

WHY ARE WOMEN SO HARD ON

WOMEN?

by

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Not having been trusted.
For so long, many women
have lost faith in them-
selves. Women need to
recover that faith.

Ashley Montagu (1968)

With Montagu, we believe women have lost faith in themselves. An oppressive amount of evidence exists to demonstrate that in education, as in other professions, women are not just distrusted --they are actively discriminated against. Yet, few women demand social justice. Why not? Perhaps because they have lost the faith necessary for the battle. Bright women often spurn the company of other women; they are frequently harder on women than are men. They lack faith in other women and in themselves. Why? Psychologists argue that a person who repeatedly experiences discrimination and degradation comes to devalue herself. Once we understand this process of discrimination and denigration, perhaps we can devise ways by which you as teachers and parents can help young women recover the faith in themselves which is so necessary if one is to have a productive, satisfying life.*

In Section I, we will present evidence that women are severely discriminated against in Education. Section II will describe the adverse psychological consequences of such injustices. Section III will explore some of the things that can be done to eliminate these problems.

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3

SECTION I

INFERIORITY OR DISCRIMINATION?

Statistics always constitute a double-edged sword. When we point out that in the mid 1960's women comprised only 3.5% of the lawyers, 6.5% of the physicians and 2.1% of the dentists in this country, there will be those critics who argue that these statistics are not proof of discrimination; they will argue that they actually provide evidence that women are inferior and unsuited for these professions.

Experiments are not double-edged. Under controlled conditions it is possible to determine which factors produce the types of statistics we have cited. There is compelling evidence to offer even the most skeptical critic that women are not as successful as men in Education and other professions because they are actively discriminated against.

Discrimination Against Women in Education

Carefully controlled experiments have demonstrated that even when a woman has expressed an interest in a career, and when her qualifications are identical to a man's, admissions officers, fellow students, and employers treat her as an inferior.

Let us describe briefly three of these experiments:

A. Barriers in College Admission

In 1971, Walster, Cleary and Clifford discovered that a boy who applies to college has a better chance of being admitted than does his female counterpart. The design of their experiment was a simple one. Application forms were secured from 240 U.S. colleges, and filled out by the experimenters. To insure that the applications would be as standard as possible, a master form was prepared. This form provided answers to any questions that a college might ask. Included on this form was basic information about the student's background, education, and interests. Also included were essays on his interests, hobbies, and religious experiences. Letters of reference, appropriate for students of either sex, were prepared. (These recommendations were presumably from a minister, teacher, counselor, an employer, and neighbor.) The necessary medical records were prepared by a

cooperating physician.

There was only one way in which the applications differed. On 120 of the applications the applicant described herself as a female; on 120 of the applications the applicant described himself as a male.

An appropriate transcript was provided by a cooperative principal. (Actually, he provided three sets of bogus records. He provided one transcript for a Low Ability male or female candidate, a second for a student of Average Ability, and a third for a student of High Ability.)

The researchers submitted the bogus applications with the application fee, and waited to see how the admissions' officers would react to the candidates. Whether or not the colleges accepted the candidate was scored on a five-point scale.

- 1 = rejection;
- 2 = rejection, with the possibility of reconsideration at a later date;
- 3 = qualified acceptance in which a program or course work adjustment was stipulated;
- 4 = acceptance;
- 5 = acceptance with encouragement by a personal letter or an offer of unrequested aid.

The results were striking: (See Figure 1). At the Low ability level, boys were markedly preferred over girls. At the High ability level, discrimination disappeared. The extent to which admissions' officers discriminated against a girl, then, depended on her ability level. This finding is in accord with the feminist observation (and complaint) that only a truly exceptional woman can ever hope to transcend sexual stereotypes and be judged on an objective basis. The authors conclude: "A woman with modest ability continues to be judged first, and foremost, as a woman, and thus, as an inferior."

The first barrier a woman of modest ability faces, then, is that she is likely to be denied an education. If women are prevented from preparing for a fulfilling life, we should not be surprised when they fail to find one.

B. Biases

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B. Biases in the Evaluation of Women's Work

Research indicates that a woman is at a disadvantage, even when her work is being judged by other women. Pheterson, Kiesler, and Goldberg (1971) demonstrated that the same painting would look "better" to judges if the artist's name was preceded by "Mr." rather than by "Miss" or "Mrs." The authors found that only under very special circumstances would women's work be given a sympathetic review; if experts certified that indeed the work was outstanding, discrimination ceased.

The author's hypothesis was tested in the following way:

Students -- all women -- were shown eight paintings, which were accompanied by bogus "biographies." These biographies led students to believe that four of the artists were men and four were women. The biographies also misled students about how famous the paintings were. The biographies indicated that two of the men's and women's paintings were famous paintings (i.e., The biography said something like: "This painting is the winner of the Annual Cleveland Color Competition."). The rest of the paintings were described as simply entries in local shows (i.e., The biography said something like: "She (he) has entered this painting in museum-sponsored young artists' contest.").

After examining the paintings, women were asked to judge how technically competent the artist was, how creative he was, to assess the quality and content of the painting, to estimate emotional impact the artist instilled in his painting, and to predict the artistic future of the artist.

The results of this experiment totally corroborate the results secured in Experiment I. When the painting was simply an entry in a local show, it was accorded far more respect when the artist was said to be a male than when she was said to be a female. Once the painting was described as a prize winning painting, however, judges no longer discriminated against women. Once they believed the artist was a "winner", she was accorded as much respect as a male.

