of her rejection of the content of the course. One of my top academic students demonstrated

a very different understanding about women and history. She asked me why I bothered trying to make it seem like women had made important contributions when "it is a fact that the important things in the 20th century have been men and war." When I consider the curriculum that I have delivered, it does not surprise me that this bright young woman has come to such a disappointing conclusion. Unfortunately, the marginal treatment of women's history in the new *History 12 IRP* does little to counteract such responses.

As in the 8-11 curricula, there is only one prescribed learning outcome related to women in the revised History 12 curriculum, and it is presented in a segregated fashion. The curriculum overlooks feminist scholarship from the last two decades and only presents "great women" (during the years 1963-1991) without suggesting links be drawn to grassroots movements. The Instructional Strategy accompanying this Learning Outcome suggests teaching this content in a segregated fashion, reinforcing the notion of women's history as deficient, contribution history. Moreover, there is no requirement that teachers approach the diversity of women's experience in meeting this goal. As there are no Learning Outcomes referring to gender or women during the years 1919-1962, students may well be led to think that women did nothing worthy of inclusion in the curriculum during this time period. The restraints associated with the provincial final leave teachers little time to move beyond the confines of the curriculum. Thus it seems likely that the new curriculum, like the old, will result in some female students feeling disinterested and turned off the course, and others buying into the notion that women's history is not worthy of study.

The comprehensive texts recommended for the new grades 8-11 curricula, for the most part, show an improvement over the texts associated with the outgoing curriculum.

Still, there is much room for improvement. While some of the resources which focus entirely on women's history are quite good, they unfortunately reinforce the separateness of women's history. The comprehensive texts associated with the History 12 curriculum to date show little improvement in regard to representing women's history, and no suitable women-focussed resources have yet to be approved.

When one reads the assurances in the *IRPs* that issues of equity, including gender equity, are addressed in all the new *IRPS*, it is difficult to imagine how the documents managed to deal with women's history in such a problematic manner. I was seconded to do a gender-review of the *History 12 IRP*. I expressed many of the concerns found within this project. In particular, I expressed my concerns about the ramifications of the segregation of women's history, and pointed out a number of areas where gender could be addressed in PLOs throughout the curriculum. Although the Ministry paid me for a gender review, there is no indication in the final document that my suggestions had any impact whatsoever.

Writing curriculum is a political contest. It was generally agreed that the content of the social studies curriculum needed to be reduced in order to avoid the teaching of de-contextualized facts. The Ministry also expressed the need to make the curriculum more equitable and relevant by improving the representation of ethnicity and gender. These two objectives, decreasing content and making space for previously marginalized groups, simply can not be achieved without getting rid of some of the learning outcomes contained in the outgoing curriculum. This is when the problems begin:

> The most commonly expressed fear in the field was that the term conflict was too vague and that war (particularly the World Wars) might not be taught. One outraged history teacher even increased the stakes by

> copying his response, primarily a concern with the change of focus on Canada and wars in Grade 11 social studies, to his two area MLAs, well-known opposition members. (Ekdahl, "Writing" 40)

Ekdahl further writes that the outcome of this kind of controversy resulted in altering the language in the grade 11 document:

> [T]he word *conflict*, used in the first document in conjunction with the words *resolution* and *co-operation* to provide an alternative curriculum focus for peace educators, feminist educators, parents, and others, was systematically replaced by or attached to the word *war*. ("Writing" 41)

In his National best-seller *Who killed Canadian History*, Granatstein speaks strongly in favour of teaching detailed military history in social studies classrooms:

> Fortunately, there are still teachers in British Columbia who try very hard to ensure that their students learn about Canada's military past. The war years are an integral part of the grade 11 social studies curriculum, military history is covered as thoroughly as is the home front, and, in May 1995, Armstrong's Pleasant Valley Secondary School held an open house on the theme of the Second World War. The school also goes on a field trip to Europe each year and makes a point of visiting the battlefields....Good teachers with a sense of the past can still make a difference, whatever provincial ministries may try to make them teach (128).