The authors argue: "The implications of these findings are far-reaching. The work of women in competition is devalued by other women." ... "even work that is equivalent to the work of a man will be judged inferior until it receives special distinction; and, that distinction is difficult to achieve when judgment is biased against the work in competition. According to

the present data, and those of Goldberg (1968) women cannot expect unbiased evaluations until they prove themselves by award, trophy, or other obvious success."

C. Barriers in Employment

Assuming that the female is accepted into graduate school and assuming she somehow survives the sex discrimination she encounters there, she is likely to encounter additional difficulties when she attempts to join male-dominated faculty ranks. Despite the fact that Federal laws and Wisconsin State laws forbid discrimination on the basis of sex, and despite the fact that this year universities were alerted that unless they cease discriminating and begin complying with Executive Order 11246 (as amended by Executive Order 11375) their Federal contract funds will be withheld, universities continue to discriminate.

This year, for example, a Wisconsin Ph.D. applied for a job in Hawaii. The chairman's reply was swift. He reminded that her first responsibility was to her husband and child. He implied that the department did not wish to abet her shirking of womanly chores and therefore would not be interested in interviewing her. "Marriage is more important than a career," he warned.

An experiment by Clifford and Looft (1971) was designed to determine whether State and Federal laws concerning equal employment are commonly obeyed and whether women are in fact accorded equal employment opportunities. In light of the preceding research on such issues, it was predicted that employers would pursue males more enthusiastically than females, and that the anti-female bias would be greater for average applicants than for superior ones.

The test was conducted at last year's American Psychological Association meetings. Bogus application forms were submitted to the APA employment placement service. Half of the applicants claimed to be female Ph.D.'s; half claimed to be males. The ability of applicants, both "male" and "female," was systematically varied: Half of the applicants, claimed to be High in ability. (The candidate said he (or she) had two published articles, had presented one paper, had one article in preparation, an NDEA fellowship, and one year of college teaching experience.) Half of the applicants claimed to be Average in ability. (The candidate claimed only one paper presentation and two years' work as a teaching assistant.) All applicants claimed to be new Wisconsin Ph.D.'s, and to

be seeking employment. All had no previous employment.

The employee interview was scored as follows:

- 0 = no reply
- 1 = the applicant not wishing to be interviewed
- 2 = a scheduled interview
- 4 = a scheduled interview with a question about appointment

As is evident, the results of the interview which are entirely in line with I and II. The results are, however, on the whole, "that" this experience of institutions of higher education is not an achievement to sex discrimination, outstanding ability, and rehabilitation."

Conclusion

Both statistics show an overwhelming evidence of higher education discrimination when women are involved.

D. On the

Discrimination in the variety of employment opportunities accepted for the female is accorded the same as the male.

Discrimination in the figures, female and male; female and male.

be seeking employment in either academic or research institutions. All had special interests in learning and human development.

The employer's response to the applicant's request for an interview was scored as follows:

- 0 = no reply, or reply indicating that the employer did not wish to interview the applicant;
- 1 = the applicant was requested to send a vita to the interviewer;
- 2 = a scheduled interview indicating time and place;
- 4 = a scheduled interview plus a follow-up message requesting a future contact. (Obviously, the original appointment was not kept.)

As is evident from Figure 2, the authors secured results which are entirely consistent with those secured in Experiments I and II. The results were not statistically significant, however. On the basis of their data, the authors concluded "that" this experiment suggests that, the hiring practices of institutions of higher education, do not subject outstanding achievers to sex discrimination; but that females of less than outstanding ability appear to be in need of vocational rehabilitation."

Conclusion

Both statistical data and experimental research provide overwhelming evidence that women are discriminated against in higher education. Discrimination seems to be especially intense when women do not possess exceptional ability or fame.

D. On the Job Discrimination

Discrimination does not end with hiring. Women who survive the variety of sex biases we have documented, and are finally accepted for the positions to which they aspire, are still not accorded the same status as the males in the occupations.

Discrimination is reflected in salaries. According to 1966 figures, female professionals earn 35% less than male professionals; female managers earn 46% less than the males; and female

sales workers earn 59% less than males. In primary and secondary school, women teachers are paid as much as males. Unfortunately teachers of both sexes are paid so little that it is almost impossible to support a family on a teacher's income. (The average salary of beginning teachers who possess a B.A. is \$7,070.) One out of every eight women is the sole support of a household. The divorced or widowed teacher, who has sole responsibility for her children, must subtract the expense of Day Care services (a service not yet made available by most institutions) from her already meager salary. In higher education, where salaries are larger, sex discrimination again appears. On the University of Wisconsin campus, the salaries of women professors are \$3,744 lower on the average than those of comparable males.

Discrimination is also evident in promotions. Some women consciously choose to avoid administrative positions so that they can combine teaching and mothering. Unfortunately, institutional discrimination severely restricts the personal choice of women who wish to arrange their lives differently. Women who do aspire to professional advancement are denied the opportunity. They are caught on the lower rungs of academia.

Epstein (1971) illustrates the problem:

Women hold a fourth of all jobs in the federal civil service but only 2% of the top positions... In library science, where women 'man' the profession, a very small proportion of administrative positions are held by women. Although women traditionally have made up a large part of the professional teaching corps, in 1964 only 22 percent of the faculty and professional staff in institutions of higher learning were women, a considerably smaller proportion than in 1940 (28 percent) and 1930 (27 percent). There has also been a sharp drop in the proportion of women secondary school teachers, 46 percent of the total in 1965 as compared with 57 percent in 1950. The decline in percentage of women elementary school principals is almost extraordinary. In 1928, 55 percent of the principals were women; in 1948, 41 percent; in 1958, 38 percent, and in 1968 the figure has been reported to have dropped to 22 percent.

Summary:

In spite of State and Federal laws which insist on equality of opportunity, women continue to be treated unfairly. The

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statistics and studies cited thus far indicate just some of the ways in which institutionalized discrimination operates in education and the professions to keep women down. Success is denied to all but the exceptional.

Each person has only one fleeting existence to enjoy. He should not be denied the chance to design a life which will be most satisfying to him. Some women believe a total dedication to home and family is most likely to bring them satisfaction. Others choose to work full time, immersed in a varied and challenging career. Many women choose to combine the two. Yet, despite our protestations that everyone is entitled to choice, present practices make it very difficult for women to depart from the traditional role of wife and mother. For those desiring to combine a career with motherhood, the problems often seem insurmountable. In an institution such as the university -- where there is paid paternity leave but no maternity leave, where there is no university day care center, where nepotism is still an unwritten precedent in many departments, and where women at the faculty and administrative level are nearly invisible -- the opportunities to combine family and career appear to many women to be virtually blocked.

We protest that everyone is entitled to choice. Then society systematically blocks off the options of women. Is it any wonder that so many women are beginning to resent the "choices" that are left them?

SECTION II

THE EFFECT OF INJUSTICE ON THE HUMAN PERSONALITY

The coercion of men and women into stereotyped roles has profound effects on their personalities and attitudes. Once they become aware of the rigid role typing that operates in our society, and conclude that such discrimination is unjust, even more profound and explosive reactions are likely to occur.

Psychological evidence tells us a great deal about how prolonged discrimination affects those involved in inequitable relationships. James Baldwin has argued that the exploiter of other men eventually ends up by suffering more than those he exploits for, in the end, the exploiter loses his humanity. While we cannot say who suffers most in an inequitable relationship, we do know that one crucial outcome of continued inequity is the denigration of the victim both by himself and the exploiter. The reader can best gain an understanding of how this process occurs if we first review the findings which have emerged from equity theory research.

Equity Theory
Theoretical Underpinnings

If it is to survive, a society must develop some system for equitably dividing up community resources. Citizens must agree on rules for deciding who gets what, and these rules must be acceptable to almost everyone.

Although every society eventually reaches a decision about how to apportion resources "equitably," the definition of what is "equitable" varies enormously among groups. Some societies believe that hard work or a distinguished family name entitles one to reward. Others believe that the ability to sing and tap dance are important assets.

Regardless of the exact system one adopts, it is fairly easy to socialize individuals to behave in an equitable way. In a variety of societies, we find that when an individual inadvertently receives much more reward than he knows he deserves, he will voluntarily share some of his bounty with his deprived friends. His deprived friends, on the other hand, are quick to demand that he give them a fair share of the resources he controls.

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not inevitably do so. With some regularity, presumably well socialized individuals simply refuse to follow the rules and intentionally exploit others. Or, individuals exploit others unintentionally. Sometimes they are unjust because they are ignorant of equity rules. Sometimes groups within the society disagree about what is fair. Individuals are denounced for being unjust regardless of what they do. Consider the elderly employer who has paid blacks and women less than other workers for the past 35 years. Until now, "No one objected" -- at least not to his face. Now he discovers that government agencies insist that such inequities are unfair and illegal. Blacks and women seem to share the government's perception; many old-timers do not. No matter how the employer resolves his dilemma, he will be left with the disturbing feeling that he is behaving and has been behaving inequitably.

Psychologists have discovered that when individuals realize they are in an inequitable relationship-- regardless of the reason -- both the exploiter and the victim respond in a standard way: First, they both experience distress. The more inequitable the relationship, the more acutely distressed they become. The victim usually labels his reaction as anger; the harm-doer labels his feelings as guilt. Regardless of what they call their reaction, the consequences are the same -- both the exploiter and the exploited become acutely uncomfortable.

There are only two ways in which they can restore balance to their relationship and eliminate their distress: (1) They can restore actual equity to their relationship, or (2) They can restore psychological equity.

Restoration of Actual Equity

Participants can restore actual equity by acknowledging that an inequity exists and by reallocating resources to eliminate the injustice. For example, the underpaid and overworked secretary (let us label her the "victim"), may be encouraged to "take Monday off" or be given an especially large Christmas bonus by her guilty boss (label him the "exploiter"). Or the secretary may take the initiative. She may demand a raise. (If she has an intractable boss, she may console herself by stealing from the company.)

Sometimes the exploiter is unwilling to give up his undeserved benefits, and the victim is not clever or powerful enough to force him to act fairly. Under such circumstances, the evidence indicates that both participants will distort reality in an effort to convince themselves that their inequitable

relationship is, in fact, equitable.

Man's creativity in distorting reality is legendary. Let us consider some of the ways exploiters have found to justify the unjustifiable.

Reactions of the Exploiter

Exploiters have some favorite techniques for justifying their exploitation of others. These include derogation of the victim, minimization of the victim's suffering, and denial of responsibility for the other's deprivation.

Derogation of the victim: If one can convince himself that a victim deserves his lowly state, he can feel a whole lot better about continuing to deprive the other of the things he deserves.