Granatstein holds academic feminists such as Katherine McKenna responsible for forcing military history out of the curriculum in various provinces through insisting on including nurturance and co-operation as well: "this condemnatory approach to the way history has been written (and the way history has been made!) has certainly captured most present-day text writers, male and female, and it probably explains why the fighting has been all but eliminated from the Canadian history of the world wars" (125).

In the face of such controversy, military history is clearly articulated in the grade 11 social studies curriculum. It seems that the grade 8-11 curricula sets out to please everyone by being ambiguous about gender. Just as feminist teachers are validated in

teaching women's history in an integrated, substantive manner, so are those who choose to cover women's history in a superficial, decontextualized way.

As a result of the provincial final, History 12 doesn't have the luxury of ambiguity: teachers are only required to introduce a few "great women." The battles of World War I are missing from the History 12 curriculum, but this was hardly necessary for the inclusion of one "great women" Learning Outcome. Instead, it was abandoned in favour of extending the course from 1980 to 1991 in order to include the fall of communism in Europe. Thus, it would seem that even military history is negotiable depending on the perceived significance of what is to replace it.

The process of writing social studies curricula leaves much room for improvement. In discussing her experience as a member of the writing team for social studies 8-11, Ekdahl describes a process which is rushed and haphazard. While the convoluted transformations of the writing team and the instructions from the Ministry would take too long to describe, the following example indicates some of the "folly of the process" described by Ekdahl. In 1994, a secondary teacher, who was also a member of the Social Studies Provincial Specialists' Association (BCSSTA) withdrew from the writing team expressing concerns about the unrealistic time frame for revisions, and the problems associated with having one teacher responsible for rewriting any grade! This led to the addition of new writers who had not participated in the earlier stages of writing. These problems in process had real ramifications, a notable one being that the grade 11 IRP was turned over to a new team and was eventually published as a separate document (40).

In 1996 the Ministry of Education financed a province-wide assessment of Social

Studies. That the final touches on the writing of the curriculum should take place at the same time as an expensive assessment of the subject suggests a lack of planning and logic. Student achievement results were discouraging. The authors of the assessment recommended that the new IRPs be designated as interim documents, pending the outcome of an extensive review of social studies education (Bognar, Cassidy, and Clarke). The Ministry has not acted on this recommendation.

While the secondary social studies and History 12 curricula are far from satisfactory from a feminist point of view, there are some measures that could highlight the potential of the IRPs. Within districts, feminist teachers could lobby for time or funding to develop units, lessons and other resources which support the integration of women's history and gender analysis throughout the curriculum. The existence of such resources may well prove useful for future curriculum writing by demonstrating the ways in which feminist historiography can be set into practice in classrooms. It would also be helpful to lobby for in-service training on gender in social studies curriculum to help address teachers' gaps in knowledge. Suggesting appropriate texts and other learning resources for the review and recommendation process would help to improve teacher access to such materials. In the case of History 12, feminist teachers should request that the ministry impress upon the provincial examination writing team the importance of representing the women's history found in the IRPs on the examinations. This is one way to insure that women's history is addressed in classrooms.

Feminist research could help impact future social studies curriculum. Research into student understandings about gender and history in BC might be used to make a stronger case for more thoughtful inclusion of women's history in the curriculum. In

addition, research into teacher knowledge of women's history as it relates to the curriculum could help make a case for both in-service and pre-service training. The Ministry of Education publication entitled *Gender Equity* indicates that women are greatly under-represented (25.3%) as teachers of secondary social studies (8). This suggests the need to interrogate hiring practices and to examine the current status of women entered in pre-service social studies teacher training.

Teacher feedback and lobbying affect the writing of the curriculum. The relative absence of women teaching secondary social studies suggests the need for feminist teachers to forge links with other advocates for gender-fair social studies, within universities and communities, in order to voice feminist concerns during the writing of future curricula as effectively as conservative concerns were expressed during the writing of the 1997 *IRPs*.

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