That harm-doers derogate their victims has often been demonstrated. In one experiment, psychologists hired college students to humiliate other students (presumably so the psychologist could discover how people responded after being insulted). This put students in a very uncomfortable position. They were perfectly aware that their fellow students didn't deserve to be humiliated. Yet, they had to insult him or lose the job. Students neatly solved their dilemma by distorting reality. Somehow they managed to convince themselves that the students whom they insulted really were inferior fellows. They convinced themselves that the victim was conceited, stupid, maladjusted, etc., and thus deserved to be hurt. Sykes and Matza (1957) found that juvenile delinquents feel guilty enough about hurting others that they go to the trouble of belittling the victim. They convince themselves (and others) that their victims are really homosexuals, bums, or possess other traits which make them deserving of punishment. In tormenting others, rather than harm-doers. We see this derogation of the victim operating in daily life. The con-man ridicules "suckers" and claims, "You can't cheat an honest man." The owner of a company store insists that the miners he over-charges are "Scum," who would squander their hard-earned money on liquor if he didn't relieve them of it. The school superintendent, who passes over deserving women in order to promote males to Principal, convinces himself, "Women make lousy administrators; they're emotionally unstable."

Minimization of the victim's suffering: A second way

that a person who has injured another can justify his injustice is by denying that the victim was really injured. Researchers have often demonstrated that harm-doers consistently underestimate how much harm they have done to others. Brock and Buss (1962) for example, interviewed college students who had been hired to administer electric shock to other students. It is, of course, very disturbing to have to shock another human being, especially when he does not deserve such punishment. Students rationalized this injustice by distorting how much the victim was suffering. After they had shocked the other student for awhile students began to markedly underestimate the painfulness of the shock they were delivering. Such rationalizations are common. Supervisors of migrant workers were once heard to explain, in all seriousness, that "Mexicans didn't really need much money, since they don't appreciate nice things." The grapeworkers strike soon reduced the plausibility of that rationalization.

When women hear employers explain that "Women really just work for pin money" and thus don't mind making less money than men, they might be forgiven for thinking that that tells one more about the Employer's needs than those of women.

Denial of responsibility for the act: If one can convince himself that he is not responsible for existing inequities, he can feel much better about the injustice he observes around him.

In daily life, denial of responsibility seems to be a favorite strategy of those who are made to feel guilty about exploiting others. War criminals protest vehemently they were "only following orders." Male chauvinists protest that "It's a man's world, and it's not my fault that things are as they are." Such statements often bring considerable satisfaction to those who are enjoying the benefits of the status quo.

Reactions of the Exploited

If an inequitable relationship is distressing to the exploiter it is doubly distressing to his victim. Although an exploiter may have to endure considerable discomfort when he treats others unjustly, he at least has the consolation that he is benefitting materially from his discomfort. The exploited individual has not such comfort -- he loses in every way from the inequity.

Like the harm-doer, the victim is naturally eager to restore equity to their one-sided relationship. He can do this in several ways: (1) He can demand restitution. (2) He can

retaliate against the harm-doer. (3) He can justify his own exploitation or accept the exploiter's justifications.

Demands for Compensation: Undoubtedly the victim's first response to exploitation is to seek restitution. If he secures compensation, he has restored the relationship to equity and he has benefited materially. It is easy to see why this is a popular response.

Retaliation: A second way victims try to restore equity is by retaliating against the exploiter. Whether or not retaliation is a good strategy is a moot point. Although retaliation does not bring the victim any material benefits, it does at least deprive the exploiter of his illicit benefits. Thus, retaliation may help to dissuade the exploiter from continuing to behave unfairly. (In addition, retaliation may bring the victim a certain satisfaction.) Whether or not it is a good strategy, Ross et al. (1971) demonstrate that victims will retaliate against those who have treated them enigmatically, when given the opportunity. The more inequitably they believe they were treated, the more they will retaliate. Evidence from Berscheid et al. (1968) suggests that appropriate retaliation will cause the harm-doer (as well, presumably, as the victim) to believe that the previous wrong has been righted, and that the relationship can begin again on a fairer footing. It thus appears that retaliation has as much potential for renewing a relationship as for destroying it.

Justification of the Inequity! Sometimes a victim finds that it is impossible either to elicit restitution or to retaliate against the harm-doer. The impotent victim is left with only two options: He can acknowledge that he is exploited and that he is too weak to do anything about it, or he can justify his exploitation. Often, victimized individuals find it less upsetting to distort reality and justify their victimization, than to acknowledge that the world is unjust and that they are too impotent to elicit fair treatment (Lerner and Matthews, 1967).

Victimized individuals have been found to restore psychological equity in several ways: Victims sometimes console themselves by imagining that their exploitation has brought them compensating benefits. ("Suffering brings wisdom and purity.") Or, they tell themselves that in the long run the exploiter will be punished as he deserves. ("The mill of the Lord grinds slowly, but it grinds exceedingly fine.") Recent data demonstrate that the victims may also convince themselves that their exploiter actually deserves the excessive benefits

he receives. Several experimenters have examined the reactions of individuals when an unworthy recipient pressures them into performing a difficult favor for him. They found that the abashed favor-doer would try to justify the inequity by convincing himself that the recipient was especially needy or worthy.

In our everyday experience, it is not uncommon to hear women who receive less money than a man for the same work, or who lose a job to a man, to assume that her deprivation is deserved. They say that they realize that the man needs the money more, or needs the job more than they do. Rarely do the women really know about the man's "needs." They do not know whether he has additional income from his wife's salary or whether he does in fact have a family to support. There are thousands of wives around any campus who have given up their own education of the husband who, they will argue, really has a greater need for the degree.

It is distressing to individuals who are desirous of promoting social equality, to see self-denigrating processes in action. As professional women, we frequently see women blaming themselves for problems that are in no way their own. One anecdote should provide insight. A friend of the senior author was interviewed by a department (not her own) at the University of Wisconsin. Her competence was unquestioned. Although she was applying for a job as an Assistant Professor, her work was internationally known and she had published far more than had the average Full Professors in that department. She also had an excellent reputation as a teacher. Her interviewers perceived her talents. (One of them honestly stated "She wouldn't really fit in here -- she's too smart." The comment was uproariously funny because it was true.) In the end, the department decided not to offer her a job. When the decision was criticized, one man countered angrily, "Discrimination is an old Wisconsin tradition." To everyone within the department, the reason for her exclusion was clear. She was talented, but she made the department members uncomfortable.

Within one year, however, the friend had reinterpreted her rejection. She had convinced herself that she had behaved stupidly and thus destroyed her chances for a job. "I had some personal problems at the time," she confided, "and that prevented me from being sensitive to what was going on ... I came on too strong ... Probably I was too aggressive ... I should have been more enthusiastic (about the Chairman's research interest; a project he has since abandoned.) .. They say they don't hire women, but if I had been convincing enough, I could have changed their minds. At some time every-

one reaches a test point. They have to say if I succeed here I'm good. Otherwise I should give up ... That was my test and I failed; I'm second rate, and I've accepted it." Such self-denigration may have given my friend the illusion that she had some control over her destiny, but this illusion of control was purchased at a high cost -- self-respect.

Why Women are so Hard on Women

Reformers who have worked to alleviate social injustice, at great personal sacrifice, are often enraged to discover that the exploited themselves sometimes vehemently defend the status quo. They watch numerous blacks and women offer elaborate rationales for the propriety of their inferior status, and they are incredulous. Those who have suffered the most sometimes are the most reluctant to object to the treatment they have received. Reformers might have more sympathy for and more ability to motivate these Uncle Toms and Aunt Tomasinas if they understood the psychological underpinnings of such reactions. When one is treated inequitably but has no hope of altering the situation, it is often less degrading to deny or "justify" injustice than to face up to one's humiliating position.

Pate has speculated that when one has little hope for change, self-denigration is one's alternative. The more discrimination one has had to accept in a lifetime, the less hope he will have for change; the more entrenched his tendency to denigrate himself will be. This could explain why, in our society, older or already established members of the profession are especially hesitant to accept promised changes. Older, more established women often feel aversion to groups of activist women and tend to be hard on the young women in their field. In every generation there are always those who feel the young should have to struggle as hard for advancement as they did, and begrudge the young benefits they themselves never obtained. The inequity older women have endured, combined with their belief that change is unlikely in their time, leads them to denigrate themselves and to be so hard on younger women. Young women who expect change to occur are more likely to become angry and demand restitution than to denigrate themselves, when faced with inequity. Perhaps failing to understand the damaged self-concepts of their elders who have long suffered discrimination, they may be hostile to the "establishment" women who do not join their cause.

Young and older women should stop being so hard on one another. Both younger and older women must come to understand that they have been treated in discriminatory ways, and to understand the psychological consequences of this treatment. With a greater awareness of their common problems, perhaps they can learn to think constructively about ways of changing-- rather than adjusting to -- the discriminatory situations which they meet.

Additional Factors Which Lead to Self-Denigration

In the preceding chapter we discussed in detail why societal discrimination leads women to denigrate themselves. Discrimination and denigration are the main elements in a more complex model of derogation, which we would like to develop for you in this section.

Aspiration and Achievement: There is already considerable evidence that women have lower occupational aspirations than men; ignoring those women who do not choose to enter the labor market at all, we know that those who do will frequently choose to enter and remain in the lower status positions -- choosing to be nurses rather than doctors, dental assistants rather than dentists, legal secretaries rather than lawyers. This is not a surprise to most of us, but it is of interest to learn from Tangri (1969) and Schwenn (1970) that women do not necessarily have these lower aspirations all their lives. Toward the end of their college experience many women who have aspired to Ph.D.'s or to professions suddenly shift their goals downward to more traditionally female occupations, which they feel will be more compatible with the usual pattern of marriage. Matina Horner (1968) attributes these lowered aspirations and hence lower achievement to a fear of success, a motive which she feels is characteristic of women. This motive or fear grows out of a role conflict in which the sex role predominates; success is unconsciously equated with loss of femininity. Horner's research has shown that females register greater fear of success as they move from the freshman to the senior year of high school and, again, as they move from the freshman to the senior year of college. As corroborating evidence, Sanford (1961) reported that seniors at a very high ranking women's college (which encouraged a liberal and independent spirit) showed a higher incidence of anxiety

and psychological disturbance than they did when they arrived as freshmen. A probable explanation for both sets of findings is that in the senior year the woman's concern about marriage, and its potential conflict with a career, induces great anxiety.

Society serves to induce this anxiety through the labels it attaches to the woman who deviates from the traditionally prescribed role. The woman who chooses to compete in domains previously preserved for males is not infrequently called an "aggressive bitch," "a castrating female," or "unfeminine." A woman who chooses a career rather than a family is made to feel guilty about shirking a womanly duty and is told and often made to feel that there is something "unnatural" about her and that she will never be "fulfilled."

Societal Denigration and Discrimination

Because women have under-aspired and under-achieved, society under-values their potential in the economic and political spheres, and it is this devaluation which results in the actual practices of discrimination which we have discussed. The societal attitudes and practices in turn affect the woman's attitudes toward herself; socialized into the society's belief system she can easily view herself as a second-class citizen, deserving or lucky to receive whatever rewards she can. That women themselves do not value their role is reflected by a 1955 Gallup poll which revealed that one-third of the women surveyed reported desiring or having desired at some time in their lives to be men. Only 3 or 4% of the men reported having wanted to be women. (Brenton, 1967). This attitude is commonly reflected even by educated women. At every party we run into the woman who indicates that she finds the company of other women boring, and elaborates in detail on the shortcomings of her inferiors.

Marital Hypergamy: The societal devaluation of women may be one of the factors influencing marital hypergamy which in turn is another factor which contributes to the woman's self-denigration. In many societies social status is not transmitted through women: men

can earn status by moving upward through the occupational scale but a woman's status is defined by that of her husband, regardless of her own occupation. A woman's only chance to improve her status, then, is to marry upward (or to nag her husband into raising their social status after marriage). At the same time, the man may prefer to marry a woman who is slightly inferior in terms of income and education as a means of insuring his superiority in the family structure.

Because one tends to establish his own sense of worth by comparing himself to those with whom he closely associates, one consequence of hypergamy is to virtually guarantee that the woman will feel inferior. While women as a group may not be inferior in any objective sense, they are not unlikely to be inferior in education and social status to the man to whom they are married. This sense of inferiority is fostered from the earliest dating experiences when girls are encouraged to date boys who are older and taller, boys they can "look up to." With marriage the legal system perpetuates the differential status between sexes. Laws impose a name change on the female, prevent (in many states) ownership of property by women, provide alimony to the women, on the assumption that women are incapable of providing for themselves.

If society ceases to discriminate against women, and accords them the chance to attain status in their own right (rather than requiring them to attain it through marriage or nagging), hypergamy may well become less characteristic of marriages in this culture. This, in turn, should raise the esteem of women.

If discrimination were the only link in the discrimination/denigration chain, massive change should occur once hiring and wage policies, educational practices, and laws which discriminate against women were eliminated.

Societal discrimination is undoubtedly lessening; in many respects there have been substantial changes in the last few years. For example, when the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin was presented with the statistics on salaries and promotions which we cited earlier, he moved into action. The nepotism rules which had kept so many women from employment were abandoned. A committee on the Status of Women was set up; they conducted hearings and began to rectify some of the most blatant inequities. These changes will have profound effects on the

character of education at Wisconsin -- and on the expectations and self-concepts of the women who benefit from the changes. But it is clear that such changes are only the beginning of the beginning. Recent changes such as these have apparently produced increased self-respect and increased aspirations in women. Nevertheless, several observers have reluctantly noted that women continue to "settle for the lower-ranking, lower-paying, and often unchallenging work of their society," (Epstein, 1971) despite new educational and professional opportunities. This can be explained by a model like ours, which demonstrates that there are several important influences which maintain the denigration of women. It is not until these total patterns are changed that we can expect an effective end to the discrimination/denigration of women. It is difficult to change societal attitudes and entrenched marriage patterns. An exciting start has been made, but the attainment of complete equality will, sadly, take time.

SECTION III

MAKING WOMEN RESPECTABLE

In Section I we documented the multitude of ways in which discrimination acts to limit the options of women. In Section II we pointed out that injustices of this sort take a psychological toll on all participants to the inequity. Smoldering resentment, guilt, and shame are the emotional legacy of such legacy.

Gradual change is inevitable, but what can we do to shape and expedite it? How can we insure that the options available to men and women are expanded? How can we make sure that today's children are psychologically equipped to take advantage of the increased opportunities they will have to design a life uniquely suited to their personalities? How can we change ourselves?

Educating the Children

We can be certain that by the time today's students reach adulthood what is required of "males" and "females" will have changed dramatically. None of us, however, knows the exact direction of these changes.

This poses a difficult problem for teachers. If they train their students to fill traditional male-female roles, they will surely be wrong. They will have adapted students for an environment which is demonstrably unjust and which will no longer exist. On the other hand, if they train their children for a world of equality, and such a world has not yet come into being by the time children are adults, they might also feel they have been wrong. Their open-minded boys will be taunted for being "sissies." Their free-spirited girls will suffer the fate of all "pushy" women. What is the solution to this dilemma? It probably lies in telling the truth:

A. Children should be told what the world is like now. They should know that in most middle-class families the husband's major time is spent away from home, in full-time work. A small portion of his time is spent with his family and in outside interests. The major portion of a woman's time is occupied with family and housework; a small portion of her time is filled with outside work and outside interests. (90% of

women work at some time in their lives.)* They should be aware, however, that even at the present time many couples choose successfully to live their lives in other ways.

Children can be reminded that boys and girls are treated differently in our society. Usually boys do "boy's" activities and girls do "girl's." They should be reminded, however, that much freedom of choice exists, and has always existed. The girl who wishes to play on a boy's baseball team may get kidded for her interest, but she can play ball if she wishes. (And she will probably have a better time -- kidding and all -- than she had if she pretended not to be interested in baseball.) If she receives the support she deserves from both parents and teachers, it is even easier for her to enjoy her unique interests.

"But why tell them what they already know?" you might ask. That is not true. Presently, the "world of today" which is described to students is a fantasy. Students are given a stereotyped view of life, one which perpetuates Victorian sex roles and which can only retard any trend toward equality.

To again cite Ashley Montagu:

Among the many ways in which the downgrading of women traditionally proceeds, one of the foremost is through the formal processes of "education." In a study of children's textbooks and personality development Drs. I.L. Child, E.H. Potter, and E.M. Levine found that the third-grade-level readers they examined presented females in an unfavorable and indifferent light. Females were nurturing and gentle but seldom active, adventurous, constructive, achieving, or worthy of recognition. "Girls and women are thus shown as sociable, kind and timid, but inactive, unambitious and uncreative." The characters in the stories who were nurtured and given support were generally female, "suggesting that females are in a relatively helpless position." On the other hand, the knowledgeable people were males. "Males, in short, are being portrayed as bearers of knowledge and wisdom." In some instances females were portrayed as being morally inferior to the male. They were portrayed as acquiring things in socially disapproved ways much more often than males, and less often by the socially approved means of effort and work. They are shown as lazy twice as often as males. In addition to their being slighted in these ways by com-

parison with males, males were predominantly the heroes of the stories, 73 percent being males and only 27 percent females. "The implication," write the authors of this study, "of this difference for a girl is that being female is a pretty bad thing, that the only people even in everyday life who are worth writing about or reading about are boys and men. If the content of these readers is typical of other social influences, will wonder that girls might develop for this reason alone an inferiority complex about their sex."

...The many schoolgirls who will at some future time have to make their own living are failing, if they identify with female characters to receive the same training in the development of motives for work and achievement that boys are receiving. To the extent that this distinction is characteristic of many other aspects of the training the child receives from his environment, it should cause little wonder that women are sometimes less fitted for creative work and achievement than men of similar aptitude, for there is certainly much difference in the motivational training they receive for it.

That this could have been written in 1946 and still ring true to educators today is evidence that needed changes have been tragically slow in developing.

This classroom view of man and woman does not even fairly represent yesterday. The idea that traditionally men have played the active role in society while women have been the passive helpmates is a gross distortion of reality. Such a unidimensional world never existed. Seneca (c A.D. 5-65) was already complaining that, "Because of their vices, women have ceased to deserve the privileges of their sex; they have put off their womanly nature and are therefore condemned to suffer the diseases of men." (Even the Romans found women to be intractable.) Jennie, the biography of Winston Churchill's Victorian mother, demonstrates that even Victorian ladies were not the spiritless conformers they are reputed to be. Lady Randolph initiated her husband's political career, conducted his campaigns, and supervised his speeches, while managing love affairs with politicians from a variety of nations.

The first step in preparing our children for life, then, is to stop deceiving them about the present. They should know that in our own, as in other societies, a great deal of latitude exists in what men and women are "permitted" to do.

B. Children should be warned that in their own society immense and difficult changes in the roles of men and women have begun to occur, and that these changes will require openmindedness and flexibility on their parts.

What kind of change should they be prepared for? Most observers agree (See Michael, 1965, for example) that in the future great diversity and more options will confront individuals.

The standard marital pattern we just described has already been declared to be unnecessarily confining by many married couples. Men often complain that the present occupational structure limits them in two unfortunate ways: (1) Since they must work all day, every day, it is difficult for them to develop any really intense interests outside of their work. (No wonder retirement is difficult.) They complain that it is difficult for them even to find time to have a close relationship with their children. Unions have attested to the validity of these complaints and have begun pressing for (and winning) shorter work weeks.

(2) Men complain that the present occupational structure prohibits them from changing their mind in mid-life about how they will spend their working hours. Presently, the mature man of 50 is not allowed to decide on an occupation; he is stuck with the thoughtless choices he may have made at 18. The man who longs to study Greek mythology is stuck with being an accountant. So long as the husband is the major supporter of his family, sudden career changes are disastrous; they produce an inevitable and often unbearable deterioration in the quality of family life. If job responsibility were shared, the middle aged man or woman could consider changing his occupation at any stage. One's spouse could support the family (at a reduced but bearable level) while one was retraining. Women who choose to spend their youth raising a family, could more easily re-enter the labor force once their family was grown, and men who wished to spend time with their young families could do so.

The sharing of work has other advantages. If the husband and wife shared work and family responsibilities equally, the specter of the breadwinner losing his job or becoming incapacitated would lose some of its terror. The family would have two breadwinners, two people sharing risks.

Women also have complaints about the current social structure. (This seminar has undoubtedly made us familiar with them.) Large numbers of women are beginning to admit that they find the unrelieved burden of being a fulltime housekeeper intellectually stultifying; many feel that part-time work, like part-time hobbies, would be a delight.

Given the interlocking nature of the preceding complaints, a solution begins to impose itself on us. It seems that both males and females would be happier if their lives possessed more variety. They would be happier if they could routinely "switch roles." Everyone has some desire to work outside the home and be intellectually stimulated, to play with their children, and to explore new activities. It is probable that people will soon insist on exploring a balance of work, family life, and pleasure which is optimally satisfying for them. Some of the youthful experiments with communal living constitute one radical attempt to create this balance.

The least an educator can do, then, is alert children to the fact that the world of the future will require more choices than the world of today. At best, the teacher would hope to prepare the child to fit into this world. But how are you, as an educator, to guess what style of life your students will develop? How can you prepare them for the life they ultimately choose? Foreseeing the future becomes even more difficult when you realize that children might even need to be prepared to fill different roles at different stages of life. How can you hope to predict these patterns?

Obviously you are not going to be able to foresee the future. You cannot predict how your children will live and train them for that life. Instead, you will have to train them to meet a wide variety of circumstances. You will have to expose them to the wide variety of skills, knowledge, and attitudes which they might need. Every child should read stories that sometimes

depict the female as the heroine. Then, regardless of how "equal" the woman of the future turns out to be, students will not find themselves unprepared. Females must be expected and encouraged to perform on a par with males. A particular couple may end up deciding to live by the old values and play the old roles. If she chooses, the overtrained woman can always "play dumb" and forget her skills. That is an easier transition to make than the opposite. It is extremely difficult for a woman who discovers at thirty that she needs to be very smart, to begin from scratch to develop her talents and her self-confidence.

You can rely on parents to inculcate children with the knowledge that boys do certain things and girls do others. Sex roles are well learned by the time children enter school; they function from infancy to limit human potential. Let us cite an example:

One of us was browsing in a dime store the other day. A small girl there was obviously attracted to a toy that consisted of a ladder which a man springs up, apparently in defiance of gravity. First, she requested the toy. Her mother politely said, "No." The child began to cry, cajoling her mother to give her the toy. Again, "No." Finally, she began screaming, hollering, and jumping up and down while dangling from her mother's arm. These theatrics continued for a considerable period. Suddenly, she stopped. With horror she asked, "It's not a boy's toy, is it?" When the mother said "No," she began screaming again. It seemed clear that had the mother certified this toy as unacceptable--as a boy's toy--she would have accepted the decision and denied her desire to experiment with it.

You can rely on parents then to overtrain children in their "roles." You do not have to overdo the parent's training by limiting children's flexibility still further. Instead, you can work to make school a special place-- a place where one can explore exciting activities, satisfy one's curiosity, and develop skills regardless of one's sex. The school can encourage discovery, not conformity; it is a place where one can be confident that his essential personality, be it male or female, will shine through while they perform any activity that interests them. They might learn the revolutionary, but true, principle that no job or activity belongs exclusively to one sex; any activities

can be appropriately performed in a masculine or a feminine way. You can instill these attitudes gracefully, without endangering the wrath of parents, by a conscious selection of learning materials which present the sexes in equal light, by encouraging girls and boys to excel in the same subjects, by avoiding sex-segregated activities, and by encouraging all students to pursue those interests which are rewarding to them. If one can make the school a place where one can be respected for one's humanity and not one's sex, he can increase the probability that his charges will find themselves at ease in the world of the future.

Changing Ourselves

Thus far, we have concentrated on trying to devise techniques which will prepare the child to design a life uniquely suited to his desires. But how about ourselves? How can we make our own lives more fulfilling?

No one knows for sure. However, here are some things that many women have found for improving their own self-respect.

A. We can become more conscious of our own place in the world. We probably learned little about women in school. Thus, exposures to the thoughts and actions of women are a revelation. In much more restrictive times, as well as our own semi-permissive time, women of daring, wit, and power existed. They evidently transcend cultural taboos. The biographies of Eleanor Roosevelt, Lady Randolph (Jennie), Queen Victoria, Anais Nin, Isadora Duncan, and Mary Quant are special favorites of mine. Other books you might appreciate are The Awakening by Kate Chopin, Mrs. Bridge by Evan O'Connell, Shulamith Firestone's Dialects of Sex, Golden Notebook by Doris Lessing and The Natural Superiority of Women by Ashley Mantagu.

B. Women can begin to talk to one another. Somehow, women have gotten into the habit of thinking of other women as either uninteresting or as "the enemy." They rarely share their real concerns with one another, confining themselves instead to communicating about "safe" topics, like where they carried their last child (front or back), the comparative performance of their babies and school-age children, other women, or the weather. If one is daring enough to voice her real dissatisfaction and enthusiasms, to brooch unconventional topics, she might find that her "dull" companion has as exciting and active a mind as her own.

One always runs the risk that such "consciousness-raising" may be painful. Self-denigration is a self-protective device; it enables one to endure long-term inequity with the minimum of pain. If we have always volunteered to wait on others, to "clean up" after celebrations, minimizing the inconvenience with a good hearted "I don't mind," we might be distressed to discover that others will probably insist on service even if we've acknowledged that we do mind. It's one thing to volunteer more than our share; it's not so pleasant to discover that we learned to "volunteer" because we really had no choice. So consciousness may bring pain. But we must give up our self-deceptions because it is the only means to freedom for ourselves and our daughters.

The same changes that bring pain will bring compensating rewards. Others will often prove to be more accomodating than we would have expected when we express our feeling of injustice. We will discover that activities that were once considered taboo are open to us. (The university this year opened the Men's pool to women in response to the women's enthusiasm -- and pressure. The lockers are still a male stronghold, however.) These changes make life more pleasant. We discover that a little criticism is a small price to pay in order to explore things in which we are interested, and which provide us with a more stimulating existence.

If sizeable numbers of men and women can become more daring about exploring the world and themselves, the shared ignorance which has thus far buoyed up inequities will disappear, and so will useless restrictions. Hopefully, people will soon learn that they can be loved for their own uniqueness rather than for the imitation of the stereotyped man or woman they pretend to be.

Good luck to all of us.

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